Between Bureaucrats: Education and the Making of the State in Ghana

By

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the lives and practices of circuit supervisors (CSs), mid-level bureaucrats in the Ghanaian state's decentralized education system who, characterize themselves as managing the human capital of the nation. As state agents and citizen actors, CSs traverse the space between the managerial demands of global and national institutions, and the educational needs and interest of the schools and communities they serve. In the developmentalist Ghanaian state, they are important yet under-theorized players. Finely combing their negotiations of state-school-citizen relations, this research maps how three key neoliberal(izing) governance mechanisms—participatory democracy, decentralization, and privatization—affect the meaning and practice of their jobs as educational supervisors. CSs confront and navigate forces that strip resources from the public education sector; deprofessionalize them in service to international norms of accountability, transparency, and efficiency; and hold them increasingly responsible for school quality. In so doing, CSs experiences of trying to improve Ghanaian schools make visible the techno-rationalization of the developmentalist state and the way that managerial forms of governance are coming to dominate over more democratic, participatory ones. In the missing middle, the space between policy and its effect, CSs negotiate how development works in the quotidian.

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List of Acronyms

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Exam
CS	Circuit Supervisor
CSRP	Civil Service Reform Program
DEOC	District Education Oversight Committees
DFID	British Department for International Development
DTST	District Teacher Support Team
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ERP	Education Reform Program
EU	European Union
fCUBE	free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GES	Ghana Education Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDO	International Development Organization
IPS	Institute of Professional Studies
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JHS	Junior High School
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KNUST	Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEA	National Education Assessment
NIB	National Inspectorate Board

OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFY	Operation Feed Yourself
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
QUIPS	Quality Improvement in Primary Schools
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policies
SMC	School Management Committee
SPIP	School Performance Improvement Plan
SSS	Senior Secondary School
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

> People in Ghana, as in nearly every other country, believe that one of the most important duties of the state is to ensure the supply and maintenance of an adequate system of education for all the children living in it. Indeed in this country, and elsewhere in West Africa, governments are judged to a greater extent than in most other countries by how far they succeed or fail in satisfying educational needs. (McWilliam, 1962, p. 2)

Since the expansion of free compulsory universal basic education (fCUBE) in 1996, public education in Ghana is the most routine and consistent place in which people come into contact with the democratic state in their daily lives. Employing 60% of workers on the public payroll, it is also the single largest sector of the state. Education, therefore, is not tangential to, but is, in many ways, the state itself—its financing, its personnel, and its socializing engagement with its citizens. This makes educational governance a critical part of state governance writ large (Coe, 2005; Welmond, 2002).

This is an ethnography of circuit supervisors (CSs), mid-level bureaucrats in Ghana's education sector. It explores how CSs, conceptualized as the "foot soldiers in the implementation of educational policies" (Bosu, 2009), operate at the frontlines of the state, translating the educational goals and policies of the state into practice in schools and communities. At the same time, the ethnography traces how CSs make educational outcomes legible to the state through collection and generation of school-based educational reports, statistics, and assessments. In this way, CSs are serving as key hinges, making sense of the state for people, and making sense of citizens for the state.

The study explores these two aspects of CSs' negotiation of state-school relations by mapping how three of the key neoliberal(izing) governance mechanisms (participatory democracy, decentralization, and privatization)[1] central to 21st-century Ghanaian state policy affect the meaning and practice of CSs' jobs as educational supervisors. At the same time, the study explores how CSs navigate the profound and constant conditions of indeterminacy born out of global capitalism and the unprecedented inequalities it has created in Ghana in its most recent neoliberal, democratic incarnation. In the current era of globalized capitalism, state policies and practices, and the well-being of people within states, are not isolated from larger transnational flows.

This study is based on 18 months of extended ethnographic research on the everyday practices of CSs in two districts, one each in the Volta and Ashanti Regions.

Figure 1: Regional Map of Ghana

The title of this ethnography, *Between Bureaucrats*, points to the significance of CSs' positionality, both vertically and horizontally, in the educational structures and practices of the

[1] Unless otherwise noted, from here forward, when I discuss governance mechanisms of neoliberalism I am referring to democratization, decentralization, and privatization. Also, while I recognize the long and diverse traditions underlying all three of these mechanisms, here I am talking about their particular forms at this time, as constituted during this particular global economic and political moment.

state. Vertically, CSs operate as decentralized middle figures, working both up to the central government and down to schools and communities. Horizontally, I am drawing attention to CSs as mid-level bureaucrats working in local communities, whose "democratic" professional practices are generally recognizable and legible across purportedly decentralized sites, offering potentially significant insights into how democracy is constituted and legitimized through everyday practices across disparate localized settings. While Ferguson and Gupta bring to the fore the constructed nature of this assumed state spacialization, there is a certain utility to this construction when talking and thinking about the movement of official policy and resources. I, therefore, talk about CSs as being part of the vertical and horizontal relations of the state because it is analytically helpful in thinking about how ideas, policies, aspirations, resources, and practices move in a state represented as having vertical and horizontal spatial characteristics (centralized, decentralized, and localized government that is democratized).

The Ashanti and Volta regions, where this research was conducted, have differed historically in important ways in terms of education, economics, culture, ethnicity, power, politics, and natural resources, which I discuss at greater length in Chapter 2. Despite these differences, the research revealed that in the multiparty, predominantly market-driven context of postcolonial Ghana, CSs in both districts understood their primary responsibility as managing the human capital of the nation. In the classrooms, communities, and offices where they worked, they drew on and deployed their personal and professional experiences and knowledge to: build a professionalized rationale amongst themselves and with teachers for how providing quality education will result in individual and national development; partition responsibility for the provision of education across a diverse set of stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and government; and help teachers, pupils, and parents make sense of what it means to be an

educated and productive citizen in a participatory democracy. I argue, therefore, that CSs are intimately involved in the symbolic and material construction of the state as they attend to the everyday administration of education.

This study is situated within scholarship on education and the state that argues that education is an important arena in which state and society are negotiated, and scholarship on the anthropology of the state that theorizes the state as constantly under negotiation and construction. Together these two areas of scholarship point to the relevance of studying mid-level actors in the education sector as a way of studying the state itself.

I also position the dissertation in relation to a gap in the anthropology of development literature that this study seeks to address: how the Ghanaian state and its neoliberal mandates (to democratize, decentralize, and privatize) are constituted in daily practice—in this case, as they are translated and constituted by CSs in their interactions with schools and communities. I draw on Mosse (2004), who points to the need to open up the "black box" that exists between policy and its effects. "The ethnographic question is not whether but how development projects work; not whether a project succeeds, but how success is produced" (Mosse, 2004, p. 646). Following Mosse, my focus is not on whether CSs are effective at school supervision, but rather how their daily practices both reveal and help constitute the scope and function of the state itself (p. 641).

Education: The Developmentalist Frontier

Since the Education Reform Program (ERP) of 1987, and later, the fCUBE policy of 1996, there has been substantial re-investment by the Ghanaian state into the public education system, as well as significant private funder investment in and influence on educational policies (Casely-Hayford, Palmer, Ayamdoo, & Thompson, 2007, p. 8 King, 2011, p. 650). In recent

years, the Ghanaian government has allocated as much as 30% of its annual budget to education. This is more than any other sector of the public service, making education the single largest area of investment for the state (Casley-Hayford, 2011, p. 11; Wereko & Dordunoo, 2010, p. 9-10). Despite high levels of spending, there is still a significant budget shortfall in the sector, estimated to be around 7.2bn Ghana Cedi from 2010-2020 (Government of Ghana, 2010, p. 41). The government's investments in the sector, not the shortfall, however, are what is focused on, particularly by International Development Organizations (IDOs) and in conversations about sector efficiency.

The government's investment in education, as a percentage of GPD, reached 10.1% in 2008, which is significantly higher than investments by other countries in the region (4.3% to 5.7%). In addition, Ghana's spending on education is higher than the global Education for All (EFA) benchmark of 6.5% (Government of Ghana, 2010, p. 11). High levels of state spending are justified and supported by development discourses of human capital theory that argue that state investments in education yield high public rates of return (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2002), leading to increased individual and social welfare, economic growth, poverty reduction, and more democratic political systems (Hannum & Buchmann, 2005).

The expected outcomes of such investments are quality education, as measured by performance on standardized tests, and a raft of development outcomes associated with schooling, including decreased pregnancy rates and infant mortality, improved health status, increased participation in governance, increased employment and earnings, and growth in the economy. In this context, access to and quality of education become important national narratives that link education and educators to individual and national development as part of the

developmentalist state's project of growth. The developmentalist state can be understood, in its most basic form, as a state whose primary focus is economic development itself.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Etsy, et al. 2009) reported that Ghana is perceived by the international development community to be a "successful developing country" and found that reforms aimed specifically at increasing access to education and improving management and supervision in the education sector have been in place for many years. However, despite these positive institutional and policy environments and high levels of investment in the sector, learning outcomes in formal schools, as measured by student performance on international and national standardized tests, have remained persistently low. This has created a complex environment in which the state is blamed, by both its citizens and IDOs and international financial institutions (from here forward referred to collectively as IDOs), for being ineffective and inefficient in the provision and delivery of quality education services. This feeds into the neoliberal mantra that the public interest is best served by the private sector and that so far as the public sector remains, it should be governed by market principles. As will be evident in the following chapters, particularly Chapter 6 and 7, education reforms driven by market logics have subjected CSs to significant managerial pressures, coming from both the government and IDOs, to be more accountable, efficient, and effective in their work in order to raise education quality.

Outcomes on standardized tests, a dominant indicator used to measure education quality, have been slowly declining in recent years, creating a concerning trend and worry by the government that they have been largely unable to arrest this decline. In 2011, the pass rate for the Basic Education Certificate Exam (BECE), a national high stakes standardized test given at the end of junior high school, was less than 47%. Similarly, the 2013 National Education

Assessment (NEA), showed that students in primary class 6 (P6) demonstrated low levels of proficiency in both math and English: for math, females had a 10.2% level of proficiency, while males were slightly higher with 11.6%; for English, female proficiency levels were 39.6%, while males were 38.4% (Ministry of Education, 2014, p. xii).

In the current era of global capitalism, a country's stock of human capital is commonly discussed among IDOs and governments as critical to international competitiveness. Flagging educational performance (the production of human capital) is taken to indicate a weakened position or ability to participate in the global economy. In Ghana, even as educational expenditures as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) remain higher than the regional average, students have been performing well below other African countries in cross-national comparisons using such measures as the Trends in International Math and Science Study from 2003 and 2007 (Etsy, Smith, Gyamera, Koka, Boer, Havi, & Heyneman, 2009, p. 9). In 2015, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released its global school rankings, based on test scores from 76 countries; Ghana was ranked last—76 out of 76. High investments in the education sector and low learning outcomes have created a sense of crisis within the state that Ghana is not only losing a competitive edge in the global economy, but that domestically, economic, political and social development are also being stymied.

The Ghanaian media has called the low standard of public education a "disgrace to the state" (Mohammaed, 2011), indicating that educational performance is an important public arena in which the efficacy of the state is judged. Public education, therefore, plays a critical role not only in terms of its purported connection to increased socioeconomic development and its symbolic role in deepening democracy, but also in how people understand, make sense of, and build trust in the state itself (Coe, 2005; Kendall, 2007).

Coe (2005), in her research on how the government of Ghana attempts to create a national culture through schooling, highlights the way in which education serves as a key space where the relationship between state and citizen is negotiated. Studying how people interact with and within the education sector, as both employees and recipients of services, is particularly useful for understanding how people make sense of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and stakeholders of the state itself. The interactional space between state and society that is cultivated in and through formal schooling is not unidirectional, flowing top down from state to citizen. Rather, education is a space where citizens can also make claims on the state. For example, policies such as fCUBE recognize and affirm education as a human right. As such, citizens can make rights-based claims on the state for the provision of services. Schooling thus becomes a central site of negotiation of the roles and responsibilities of democratic state and society (Coe, 2005, p. 5). As we will see in Chapter 2, this negotiation is shaped in Ghana by the disjuncture between educational policies, such as fCUBE, that promise high quality free education for all, and their effects, which indicate that state investments in education have yielded persistently low outcomes for individual and national development.

The continuity of the developmentalist state in Ghana. Since independence in 1957, Ghana has experienced an array of political and state forms—socialist, capitalist, populist, authoritarian, and democratic—each with its own attendant economic policies and ideologies, educational plans and trajectories. What has remained consistent, however, has been the steady articulation of economic development as the guiding purpose of the state. In the 20th century, the developmentalist state pursued economic growth through an approach of state-led industrialization and building a strong bureaucracy (Williams, 2014), both of which occurred

during Nkrumah's leadership during the first decade after independence. During this time, the collective project of national (economic) development gained "widespread credence and constituted one of the most important 'collective goods' provided by the state" (Evans, 2014, p. 225).

Today, however, economic growth has changed, necessitating that developmentalist states, like Ghana, also shift their focus: economic development is no longer to be achieved through manufacturing, but rather has moved towards service sector employment, growth driven by the knowledge economy, and human capital development. In this context, the provision of capability-expanding services (e.g., education and health) become more important and require increased state support. Democratized, decentralized, and privatized states are imagined, by the international development community, as the most accountable, efficient, and effective means of providing capability-expanding services. This helps explain why, for example, the Ghanaian state, recognized as an exemplar of neoliberal reform (Chalfin, 2010; Hutchful, 2002), is also aggressively investing in public education and, through this investment, expanding the reach of the state in targeted areas.

For capitalist states such as Ghana, however, guided by neoliberal ideology, serious tension arises where the logics of the developmental state (invest in capability-expanding services) contradict neoliberal ideology (keep the state small and focused on securing an environment hospitable to free market enterprise). In the education sector, it is actors such as CSs who find themselves at the uncomfortable intersection of these often conflicting logics. CSs are part of the machinery of government meant to ensure the delivery of quality education (a central capability-expanding service), but they are expected to do so while also ensuring efficient (value for money) and effective (e.g., high outcomes on standardized tests) delivery of services.

In practice, this means that CSs frequently get overloaded with tasks, under-resourced to perform them, and then blamed for being ineffective in their jobs. This is reflective of the Ghanaian state itself: the state is expected to provide capability-expanding services, but under neoliberal governance and in a capitalist context, key sectors of the state like education are under-resourced and over-stretched, resulting in poor educational outcomes and a weak relationship between educational policy and its effects.

The How of Educational Policy and its Effects

In Ghana, the enduringly weak relationship between high levels of investment in national educational goals and policies and local educational outcomes leads to questions about the relationships among educational policy, implementation, and practice. At the same time, the constant sense of crisis that pervades the education sector, as investments remain high and outcomes remain low, continually opens up opportunities for reform, particularly reforms aimed at making education more efficient and effective. These reforms condense around actors like CSs, who are seen as both the agents (increasing educational supervision and management) and targets (being inefficient and ineffective in educational supervision and management) of such reforms.

Education has become so central to national narratives of development, and such significant focus has been placed on developing human capital through educational investments, that one could argue that the developmental state[2] today is also now an educationalist state—education is a significant area of investment for the state and seen as central to national development. President Kufuor (2001-2008), for example, in adopting the Ghana Poverty

[2] For a discussion on the developmental state see Williams, M. (ed.) (2014). *The End of the Developmental State?* Routledge Studies in Development and Society: New York.

Reduction Strategies I (2003-2005) and II (2006-2009) highlighted education as the central means for reducing poverty and spurring development (Wereko & Dordunoo, 2010, p. 2). The government of Ghana regularly positions education as the solution to the attendant poverty, socioeconomic stratification, and inequality that not only result from, but is seen as necessary for, modernity to exist in its current expansive form (Wereko & Dordunoo, 2010, p. 2). Therefore, this study treats Ghana's educational policy as a core aspect of its broader, state-led developmentalist policy. Below is a review of the literature on policy studies and the anthropology of development, which will locate figures like CSs within this literature and the narrative of this dissertation.

Policy studies. Scholars have long sought to shed light on the overarching question of why there are persistent fissures in the plans (policies and projects) and outcomes of development (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994; Kendall, 2007; Mosse, 2004; Shore & Wright, 1997). Hobart (1993) defines development as "effectively a synonym for more or less planned social and economic change" (p. 1). This definition lends itself to seeing underdevelopment as a problem and development policy as the solution. Given the level of investment by national governments and international actors, one would expect the key sectors targeted by development, like education, to show significant improvement: for example, almost universal enrollment, attendance, and retention in formal schooling and higher levels of proficiency in basic literacy and numeracy. However, initiating, achieving, and sustaining such changes have proven an enduring challenge.

There are different ways of understanding policy, which lead to different explanations as to the relationship between policy and practice, and to understanding the successes or failures of

development. Mosse (2004) points out that there has been research on those at the top of the policy process, the so-called "developers," and conversely, those at the bottom, local people, who are the targets of development. Who acts, where, and when, their agency, and purpose may be conceived of quite differently depending on who is the focus of inquiry, but studies of those at the top and bottom of the policy process focus primarily on the who of development (who is doing the developing or being developed) and the outcomes of development (the effects of policy). What falls out of focus, and is largely missing in such studies, is the how of development, which is the major analytic focus of this dissertation; how do CSs, in the education sector, govern and how are they governed by neoliberal forms of governance in Ghana?

An instrumental view of policy conceives of it as a technical-rational tool used to shape desired outcomes (Mosse, 2004, p. 641; Ozga, 2000, p. 2). The overarching concern is how to implement policy, which is treated as an instrument employed by decision makers to address problems and produce change (Shore & Wright 1997, p. 5). This leads to a focus on how best to align policy prescriptions with institutional realities in order to achieve realization of desired outcomes. Therefore, when policy fails, the concern is with identifying where and why policy breaks down so that it can be better designed and made more implementable (Mosse, 2004, p. 640).

Policy, seen as a form of "administrative rationalism," is dominated by a "managerial perspective" (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 5). There is an implicit assumption that power and agency for policy design and implementation are vested in policymakers who can control and manipulate the organizational, institutional, technological, and political terrain on and through which policy is implemented (Elmore, 1979, p. 603). This conceptualization of policy (and its practice) assumes a hierarchical relationship between both actors and institutions. Those at the

center are at the top of the hierarchy and are ascribed with the greatest level of agency in determining the direction, scope, and reach of any given policy; implementing agencies exist and function in a hierarchically subordinate relationship to the central apparatus of government (Elmore, 1979, p. 605). The closer any given actor is to the actual source of the policy (i.e., creating official policy text at the level of central government) the greater the actor's authority, control, and influence over the policy. The types of voices traditionally heard in the process of policy formulation and project design tend to be those of the so called "developers": funders, national governments, development agencies, technical experts, and researchers who seek to bring change to local populations (Mantilla, 2001, p. 126). The "beneficiaries" of development, the less dominant and less powerful actors (teachers, parents, students) are seen as adjusting their actions and expectations to conform to the development policy or project being implemented. This perspective lends itself to seeing CSs simply as "implementers" of official policy, and to focusing on how to make them more efficient and effective in this role.

This hierarchical view is essentially managerial in that it stresses those factors in the policy process that are centrally located and thus more easily manipulated by policy makers, such as funding formulas, formal organizational structures, authority relationships among administrative units, regulations, and administrative controls. This view results in a focus on making CSs more accountable to and compliant with policy makers and IDOs.

Thus, the successes and failures of development policies are measured against the level of compliance with the policy makers' stated intent. The failure of development policy is, therefore, explained as a failure of alignment between policy goals and institutional realities, often attributed to lack of implementation capacity (Evans, Sack, & Shaw, 1995, p. 4), which again draws attention to CSs as a primary source of policy failure itself. The solution, therefore, is to

bring institutional realities, and the actions of actors like CSs, into closer alignment with policy prescriptions in order to harmonize development policy and outcome (Mosse, 2004, p. 641).

Recognizing this top-down orientation as problematic, there has been a move towards more bottom-up and participatory approaches to understanding policy, though in practices these are largely an inversion of top-down ones (Elmore, 1979; Sabatier, 1986). A bottom up policy approach privileges the perspectives and expressed needs of actors and target groups at the hierarchically lowest level of the system. What is eventually codified as policy emerges from grassroots agitation, backing-up through the various levels and structures of implementing bodies to the top. From this perspective, the voice and experiences of community actors are fore-fronted and privileged for their close knowledge and understanding of what is happening on the ground/at the bottom.

CSs are not the kind of community actor that bottom-up approaches are imagined to start with, but they are part of the local landscape through which policy moves up towards the top. CSs, therefore, within the hierarchy of policy actors, could be imagined as better positioned to articulate needs and solutions that are in closer alignment with people's actual needs and wants. A bottom-up approach is more likely to attribute the success or failure of policy to the skills and strategies of ground-level actors rather than efforts at the central level of governance (Sabatier, 1986, p. 32). The focus, however, is still not on the question of how development works. There is an explicit assumption that there is a linear or rational relationship between policy and practice that moves either from the top down or from the bottom up, with a direct relationship between policy and practice in both directions: top down policy drives the practice of actors like CSs, and bottom-up CSs' practices would be seen as driving policy. As Mosse (2004) points out, however, we must consider the very real possibility that development policy may in fact not be the driver

of development practice, and vice versa that development practice may have little to do with the formal articulation of policy (p. 640). This is not to say there is not a relationship and that official policy does not have material and ideological effects on the way people understand themselves and their work, but it is to say that the relationship is not necessarily linear or causal in the way that instrumentalist approaches to policy and practice seem to imply.

Anthropology of development. In contrast, beginning primarily in the 1990s, the anthropology of development emerged, focusing on development as a subject of critical inquiry, questioning its purposes, practices, assumptions, and ideas (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994; Hobart, 1993; Olivier de Sardan, 2005). Escobar and Ferguson, for example, draw heavily on Foucault's use of power and discourse to interrogate the development discourse itself, its policies and its practices, showing how categories like the "Third World," the poor, and underdevelopment, among others, have been produced in order to become arenas of action for the West. Escobar, in particular, explicates how the colonizing discourses of development, created after World War II as part of the response to the global discovery of mass poverty (or the production of it as a governable category), have created the "Third World" as an object of development, which not only affects people's livelihoods and well-being, but as importantly, the very ways we see and understand the world.

Ferguson, drawing both on Foucault's ideas of discourse and governmentality, similarly deconstructs development discourse by looking at a World Bank funded project in Lesotho. He shows how development is depoliticized by transforming social and economic relations into technical problems that are made solvable through increased state and bureaucratic reach and intervention by technical experts. Local context, history, and knowledge are all erased, making

development not only a depoliticized endeavor, but also an ahistorical one. This allows for poverty to appear as though it exists as a simple matter of fact, rather than as produced in relation to a long history of social and economic exploitation and inequality. It is important to note, however, that development appears depoliticized, but accomplishes important expansions for the state; it has deeply political effects, but appears discursively apolitical.

Both Escobar and Ferguson tend to focus on the ways in which individual control, social regulation, and hierarchies of knowledge and power are maintained by development discourse through policies and practices that have both individual and institutional effects. Their analytic gaze is largely top-down, giving priority to Western ideology in defining the discourses and practices of development. Western hegemony is seen as acting on, rather than with, local practices and knowledge, often denying if not destroying them in the process. This is not to say there is no recognition of resistance, but resistance is in reaction to domination in these accounts and what thrives and is preserved is hegemony of the current nation-state system. This body of scholarship helps us see the larger development context, and relations of power, in which actors like CSs operate, but it does not help us see in any specific way how they operate, and in fact may obfuscate the complex and sometimes contradictory roles that actors like CSs play. Local actors like CSs, and their everyday practices, are not the focus of inquiry.

Policy as practice, as a body of research and theory, again shifts the focus of inquiry, asking not ”Is (development) policy successful?” but rather, “What is policy?” and “What does policy do?” (Levinson, Sutton, & Winstead, 2009, p. 769). A traditional official view conceptualizes policy as the “authoritative allocation of values” and policies as the “operational statements of [those] values” (Ball, 1990, p. 3). As such, policy becomes a means of the powerful to codify dominant values and beliefs in society. Thus, asking “What does policy do?”

becomes a question fundamentally concerned with power and its effects (Levinson et al., 2009, p. 769), which is also central to the deconstructive task of understanding development as discourse. Dominant values, articulated as official policy, are institutionalized in patterns of practice, making what were once assertions of beliefs appear as natural or given structures of society (Popkewitz, 1991, p. 20). Similarly, the discourse of development is powerful, in part, for the way that it naturalizes particular ideas like poverty and underdevelopment, as if they existed *a priori*.

While the anthropology of development focuses more on the production and construction of discourse rather than the way people take up those discourses in their daily lives, policy as practice shifts our focus to moments of what Sutton and Levinson (2001) identify as policy appropriation, understood as "the way creative agents 'take in' elements of policy, thereby incorporating these discursive and institutional resources into their own schemes of interest, motivation, [and] action" (p. 3). It is, in a sense, a process of making policy one's own. A focus on appropriation gives analytic priority to the idea of practice and focuses on understanding the way individuals and groups "engage in situated behaviors" that are both enabled and constrained by normative structures that pattern lived experience (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 3). Such studies tend not to look at instances where policy is codified as official text, but rather those contingent moments in which policy is circulated and becomes part of practice.

This process of appropriation decenters and then reconstitutes agency across the policy process, allowing for an understanding of policy as both authoritative statement and negotiated "cultural resource" (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 3). Emphasizing the behavior of diverse actors across social spaces and policy scales leads to a focus on nonauthorized and unofficial forms of policy expression; actors across contexts can authorize new articulations of policy. Ultimately,

policy-as-practice shifts the analytic emphasis from outcomes (was a particular policy successful?) to effects (how does a particular policy influence/ change/ reify power relations?) (Ball, Bowe, & Gold, 1992, p. 23). This shift from outcomes to effects is important because it moves us towards a process oriented analysis instead of a linear (top-down or bottom-up) one and gets us closer to understanding not whether development works, but rather how development works, which, as I mentioned previously, is the major analytic focus of this dissertation.

Scholars such as Escobar and Ferguson have done important work theorizing the de-link between the discourse of development and its effects, helping us see how the policies and practices of development are used to deploy disciplinary technologies that define and govern the "Third World," as well as produce knowledge about it. These accounts, however, do not help us understand how frontline actors, such as CSs, act as "skilled brokers" of development (Mosse, 2004, p. 647). Such brokers translate "policy goals into practical interests" to those historically seen as the objects of development, while, at the same time, translating "practical interests back into policy goals" for the architects of development who are in positions of power to articulate, register, and codify development priorities into official policy texts (Mosse, 2004, p. 647). It is the liminal middle space between policy and practice, between the architects and the targets of development, that remains largely invisible in current development theorizing and which is the major focus and contribution of this dissertation.

The Importance of Studying CSs

With nearly 60% of public employees in Ghana working in the education sector, education is the single largest sector of the state, and as such has been a major target of neoliberal reforms aimed at the public service (Wereko & Dordunoo, 2010, p. 12). Seeking to

make education more efficient and effective, in 1987 the Ghanaian government adopted the ERP as part of the larger structural adjustment program (SAP). One of the major foci of the ERP was to improve the supervision and management of the education system. In alignment with the country's comprehensive decentralization policy found in the Local Government Law (PNDC Law 207) of 1988 (and later the Local Government Act of 1993), efforts to improve supervision and management were assumed to best be achieved by shifting responsibility for management and supervision to the local district and sub-district (circuit) levels. This was done by (i) "Upgrading the 110 District Education Offices to directorate status" (ii) "Selection and appointment of District Directors of Education," and (iii) "Selection and appointment of Circuit Supervisors with higher qualifications and experience to be in charge of supervision of schools at circuit level" (Konadu, 1994, p.16). The restructuring of supervision to include the introduction of CSs to the education system, therefore, was important in that it was part of the larger restructuring of the state towards a decentralized, and not long after, democratized, form of governance.

Until the education reforms of the 1980s, CSs in Ghana were called inspectors, a position that was established during colonial times (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh 1975; Opoku-Asare, 2006, p. 109) and that changed very little throughout the first three decades after independence. CSs' roles and responsibilities are the focus of Chapter 5; for our purposes here, it is important to note that CSs must navigate the reconfigured neoliberal state, in which *democratization* has made participation in education everyone's right and responsibility; *decentralization* has moved certain aspects of educational governance and responsibility closer to people's everyday lives; and *privatization* has allowed for goods and services once provided by the state to be offered by

for-profit individuals operating in a private sector that is viewed as a partner in the development of the state.

CSs are expected to absorb the responsibilities being moved down the ladder in their direction by the central government through decentralization (e.g., providing pedagogical support to teachers, vetting school budgets, or monitoring the quality of school infrastructure). They are also made responsible for a variety of new tasks imposed by IDOs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who want to work with local, rather than national, government bodies (e.g., collecting educational data and statistics or implementing educational support and improvement projects), as well as the private sector (e.g., ensuring that private schools are properly registered, providing in-service training to teachers, and monitoring the disbursement of government books and supplies). This gives their job an often untenable and exhaustive quality.

In their daily activities, CSs play the role of brokers between citizens and the state, shaping the way state power gets imagined and experienced in moments of supervisory intermediation, and shaping how people understand and take on their rights and responsibilities as democratic citizens. Chapter 3 will provide a more in-depth theorizing about CSs as middle figures (Hunt, 1999) and brokers (Nuijten, 2003), who act as intermediaries in the negotiation of educational policy and its effects (Mosse, 2004).

CSs, however, are not just negotiating up and down within a bounded imaginary of vertical state governance (Gupta & Ferguson, 2002), but are also responding to and interacting with a diffuse field of global actors and globalized educational practices, policies, and expectations, from the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA), to local labor pressures that lead parents and students to question the

purposes of sending their child to the local public school. Welmond (2002), studying the formation of teacher identity in Benin, explores how global trends meet local contexts, producing varied consequences. Conflicting ideas about the roles, responsibilities, rights, and ultimately the identity of teachers in Benin, places Beninese teachers at the "uncomfortable intersection of contradictory demands made on the education system. These demands come from all corners: from elite interests, from ambitious groups vying for social mobility, from ideological paradigms that frame the transformative function of education in different ways, from history, and from global forces" (Welmond, 2002, p. 37). Teachers not only respond to these competing and sometimes conflicting demands, but as they do so they also bring their own personal ambitions, professional interests, and knowledge as educators to the table.

Similarly, CSs in Ghana, as the "foot-soldiers in the implementation of educational policies," are not just implementing polices from the top down, but rather exercise a great deal of discretion in the practice of their jobs, drawing on and deploying their own experiences and expertise as they translate and negotiate educational policies into practices in schools and communities and make educational outcomes, such as enrollment and parity, legible to the state and IDOs. Drawing on Welmond's work, I posit that CSs are placed at an uncomfortable intersection, attending and responding to a variety of demands and expectations coming from different educational stakeholders, while also brigning their own professional knowledge and expertise to bear on the implementation of educational policies and their practices.

Theorizing the State

The study of educational negotiations and practices as a way of studying the state is based on a particular understanding of the state not as a discrete and static entity, but rather as

discursively and materially constructed, which draws on an anthropological view of the state. Political scientists have tended towards theorizing the state as discrete, as an identifiable and bounded institutional entity that carries out particular functions (Skocpol, 1985). In contrast, anthropology of the state takes a different approach, conceptualizing states as "culturally embedded and discursively constructed ensembles…produced through everyday practices and encounters and through public cultural representations and performances" (Sharma & Gupta, 2006, p .27). Drawing on the anthropology of the state, this section presents a broad theorization about the state and approaches to studying it.

Anthropology of the state is identifiable as a particular body of literature in the way that such work focuses on the "everyday practices and representations as modes through which the state comes into being" (Sharma & Gupta, 2006, p. 27). A methodological implication of such an approach is that it opens up a variety of once unimagined sites as viable places through which the state itself can be examined through anthropological inquiry. "An anthropological perspective allows us to pay careful attention to the cultural constitution of the state—that is, how people perceive the state, how their understandings are shaped by their particular locations and intimate and embodied encounters with state processes and officials, and how the state manifests itself in their lives" (Sharma & Gupta, 2006, p. 11). Anthropology of the state tends to focus on the reproduction of the state through proceduralism—the repetition of everyday actions (Sharma & Gupta, 2006, p. 13). It provides a framework through which a study of CSs in the education sector becomes sensible and important as a site to study the dynamics of how the state is imagined, produced, and experienced through everyday bureaucratic and relational practices. It recognizes and analyzes how, through the arena of everyday practice (such as trying to access schooling), people actually come into contact with, learn about, conceptualize and build the state.

In other words, political scientists view the state as consisting of elite leader-actors, institutions (like the senate), and official policies and laws. "The public" is never visible as co-constructing or constituting the state, outside of elections. These approaches have dominated much of the research and theorizing about political democracy, political decentralization, and political constitution (Diamond, 1999). Anthropological approaches, in contrast, open up new sites of inquiry and new modes of understanding by focusing on the everyday constitution of (and continual need to maintain and construct) the state. More than that, they think of bodies, people, and processes as sites of interest for studying the state in the first place.

Anthropological approaches of studying the state not only destabilize political science assumptions about the actors, institutions, and processes that constitute the state, but also its spatialization, and temporalization. Sharma & Gupta (2006) argue that the state is not a discrete entity but something that is produced through particular socio-cultural and political practices, and posit that we have entered an age of globalization in which "transnational economic processes and political reorganization may have altered the nature of and the presumed link between sovereignty and territoriality" and hence the sovereignty of the nation-state over its geographic territory (p. 7). They argue that the emergence of state-like regulatory regimes such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and European Union (EU) have shifted the global order of states from a system based on " 'inter-nationalism,' which depended on nation-states, to 'trans-nationalism,' which has a more troubled relationship with bounded and natural(ized) nation-states" (Sharma & Gupta, 2006, p. 8). This shift does not make the nation-state as a "conceptual framework and material reality" irrelevant, but it does unsettle the assumption that states exercise territorially bounded sovereignty (Sharma & Gupta, 2006, p. 7). This reconfiguration of common assumptions about the shape, scope, and

coverage of the state helps center questions about the importance, influence, and role of IDOs and other funders in the Ghanaian education sector and how, for example, their involvement in funding projects and shaping policies troubles Western ideals of state sovereignty. Once concepts such as sovereignty and the state are understood not as fixed categories, but as evolving phenomena, it becomes particularly relevant to study both their production, and the meaning made of and about their production.

Neoliberalization of the Ghanaian State

At independence in 1957, Ghana emerged as a socialist-led developmental state with a strong nationalist spirit, a diverse populist base, and a good economy. As a socialist-developmentalist leader, President Nkrumah pursued rapid state-led industrialization, large investments in infrastructure development, and public spending on sectors like education and health as the means of growing and strengthening the country. For Nkrumah, developing Ghana as a strong, industrialized, socialist state would allow the country to take its place as the leader of the Pan-Africanist movement, supporting and uniting other countries across the continent in their liberation struggles to reject the exploitative capitalist interests of the West.

After the 1966 coup that overthrew Nkrumah, which was partially backed by the CIA (Gifford, 2004, p. 1), the National Liberation Council (NLC), under the leadership of General Ankrah, abandoned Nkrumah's state-led approach to development. The NLC opened the country up to market-oriented development through assistance from the IMF, empowering the private sector to become a primary engine of development. When Busia came to power in 1969 his government was equally pro-IMF and continued to focus on strengthening weaknesses in the private sector in order to enhance economic development. Busia's 1971 budget not only

withdrew subsidies, further liberalized trade, devalued the cedi by 44%, but also abolished free education. In 1972, Acheampong overthrew the Busia government in a coup, rejected the laissez faire policies of the previous regimes, and turned back towards a more state-led approach to development. He revived state-owned enterprises, re-instituted controls on imports and prices, and revalued the cedi, among other things.

However, Ghana continued to be plagued by economic hardship and the military regime of Acheampong lost favor among the people, resulting in violent disturbances and general unrest. In 1979, Flight Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings led a coup against Acheampong, overthrowing the government. Rawlings quickly turned the country back over to democratic rule under the leadership of the Liman administration. By 1981, however, unrest was again ripe across the country and when Rawlings came to power in his second successful coup at the end of 1981 he sought nothing less than revolution for the people, bringing a message self-sufficiency and the need to build a strong Ghanaian state that could develop its own form of democracy.

From the 1970s to the early 1980s, during these turbulent political years, Ghana (like most countries on the continent) entered a period of protracted economic decline. The real minimum wage dropped by 80% between 1975 and 1981, which created an increasingly impoverished and demoralized citizenry. The fate of Ghana's education system was intimately linked to this rise and fall of state economic and political well-being. Ghana had one of the most respected education systems in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s, but by 1983 as many as 50% of trained teachers are estimated to have left the country due to declining economic and working conditions (Casely-Hayford et al., 2007, p. 15). Ghana and its education system were in crisis.

During this period, neoliberalism came to global ascendance, through the Washington Consensus, which embodied the guiding ideology of the international community (including

multilateral and bilateral organizations and a number of national governments) (Sheppard & Leitner, 2010, p. 185). Neoliberalism is a dominant political, economic, and social theory grounded in thick conceptions of free-market enterprise and thin conceptions of democracy. Neoliberal ideology assumes "that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade" (Harvey, 2007, p. 2). Participatory democracy is seen, by free-market advocates, as the most effective way of fostering transparent and accountable states capable of implementing and ensuring a market-based economy with these key neoliberal characteristics (Onis & Senses, 2005, p. 276).

In countries like Ghana, neoliberalism was introduced in the form of SAPs, imposed by the World Bank and IMF, as conditionalities for financial assistance. SAPs consisted of a configuration of *laissez-faire* economic and social policies such as privatization, fiscal austerity, deregulation, free trade, decentralization, and reductions in government spending, which became the tools and logic utilized by IDOs and some national politicians to roll back and hollow out states like Ghana, which had once been strongly centralized (Peck & Tickel, 2002, p. 384). By rolling back, I am referring to policies and practices aimed at achieving state divestiture, civil and public service retrenchment, and shrinking of budgets and resources. Hollowing out refers to the moving of resources and responsibilities that once resided in the central government away from and onto a range of new local and private stakeholders through processes of decentralization and privatization. While in historical practice, rolling back has usually preceded hollowing out, both practices are evident in today's Ghana, and in many countries around the world. Indeed, processes of rolling back and hollowing the state have followed in waves throughout the SAP period. During the late 1980s to mid-1990s, the neoliberal policies enacted

by the Ghanaian government, as requirements imposed on them in order to receive foreign aid, systematically rolled back the state through divestiture in state-owned corporations (SOCs) and industries, civil and public service retrenchment, and the shrinking of budgets and resources (Ayee, 2001, p. 12; Gayi, 1991, p. 558; Haruna, 2003, p. 344). The coercive imposition of SAPs can be understood as a form of "disaster capitalism" (Klein, 2007), a term used to indicate the process by which neoliberal policies and practices take root and thrive in moments of national crises brought about by natural disaster, (global) economic meltdown, or both. In Ghana, the national economic decline of the 1970s and early 1980s, which affected all economic, political and social sectors of the state, combined with the severe drought in 1982/83, which brought crop failure, a sharp rise in food prices, and mass food shortages, created the ideal context for neoliberalism to take root. It should be noted that what was happening inside of Ghana was also affected by what was happening outside; Cold War politics, for example, and the oil shocks of the 1970s.

While Ghanaian neoliberalism in the 1980s was characterized by dismantling the state through rollback and hollow-out policies, in the late 1990s the focus shifted to mobilizing the state to maintain these newly-produced market logics concerning public spending and services, and citizen rights and responsibilities. Neoliberal policies and practices were designed to aggressively regulate and discipline people's subjectivities toward managerial and marketized values of efficiency and effectiveness. "Responsibilization," the process whereby citizens are made individually responsible for something that was once the duty of the state, or was not previously recognized as a responsibility at all (Wakefield & Fleming, 2009), became important to making people accountable (as self-managing individuals) for acting in efficient and effective ways. Efficiency and effectiveness were in turn tied to discourses of "good" democratic

citizenship. For example, in 2007 the government of Ghana drafted a new public management policy to be implemented with the intent of altering individual behavior and the organizational culture in the civil service, encouraging a performance-driven, results-oriented focus of work (Ohemeng, 2011).

Obeng-Odoom (2012) posits that regardless of resistance to and unrest over neoliberal policies, since 1983 "successive governments have been pursuing a neoliberal agenda" and that the period from 1983 to the present can be understood as the neoliberal era in Ghana (p. 89). Ghana's more recent neoliberal policies and discourses appear to be trying to constitute what in the United States or United Kingdom might be considered a managerialist state. By this I mean state operations characterized by: an emphasis on outputs (often with little concern for or notice of inputs); a focus on monitoring the performance of employees through pervasive use of reviews, assessments, performance indicators, rankings, league tables, etc.; and decentralization of authority, for budgetary and personnel management, to local levels of government and line managers. There is, however, a simultaneous retention of power and control at the centralized level, and a reconfiguration of the relationship between the public and private sector, in part, through public-private partnerships, making public and private interests appear aligned (Clarke & Newman, 1997).[3]

Mid-level bureaucrats, like CSs, become part of the functional machinery through which the neoliberal state governs managerially. This dissertation will show that the strong focus on participatory democracy, decentralized governance, and privatization in Ghana makes CSs ideal middle figures, both structurally and ideologically, to instantiate neoliberal forms of governance.

[3] For a more detailed discussion of the managerial state see Clarke, J. & Newman, J. (1997). *The Managerial State: Power, Politics and Ideology in the Remaking of Social Welfare.* London: Sage Publications.

Mechanisms of Neoliberal Governance (Democratization, Decentralization, Privatization)

Neoliberal reforms, which seek to make the state more effective and efficient, are designed to distribute responsibilities away from the central state and onto a wide range of localized stakeholders. District and community bodies (Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), School Management Committees (SMCs), District Teacher Support Teams (DTSTs,), and District Education Oversight Committees (DEOCs), mid-level bureaucrats (CSs), teachers, students, opinion and religious leaders, private school proprietors, and a range of other community actors are made responsible for the provision of schooling. Democratization, decentralization, and privatization—three mechanisms which are central to neoliberal governance and policy around much of the world—serve as a frame for this study of CSs' roles in constituting the Ghanaian state because they are key to CSs' daily experiences of state mandates and of local educational institutions alike.

One of the implicit assumptions of democratization and decentralization is that shifting responsibility to local level actors, like CSs, both increases local participation and privileges the knowledge and authority of those on the ground who are closest to and most familiar with the challenges that communities face. In theory, as district field officers, CSs really are well positioned to respond in timely and relevant ways to the educational needs of communities, but the complex and often conflicting politics of IDOs and their demands, the serious material constraints that CSs navigate, and the unwieldy scope of work they must attend to, undermines their ability to actually meet the needs of teachers and schools in meaningful and generative ways. The binds, therefore, in which CSs find themselves are both constituted by and constitutive of the Ghanaian state in its democratic, decentralized, and privatized form. Below, I briefly describe each of these binds, which will be more fully examined in Chapter 2, where I

explore their history in Ghanaian policy and their consequences for educational supervision and the realization of free basic education for all.

There is a vast literature examining the three governance mechanisms of neoliberalism. There is work, for example, exploring how decentralization can be used as a means of extending and deepening democratization by altering the power relations of state, society, and market (Garcia-Guadill, 2002); or how democratization and decentralization are assumed (often incorrectly) to change the performance of government institutions making them more accountable, responsive, and effective, while also freeing up participation by the private sector in economic development (Crook, 1994). These literatures, while valuable, for the most part, however, do not think about these mechanisms together as explicitly neoliberalizing. My interest here is in how these three mechanisms (re)constitute relations among states and citizens. I, therefore, look at a more particularized literature in these areas to explore how all three mechanisms of neoliberal governance have moved together in mutually reinforcing ways, particularly in the education sector, not only altering the relationships between state, society, and market, but in the process the professional worlds of state functionaries, such as CSs, and how they navigate their daily work and understand their roles and responsibilities as envoys of the state in its democratized, decentralized, and privatized form.

Democratization. The democratized state that CSs navigate, characterized by participatory multiparty politics, was born out of a period of contestation in the 1980s and early 1990s about what democracy in Ghana should look like. During the initial hollowing and roll back neoliberal reforms of the 1980s, the country was under the military rule of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) regime, led by Jerry Rawlings, who came to power through a

coup on December 31, 1981. Rawlings, as he had after his first coup in 1979, sought to turn Ghana back over to civilian democratic rule. Between 1981 and 1992, he outlawed party politics, not because he opposed democracy, but because he believed that partisan politics was corrupt, providing opportunities for political support to be bought through "bribery, theft, embezzlement and trade malpractices" (Rawlings as quoted in Oquaye, 2004, p. 88). For Rawlings, decentralization, democracy, and the participation of the masses was justified as the ideal state form because he believed it was the only path to the realization of a better developmentalist state; that is, one that was less corrupt, more participatory, and ultimately more developed.

For Rawlings, democracy was something quite different from multiparty elections. In 1987, he articulated his vision in a speech:

> Democracy is only real when ordinary people know the stakes they have in it and are prepared to fight for its realization. That is why we will continue to insist that each and every citizen must not shirk his responsibilities….the December 31 Revolution was born out of the chaos which afflicted the nation from the latest economic collapse of the late seventies and early eighties….The ultimate goal of the revolution is the establishment of a society in which all citizens can derive the maximum good for their combined efforts. To achieve this, we need to establish a political structure capable of sustaining the economic and social well-being of the country and of all our people. That structure must necessarily involve the creation of institutions through which all Ghanaians will exercise their rights to participate in the process of decision-making at all levels….it is from the depth of involvement of all our people, as workers, farmers, intellectuals and professionals, soldiers, and policemen that we can draw the collective wisdom which will safeguard the future of our nation….For the first time…we accorded primacy to the local

> level in the evolution of democracy. Of course when we say that, we do not imply that democracy begins and ends at the local level. Far from it. The local structure is only the foundation upon which the other structures of the democratic process will be erected. (Rawlings as quoted in Oquaye, 2004, pp. 89-90)

Rawlings very clearly saw local governance (decentralization, in today's common parlance) as the foundation of a strong state at all levels. He did not seek to replace central with local governance, but rather advocated for shifting the emphasis and directionality of democracy so that it moved from the grassroots up, strengthening and informing a strong national government that was truly representative of the people. Rawlings, like many African leaders at the time, believed that this could not be achieved through multiparty democracy, which was corrupt and served the interests of elites, not the masses.

We will never know what democracy, as envisioned by Rawlings, would have become because the democracy-building process was coopted by IDOs and the international community, a part of the Third Wave, which advocated narrowly for multiparty political democracy as the only viable form of legitimate democracy (Kendall, 2004; Huntington, 1991). Participation of the masses in national democracy was constituted, as is the case in the West, primarily through irregular participation in voting, while local democratic participation was promulgated through participation in local development initiatives (e.g., supporting the establishment of schools, in cash or kind). IDOs were successful in their effort to redirect the democratic institution-building process in part by making multiparty democracy a conditionality for financial assistance.[4] By 1992, under strong pressure from IDOs to whom Ghana was heavily indebted, and in response to rising skepticism about the idea of nonpartisan, one-party governance, particularly among

[4] This was a common outcome in democratic transitions across the continent as part of the "Third Wave" of democracy.

Western-educated and urban elite, articulate, and vocal stakeholders like lawyers and students, Rawlings lifted the ban on party politics. In November of 1992 Ghana held multiparty democratic elections. Founding the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Rawlings won the presidency and his party swept the parliamentary elections, making him the first democratically elected president of the 4th Republic of Ghana.

The policies and practices of multiparty democracy have opened the floodgates to outside interests and influences, including in the education sector. In 1996, in fulfillment of the constitutional mandate for universal basic education, the government began implementation of fCUBE, itself an expansive democratizing policy. Kendall (2007), researching universal primary education (UPE) in Malawi, points to the way in which UPE is often linked to democratization. "Many international EFA declarations claim a relationship between UPE and political democratization. In official documents, UPE is contrasted with, and judged inherently more democratic than, colonial, elite-creating, limited-access education systems, and UPE is also envisioned as creating an environment in which political democracy can flourish" (Kendall, 2007, p. 283). There is, therefore, an assumption that free education transforms relations of power and authority when it moves together with political democratization in places like Malawi, as Kendall shows (Kendall, 2007, p. 301). In this context, fCUBE in Ghana can be conceptualized not just as a policy implemented by the democratic state, but itself a democratizing policy.

In practice, however, and as with free primary education in Malawi, fCUBE has been problematic. Rather than provide coordinated sector-wide support for fCUBE, IDOs each funded different projects in support of universal education. The outcome has been a significant increase in demands for state funding of education, which has in turn increased reliance on IDO funding

(Samoff, 2007). IDOs, in turn, have responded through a proliferation of projects in the sector and increased demands for and influence on educational policy. This has not been particularly democratizing, as it has privileged the voice of "developers," locking people and sometimes even elected officials out of both decision making processes and educational opportunities.[5]

This is a clear example of how the Ghanaian state's (and the international) approach to education has fundamentally shaped the educational ecology that CSs tend. Democratizing policies such as fCUBE have led to the proliferation of projects in the sector, each of which is organized and funded by a different IDO with different demands. This has deeply strained the capacity of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to direct policy and resources, and it overburdens CSs, who are often made responsible for their implementation, requiring that they navigate the attendant logics and demands that accompany them, frequently at the expense of teachers, learners, and communities. fCUBE also has changed expectations about who is responsible for the provision of education, creating significant confusion over what "free" education really means, and it is CSs who must help people make sense of what educational rights and responsibilities look like and mean in democratic times. These issues will be explored further in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Decentralization. Participatory (multiparty) democracy has moved in lockstep with decentralization as a neoliberal governance mechanism; "one of the objectives of decentralization is extending democracy by transforming the power relations between the state, the market, and civil society" (Garcia-Guadilla, 2002, p. 90). In practice, power relations in

[5] For further discussion on the role and influence of international actors on promoting or inhibiting democracy in Africa see, Brown, S. (2005). Foreign Aid and Democracy Promotion: Lessons from Africa. *The European Journal of Development Research* (17) 2, 179-198.

Ghana have been transformed through neoliberal decentralization, in part by dismantling the centralized state, using decentralization and its attendant logics as a mechanism for moving authority, administration, and responsibilities (but often not resources) down the governance ladder. IDO-mandated divestiture by the state from state-owned corporations and industries, requirements to downsize the civil and public services, and aggressive opening of the economy to free-market enterprise all undermined the ability of the central state to function. What resulted has been a hollowed-out central government and a system of local governance that is under-resourced and overburdened. These are the contours of the official structure of the Ghanaian state.

The constitution of the 4th Republic stipulated fiscal decentralization through the establishment of the District Assemblies' Common Fund, which mandated that 5% of the total national revenue be allocated annually to the district assemblies. Parliament has since increased the percent to 7.5%, and the government identifies the Common Fund today as a "development Fund that is intended to ensure equitable development of the various Assemblies in the country" (Government of Ghana, 2015). Financial decentralization, however, was and is inadequate for the meaningful functioning of local government, largely because neoliberal SAPs successfully gutted the centralized state of financial resources by imposing fiscal austerity and "freeing" key economic activities and sources of funds from direct state control.

As they did across the continent, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the World Bank and IMF responded to the need for additional revenue sources at the local level by instituting "cost-sharing" user fees for what were formerly free public services (Thobani, 1983). The education and health sectors were the paradigmatic cases. The adoption of cost-sharing as a source of local revenue generation was a strong signal that decentralization was part of a larger strategy of

restructuring the state, reducing state investment in direct service provision and direct revenue generation and encouraging or inducing private investment and individual responsibility to contribute time and resources to local and national development (Mohan, 1996, p. 87). Political power over the levers of the democratic state were centralized, while responsibilities for daily survival and thriving were decentralized.

In Ghana, district assemblies (local structures of governance) were directed to encourage and support community projects that were self-initiated, meaning projects that communities started with the use of their own funds and labor. The Secretary and later Minister of Local Government and Rural Development during the Rawlings era, rather bluntly stated that, "'Power to the people means the people pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps" (Crook, 1994, p. 344). In other words, decentralization and community participation, while often invoked as democratizing, have not created more robust avenues for people's voices to be heard or included in national decision making processes. Poverty undermines democracy in capitalist countries such as Ghana, where inequality provides a privileged platform for the wealthy where their voices and interests overpower the competing claims of others. The more precarious people's lives are, often the harder it is for them to advocate for their needs and interests.

Neoliberal policies of decentralization and community participation (often a more politically palatable way to say cost-sharing) have made many people's lives more tenuous as social safety nets, public support, and welfare have been dismantled at the same time that calls for "participation" have increased. This has stretched peoples' time and resources thinner and thinner, making it more, not less, difficult for them to be active participants in a robust democratic society. The documentation of SAP-induced hardships across Africa helped spur the

advent of "Adjustment with a Human Face."[6] Development approaches that emerged out of this vein of research recognized the destruction of poor people's survival capacities and the crippling of the African state, and thus aimed to refocus attention on poverty alleviation as a key focus of adjustment policies. Given this reality, it is not surprising that "Not only is there little positive evidence that policies of decentralization 'work' or can be made to work, but there is considerable evidence that they do not work, that is, that they do not increase effectiveness, administrative efficiency, or local participation" (McGinn & Street, 1986, p. 473).

The seeming failures of decentralization, however, when read more critically against the actual intent of the neoliberal project to hollow out the centralized state, are in reality an incredible success. The state, as it existed before as a centralized entity, is no longer understood as wielding absolute authority, and the Ghanaian state (at the centralized and decentralized level) is significantly weakened in its ability to provide public goods and services or implement and enforce educational policies. The kind of rescaling of the Ghanaian state that has happened under neoliberal decentralization has served to diffuse accountability for governance onto a range of stakeholders made responsible for initiating and sustaining change in their communities through active participation in local government, investing in and ensuring the delivery of goods and services once administered by the state (i.e., education), and "ownership" of development projects.

At the same time, decentralization in the education sector has resulted in the creation of a cadre of school, community, and district bodies meant to contribute to the local administration of schooling: PTAs, SMCs, DTSTs, and DEOCs. These school, community, and district bodies are expected to coordinate their activities with the District Assembly and the District Education

[6] *Adjustment with a Human Face* was the name of a 1987 UNICEF report, which provided one of the first major critiques of SAPs.

Directorate, but because they operate in schools and communities, which are the responsibility of CSs, CSs often end up spending significant time dealing with and attempting to coordinate these school/community/district bodies, rather than providing pedagogical support to teachers. In other words, decentralization created a cast of characters to do the idealized work of decentralization. But in actuality what it did was proliferate community and localized bodies that now needed to be coordinated, supervised, and monitored, work which is often rationalized as the responsibility of CSs.

While research and debates about local ownership and investment in development projects have focused strongly on parental responsibility, and have at times included stakeholders like chiefs and opinion leaders who wield influence and often control resources in communities, there is little, if any, attention given to actors like CSs who are subject to these same logics and pressures, but are expected to play the state's coordinating role in policy implementation. Like parents, CSs are expected to contribute their personal time, money, and resources to express their commitment to education and to the schools and communities where they work. In fact, much of the work CSs do requires personal sacrifice. But, the personal sacrifice of bureaucrats is rarely acknowledged by IDOs or by the central government as an important and central aspect of discourses of local ownership and responsibility.

CSs are not only subject to this rationality, infused with a moral bent, of the need to sacrifice for personal, familial, and national development, but also do important work for the state reinforcing (and enacting) the message of shared responsibility in the communities where they work, which will be discussed at greater length in Chapters 5 and 7.

Actors such as CSs, therefore, become particularly important as part of the architecture of the decentralized state. They are its core "human capital," coordinating and deploying logics

(such as shared responsibility and participation) that keep the state functioning. CSs are not disingenuous in the work they do. They care deeply about and are invested in the well-being of those with whom their personal and professional lives are intertwined. One of the reasons the Ghanaian state works as well as it does is that the local actors who are supposed to administer it, such as CSs, are mutually implicated in the same struggles, sacrifices, and bids for legitimacy as the teachers, parents, and community members with whom they engage as a daily part of their work. This reciprocity results, in part, from the tenuousness of employment and well-being shared by most workers in the Ghanaian state, and which is characteristic of global capitalism today. It also results, however, from the deeply held and shared belief of many Ghanaians in the power of people to transform and develop the country for the greater good of all—a legacy, in part, of the long history of developmentalist state governance.

In the long term, IDOs and funders expect that decentralization will make the state more responsive and efficient, while also being more participatory and representative of those it serves. In reality, perhaps the biggest change brought by decentralization has been the transference of the burden of responsibility for state engagement and service provision onto a cadre of regional and district actors, like CSs, who are expected to implement programs and projects and administer services without the attendant resources or authority to adequately do so.

Privatization. The ERP of 1987 not only brought CSs into the system as part of decentralizing the structure of educational governance, but also articulated a new relationship between the public and private sector: private entrepreneurs were now treated as development partners (Adoma & Yeboah, 2014, p. 453). There has long been the existence of private school provision. For example, the Education Act of 1961 included a provision for the establishment of

private schools, fueled by increasing enrollment and the need to augment government efforts to provide education. In 1973, the Private School Unit of the MoE was established to oversee private schools in the country. But, the scope and nature of the private sector in education shifted noticeably after 1987.

Private schools were no longer just about filling an educational gap that the state could not fully address, but also about actively cultivating education as part of the private market. This new approach to privatization resulted in a dramatic rise in private schools as compared to public schools after 1987. Public primary schools increased by 24.8% from1987-1997, while private schools shot up by a staggering 761.4% (Baku, 2003). The national average of private school enrollment in primary education is 20% overall, but 29% for the urban capitals of the Ashanti and Greater Accra regions and as low as 4.3% in rural areas. This is significantly higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa of 15% (Ministry of Education, 2014, p.3).

There is growing concern that the government's support for private education is exacerbating inequalities in the education system, as children accessing private schools are generally from families willing and able to pay high fees for what is perceived to be better quality schooling (Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition & Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2014, p. 7). Even as educational privatization plays a key role in shifting people's perceptions about the quality and utility of public education, and in their perceptions of economic and social mobility in Ghana, privatization processes also deeply complicate CSs' roles. With a growing number of private schools, CSs must navigate tensions within districts and among communities about the perceived quality of public versus private schools, and educational inequalities among and between communities, districts, and regions that are being exacerbated by a growing industry of private education in the country.

Because of the government's new emphasis on supporting public-private partnerships, the government has agreed to: provide "support for private kindergartens by meeting some of their teacher costs" and give "support to primary and junior high schools by providing non-salary inputs (e.g., textbooks) and in-service training" (Government of Ghana, 2010, p. 32). In a context where public education is already significantly underfunded, diverting public resources to the private sector puts an even further strain on public education. CSs are directly implicated in public-private partnerships as they are often expected to provide the public part of the partnership, arranging, overseeing, and sometimes even facilitating in-service training for teachers as well as monitoring the distribution of public resources (e.g., textbooks) in private schools.[7]

Conclusion. Each of the areas explored above has vast literatures of its own. Again, however, my interest in them here is tuned toward how they help in understanding governance, and in particular their consequences for CSs, which is a particularized way of engaging with these literatures, and helps us understand these three mechanisms in new ways. School supervision and state governance in Ghana today parallel and reflect one another; both function through governance that relies on citizen participation as a form of democratization, individual responsibility as an essential characteristic of decentralization, and a blurring of the boundaries of the public and private sectors, broadening the space where marketized logics of efficiency and effectiveness can and do dominate. As CSs traverse back and forth between government offices and school communities they are negotiating how the three major governance mechanisms of neoliberalism work in the quotidian.

[7] It is important to note that there is a comparative and international education literature on privatization (Bray, 2006; Srivastava, 2013; Tooley & Dixon, 2005), but the primary way in which I am engaging privatization in this research is through CSs' experiences of it, and in this regard, the literature has little to offer directly, which is why it does not appear at length here.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter 2 lays out, in greater detail, the historical and contemporary context of education in Ghana, particularly as it relates to the three key governance mechanisms of neoliberalism, through and by which CSs are governed in the everyday practices of their jobs. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology of this study, my conceptualization of open-ended ethnography, and an introduction and rationale as to why this is a comparative cross-regional study in the Ashanti and Volta Regions in particular.

Chapter 4 introduces the fourteen CSs with whom I worked, who are the primary subjects of this ethnography. This chapter provides a micro-analysis of CSs as a group, examining social characteristics such as gender, age and generation, education and professional qualifications, and family background that at times differentiated and at times united their conceptualizations of their roles and their daily experiences, in the Ghanaian state. This brings into focus differences and similarities in how CSs think about themselves, their work as educators, and their responsibility to their country. What becomes clear in this chapter is the way that CSs' life experiences did not unfold in a black box; they were intertwined with the material realities of an education sector undermined by economic austerity, a state animated by political values of participatory democracy, and neoliberal ideological principles that valorized hard work, initiative, and personal responsibility.

Chapter 5 moves back out from the individual CSs' stories to examine the ecology in which they work. It explores the historic shift from school inspector to CS, looking at the change in job roles, responsibilities, and expectations, particularly as they relate to concomitant shifts in the structure and nature of state, society, and market, locally and globally.

Chapters 6 and 7 move us back into the lives and daily practices of CSs in the schools, communities, and offices where they work. Chapter 6 focuses on how CSs work is part of the techno-rationalization of the developmentalist state that renders education "statistical," and that provides the means of instituting state managerialism through reportage, standardization, assessment, fillingout forms, and data collection. This chapter will walk through the types of statistical interactions that CSs frequently engage in, illustrating how the collection of enrollment and staffing data, for example, are never just about collecting data themselves, but rather are always tied to a complex web of interests that deeply affect the shape, scope, and tenor of CSs' work. Within a framework of global educational assessment and accountability, political and administrative decentralization processes position CSs to play an important bridging role. They are expected to work "down" to teachers and schools and "up" to IDOs and funders, collecting the kinds of data from the former that are necessary for the state's encounter with the latter development apparatus.

Chapter 7 analyzes the moral and normative sides of managerial governance and moments when managerialism not only intersects with moralized discourses, but itself becomes moralized as part of the discourse of governance itself. CSs' moralizing tendencies move in parallel to those of the Ghanaian state itself, whose existence is deeply moralized through the developmentalist state mandate to: alleviate poverty, promote economic development, and provide capability-expanding services, all of which are in the purported service of realizing citizens' well-being. The Ghanaian state conflates moral and managerial registers, making managerial governance itself appear as moral, desirable, and necessary.

Chapter 8 concludes by bringing to the fore how the pressures of managerial governance and the perennial quest to use limited resources better exhausts actors such as CSs, as well as

schools and communities, requiring them to invest ever more of their time, energy, and capital in the neoliberal hollow state. This ensures that the state itself remains in its hollow form, continually pushing development and people's individual and collective well-being to the future horizon.

Chapter 2: External and Internal Politics of Education Policy Making in Ghana

In order to understand CSs as mid-level functionaries who are constituted by and constitutive of the Ghanaian state, it is necessary to place these actors within the wider historical context of the state itself: the discursive traces left by independence and nationalist movements, the insecurity wrought by the demise of state-directed forms of economic and social welfare, and new state forms, and the mechanisms of power that have propelled them into being, that have developed in the post-independence era. Those that have concentrated around free-market ideologies are particularly important for understanding the context of work, school, and life in contemporary Ghana.

The first part of this chapter will provide a brief history of the political and economic currents of the Ghanaian state, and the roles of education in it, since independence in 1957. The second half of the chapter provides an overview of fCUBE, the state's signature policy for basic education since 1996. fCUBE is particularly important because it plays a key role in rearranging the responsibilities of the state and its populace in the primary education arena, strongly shaping the educational landscape that CSs traverse today. The colonial history of Ghanaian education and educational management will appear in Chapter 5, which focuses on how changes to state structure and governance have shaped expectations about CSs' roles and responsibilities as they work in school communities on the frontlines of state (re)production.

Independence Era Ghana

In 1957, Ghana became the first country in Africa to gain independence from colonial rule. By 1961, Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, had introduced a policy of

universal free primary education. Ghanaians responded positively, and enrollment almost doubled over the next five years (Casely-Hayford et al., 2007, p. 59). The Education Act of 1961 not only established free, compulsory primary education, but also included a provision for the establishment of private schools to augment government efforts to provide rapid educational access, as enrollments increased at a faster pace than the government could accommodate (UNESCO-IBE, 2010).

By 1965, Ghana had one of the most well-respected education systems in sub-Saharan Africa and had increased access to primary education rapidly over a short period of time. In 1960, total enrollment in primary school totaled 664,332, a gross enrollment rate of 59 percent. Just five years later, in 1965, total primary school enrollment had risen to 1,413,517 pupils, a GER of 106 percent. This precipitous rise in the GER is partially due to enrollment by overage students, but regardless, a substantial number of pupils who had previously been shut out of formal schooling were now entering the classroom (Fredriksen, 2009. p. 5). Even with public and private provision of education, however, the rapid rise in enrollment during this period put a significant strain on the system. There were not enough teachers, classrooms, or materials to maintain the previous level of services for all of the new pupils entering formal schooling. By 1965/66, only 33% of primary school teachers were trained. To help address this shortage of trained teachers, in 1965 the government opened 35 new Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), which resulted in an increase in the number of trained teachers in public primary school classrooms to approximately 60% by 1970/71 (Konadu, 1994, p. 11).

As the government's rapid response to the decline in teacher training indicated, Nkrumah not only focused on expanding access to education, but also cultivated teaching as a desirable and respected profession. "[T]eachers enjoyed salaries comparable to people with similar

qualifications in other professions with Nkrumah declaring that he wanted the profession to give service that is second to none" (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975, p. 97). The respect given to teachers was mirrored in the general respect given to public employees who, as functionaries of the socialist state, were seen as central to Ghana's development.

Like the education sector, from just before independence in 1957 until the mid-1970s, Ghana's civil service was respected for being well-educated and trained, adequately resourced, and appropriately remunerated. It is perhaps not a coincidence that the period of time in which the civil service was praised for high performance, productivity, and professionalism coincided with a period of economic stability, growth in infrastructure, and a relatively well-educated and professionally experienced citizenry who could participate in developing the country through the public and private sectors (Ayee, 2001, p. 2).

Instability and the Decline of Public Services in the 1970s and 1980s

From the 1970s to the early 1980s, Ghana entered a period of political instability and protracted economic decline. Nkrumah, a socialist, was overthrown in a military coup in 1966 by a strongly pro-Western regime that capitalized, in large part, on the faltering economy and Nkrumah's tightening of political control, as reason for the forcible change of power. Ghana was ruled throughout the 1970s and early 1980s by an alternating series of military regimes and civilian governments. During this period, the economy suffered from external factors, particularly the sustained fall in the price of the country's major exports: gold, cocoa, and timber. In addition, manufacturing output and agricultural production dropped off, inflation accelerated, fiscal deficits ballooned, and external debt increased by as much as 400%. Ghana, like many countries, was affected by the global oil crisis and struggled to respond to the oil-price shock of

1973/74. As a result of domestic and international conditions, the real minimum wage dropped by as much as 80% between 1975 and 1981, which not only created an increasingly impoverished citizenry, but also a demoralized people in the process. Not surprisingly, the decline in the civil service is associated with this period of time.

By the early 1980s, the civil service was seen as corrupt and visionless (Adei & Boachie-Danquah, 2002, p. 11) and not only was constrained in its capacity to implement the policies and programs of government, but also had suffered significant losses in morale, professionalism, and personnel. Many well-educated Ghanaians fled the country looking for work and prospects of a better future in neighboring countries like Nigeria. According to Chernoff (2003), "Teachers and health-care professionals and engineers went to Nigeria by the thousands, to the extent that it might be said that Ghana's principal export changed from cocoa to educated people" (p. 30). Others moved from the public to the private sector, or maintained public sector jobs, but benefited simultaneously from private sector ventures.

The public education sector suffered along with its primary assets: its teachers, its pupils, and their families. Between 1976 and 1983, government spending on education fell from 6.4% of GDP to a mere 1.5%. The mass exodus of trained teachers from the country during this period resulted in an influx of untrained teachers into classrooms. It is estimated that by 1984, as many as 40.51% of teachers in the classroom were untrained (Cobbold, 2015, p. 71). This prevented the education system from total collapse, but resulted in a significantly lowered quality of schooling (Konadu, 1994, pp. 13-14). Ghana's education system, once regarded as among the best in sub-Saharan Africa, was in crisis.

Despite the overall decline in education at the time, there were some important developments in the sector that endure today. Perhaps most notable was the establishment of the

Ghana Education Service (GES) in 1974, as part of the Public Service of Ghana. Until then, the MoE had been the single governing body responsible for public education in the country. After 1974, the MoE maintained primary responsibility for policy formulation, planning, and monitoring, while the GES was responsible for implementation of national education policies at the level of pre-tertiary education (Konadu, 1994, p. 6). In 1972, Colonel Acheampong, of the National Redemption Council (NRC), came to power through a coup. That year he formed the Dzobo Committee, chaired by Professor N. K. Dzobo of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, to recommend reforms to the country's education system. In 1973, the Committee released their report and in 1974 the report led to the publication of the *New Content and Structure of Education.* The GES was established, in large part, to oversee the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee.

In 1972, the content and structure of Ghana's education system still largely reflected that of the British system, which had been inherited from colonial times. Formal schooling was not seen as adequately addressing the socioeconomic and development needs of Ghana in the present, and was largely perceived to be preparing Ghanaians to work in an economy that responded to and primarily served the needs of other countries. In addition, formal schooling was seventeen years long at the time, and one of the major recommendations of the Committee, although it was not fully implemented at the time, was to reduce the pre-tertiary education cycle to twelve years. With the state facing financial crisis, and education a costly sector, reducing the size and cost of the sector would have been pragmatic for the state. Recommendations made by the Committee, therefore, aimed to make schooling more manageable for the state and more relevant to Ghanaians, responding to an overarching feeling that schooling should teach youth to

be self-reliant in the use and cultivation of the country's resources for both their and the nation's rapid development.

The Committee made a series of recommendations, therefore, which aimed to make schooling more practical, including courses that would teach the kind of technical and vocational skills that were thought to lead to appropriate employment. One way of making schooling more relevant was to eliminate the four-year middle school system and replace it with junior secondary school (JSS), which was a three-year course of study meant to be accessible for all children of school-going age. Since Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, education had become increasingly more elite, particularly at the upper levels. JSS, in contrast, was theoretically meant for everyone and would include technical and vocational courses aimed at providing the manpower needs of the nation. The Dzobo Committee's recommendations were rolled out on an experimental basis, but were not scaled up or fully implemented at the time.[8]

In 1981, responding to perceived widespread corruption, continued economic deterioration, and pervasive poverty and hardship, Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings appealed to both the left wing intelligentsia and the general public as a champion of the people. He called for a populist revolution to transform the social and economic conditions of the country, and on December 31, 1981, he led a military coup and overthrew the sitting government then headed by Hilla Limann of the People's National Party. Limann had come to power through democratic elections after Rawlings' first coup in 1979. Rawlings' revolution was complicated by an increasingly acute economic crisis, compounded by severe drought that wreaked havoc on the country in1982/83 and led to widespread famine (Konadu, 1994, p. 5). By1983, unable to secure substantial support from the Eastern bloc, Rawlings entered negotiations with the West for

[8] Recommendations made by the Dzobo Committee, about the content and structure of education, were the foundation for changes implemented as part of the ERP of 1987, over a decade later.

financial assistance. As a result, Rawlings was forced to make a decisive move away from a strategy of state-led development, adopting a set of neoliberal, market-oriented reforms required by the World Bank and IMF as conditions for financial assistance. In Ghana, these reforms were termed the Economic Recovery Program, but they mirrored a standardized set of policies characteristic of SAPs imposed by the IMF and World Bank on post-colonial states in economic crisis.

The Structural Adjustment Era

SAPs aimed to create the "'right' framework for private sector development, an extension of markets and a retreat of the state from direct service provision" (Oquaye, 2004, p. 92). By some measures, Ghana's experiment with structural adjustment was a spectacular success. Between 1984 and 1990 the economy recovered and averaged a real growth in GDP of 5.7% per annum. According to Kraus (1991), this time was "the longest—and only—period of sustained economic growth since independence in 1957" (p. 19). Substantial economic growth led Ghana to be recognized by the international community as an exemplary case of market-oriented development (Oquaye, 2004, p. 308).

There was widespread resistance by Ghanaians, however, to the implementation of SAPs in the country. The diminished capacity of the state stood in stark contrast to the populist platform on which Rawlings had come to power only a few years earlier. Ordinary Ghanaians, but public sector employees in particular, felt that SAPs were unduly harsh and did not raise living standards, despite recorded economic growth. In 1991, "many Ghanaians, especially urban dwellers, believe[d] that conditions [were] 'worse than before,' with living standards lower, citing very low real wages, new or much higher charges for still poor public services, and

massive layoffs in the public and private sectors" (Kraus, 1991, p. 20). Job retrenchment, a conditionality imposed by the World Bank, was a major feature of public sector reform, affecting thousands of people across the country.

The civil and public services were reduced by over 44,838 employees between 1986 and 1993 (Ayee, 2001, p. 12; Haruna, 2003. p. 344). Another nearly 20,000 people who worked for the Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board were let go, as were 30,000 workers employed by state-owned enterprises (Gayi, 1991, p. 558). Retrenchment of workers was accompanied by divestiture in state-owned corporations (SOCs) and the privatization of an increasing number of SOCs and other state resources. By 1998 the government had divested from 212 SOCs and enterprises through a combination of direct sale of state assets, public-private partnerships, deregulation, and establishment of contracts, which included a scaling back of the state in the provision of basic utilities such as water and electricity and services such as health (Haruna, 2003, p. 345). This fundamentally redefined the state's relationship to its citizens and the way that people not only experienced the state, but came to understand their role within it.

By 1988, sustained economic growth was perceived to be serving only an elite few as income inequality persisted. The richest 20% of the population, measured in terms of household consumption, accounted for 42.3% of all consumption expenditures (Kraus, 1991, p. 27). The harsh circumstances in which most people found themselves after the adoption of the SAP led to the widespread feeling among Ghanaians that rising GDP was not an accurate measure of whether their lives and livelihoods were improving. The neoliberal ideological shift embodied in Ghana's SAP was met with strong opposition and agitation from labor unions, including the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, student organizations, and the left wing intelligentsia that had been strong allies of Rawlings in 1981 (Adedeji, 2001, p.1; Asante &

Gyimah-Boadi, 2004, p. 40). Unrest over the diminished role of the state and the public sector, in particular, were compounded by feelings among Ghanaians that the SAP, strongly linked to and imposed by the World Bank and IMF, impinged on state sovereignty and political autonomy (Kraus, 1991, p. 20).

The SAP targeted state bureaucracy in particular, because the ideological basis of the SAP was neoliberal. The state was characterized as bloated, inefficient, and corrupt. As such, one of the major target areas of structural adjustment was public sector reform. For example, the Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP), run from 1987 to 1993, was launched as part of the wider program of structural adjustment (Adei & Boachie-Danquah, 2002, p. 2; Haruna, 2003, p. 344). The CSRP was intended to alter the "nerve centre of the machinery of government," fundamentally changing the size, scope, and function of the state itself (Economic Commission for Africa, 2010, p. xi). Reform of the civil and public services was discursively framed in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in state management and delivery of public services. The value of the state increasingly resided in its ability to produce the conditions necessary for capitalist economic growth, rather than its ability to secure its citizens' social welfare through the redistribution of wealth, or to foment widespread development through state-led initiatives. The result was that the state controlled an increasingly small percentage of the country's economic drivers (be they natural resources, services like energy and health, or people) and played a diminished role in people's everyday lives. State employees provided fewer and fewer "front line" services, and there was a subjective shift within the government (and in the populace) in which the definition of the public good was increasingly rationalized and circumscribed by an ideational neoliberal economic and monetary register.

Education Recovery Program (ERP) of 1987

The education sector, the single largest sector of the state, was not impervious to structural adjustment. With support from the World Bank, Ghana embarked on implementation of the ERP in 1987. Like the CSRP, the ERP was part of the larger project of neoliberal state restructuring. The ERP focused on four major areas: increasing access to education and restructuring the education cycle; improving educational quality by making educational content more relevant to socioeconomic conditions; ensuring cost-effectiveness and cost recovery; and improving the supervision and management of the education system.

Until this time, pre-tertiary public education in Ghana totaled 17 years (6 years of primary, 4 years of middle school, and 7 years of Senior Secondary School (SSS)). After the reforms, the cycle of pre-tertiary public education was reduced to 12 years (6 years of primary, 3 years of JSS, and 3 years of SSS (Konadu. 1994, pp. 7-8). As mentioned previously, the 1987 reforms were based on recommendations made by the Dzobo Committee, which was commissioned by the government in 1972, but never fully implemented. The Committee not only recommended that the length of pre-tertiary education be reduced, but also that a middle school be replaced with JSS, and that the JSS curriculum be focused more heavily on vocational education. Middle schools had served primarily as grammar schools, but after 1987, JSS curriculum included pre-technical and pre-vocational training (Casely-Hayford et al., 2007, p. 15). The increased emphasis on vocational education was meant to prepare young people for the world of work, again indicating the emphasis placed on the relationship between education and economic development. These reforms were important to bringing Ghana into alignment with international standards in terms of the structure and content of education.

Neoliberal reforms are market-driven, and in the education sector this has meant, among other things, that they "aim to contain the unit cost of education and increase its efficiency" (Welmond, 2004, p. 39). The overarching focus on efficiency (value for money) and effectiveness (educational outcomes) clearly undergird the ERP of 1987. It is important to recognize, however, that the ERP, as a market-driven reform, was not separate from, but rather part of, the larger project to "neoliberalize" individuals—the ideological work that schooling does on people. This is part of why the ERP targeted both the structure and content of education, changing everything from the number of years children attended school, to making the curriculum more "relevant" to the world of work, to implementing a new cost structure of education.

Together, these reforms worked at the structural and ideological level to change people's relationship to public education, and hence the state. For example, primary school fees were introduced as a form of cost-sharing and cost-recovery, conditions for financial assistance imposed by the World Bank and IMF. Schooling, at the basic level, had been fee free: no fees for "tuition, textbooks, learning and teaching aids, stationery and furniture" (Casely-Hayford, et al., 2007, p. 18). Cost-sharing shifted part of the burden of responsibility for education away from the state and onto people and, not surprisingly, put greater strain on poorer families to secure and maintain their children's access to schooling. It also enforced an expectation that parents were responsible for investing in their children's education, and failure to fulfill one's financial responsibilities was often read as a lack of commitment to or understanding of the value of education itself. Under the ERP, the state effectively became only one stakeholder (and a much less central one) among many responsible for the provision of education. The state remained responsible for the payment of teachers' salaries (World Bank, 2004, p. 31), while IDOs

(primarily the World Bank during this time) channeled funding into "non-recurrent" expenditures like infrastructure rehabilitation, textbook provision, teacher training initiatives, and technical assistance. Parents, of course, were now expected to contribute to schooling by paying school fees and other direct pupil costs. This fundamentally changed parents' and communities' relationship with the state, and created a narrowed recognition about what counted as "participation." The value of participation was circumscribed by a largely monetary register in which paying for school fees or helping pay for school infrastructure, for example, were recognized as valued forms of community participation and signs of investment in the nation.

This was quite different from Nkrumah's socialist and Rawlings' early populist eras, when participation had to do much more with broadening the political, economic, cultural, and social base of the country to include the interests and voices of all people, not just elites. These changes also changed teachers' and other GES employees' relationships with the state and communities as well; GES employees remained on the state payroll, but were now expected to be responsive to the demands and interests of this diversified body of stakeholders (i.e., IDOs and communities). They were also often at the uneasy intersection of being state employees, but now framed as working for communities.

Structural adjustment, writ large, placed emphasis on decentralization in governance; in Ghana, education was no exception, but major changes were slow to take hold. During this period, the Local Government Acts of 1988 and later 1993 shifted responsibility for the administration of education to the districts. It was not until the mid-1990s, however, that implementation of decentralization gained traction. In 1995, for example, the Ghana Education Service Act created DEOCs as well as SMCs. Unlike PTAs, which were primarily responsible for generating school revenue, SMCs were school-community bodies that were to function more

like school boards, responsible for engaging in school management by developing and overseeing community-led school improvement plans (World Bank, 2004, p. 10).

Perhaps one of the most important, although less reported, developments that occurred in the education sector during this time had to do with the collection and reporting of educational data. In 1987, the World Bank helped fund a school mapping project, which resulted in the collection of basic education statistics that were then collated and reported in 1988. This was an early attempt at establishing data collection as part of the planning process in the education sector, serving as a precursor for what would later become the creation of the Education Management Information System (EMIS), with support from the World Bank and USAID (World Bank, 2004, p .8). The development of the EMIS took off in a more formalized manner alongside the implementation of fCUBE in the late 1990s, in order to help track progress of the fCUBE policy towards its established objectives (Trucano, 2006, p. 11). From the outset, therefore, fCUBE was much more closely tied to data collection and reporting than previous policies had been, and this had far reaching implications in terms of the culture of accountability and management that was ushered into the sector alongside the ERP and later accelerated under fCUBE. Pressure to systematically collect and report educational statistics has had far reaching implications for CSs, which is the focus of Chapters 6 and 7.

Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE)

Under pressure from the international community, in 1992 Ghana held multiparty democratic elections and transitioned back to democratic rule for the fourth time since independence. The new government was referred to as the 4th Republic of Ghana. Drawing on the Education Act of 1961, the 1992 Constitution mandates the provision of free, compulsory,

universal, basic education by the government. The Local Governance Act of 1993 ensured that education would continue to be decentralized, as it had been under the 1987 reforms. By this point, the EFA movement was in full swing and free, universal, primary education was now a global target. Expectations about Ghana and what the country was able to do were very much determined by the discourses and policies being pushed by international bodies. It is no coincidence, therefore, that Ghana's constitution included provisions and mandates for free, basic education. In 1996, in fulfillment of the constitutional mandate for education, the government began implementation of fCUBE, the guiding national policy document today aimed at achieving basic education for all citizens of school-going age. Implementation of fCUBE began in 1996 and was originally intended to be completed by 2005, but universal, basic education remains elusive and the government continues to struggle to make fCUBE a reality for all, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized.

An extension of the ERP of 1987, fCUBE had four broad strategic objectives: 1) "improve the quality of teaching and learning," 2) "improve management and efficiency within the education sectors," 3) "improve access and participation," and 4) "decentralize the education management system" (Government of Ghana, 2003, p. 5). fCUBE, as a sector-wide policy, was well positioned to function as a SWAp (sector-wide approach), an approach in international development meant to bring together governments, funders, and other stakeholders within any sector to create a system of more coordinated and effective programming and funding.

In practice, however, rather than harmonize funding and operations around fCUBE, agencies, including the World Bank, USAID, and the British Department for International Development (DFID), created their own initiatives, each with separate approaches through which to channel support to basic education (King, 2011, p. 651). While a select few IDOs, the World

Bank in particular, had been active in the education sector since 1987, fCUBE opened the flood gates to IDOs, and their influence on policy, the proliferation of projects in the sector, and government reliance on them for support increased dramatically. This fragmented government control and firmly seated decision making about education with funders, while putting the government on the hook to pay for free schooling since IDOs were, for the most part, channeling money into their own projects around fCUBE, rather than fCUBE itself.

While the ERP and fCUBE led to greater state dependence on IDOs, it also spurred increased investment by the Ghanaian state in public schooling. This investment was conceptualized by the IDOs and the state in public documents as part of a developmentalist shift towards growth driven by the knowledge economy and through human capital development, requiring state investment in capability-expanding services such as education. During the 1970s and early 1980s, state investments in education had fallen precipitously, in large part because of SAPs. Not only did investments decline, but only one-third of the government's education budget was allocated to primary education, as there was a focus on subsidizing secondary and tertiary levels as well (World Bank, 2004, p. 7). One of the major foci of the ERP, and later fCUBE, was to draw attention and funding to basic education,[9] which had come to be seen by the World Bank and the international development community as a foundational area for development and the single best state investment. Between 1987 and 2006, education sector expenditures rose from 1.4% of GDP to 5.7% of GDP (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008, p. 1).

Pressure to fund basic education, at the expense of higher levels of schooling, was part of the larger EFA rationale and movement, but it also jived well with Ghanaian conceptions of the

[9] Basic education in Ghana consists of two years of kindergarten, six years of primary school, and three years of JHS.

virtues of schooling that extended back to both socialist and populist revolutions in the country, in which education for the masses was an important focus. The fact that the state was able (practically mandated by the international development community) to start reinvesting in basic education, was important to a majority of Ghanaians, who had long learned to associate state investments in mass schooling with more people-centered development. There was of course a profound mismatch between structural adjustment and people-centered development, but that did not preclude people's historical association between the two.

During this same period, however, increases in enrollments for primary education were uneven. From 1987-1991, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) went from 76% to only 79%, before falling again in 1997 to 73%. By 2001 enrollment was back up to 80%, but again receded to 78% a few years later (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008, p.1). This is not surprising, since the ERP introduced cost-sharing, making it difficult for many families to afford basic education for their children. When fCUBE was introduced in 1996, education was to be free and compulsory, but it was not until the introduction of the capitation grant in 2005 that school fees were actually removed from basic education.

Through the capitation grant, the government provides a per pupil payment to schools in order to reduce the direct cost of education to households. In its first year of national implementation, the capitation grant provided schools the equivalent of approximately US$3.31 per pupil, per term, funded through money from the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) and Social Levy Mitigation Funds. In subsequent years, provision for the capitation grant has been included in the national budget and in 2009 was increased slightly to try to account for inflation. In addition, in 2005 the school feeding program was also introduced to select schools across the country, particularly those in deprived areas, as part of a national strategy of

increasing enrollment, attendance, and retention in formal schooling. During the 2005/06 academic year, primary school enrollment across the country rose by 17%, bringing the GER to 86% (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008, p. 1).

It is important to note that countries such as Ghana are strongly influenced by the global movement for fee-free universal primary education articulated in EFA and the MDGs. fCUBE was never intended to make education entirely free; it was intended to remove the fees that IDOs and funders had, over the course of the 1990s and 2000s, decided were posing the greatest barrier to achieving international education goals. Officially, fCUBE was a cost-sharing policy that responsibilized three main stakeholders for education financing: the state, the district assembly, and parents and communities. Cost-sharing was delineated as follows:

> **Tuition**: tuition shall be free in all basic schools in the public system.
>
> **Textbooks**: textbooks shall be supplied free to basic schools, grades 1–6 in the public system and in the private sector. Pupils in basic schools, grades 7–9 will, however, pay textbook-user fees, which should not be more than 10 percent of the average total cost of textbooks supplied to one pupil in basic schools, grades 7–9.
>
> **Stationery**: stationery cost will be borne to a large extent by parents of pupils in grades 1–9 in the public and private basic schools. Exercise books with unused pages shall be carried over to the next stage and will be replaced only when all the pages are used.
>
> **Equipment and tools**: equipment shall be supplied free to all basic schools in the public system.
>
> **Meals and transportation**: it will be the responsibility of parents to provide adequate meals for their children as well as money to cover their transportation to and from school.

> **Fees and levies**: subject to approval from the district assemblies, communities and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) may impose special levies or fees on their members for the purpose of raising funds for school projects, provided that no student shall be asked to leave school if his or her parents cannot pay (World Bank, 2009, p. 101).

In practice, however, there has been considerable confusion about who is responsible for what costs. The government's messaging around the notion of "free" has been confusing at best and deceptive at worst. According to a 2004 survey conducted in four of Ghana's ten regions, there were as many as 76 different types of levies being collected from families for children's education, which ranged from US$0.33-US$13.33. Not surprisingly, this had a negative impact on children's attendance (World Bank, 2009, p. 102).

CSs and Making Sense of the Political Economy of fCUBE

Making sense of fCBUE, for CSs, is really about making sense of the practical economics of schooling, and the politics of fCUBE at a national and sub-national scale. This is what they are navigating when they confront fCUBE and try to determine how to get children schooled reasonably. This is a larger-scale issue with neoliberal-era free primary education (FPE), in which previous rationales for EFA have disappeared, and the new rationales are larger political or purely economic ones. This has been the case not only in Ghana, but across the continent in places like Malawi (Kendall, 2007), Kenya (Mukudi, 2004), and Uganda (Stasavage, 2005), among others.

When asked about fCUBE, Philip, a CS in the Kuwai District of the Ashanti Region, emphasized that, "the 'free' is lower case and the 'C'-'U'-'B'-'E' are all big," signifying where the government's emphasis, or lack thereof, resides (field notes 9.24.12). It is not uncommon to

hear education officers and teachers joke with one another that the "f" in fCUBE is silent, indicating that education is not free at all because of the multiple expenses that parents and communities must actually pay for. The burdens of free education in the EFA and MDG era are well documented. Bray (1996), for example, shows the multiple kinds of costs that free education places on families and communities in East Asian countries. In Ghana, Nudzor (2013) suggests that the small "'f' demonstrates the Government of Ghana's commitment to meeting what is referred to as the 'public costs' of education whilst parents/guardians take up the 'private costs'" (p. 180). It is not easy for people, however, to navigate the meaning or the financial implications of the public and private costs of schooling.

In the home countries of most funders and IDOs, the public costs of education traditionally might be considered to include school system costs like infrastructure, salaries, transportation, food during the school day, and operating costs. The private costs of schooling constituted individual, out-of-school expenses like uniforms, food, books, and stationery. In the state today, these delineations do not hold true because the state has claimed to have taken over the payment of school fees through the capitation grant, school feeding through the school feeding program, and the distribution of uniforms and exercise books to needy children, all areas considered private costs of education in Ghana until very recently. In practice, the government of Ghana does not pay the capitation grant on time, build or maintain school infrastructure at an adequate level, supply the needed number of textbooks and learning materials, or adequately deal with issues of teacher payment, promotion, and staffing. In reality, then, not only parents and communities, but teachers and CSs too, end up paying for many of the costs of schooling—even those that are delineated as public costs in fCUBE's official policy.

To make up for resource gaps, teachers are instructed by CSs to cater for supplies in their classrooms and told to inform parents to buy additional books and writing materials for their wards. PTAs vote to institute development levies that parents are expected to pay, and which cover an array of services, from building classroom blocks and toilets, to paying teachers to teach extra classes.

Not surprisingly, given government rhetoric and actual practices, there is significant confusion about what exactly "free" education signifies. The result is a situation where everybody and nobody is responsible for the costs of education. This situation makes it important for CSs to strategically rationalize and craft plausible responses aimed at cajoling their constituents into "doing their part" and "fulfilling their responsibilities" to their children and to the state, regardless of circumstances and the state's behavior.

A pervasive concern among CSs, therefore, is not so much that fCUBE is not entirely free, but rather that the government has misrepresented the policy and misled the public, particularly parents, into thinking that fCUBE means they have no financial responsibilities for their children's education. This is seen as a problem for two primary reasons: 1) the state cannot actually fill the financial gap, so parental and community contributions are necessary for schools to function, and 2) there is concern that parents are failing to recognize that living in a democracy means that the right to education also entails responsibilities to educational institutions (schools) and actors (students). For example, Edward, a CS in the Kuwai District, draws a connection between rights and responsibilities, noting that even in America all citizens contribute to free education. "Parents think the government schools are free. Nothing is free. In America it is taxpayers' money. Nothing is free. Here, parents don't want to do anything because government schools are free" (field notes 9.14.12). His concern is that the discourse of fee-free

education is making it hard to maintain community and parental participation, which has also been noted as problematic by IDOs like the World Bank (World Bank, 2009, p. 26).

It is important to note that the World Bank, for a long time, said that if there were no fees, parents and kids would discount the value of schooling. Edward is partially expressing that concern—a fully neoliberal one—that parents are not taking up their responsibilities because they think school is free and, therefore, not as valuable. This is also overlaid and supported by the parallel discourse in Ghana about private schooling being of better quality not because the teachers are better, which they often are not because they are for the most part untrained, but because parents pay for schooling and, therefore, supervise their children and their learning well to ensure they get a good return on their investment (also a strongly neoliberal discourse). There is also another, and more political, way of reading some of the tensions about free schooling; it is not that people discount what is free, but that they are trying to hold their government responsible. But what people are holding the government responsible for (paying for schooling) is something that the government on its own actually probably cannot accomplish. These tensions complicate the discourse and practices that circulate around fCUBE.

Regardless, teachers struggle to teach in classrooms that are under-resourced and often point blame at the government for "selling" parents the idea that fCUBE means that they do not have to pay for anything. In other words, fCUBE was presented to parents in such a way that it made it more, not less, difficult for schools to get the resources they need to function well. The "public" costs of schools are supposed to be paid by the government, but the government's portion of support shrinks or disappears for months with little warning. At the same time, because of the political hay that the government has sown with fCUBE, parents believe that free education means they do not have to pay for any costs associated with schooling. The

government has created a narrative of responsibility and rights that has destabilized the schools' relationship with parents and created tensions among levels of government education administrators, even as the purported goal of fCUBE was to decentralize educational decision making and power. CSs end up spending a significant amount of time navigating, rationalizing, and diffusing the tensions that build up around fCUBE, among schools, communities, IDOs, and government administrators.

Politicizing Free Education

There is a common feeling, particularly among those working for the GES, that the government is "politicizing education," making promises it cannot and does not intend to keep. As has been illustrated above, there is a strong sense that the national government has remained intentionally silent about explaining the nuances of the "f" in its' fCUBE policy because it is politically advantageous for it to do so. The symbolic promise of achieving free education and the goals of EFA does important work for the state. "Many international EFA declarations claim a relationship between UPE [universal primary education] and political democratization. In official documents, UPE is contrasted with, and judged inherently more democratic than, colonial, elite-creating, limited-access education systems, and UPE is also envisioned as creating an environment in which political democracy can flourish" (Kendall, 2007, p. 283). There is, therefore, a symbolic promise that free education will transform relations of power and authority in places like Ghana, and as Kendall shows, Malawi, where free education and official democratization have moved together (p. 301). From the government's perspective, IDOs and funders have been so strongly focused on fee-free schooling that the language of "free" is invaluable in the state's "upward" orientation towards funders and the international community,

which is strongly oriented towards achieving a variety of set targets (e.g., universal primary education and gender parity) seen as related to "free" education (Jansen, 2005). It also makes great political sense looking "downward" to the people at the time of elections, as promises of free education have proven across the continent to be an effective way of winning votes in democratic times (Harding & Stasavage, 2014; Stasavage, 2005).

fCUBE, in all its ambiguity, has thus been a powerful platform for the government to project itself as being for the people, which is an important part of the ideological identity of the state in its decentralized, participatory, and democratic form. The relationship between education and what it does for the state, however, is incredibly nuanced and tenuous. Kendall (2007), for example, researching free primary education (FPE) in Malawi, points to how FPE policies can end up having unintended consequences. Following the restoration of democracy in Malawi in 1993,

> The new democratic state was judged based on its ability to deliver what it promised symbolically in FPE—a state that serves all equally, that is responsive to its populace, and that improves people's daily lives….When it failed to do so, the state, like FPE, lost legitimacy (p. 302).

One of the unintended consequences of FPE, therefore, was that the state's educational failures served to delegitimize it. This was problematic for Malawi's newly democratic government, and for the legitimacy of the newly democratic state. But, from a neoliberal perspective, failure of public services supports claims that state bureaucracies are inefficient and ineffective and that what is needed is investment in neoliberal forms of governance that decenter the state, impose market-oriented reforms, and forefront the private sector and market in the provision of goods

and services. Failures of FPE, therefore, can be productive for advancing neoliberal ideologies in democratic states like Malawi and Ghana.

Ghana, like Malawi, continues to make promises to provide quality free education at the same time that it is becoming less and less able to fulfill them. One of the overarching consequences is that "the perceived failures of FPE and democratization are actually part of the successful legitimation of a new neoliberal model of relations between the state, its citizens, and the global economy" (Kendall, 2007, p. 302). This is exactly the kind of process that ensures that the Ghanaian state, and other states like it, increasingly serve capitalist interests more readily than attending to the well-being of its citizens.

Conclusion

The history and politics of education in Ghana intersect with and make visible symbolic and material aspects of governance and claims about the rights and responsibilities of the state and its people. CSs are centrally engaged in the day-to-day navigation of educational policies, notions of rights and responsibilities, and the tensions and contradictions that build around them. They work tirelessly to rationalize with teachers and parents why everyone has a part to play in funding schooling and making education (and Ghana) successful, based both on the pragmatic recognition that the state is incapable of doing everything on its own, and because of their sincere belief in the democratic value of the responsibility of participation.

At other moments, they also find themselves equally as frustrated and disillusioned with the state as teachers and parents, aware of the hollow promises the state makes and its complete inability to follow through financially and administratively. Anthony, a senior CS in the Kuwai District of the Ashanti Region, articulated the contradictions that CSs face:

> They [government] don't give us allowances, they don't give capitation grant, but when the children perform poorly they blame us. 'CS, why aren't you supervising?' There is no capitation, but we have to tell the teachers to teach without it. There is no capitation, but we have to tell the teachers to do SBI [school based in-service training] with no resources. We have to tell them small lies, we can't tell them the truth, or they will become frustrated and won't do the work (field notes 10.5.12).

Anthony is quite clear that managing the frustrations generated by the state requires diplomacy, but not full transparency. To be fully transparent would be so demoralizing that people would cease to work, and the state would no longer function in even its hollow form. People might not get much from the state now, but they do often express hope for the future, believing that if they just work hard enough, or invest themselves in the right way, maybe someday they will reach greener pastures. As Bless, a lecturer at a college of education in the Volta Region so aptly observed, "The government pretends to be paying teachers and so teachers pretend to be teaching" (field notes 3.28.13). This should not be read as primarily disingenuous or corrupt on either side, but rather a recognition of what life in the Ghanaian state is like; people (and the state alike) look at the options for survival and thriving and see virtually no viable options, except following the neoliberal/capitalist dream. And so, to the best of their abilities, they do.

Chapter 3: Methods

The major period of research for this dissertation took place from May 2012 to May 2013. Data were also collected during three shorter trips to Ghana: an exploratory study establishing the feasibility of my dissertation research in August 2010; a preparatory study in the Volta Region in January 2012; and a six-week follow-up trip, late May through the end of June 2014, to seek clarification on particular questions that arose during data analysis. These represent the active periods in which I researched CSs and the work they do as state agents and citizen actors in the schools and communities under their purview. These formal periods of data collection, however, represent a bounded period in the much longer trajectory of my engagement with Ghana. Since my first visit to Ghana, eighteen years ago, I have traveled there almost yearly, living, working and, during the past five years, doing research. The analysis in my dissertation is informed and shaped by the much longer period of time I have spent in the country.

I used an open-ended, multi-sited ethnographic approach to my research. Open-ended ethnography, as I employed it, involves an emergent process in which understanding is a critical recursive process of mutual engagement between researcher and participants. Such an ethnographic approach is concerned with understanding and describing the social, cultural, economic, and political sense making of a people in a particular time and place through a process of deep immersion. A truly "thick" ethnography (Geertz, 1973), such as I am pursuing here, is not and cannot be merely the testing of theories or hypotheses, and it cannot emerge from a brief or thin engagement with the field of study. The study represents almost two decades of engagement with people, schools, and places in Ghana, and this, I would argue, is necessary for

open-ended ethnography to yield new insights into the meaning and sense people make of their life worlds.

Open-ended ethnography allowed me to see CSs (their lives, their work, and their struggles) as people, who bring their own explanations and assessments of the world to the table. As will become evident across the following chapters, CSs placed significant value on working in the field. I came to understand CSs as knowledgeable experts for their deep and nuanced understanding of place and people. This served as a form of validation because I had learned to see their expertise in the way they themselves saw it too. Being-in-the-field, therefore, was not only resonant with what CSs did, but also how they understood and attributed meaning to their work and themselves as professionals.

The amount of time this kind of ethnography takes, the types of open-ended engagement required, the critical reflexivity that is central to building rapport and trust in relationships of reciprocity are increasingly out of step with our own temporal horizons in the world of late capitalism. Therefore, much of what falls under the genre of ethnography today conflates "ethnography" with the use of particular ethnographic methods, as well as with the notion of sound qualitative work. The result is an increasingly thin genre of qualitative research that is labeled "ethnography" but fails to embrace or even capture the messy, often contradictory, and always incomplete ways we experience our worlds and the sense we make of them in the process.

In my own ethnographic research, I draw strongly on a phenomenological approach. As other ethnographers have commented: "Sustained and deep research yields insights into a culture, and into a process of continuity and change, scarcely attainable any other way" (Keesing & Strathern, 1998, pp.7-9, as cited in Sluka & Robben, 2010, p. 8). Ethnography is not just a

toolkit of methods applied in the field, but rather a way of engaging with people over time in order to understand other ways of being in the world.

While my own research does not focus on culture, per se, in the vein of cultural anthropology, I draw heavily on these traditions in my understanding of ethnographic fieldwork. In recent decades, expectations about the duration of ethnographic fieldwork have shifted from the traditional one to two years towards shorter and shorter periods that look, for example, at a range of sites rather than a single place (Escobar, 2008). Similarly, ideas about what constitutes the field itself have changed, as is evident in the case of ethnographies that are not place based, but rather track global connections (Tsing, 2005) or cultural flows (Appadurai, 1991). I would argue that while the duration of time for ethnographic field work is not absolute, nor should "the field" be constituted only as a geographically fixed reality, all thick ethnography still requires engaging meaningfully, critically, reflexively, and over a long period of time with people and their life worlds.

Data Collection and Analysis

My research archive is based on qualitative data I collected through extensive participant observation, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, and document analysis. I shadowed fourteen CSs in the GES in the formal and informal spaces of their jobs. All district, community, and people's names have been replaced with pseudonyms to preserve anonymity. The dissertation is informed by the particularities of CSs' lives and the perspectives from which they draw as they work in schools and communities. As I moved with CSs I came into contact with and got to know many of the teachers they supervised and GES officers with whom they worked and regularly interacted with in the District Directorates of Education.

One of the important aspects of my long-term engagement with and work in Ghana was that I was able to draw on trusted friendships that I had cultivated over many years with other educators. These people were significant in helping me navigate and make sense of what I was seeing and hearing in the field. In the Volta Region, Bless, now a lecturer at a College of Education, served an important role, helping me to understand, in particular, the nuances of the relationship between teachers, head teachers, and CSs. From the perspective of someone training the next generation of teachers, he was able to explain some of the tensions that arose between young teachers new to the service and older teachers who had been serving for many years, which I discuss at greater length in Chapter 4, along with the parallels that might be drawn between older and younger CSs. I met Bless in 2005, five years before I began pilot research for this dissertation, when he was a first-year junior high school (JHS) teacher in a village school in the Volta Region, where I was living nearby and volunteering. He came from a family of educators. His father had worked at the regional level for the GES and his mother had been a headmistress for many years. Bless was a well-respected teacher in the community and, even after leaving to become a lecturer, was still in close contact with many of his former students and their families, mentoring them as they struggled to continue their education at the SHS level and beyond. Bless, as a confidant and friend, helped connect me with more senior people, like Christopher, his boss at the College of Education, who spoke openly about their own experiences and their understandings about the changes that have taken place in the GES. This was important to contextualizing what I was seeing and hearing in the field with CSs and offered me opportunities to ask for points of clarification from CSs themselves about explanations that people like Christopher and Bless gave.

Table 1: Primary CS Participants 2012/13 Academic Year

Boto District, Volta Region	**Kuwai District, Ashanti Region**
Daniel	Anthony
Kobla	Kwame
Cornelia	Kofi
Wonder	Philip
Commend	Edward
Dela	Michael
Selorm	
David	

Table 2: Other Major Participants

Volta Region	**Position**
Mawuli	Assistant Director of Supervision, Boto
Bless	Lecturer, College of Education
Christopher	Head of Science Department, College of Education

While my primary research was about CSs themselves, it was always important to think about and make sense of CSs and their work in relation to the people they supervised and who supervised them, and the wider context of their jobs. From May 2012-May 2013, I observed CSs in their District Directorates of Education, in classrooms, at schools, and in communities. I attended meetings and trainings at district and regional offices with them; watched as they led activities and attended meetings in school communities; and joined them in public places like markets, church services, funerals, football matches, and cultural celebrations as they engaged in day-to-day interactions.

A CSs' normal week consists of meetings and administrative work at the District Directorate Mondays and Fridays, and being in the field visiting schools and communities Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. There are, of course, lots of times that schedules change and what is normally supposed to happen does not: CSs are called away from usual work to

attend trainings, special events, address problems that arise in schools, or have personal business of their own that keeps them from either the office or schools. I took some days in the office, watching CSs' routines of moving in and out. Other days I followed CSs out into schools and communities, mirroring their "full day in the field."

During my time with CSs I listened carefully for how they and the officials and educators with whom they interacted talked about education, roles and responsibilities, obligations and duties, power, commitment, government, identity (as individuals, family members, civil servants, citizens, and so forth) and the state. I also watched for how education was performed, how roles and responsibilities were executed, how ideas of obligation and duty were enacted, and how power and moral authority were exercised in people's daily lives. In addition, I collected an extensive set of documents for analysis, including government archival reports, monitoring and evaluation reports, articles from the public media, and publications and reports from major international development funding agencies.

I designed my fieldwork to build off of cross-district and region comparisons, which will be discussed at greater length below. After conducting one month of preliminary research in each of the Volta and Ashanti regions in June and July of 2012, I transcribed selected interviews and reviewed field notes identifying emerging themes. I began my regular process of writing analytic memos, a practice I continued throughout the duration of my research. During fieldwork I carried a small handheld recorder to capture many of the conversations and interactions I had. While I transcribed verbatim a select number of interviews, conversations, and meetings, the recordings served mostly as a reference point when further clarification was needed.

English is the official language of Ghana and many people, particularly those employed by the GES, with whom I primarily worked, spoke and used English frequently. It was not

uncommon, however, for people to use English and one or more Ghanaian language, moving between them fluidly. For two years before beginning fieldwork, with funding from a FLAS, I studied Twi, the predominant language of the Ashanti Region. Having spent significant time in the Volta Region, I also had a basic understanding of Èʋe, the language spoken by the Ewe and the main language in region. I, therefore, worked without an official translator. The CSs with whom I worked often provided translations on the spot, when needed. I used the recordings as a way to seek clarification by having select segments translated when I was unsure of meaning or wanted to follow-up in greater detail about a particular conversation or interaction.

Each day I took in-depth field notes, and most nights logged those notes into the computer. By the end of my fieldwork I had a comprehensive daily log and a selection of transcribed interviews and recordings to work with in digital format. The process of logging notes in the field served as the first round of analysis for me: I used it to familiarize myself with my data, reflecting on what I had been seeing and hearing while actively conducting research. This allowed me to begin seeing patterns and anomalies. When logging my field notes, I used the recordings each night to add depth to my notes, to capture particular phrases or things people said, and as a way to crosscheck what I was hearing and seeing with what people were saying. This was an important part of the reflexive process, making visible what I focused on in my field notes, how I captured conversations and interactions, and how those differed, or did not, from the audio recordings.

By spending significant time logging my notes and listening to my recordings while in the field, I was more readily able to ask people about things I had heard them say or saw them do, ask for points of clarification, and probe more deeply areas I was interested in or confused about. Using the logging process as a first level of analysis, I was also able to ask people if the

sense I was making about situations, interactions, and moments also sounded plausible to them. I was not always asking if the sense I was making was the sense they were making, but rather if the stories, narratives, and understandings I was developing were recognizable as sensible in the contexts of their lives. Themes that emerged from this process continually informed the direction and redirection of my research, and served as codes during data analysis. Through an inductive process, I conducted multiple rounds of analysis from June 2013-May 2015 using a process of hand coding; keyword searches in One Note, the program I used to log my original field notes; and MAXQDA, a data analysis software.

While in the field, I also collected official documents that either circulated in the district directorates of education or were an essential part of CSs' work. Such documents included, but were not limited to, the following: data reporting forms CSs' used while in the field; assessment and appraisal forms; field reports; district league tables of school pass rates on the BECE; professional handbooks and training manuals; codes of conduct and terms of service; performance contracts that teachers signed with the district directorate; communications that the district directorate sent through CSs to teachers and school communities and vice versa; queries written by CSs to teachers about violations of terms of service (e.g., absenting themselves from the classroom); and public announcements posted at the district directorates such as job vacancies in the GES, opportunities to apply for top-up courses, or announcements about upcoming meetings.

I analyzed these documents using the same basic inductive process as I did with my field notes and transcripts. I did not digitize these documents, so I hand coded them along with many of the field notes I also hand coded during initial rounds of data analysis. I paid particular attention to where, when, and how these documents appeared in my field notes as a focal point of

interaction. For example, how did (or did not) CSs employ the reporting forms they were instructed to use when supervising and monitoring teachers? Or, how did (or did not) the work CSs actually did align with their official job descriptions? My analysis of these documents is threaded throughout Chapters 6 and 7.

I also collected policy documents, like fCUBE, and IDO reviews and reports. I analyzed these documents looking for how official policy and practice were represented, depicted, and analyzed, and cross-referenced them with what I was hearing and seeing on the ground about the same (or similar) policies and practices. This approach is most evident in Chapters 2 and 5.

Sites

The majority of my data collection occurred in the Ashanti and Volta regions of Ghana, with one district in each region serving as a primary field site. The Ashanti and Volta regions were chosen for comparative study because of their distinctly different orientations toward the public and private sectors, educational histories, economic trajectories, and common recognition of a so-called Ewe-Ashanti/Akan cleavage (Asante & Gyimah-Boadi, 2004; Langer, 2009). It appeared that this would provide a unique opportunity to explore a range of sense making about roles and responsibilities related to education; the value of and meaning made about education; and mediation of educational policies and practices across disparate contexts**.**

Figure 2: Ghana on the Map of Africa

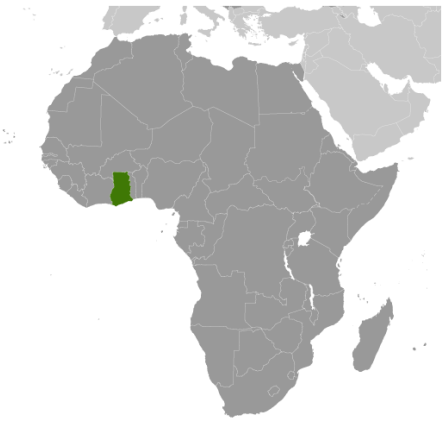

Figure 3: Regional Map of Ghana

(CIA, 2015)

The Ashanti Region is recognized for having strong ties to business and producing a powerful economic elite. Economically, the region is known for growing cocoa and for gold mining, both of which contribute significantly to Ghana's economy. In 2009, Ghana was the second largest producer of gold in Africa, following South Africa, and the ninth in the world (Bloch & Owusu, 2012). The Ashanti Region is the most populous region of the country, housing 19.4% of the total population. The region is largely urban, with 60.6% of people living in urbanized areas. This is likely due to the high concentration of industries and commercial activities in the area. A majority of those living in the region are Akans, one of Ghana's major ethnic groups.

In contrast, the Volta Region is often described as being economically weak, but has a long history of formal education, resulting in a well-educated class that has climbed the ranks of the public and civil services. The major economic sectors in the region are agriculture, forestry,

and fishing. The Volta Region is among the least populated regions, with only 8.6% of the total population. A majority of the population, 66.3%, resides in rural areas and are Ewe, another of Ghana's major ethnic groups.

The Ashanti Region is far more populous than the Volta Region and also has a much larger number of educated people. This is particularly true at the higher levels of education such as completion of a bachelor's degree or postgraduate credentials (i.e., certificate, diploma, masters, or PhD). In the Volta Region, for example, in 2010 a bachelor's degree was reported as the highest level of education for 2,748 people, while in the Ashanti Region 24,512 people were reported having earned a bachelor degree (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012, p. 50). The number of educated people accumulating in the Ashanti Region is causing concern among the Ewe, who fear they are falling behind and losing control of the educational advantage they once enjoyed during colonial times and through much of the post-independence era.

The Ewe commonly perceive themselves as being historically more educated due to their earlier participation in formal schooling along the coast, than the Asante who resided in the interior. In 1821 the British took control of the coastal forts used for trading in what is now the Central Region of the country. By the mid- to late-1800s missionaries had spread east and had established themselves among the Ewe people in areas that are now part of the Volta Region, translating the Bible into Ewe, and spreading literacy and formal education. In contrast, the British had difficulty defeating the Asante Kingdom in the interior, and it was not until the Asante uprising in 1900 that the British were able to annex the Asante Empire, establishing it as a protectorate in 1902. Not only did the British have difficulty taking control of the Asante, but the Asante also largely rejected the Christianizing missions that came before the British. Thus, formal schooling was established and took hold much earlier among populations along the coast,

including the Ewe, than among those, such as the Asante, residing in the interior. Although the number of those educated in colonial and mission schools was relatively small, many went on to play prominent roles in the colonial administration.

More than one Ewe recounted that, historically, because Ewes were well educated they filled the public and civil services and could be found in many positions teaching at universities. It was stressed, by people such as Bless, however, that Ewes, as a minority group and also feared for their strong association with traditional religion, often did not want to be identifiable as Ewe, so they would change their names to conceal their ethnic identities. It is also commonly believed among the Ewe that Ewes could speak Twi, the language of the Asante, without an accent, so few people knew they were Ewe. Twi is thought to be a far easier language than Èʋe to speak. Thus, not only was it hard for me to trace the number of Ewe who were employed in the government or universities, but according to Ewe leaders themselves, it was not easy to trace them because, historically, they concealed their ethnic identity when they assumed positions in the public and civil services and at universities.

Another important part of the decision to select sites for this research in the Volta and Ashanti regions was the recognition that the two main political parties in Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), also have important geographical overlays. The NPP's stronghold is understood as the Ashanti Region, while the NDC's has long been the Volta Region. Therefore, choosing one site in each of the two particularly politically distinct areas of the country was important to comparatively exploring how and if political context and historic relationship to the state and to private sector institutions weighed heavily on social sense making about education. In addition, 2012 was a presidential

election year and education featured predominantly in both the NPP and NDC platforms, making both politics and education an important part of public debate.

In the Volta Region I call the district I worked in the Boto District and in the Ashanti Region, the Kuwai District. In 2014, the first District League Table for Ghana was released. It is described as a "simple ranking tool of progress toward delivering development and key basic services in each of Ghana's Districts" (UNICEF & CCD-Ghana, 2014, p. 10). The Boto District was given a mid-ranking, falling within the top 100 districts in the country. In contrast, the Kuwai District was ranked among the top 10 districts in the country for delivering development and basic services. In general, the Ashanti Region had as many as 13 districts ranked as "high" in terms of their delivery of development and services and only one district ranked as "low." In contrast, the Volta Region had only one district ranked as "high," a majority of districts ranked as "mid," and as many as six districts ranked as "low" (UNICEF & CCD-Ghana, 2014, p. 3). It is these types of reports that fuel concern, particularly among the Ewe, that they are lagging behind the Asante.

The Kuwai District is located in the central part of the Ashanti Region and is part of an area known as the Kumasi City region, which is made up of the Kumasi Metropolitan Area and the surrounding districts. The district has a total land area of 246.8 square kilometers, and according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the district had a population of 115,106. In terms of educational administration, the district was divided into six circuits, with one CS per circuit. The teacher to pupil ratio averaged 1:21. In contrast, the Boto District is located in the southern part of the Volta Region near the coast and covers a much larger land area of 779 square kilometers, and according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census had a population of 160,756. The district was divided into eight educational circuits, each overseen by one CS.

The teacher to pupil ratio averaged 1:35. The two districts chosen for research are largely representative of the regions in which they are located.

As will become evident in the chapters that follow, rather than seeing significant differences across sites, as I initially expected, there was a high degree of continuity in the way CSs talked about, conceptualized, and performed their jobs. I will show how this reflects the continued power of centralizing hierarchy: even in the decentralized state, there is still a relatively strong centralized influence in terms of shaping the discourses and practices of education and mid-level educational actors across administrative areas. The continuity observed points to the construction of a commonsense about a "good civil servant" as well as "good" stakeholders and citizens of the Ghanaian state, a powerful tool in the neoliberal project of governing through the construction of commonsense (Gramsci, 1971). Hegemony and commonsense are themes which will be taken up in Chapter 4. At the same time, education is understood, across disparate contexts, as particularly valuable in terms of being the engine of human capital formation and hence economic growth and national development. This indicates the prominence of education as part of the national narrative of development in Ghana, and reinforces education as an important domain of the state itself. The dominant relationship between education and development is also likely why there is such a focus by Ghanaians on which groups and areas of the country are more and less educated, as education levels are so closely associated with levels of development of the potential to engage with and control economic growth, and hence power in the country.

Conclusion

In the era of fCUBE, EFA, and the MDGs, statistical data collection is often at the core of

educational research, providing information on progress towards the achievement of set targets: gender parity, universal primary education, literacy, numeracy, and a host of other indicators that are used as measures for development itself. As is the focus of Chapters 6 and 7, CSs find themselves both the subjects and objects of data collection processes, made responsible for collecting data, but also themselves evaluated based on quantifiable measures of productivity. Calls by IDOs and funders, the popular media, and the government to increase CSs' "effectiveness" have translated into creating quantifiable and observable proxies that can be used to gauge CSs' job performance. For example, the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) was established by the 2008 Education Act (778) Section 7(1) and is an independent agency of the MoE responsible for undertaking external summative evaluations of schools across the country. Based on the findings from their evaluations, the NIB sends a report to Parliament, through the MoE, ever three years on the state of education across the country. In 2013/14, a team of eleven Lead Inspectors from the NIB undertook a series of flash inspections in schools across all of Ghana's ten regions, focusing on five key quality indicators as a diagnostic overview of good practices and challenges in schools; "Effectiveness of Circuit Supervisors" was one of the key indictors used (Government of Ghana, 2014, p. 4).

For the purpose of the NIB flash inspection, however, measuring the "Effectiveness of Circuit Supervisors" boiled down to a narrow quantitative measure of whether or not a CS visited a school 0, 1, 2, 3, or >3 times per term (Government of Ghana, 2014, p. 8-9). CSs, as outlined in their terms of service, are expected to visit each school within their administrative circuit a minimum of three times per term. Within the educational community, however, it is well known that CSs face challenges in reaching schools; lack of transportation and the inadequate and inconsistent release of maintenance and fuel allowances by the government often

keep CSs from meeting their minimum visitation quota. To focus on school visits as a metric of job effectiveness, therefore, is a largely hollow measure that is actually more likely to elucidate issues that have to do with transportation and the (non)payment of government allowances than it is to make visible or account for the "effectiveness" of CSs' actual supervisory practices. This kind of "research" and the quantifiable data it produced, however, was CSs' predominant experience with and understanding of what research was.

In contrast, open-ended ethnography, a scarcely used methodology in the research of bureaucracy, provides an important mechanism for pushing back against the neoliberal tendency to quantify and explain the field statistically; it is not prescriptive in what it seeks to see and find. My being in the field with CSs over long periods of time, as a result of my ethnographic approach, was important to CSs and became an arena in which trust was built between us. Our shared presence in these spaces was an unusual experience for them. The norm for outsiders who came to seek out information from the field was to confine themselves to the District Directorates of Education; to collect statistics or require CSs or other GES officers to do so; and to visit schools and communities quickly in highly managed situations that resembled public relations campaigns more than research opportunities.

When CSs would take me into schools or communities with them, they would assuage the suspicions of teachers and parents by assuring them that I was there to see what was going on in the field and that I really wanted to understand what was happening on the ground. They encouraged people to be free with me, as they themselves were, so that I could report the challenges they faced, the innovations they developed, and the successes they celebrated. Over time, the CSs I worked with jokingly came to refer to me as their American CS, a term of endearment used to acknowledge my deep interest in understanding CSs and the messy and

nuanced work they did, not to evaluate their productivity.

Chapter 4: Becoming Bureaucrats

In 2010, I traveled to Ghana to conduct a pilot study about the National Accelerated Literacy Program (NALAP), the country's new mother tongue language policy for kindergarten and lower primary (P1-P3) school. When I asked about NALAP at the District Directorate of Education in Boto, the Director suggested I talk to Dela, a CS who had been trained as a master NALAP trainer. Similarly, when I went to schools and talked to head teachers, asking about NALAP, I was directed to the district office to speak with a CS. Or, when I asked teachers about how SMCs and PTAs functioned in their schools, they would talk about the specifics of parental participation in their particular community, but also suggested that I talk to a CS about the general roles and responsibilities of these school-community bodies. When I asked to see school log books and flipped through the entries, the majority were signed by CSs. It became clear how CSs were important actors in the local educational landscape; all roads seemed to lead to them.

At the end of my pilot research on NALAP, before leaving Ghana, I met with Dela, as the District Director had suggested. He was a slight man with a high voice, energetic when he spoke, and very open in his willingness to speak with me. We sat side by side at a table on the third floor of the district office in the large conference hall, a partially finished room with half walls that was pleasantly cool from the generous breeze. He explained that he began as a teacher in the GES in 1987, after finishing teacher training college in Northern Volta. Originally, he had not intended to be a teacher, wanting to pursue a degree at university, but due to financial difficulties he was unable to and attended teacher training college instead. He taught primary and JSS until 1999 in the Volta Region, at which time he gained admission to the University of Education, Winneba. Between 1999 and 2003, Dela studied for a bachelo'rs degree, with a specialization in

Ghanaian languages. After graduating in 2003, he came back to the Volta Region and became the headmaster of a basic school until he interviewed and was promoted to the District Office as a CS in 2008, two years before I met him. As I would learn later, this was not an unusual professional path for a CS to follow, including having original aspirations outside of the teaching profession.

In talking with Dela, it was clear that he viewed implementing NALAP, the official language policy, as going well beyond the straightforward training and supervision of teachers. He was articulate about cultural tensions around English language learning versus mother tongue instruction and the dual purpose that NALAP was supposed to fulfill: improving literacy and learning outcomes, while also preserving Ghanaian cultures. He spoke at length about the work CSs had to do sensitizing parents about how learning mother tongue (L1) was the foundation for transitioning to English as a second language (L2), making their children stronger in both. In the long term, Dela made clear, policy implementation required a great deal of relational work in both schools and communities.

I was drawn to Dela, and to CSs more broadly, because it was evident that CSs were education officers operating on the frontlines of the democratic and decentralized state, juggling a wide range of tasks and doing important and complex translational work between state and social bodies, and between the central government and teachers—the largest number of public servants in the country. Having recognized that my interest lay primarily in the translational work of CSs, I set aside NALAP as the focus of my research, and turned my ethnographic gaze to CSs themselves.

Positionality and CSs

Mid-level bureaucrats who work as frontline actors negotiating between those placed administratively above and below them, such as CSs, have been characterized in various ways: as brokers (Nuijten, 2003), development agents (Olivier de Sardan, 2005), or bicultural mediators (Serpell, 1993). Lipsky's (1980) depiction of street-level bureaucrats, however, is particularly important to conceptualizing CSs as state actors. He defines street-level bureaucrats as "public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work" (p. 3). Such public service workers perform a variety of jobs and include teachers, police officers, and social workers. According to Lipsky, these workers are the most consistent means through which citizens encounter government. Each encounter can be understood as the delivery of policy, or policy applied in daily life (Lipsky, 1980, p. 3).

The study of street-level bureaucrats is concerned with the strategies, discretion, and actions of local level actors operating within and across policy contexts (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Oberfield, 2008). "Decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively become the public policies they carry out" (Lipsky, 1980, p. xii). In this way, street-level bureaucrats are a critical juncture between state and citizen, policy and practice. This juncture is a relational one; CSs are translators and negotiators. Their work and their roles are not set, but are based on, among others, their own conceptions of their jobs, themselves, and the state, and on their relationships and interactions with those administratively above and below them with whom they have relationships of rights and responsibilities.

CSs can be understood as a kind of street-level bureaucrat; they are a central point of contact between state and citizen and in the process mediate the material and symbolic realities

of the state in people's daily lives. However, Lipsky focuses on the implementation of policy, and the way in which street-level bureaucrats become de facto policy makers, which is different from the ethnographic gaze of this research. This study looks not at the role of bureaucrats as policy makers (e.g., policy as practice), but is rather focused on understanding how CSs act as a pivotal hinge between state and society, not only linking people to the Ghanaian state, but shaping, in daily practice, people's commonsense (Gramsci, 1971) about their roles and responsibilities within it.

Studies of street-level bureaucrats attribute a great deal of agency to these actors, often focusing on the individual decisions they make and how these constitute people's experiences of the state. Such work is important in directing us toward the critical role that bureaucrats play in the operation and mediation of the state, but it assumes that individual actions can be aggregated to explain social and political realities. In other words, Lipsky and those who study street-level bureaucrats are less likely to focus on the underlying commonsense, or the dominant social, cultural, and political context that shapes social consciousness and animates and informs bureaucrats' decision making and people's understandings of these actions.

When CSs exercise their agency and discretion in decision-making, they are engaged in a process of reifying and/or resisting the dominant construction of reality—hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Hegemony is powerful because it allows for rule through consent (commonsense) rather than violence or force. Harvey (2007) argues that neoliberalism itself is now a hegemonic discourse that has been incorporated into the commonsense way we understand the world (p. 23). A neoliberal commonsense is evident in Ghana, where not only have neoliberal policies proliferated since the introduction of structural adjustment in the 1980s, but the consolidation of a largely neoliberal political and economic context has been buoyed by a populace that has taken

on and taken up neoliberal social values (e.g., personal responsibility, individual merit, self-improvement, entrepreneurship, etc.) in everyday life (Chalfin, 2010).

The confluence of neoliberal hegemony and political democracy, however, presents an interesting tension for CSs; neoliberalism and neoliberal values are often antithetical to democracy itself (Giroux, 2004). Giroux argues that the "cultural field" of neoliberalism promotes capitalist interests, undermining people's economic and educational opportunities and participation in an inclusive and substantive democracy. This leaves a complex and often contradictory ideological and material terrain that CSs must traverse as they supervise schools. CSs draw on neoliberal values and norms to govern the roles and responsibilities of teachers, but are expected to use democratic forms of supervision to do so: dialogic practices, participatory methodologies, and the consent of teachers to professional rules, regulations, and ethics of service. CSs are, therefore, themselves navigating the tensions and contradictions of the neoliberal and democratic state through everyday forms of educational governance.

Shifting the focus away from an exclusive emphasis on agency, this research studied CSs not only as individuals, but also as actors who also draw primarily on available commonsense in the decisions they make. This focus allows us to look at the actions and sense-making of CSs—their use of discretion, the discourses they deploy, the way they rationalize rights and responsibilities—as a dynamic articulation and active negotiation of the larger political, social, and cultural ecology that is constitutive of and constituted by the state itself. From this perspective, CSs can be understood as having a particular perspective on the roles and responsibilities of the state and its citizens. However, what is produced as knowledge by CSs does not emerge only from individual and discrete interactions. Rather, knowledge is socially constructed, only ever partial, and intimately connected to time and place. CSs take on

significance, therefore, not just as individuals, but rather as part of the commonsense they embody, drawing on a set of available resources to make sense of their circumstances and the work they do, acting as a hinge between state and society.

As a final note on the conceptualization of CSs, their positionalities, and the importance of researching their gaze ethnographically, I draw attention to Unterhalter and Dorward's (2013) work, which looks critically at the implementation of the poverty, education, and gender MDGs in Kenya and South Africa. Unterhalter and Dorward use the term, "missing middle" to draw attention to the "disarticulation between 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches in international development," and the resulting outcome in which groups from the top and bottom talk past, rather than in collaboration with, each other (p. 609).

They suggest that in developing the post-2015 agenda for development, there is an urgent need to address the "missing middle," creating a clear and strong articulation between top-down processes and bottom-up engagements. CSs can be understood as occupying and working in this so-called "missing middle," liaising between those conceived of as being at the "top" and those being at the "bottom." Therefore, understanding the commonsense that CSs draw on and deploy, and how they operate and function in the "missing middle" provides tremendous potential for closing the gap, or perhaps, more aptly, as Mossee (2004) would say, opening up the "black box" that exists between policy and its effects. It was evident, for example, through even a peripheral engagement with Dela, that he not only had a great deal of insight about NALAP, the policy, but also the complex politics of language instruction and competing interests at the national and local levels about everything from best practices in terms of pedagogy, to the relationship between language instruction and national unity, to concerns over cultural preservation, and fears by

parents that mother tongue instruction would disadvantage their children by preventing them from learning English.

The way that Dela talked about organizing trainings, educating parents about NALAP, and acting as a mediator between the government and the public, indicated that a lot was going on in the "black box" between policy and its effects that needed exploring. It was also evident that those working in the "missing middle" understood a great deal about the persistent gap between policy and its effects. Dela, for instance, foresaw at least some of the major challenges that were faced in sustaining NALAP over time: inadequate supply of NALAP readers and materials for schools; a lack of resources to support CSs' continued training of teachers in NALAP; and problems with the posting and transfer of teachers disrupting continuity in a teaching force capable of implementing NALAP in their classrooms.

By the time I came back in 2012, only a few years later, NALAP was being used inconsistently across the district. Some teachers used NALAP, while others had hardly even heard of it. NALAP materials were largely absent from classrooms, and Dela was only one of two of the original nine master trainers in the district who still remained. There is good reason to believe, therefore, that bringing an ethnographic focus to the work of CSs has a lot to offer in terms of making visible the "missing middle." Dela's explanations of NALAP's general failure incorporated both "top down" and "bottom up" issues that looked beyond the scope of government and saw both intended and unintended consequences for teachers, parents, pupils, and even the state itself. My interest in researching CSs as actors, therefore, rather than a particular policy or project they were tasked with implementing, was about wanting to explore the diffuse and multiplex way in which CSs work as the hinge of the state itself, working both up

to government and IDOs and down to people, not only liaising, but translating and mediating between them.

CSs' Biographical Sketches

Over the course of my research I worked closely with fourteen CSs; six in the Kuwai District of the Ashanti Region and eight in the Boto District of the Volta Region.

Table 3: CSs in the Boto and Kuwai Districts 2012/13 Academic Year

Boto District, Volta Region	**Kuwai District, Ashanti Region**
Daniel	Anthony
Kobla	Kwame
Cornelia	Kofi
Wonder	Philip
Commend	Edward
Dela	Michael
Selorm	
David	

All of the CSs in the Kuwai District were male, which was fairly typical since circuit supervision was generally considered men's work. A common explanation as to why there were few female CSs was that while women were offered such positions, they refused to take them due to the arduous nature of the work, the difficulty of traveling to hard to reach communities, and because men have a more natural inclination towards leadership and authority positions. As one female CS said, "[motor] bikes are not lady friendly," reinforcing the idea that traveling to remote schools can be hard for women (field notes 3.25.13). In the Boto District, however, two of the CSs were women, which was the result of the explicit leadership of the District Director and his commitment to gender mainstreaming.[10]

[10] Since 1997, with the establishment of the Girls' Education Unit (GEU), the government of Ghana has embraced a policy approach of gender mainstreaming in education, which means that "questions of gender must be taken

Boto's new Director of Education was brought to the district just before the beginning of the 2012/13 academic year. Student performance on the BECE was poor, with more than six schools in the district showing a 0% pass rate for their students the previous year. This was an embarrassment to the district and put pressure on the new Director to do something to improve the quality of teaching and learning. One of the first changes the Director made was splitting the existing six circuits in the district into eight and hiring two new CSs in order to improve supervision and management of schools, a common leverage point used when pursuing quality improvement initiatives. Boto thus had eight circuits while Kuwai had six.

Among the entire group of fourteen CSs, while their stories had particularities, there were overarching themes that cut across most, if not all, of their lives. All of the CSs were mid- to late-career professionals, were married, and had at least one child, but most had more. Many came from large families and had parents who were not educated. While their pay as CSs was often lower than government workers in other sectors of the civil and public services, they did fairly well for themselves and many had their own homes, sent their children to school, and a few even owned their own motorbikes or cars. They were not wealthy, but they were what many

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seriously in central, mainstream, 'normal' institutional activities" (Charlesworth, 2005, p. 1). Mainstreaming is understood to mean "part of the government, country-wide programme, in contrast to pilot interventions which are location specific (not mainstreamed)" (Sibbons & Seal, 2000, p.7). It should be noted that this is a rather unusual definition of mainstreaming, which more generally is used to mean that gender is no longer "projectized" and that it is no longer separated out (e.g. a gender unit). Ghana appears to have a more hybrid model of mainstreaming, de-projectizing gender, but also establishing a gender unit of the GES.

In the Boto District, therefore, it is important to note that the Director intentionally hired two female CSs, claiming that he did so because of the requirement to achieve gender balance; "In my former district I was trying to work towards gender balance and now I am doing the same thing here…there are qualified women for the positions" (field notes 1.3.13). At the time of this research, there were five men and two women working full time as CSs in Boto, as well as one additional woman temporarily filling a vacant CS post. This was in contrast to the Kuwai District where there was also a relatively new District Director, but he had no explicit focus on ensuring that there were women working alongside men as CSs. The stark difference in approach to gender mainstreaming across the districts indicates that, in practice, mainstreaming is largely left up to the individual initiative of district leadership, rather than systematically ensured as a normal part of operating procedures.

might consider middle class, making them more financially secure than many of the people in the school communities where they worked.

Their life stories were animated by a sense of struggle and overcoming adversity to become successful educationalists in the GES, a characteristic narrative arch of success in neoliberal times. Michael and Kofi, for example, were both young men during the years of economic hardship in the 1980s and traveled to Nigeria looking for work. It was only after their return that they entered the teaching profession. Kofi distinctly remembers the pivotal moment when Rawlings overthrew the sitting government and declared a populist revolution for the people, because the coup coincided with his father's death.

> In 1980 I went to Nigeria and spent eleven months there. I was working with a company that made concrete slabs for building. I did manual labor for that company. I came back to Ghana because my father died. He died December 23, 1981. I returned December 31, 1981. I came back to Ghana on the day of Rawlings' coup, December 31. I crossed into Ghana on Jan. 1, 1982. It was very tense and crossing was a problem. All of us converged on the Togo border just facing the military people on the Ghana side. So, I informed the military man that my father had died and I was just attending the funeral. And there wasn't any problem. I was only holding two bottles of schnapps. So immediately I informed him, and he just moved the hands that I should go, and I just crossed the border down to Ghana….I never went back to Nigeria. (field notes 4.18.13)

Kofi, as did many CSs, spent his youth during some of the most economically volatile and politically charged years since independence. He came of age as a young professional in the public service as austerity became the new normal and the free market became the law of the land.

Below are five vignettes (Daniel, Wonder, Edward, Kwame, and Kofi), providing a brief, but representative introduction to CSs and their lives. Each vignette is paradigmatic of the kinds of life experiences and positionalities of a number of the CSs with whom I worked, and can be understood as representative of a salient thread in most CSs' lives, informing their work as educators. The way they framed their stories (e.g., hardship as something necessary to overcome) is indicative of the kinds of neoliberal values that permeate their sense of self and the world they inhabit. As will become evident throughout this and the following chapters, while CSs share the professional identity of CS, which brings some continuity to how they make sense of job roles and responsibilities, there is of course also tremendous variation across their stories related to personal experience as well as other categorical identities (e.g., woman, man, parent, spouse, religious leader, elder, class, etc.). There is always a tension at play between structurally uneven group identities (e.g., men/ women) and people's particular positionalities developed through individual experiences, which are also, of course, constructed within shared institutions. Therefore, the explanations and assessments that CSs bring to the table about everything from job roles and responsibilities, to morality and ethics, to the state itself are always negotiated at the intersection of individual and shared experiences, the particular and the general.

All fourteen CSs had compelling and unique aspects to their life stories, which they brought to their work. But, the five cases below were chosen primarily because of the pronounced differences in how people focused their own narratives, making visible the types of variations that arose within the larger paradigmatic tropes of the state (e.g., credentials, advancement, prestige, religious discourse, morality, etc.). For example, as will become evident, Daniel's story was tightly wound around educational achievement as a form of social prestige, while Kwame talked about education, but focused his narrative much more closely around his

children and securing their educational futures. Wonder and Edward were both preoccupied with professional advancement, but Wonder sought to progress within the GES, while Edward was eager to make his way out and saw the GES as a stepping-stone. Likewise, the construct of CSs work as moral was similar across all CSs' narratives and relied heavily on religious discourse in which they reframed their work as sacrifice. In contrast, the work that brought in money was framed as prestige and leading to people being "big men"—an idea that was both desired and resisted. It is these kinds of themes that will emerge across the vignettes below. The intent of the stories chosen is to show the range of life experiences, individual stories, and sense CSs make about them, but to keep in mind that these narratives quite evidently share threads and contexts. In other words, the cases made visible the interplay of the particular and the general, and in so doing brought to the fore how the totality of these experiences informs and in turn travels into the work CSs do and the sense they make of it.

Daniel: Education and self-realization. Daniel was a CS in the Boto District. He began teaching in the GES in 1991, the year before Ghana transitioned back to multi-party democracy. He was in his late forties when I met him in 2012. Daniel completed middle school and earned his middle school certificate, but did not continue on to SSS,[11] as was the case with many who worked in the GES and passed through the education system around the time that Daniel did. By the 1980s, SSS was primarily the domain of those with money, resources, and connections. If you had the means to go to SSS it was more likely that you would continue onto university than follow a professional track into teaching or nursing, for example, which were generally jobs of last resort.

[11] The 1987 ERP phased out middle school and introduced JSS. The 2007 Education Reforms renamed JSS, junior high school and senior secondary school, senior high school.

At the time, a middle school certificate was all Daniel needed to qualify for teacher training college. He started training college in 1987, at the height of the SAP era, and he began teaching as soon as he completed his training. Daniel talks about teaching as a profession he sought to avoid, but without other options he became a teacher and as soon as he entered the classroom really enjoyed it, "If you want to be happy always, if you want to have peace, only when you join the teaching profession do you have your peace. Sometimes if someone makes you feel unrest, you just enter the classroom; a lot of students, the little kiddies, they make you happy….And, so I like the teaching profession. But, at first I didn't like it." While Daniel quickly came to like being in the classroom, his focus, from the outset, was always on advancement. He was clear that he sought to move up the GES hierarchy as this was part of his vision for himself and a marker of success and respect in a profession that was socially undervalued. Daniel often talked about respect in the teaching profession as something that had to be earned through hard work, it was not something that was automatically given, "To me it [teaching] is a respected position, but the respect, you have to earn it yourself." For Daniel, an important way of earning respect was to work hard and upgrade his credentials in order to move up the GES ladder.

From his earliest entry into the profession, therefore, Daniel explained that he remained committed to improving his own education. Daniel, like many, lacking financial resources or family support, saw education as the most viable pathway to improve his economic and social position in life. Therefore, as he taught his first three years he also studied independently for the "O" levels, which he took as a private candidate. The "O" levels were a remnant of the British system and were a subject-based qualification that was conferred as part of the General Certificate of Education. After passing his "O" levels, he continued teaching in the classroom

until 2001, but always had in the back of his mind that he wanted to go to university to study and get his bachelor's degree.

By 2001, he had made incremental advancements in the GES through his years of service, but wanting to qualify for higher positions in the District Directorate and seeking to advance more rapidly, he took the university entrance exams and applied for study leave with pay from the GES. For someone like Daniel, study leave with pay was perhaps one of the only ways that he could afford to attend a four-year university course, and with a bachelor's degree he would automatically be promoted to the rank of Principal Superintendent, quickly advancing him to the middle ranks of the GES bureaucracy, making him eligible for a wider range of jobs.

Passing his entrance exams and being approved for study leave, Daniel was able to enroll at the University of Education, Winneba where he studied for four years and earned his Bachelor Degree in Basic Education. From the 2000s onward, in terms of promotion, certification began to be valued more highly than years of experience. This was a common shift across Africa, driven largely by the emphasis on human capital development and calcifying international norms concerning how to measure teacher quality. Therefore, for educators like Daniel, credentials and qualifications were increasingly important as they moved through their own careers.

When Daniel completed his Bachelor's degree, he returned to the Boto District and took up a new position as a headmaster. This was a common path to school leadership, though his (and most people's) bachelor's degrees did not actually focus on educational leadership or management. After only one year, he saw a posting on the notice board at the District Directorate that there was a vacancy at the office for a CS and he applied for the position. Working in the District Directorate was considered a significant step up and would potentially allow for future advancement into other positions as they became available. Many upper level administrative and

leadership positions in the District Directorate were filled by people already employed at the office. Daniel attended an interview at both the district and the regional education offices before being selected and promoted to the office as a CS. He began his new position in the 2006/07 academic year.

Daniel conceded that he was only partially qualified for the position of CS. According to him, CSs should be university graduates, which he was, but were also supposed to be, at minimum, on the rank of Assistant Director II, which he was not. After earning his Bachelor degree, he had been automatically promoted to the rank of Principal Superintendent, one rank below the minimum of what a CS was supposed to be. But, Daniel believed that he was selected for the position because there were not enough viable candidates who were both on the appropriate rank and had the necessary academic credentials. In talking about his selection as a CS, he stressed that, unlike many of his seniors who had been promoted primarily based on years of service, or his juniors who also had similar ranks, but had not served as long, he stood out because he was a university graduate and had served for more than fifteen years, and together this was what gave him a leg up and was why he won out over other candidates for the position that year.

By 2012, when I met Daniel, based on his years of service, he qualified for a promotion to the rank of Assistant Director II. Such promotions, however, were not guaranteed and required not only submission of an application, recommendations by superiors, but also an interview at the Regional Office. Ultimately, he was denied a promotion that year, as were many other qualified personnel. The higher the rank the higher the salary earned, so Daniel suspected that the government did not want to increase his rank so they would not have to increase his pay. Interestingly, however, the two other CSs in the district who also qualified for promotion that

year had both just completed their Master's degrees, and were both promoted; Selorm to Assistant Director II (one rank above Daniel) and Dela to Assistant Director I (two ranks above Daniel). No one explicitly said it, but it appeared that a Master's degree was an important educational credential that helped pave the way for promotion, reinforcing the idea that credentials mattered and that education really was increasingly a pathway to success, as Daniel himself had so often expressed.

As is true with many who end up working in the GES, Daniel had not originally dreamed of teaching. In fact, Daniel recalls, "when I was a small boy I decided not to be a teacher…. When I was very young I decided I wanted to be an engineer. But when my mother died, no one was ready to sponsor me. So I said, okay, anything that goes is okay. God knows best." Daniel's mother died in 1974 when he was in primary class 1 (P1). Daniel remembers that his mother worked hard and paid his school fees, but his father did little to take care of him. His mother was a *trokosi*. *Trokosi* is practiced primarily in southeastern Ghana, and involves giving young girls to village priests as payment to the gods for "crimes" committed by family members. Once given to a priest, the young girl becomes his property, and is responsible for domestic chores including hauling water, farming, cooking, and cleaning. After puberty, the young women are also often required to engage in sexual relations. *Trokosi* girls are rarely, if ever, allowed to attend formal schooling.

When Daniel's mother died, he went to live with his uncle, who refused to pay for his schooling. "From class 2 (P2), I started suffering, doing any menial job to support myself to go to school," Daniel recalls, emphasizing that he knew, even at a young age, the value of education and, therefore, struggled to keep himself in school. Daniel never directly said why he valued education so much, but the period of time during which he went through primary and middle

school, education was the domain of the elite, especially at the higher levels. After Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, public primary schooling was scaled back and education went from a universal system focused on reaching everyone towards a system that primarily favored elites; the government's resources were shifted towards secondary and university education and a prestigious network of mostly private schools was established in the lower levels to ensure that elites had a significant advantage in accessing the better resourced higher levels of public education (Kosack, 2012). Daniel, from a poor family and without resources, went through school as a second-class citizen.

Until he was sixteen he lived with and helped his uncle, but his uncle refused to materially provide for him; at 16 he decided that he was old enough to go out on his own. Daniel learned auto spraying to make money, and later tilled a small plot of land, which brought in just enough income to pay for him to go to teacher training college. "Back then was not like now," Daniel explained, "we still had fees to go to school." But, back then, a person like Daniel could also still put himself through school and find a viable path to educational leadership. Daniel recognized, however, that the path he took was increasingly less viable for youth today. Even though many of the official fees had been removed, the cost of becoming a trained teacher was still high and persistent hiring freezes by the government were making it difficult, even for trained teachers, to secure jobs in the GES after graduation. Teaching was becoming less viable, even as a job of last resort. That meant that younger teachers who were able to secure jobs in the classroom today were more apt to be seen as lucky or well connected, but not necessarily as hard working as they should have been. This also meant that people like Daniel had less tolerance for young teachers who were lax in their work or who complained about their conditions of service. Teaching may not be a particularly socially valued form of employment, but young teachers who

do make it through training and find employment are generally seen as being better off than those of Daniel's generation.

After middle school, Daniel wrote the common entrance exams, wanting to continue his education. He remembers that he did well enough that, "Ho Polytechnic called me and I said I want to go, but I didn't have money to go." His teacher urged him to go to teacher training college instead, but he initially refused, hoping that he would find a way to go to polytechnic. But, his teacher persisted and Daniel eventually changed his mind.

While he may have preferred another profession, he did not express regret that he did eventually become a teacher. He was frustrated by the fact that teachers did not make much money, but he felt that there was a lot of blessing in the work he did and talked about his job in deeply moral terms.

> The teaching profession is work, although there is no money in it. It is a sacrificial job. When you are doing it, that's why I said there is a lot of blessing on it. Last Friday I was in one of the schools, a JSS. I was talking to the teachers and telling them that sometimes people looked down on me when I was a teacher. But, I like the profession because when you retire you will look very young. Let's compare teachers to the policemen. When they retire, within two or three months they become a sick color, very sick in a short time. Some of the teachers, they retire and more than 10 or 20 years pass and they still look very young. They are very respectful, and they dress very neatly, and all those things. But, policemen, immediately they retire and after three or four months you see that they are very sick. So, I prefer the teaching profession. (field notes 1.9.12)

Daniel associated teaching with altruism, morality, and longevity and the police with selfishness, corruption, and sickness. This was consistent with the common view in the country that the police service was the most corrupt public institution, notorious for taking bribes from people who were looking to avoid problems at checkpoints, fines, or charges. Police corruption was a blatant affront to a free and fair democratic society, but it was so ubiquitous that nearly everyone accepted it as part of doing business or getting things done.

If education was the most common place people came into contact with the state in daily life, the police were a close second. Therefore, it was effective for Daniel to talk about the sickness of the police as a means of appealing to teachers' sensibilities (and frustrations) about "good" and "bad" public sector workers. Daniel emphasized the moral authority of being an educator, establishing personal worth in a profession that had been monetarily and socially devalued. Daniel's discourse about teachers and police was also important insofar as it reinforced the idea that rule by force and fear was an immoral form of governance. Teachers, therefore, were not only doing sacrificial work blessed by God, but were also doing right by the state itself, acting in the good graces of the rule of law and governance by consent.

Daniel attributed his success, moving up the ranks of the GES, to "self-realization." He explained that, "self-realization means that you know who you are and forge ahead…. if you don't have any purpose in this life you will be doomed" (field notes 7.16.12). Daniel explained that, "sometimes family and parents are not ready to contribute to education here. But, if you realize something is important in you, you will make it" (field notes 7.16.12). This is an expression of the paradigmatic neoliberal value that individual aspiration and hard work are the fundamental drivers of success. The structural conditions of poverty, or corruption, or inequality that Daniel faced were what he cast himself against; overcoming adversity itself was his

"purpose." After university, Daniel was able to build his own house, where he now lives with his wife and children, a material sign of prestige and an indication that he was doing well in life, which was important to him.

Wonder: The value of experience. An early morning in February, about seven months after I was first introduced to Wonder, I met her at her house. We were visiting schools together that day in her circuit in the Boto District, but Wonder was running late. Teachers had been stopping by to get their School Performance Improvement Plans (SPIPs) vetted on their way to work. SPIPs acted as school budgets, indicating how the school proposed to spend the per pupil payment, the capitation grant, released by the government each term. The capitation grant was scheduled to be released to the district the following week, but without the CSs' approval on their SPIP, a school could not collect its money. Wonder welcomed me, inviting me to sit in a plastic chair she cleared, and explained that,

> Two different teachers came to me this morning. I told them you would be calling me any minute, but they needed their SPIPs vetted so they can collect the money next week. This is why the Director is saying that the CSs should live in their circuits. The teachers will come to you day and night. I was even eating and a teacher came and I had to stop eating, wash my hands, and vet the SPIP before I could finish. CSs are the servants of the office. (field notes 2.7.13)

Wonder lived in the largest town in her circuit, but many of the CSs did not. No housing was provided for CSs and they were transferred within the district from circuit to circuit frequently. So, there was no guarantee that a CS would live near the schools they supervised. Wonder did, but it was by chance. She rented two adjoining rooms in a large compound where many other

teachers rented rooms as well. She and her twelve-year old son, her youngest child, lived there together. The front room had blue plastic flooring laid over cement, a mattress on the floor, a fridge, a cabinet with food and dishes, and a table in the corner. I could only see into the second room through the door from where I sat, but the room had blue carpet and a dressing table with a large wood framed mirror. Wonder handed me a photo album and told me to look at it while she took a bath and got ready to go. She grabbed a shower bucket from under the table and went outside to the bath house, as there was no running water inside.

I flipped through the photo album: there were pictures of Wonder wearing a blue cap and gown and participating in a graduation ceremony; there were pictures of a wedding; photos of Wonder when she was much younger posing on the stairs of a Ghana Airways jet; and two pages of old photographs of children, which I assumed were pictures of her own kids. When she returned from her bath I asked her about some of the photos while she dressed.

She explained that the photos of her in the cap and gown were from her graduation in 2010, when she got her Diploma in Basic Education from a college of education in the Volta Region. A Diploma was the most recent qualification necessary to be a trained teacher, replacing the old Certificate A. Like many older teachers, Wonder attended a teacher training college and in 1987 received her Certificate A, becoming a professional teacher. She was posted to a primary school in the district in a major town and taught there for twenty years. Working in rural schools was not generally desirable, but placement in a peri-urban or urban school, where there were more amenities and better places to live, gave teachers incentive to want to stay. It also appeared that, for women, long-term placements in non-rural areas was particularly desirable as women were most often responsible for their children's schooling and care and more urbanized areas had

better opportunities. Wonder, raising four young children, therefore, was likely to have found a certain level of social security in her position.

Wonder acknowledged that after she started teaching she had to delay further studies because she was "giving birth," a not uncommon reason that women did not advance professionally as quickly as men. But, now that her eldest daughter was at university, she was updating her teaching credentials. "People would laugh if my daughter had a university degree, but I didn't have a Diploma," she explained (field notes 2.7.13). After completing her Diploma in Basic Education with an elective in social studies, Wonder was transferred to a different primary school in the district and continued teaching. At this point she had only one child left at home, and decided she was ready to start making career advancements. Getting her Diploma was the first step towards qualifying her for promotions.

Unlike Daniel, study leave with pay was a far less viable option for Wonder to pursue her educational advancement. Daniel had been granted study leave with pay in 2001, but by 2002 the government began retooling the program, scaling back the number of available slots, and becoming much more selective in who was chosen and for what fields of study. It was felt that too many teachers used study leave with pay to attend university on the government's bill, and then rather than fulfill their responsibility and return to the classroom as was expected, would leave the GES and use their university degrees to obtain employment in other public and private sector jobs. By the time Wonder was ready to further her studies, the government had introduced an array of distance learning programs, which were now the most viable option for most teachers to continue their studies. This was particularly true for women like Wonder who had families they were responsible for and could not easily leave their homes for years at a time to go to university.

So, like many others, Wonder further pursued her education through distance learning, doing a post-Diploma program, a two-year top-up course that allowed those who completed their Diplomas to earn their bachelor's degree in basic education. As she worked towards her bachelor's degree, Wonder was promoted to the rank of Assistant Director II, which put her on a higher rank than the headmaster at her school, who was the rank below her—Principal Superintendent. Wonder qualified for this promotion from her years of service and, according to her, her excellent teaching record. Unlike Daniel, Wonder did not earn any of her promotions from her educational qualifications, and unlike Daniel, gave much more weight to what was learned on the job rather than credentials. Wonder was doing well and her promotion gave her confidence. She wanted to advance in her career and made the decision to apply to be the headmistress of a school. Wonder explained that,

> They [the district directorate] always post vacancies for headships on the notice board at the office, so I applied to head my own school. When I came to the office for my interview they told me, I have performed wonderfully and that they needed a female CS. So they picked me. My pastor said that a promotion was coming my way. I told him I had already gotten a promotion, but he said another one was coming. I told him no, but he was right. (field notes 2.7.13)

Wonder, like many, was deeply religious. She attended an evangelical church and attributed much of her prosperity to the will of God. She assumed her new role as a CS beginning in the 2012/13 academic year, which is when I first met her. When the District Director of Education offered her the position as a CS, she called and consulted with her husband before accepting the job. She remembers her husband advising, "If you become a CS you still have many more years

to learn every aspect of the job and you can continue being promoted." She explained that she took the job because it was an opportunity to move up.

The District Director himself had started, like she had, as a classroom teacher, was promoted to the office as a CS, and eventually moved up the ranks making his way to the position of District Director. This form of incremental advancement, of working your way up the service chain, however, was becoming less viable, as more and more emphasis was being placed on credentials as the most important form of qualification. But, so far as the system of advancement was still in flux, and many senior personnel had obtained their promotions from years of service, people still approached and valued avenues for career growth differently, as is particularly evident in the differences in Daniel's and Wonder's cases. This lack of continuity or agreement about what was most important in determining professional quality, or what combination of years of service and credentials were most appropriate, caused significant tension between people in the service, particularly between older and younger generations that had advanced differently, as well as among groups of people like women and men, who also had different kinds of career opportunities. Gender seems to affect professional advancement, for example, in ways that are increasingly difficult for women when advancement is based on credentials. This seems to be the case because of women's household and family responsibilities, which make it difficult for them to further their educations once in the service, and lack of access to financial resources to support their continued studies. The value that Wonder placed, therefore, on job experience and years of service was well aligned with her own life experiences and opportunities.

Wonder remembers the previous District Director and recalls that he did not manage the District Directorate well: "He went straight from teaching at the training college to handling the

district. When he was promoted to the rank of Director, they [the GES] immediately gave him his own district to head, but he had never worked in the office [District Directorate of Education] before. When he became a Director he didn't know how to manage well. He just said, 'I'm a big man.'" As she said this, Wonder put her arms out and puffed her chest up, pretending to be a big man and laughed. "He didn't compromise with people," she said. Ruling by force, or being "a big man," was no longer an acceptable mode of governance, and Wonder was quick to draw attention to this. Not compromising with people was the antithesis of the kind of management expected in the era of democratization.

When asked if it was hard being one of only two female CSs in the district, Wonder responded, "No. I was a classroom teacher for many years so I know the work of teachers. I have a vision….I want to become a Director before I go on pension. Now that I have been promoted to the office I can learn every aspect of the job. When you know every aspect of the job, when you become a Director you can stand firm" (fields notes 2.7.13). This again reflected Wonder's emphasis on job experience as the foundation for quality leadership. She drew a strong connection between rapid educational advancement and poor job performance. As Daniel and Wonder's career paths and feelings about advancement and leadership indicate, CSs navigated great tensions fomented by a shifting professional hierarchy.

This new system of professional advancement was designed to assure that leaders were developing their human capacity and that their greater capacity was recognized by the system. But, it also served to denigrate the accumulated experience of teachers and CSs. The kind of experiential knowing that Wonder possessed was becoming less and less valued professionally. This is a deeply dehumanizing trend in the education sector that places value not on the relational and interactive qualities of schooling that teachers learn over time, but rather on the book

learning—and often isolated, individualized, online learning—that leads to credentials and degrees. This creates a fundamental tension for CSs whose work, as clinical supervisors, is primarily relational. The way in which CSs navigate these contradictions and tensions will be addressed more fully in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Not only did Wonder have a successful career as an educationalist in the GES, but she was also the mother of four children; two girls and two boys. In 2013, her eldest daughter, who was twenty-five, attended the Institute of Professional Studies (IPS), a private university in Accra. Wonder emphasized that this was an expensive school and that, "Some people even pay in [US] dollars. When you send your child to IPS people know you have money." Wonder was proud to be spending large sums of money on her daughter's education, as it was clearly a sign of prestige. Her second born was a boy who had just finished senior high school and was now living with her eldest daughter in Accra. Her son was applying to also attend IPS, like his older sister. Her third born child, a daughter, was in her second year of senior high school, attending the same prestigious school that her older two children had attended. Her youngest child was a son. He was twelve years old, lived with her, and attended a private preparatory school in the town where they lived. She was very proud of her children, and described them first and foremost in terms of their educational trajectories. Wonder and her family were upwardly mobile, and she indicated that she had aspirations for her children to pursue careers outside of the teaching profession, and she recognized that education was central to this.

Wonder came from a respected family in a district just north of Boto. Her father was a chief, but had passed away. Unlike her male counterparts, who were the primary providers in their households, Wonder had married a man with a respected and well-paying job. He worked for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in Accra, and at the time I met her, was finishing his law

degree with the hopes of being a lawyer for the IRS when he passed the bar exam. With both she and her husband in upwardly mobile career paths, this gave her family more financial security and afforded them more opportunities than many of her male colleagues and their families. For the most part, her male colleagues' spouses tended to be teachers, or seamstresses, or worked as traders, or in small shops, which brought in much smaller incomes and often had more constricted opportunities for growth. Women like Wonder, therefore, were interesting in so far as they were often more upwardly mobile than their male colleagues, but frequently had struggled to upgrade their own credentials, which was becoming increasingly important to professional advancement. Wonder was able to flourish as a spouse, a mother, and a professional, but it was not yet clear how this would or would not change for younger women in the service.

Edward: Cultivating opportunities. Edward was the newest CS in the Kuwai District, joining the office in the 2011/12 academic year. He was also the youngest of the CSs I worked with and an ambitious man. In addition to his work as a CS, and going to school to get his master's, he also ran a tourism business with another man and owned a shop in Kumasi that his wife tended, selling dresses and clothes. Edward was more enterprising than many of the CSs I met, but it was not unusual for CSs and teachers alike to have other work to supplement their income, or even sometimes to treat teaching as the secondary job to whatever else they were doing. Edward fell somewhere in the middle. He was committed to his job as a CS, but he also saw working in the GES as a stepping-stone and was, therefore, always cultivating other possibilities.

Edward had many ideas about what he wanted to do in the future. He wanted to work at the District Assembly as the Deputy Director of National Service. This would give him his own

office and his own secretary, signs of prestige that were important to him. Most of all, however, Edward talked about how he liked travel and wanted to work in tourism. He had organized domestic tourism for groups within the GES before, arranging a trip for a group of public school children to go on tour from the Ashanti Region to Accra for three days. "They saw so many things, like the president's house," he recalls. "They [the district directorate] let me go because they said I am advertising the district" (field notes 9.4.12). The government was pushing domestic tourism as a viable sector of economic growth and educational study tours were an important part of this endeavor. It was not infrequent to see the national media report on such excursions. In August of 2012, for example, a headline read, "Tourism Ministry and GES Collaborate to Promote Domestic Tourism," and the article highlighted the potential of every child to be a tourism enthusiast (Bentum-Williams, 2012). As an enterprising man, Edward saw the potential of capitalizing on his position in the GES and the tourism business he simultaneously ran, and was, therefore, proactive in lobbying the District Director to let him organize tours. Given the central government's focus on domestic tourism as a frontier of economic development, and educational study tours as an important leverage point for this, the Director was supportive of Edward's initiative in this arena.

Edward, like many other educators, talked about leaving the profession. He estimated that he was responsible for supervising approximately 350 public school teachers and another 800 private school teachers in his circuit. He struggled with the demands of the job and the relatively low pay compared to public service employees working in other sectors and the much larger salaries of those in the private sector. "They [government] blame us that performance is not good, but they don't give us allowances….I will work, but I will leave for greener pastures eventually" (field notes 9.4.12). Allowances are payments on top of regular salary given to

public service workers that are supposed to cover work-related expenses that accumulate as part of an employee's normal responsibilities. Edward, like other CSs, often worked beyond the normal work day and used his own money to do his job since allowances were not provided. He explained that, "Even over the weekend when I'm not at the office so many teachers call. They are always calling us, but we have to buy our own credit [minutes for cell phones]. We are supposed to use our allowances to buy credit, but we have to buy our own" (field notes 9.4.12). It is these kinds of frustrations that arise around issues of work and low pay that fuel unrest among GES employees and push people like Edward to want to leave the service. Allowances are scarcely paid because the education sector is too big and the number and cost of allowances is too great. Without significantly changing the budget for the sector, the government cannot afford the cost of allowances, so even though CSs and other personnel continue to incur costs, they must cover them themselves.

Edward not only wanted to leave the teaching profession, but expressed a deep desire to go to America. In his district, he had seen two other CSs win the visa lottery for America. In fact, he became a CS after his predecessor went to America, leaving a vacancy in the office. Part of his interest in America came from the fact that he was a devout member of the United Pentecostal Church, headquartered in the United States, and wanted to visit what he considered to be his home congregation. He was very religious, as many Ghanaians were. Edward was the Director of Evangelism for his congregation and had developed a five-year plan for the church to open five new congregations in the area. "As the Director you must have a vision and a plan for the future," he explained (field notes 10.7.12). Edward not only had a plan and vision for his work in the church, but he talked more broadly about his life in terms of the importance of

striving for something better. Establishing and striving for a vision in life was a common trope that animated many people's life stories.

It was not enough that Edward did his job well, or that he lived a relatively comfortable life. He was always future oriented, looking towards the next opportunity. Edward's vision for himself was quite different from Daniel's or Wonder's, for example, but all framed their lives broadly in terms of striving for future fulfillment. This mindset, and the particular mix of religion, professionalism, education, and luck was indicative of the way that many CSs talked about life in the Ghanaian state today. Years of austerity and market-led development have moved problems once recognized as social ills (e.g., poverty and unemployment), into the realm of individual responsibility. To be poor, or unemployed, or uneducated were personal failures, which people like Edward spent their lives planning against. Edward was a good self-managing, entrepreneurial citizen, constantly engaged in the kinds of personal development that allowed him to accumulate human capital that could be translated into future productive capacities.

Edward was very time conscious, as he associated good time-management with being a good and productive person. He was usually the first CS to arrive at the office in the mornings and when asked why he explained, "I am going by the code of ethics put forth for the work. It says that we should be here by 8:00am. I am just doing what is expected of me" (field notes 9.14.12). Edward certainly did not follow the code of ethics in all areas of his work, seeing as he was simultaneously running a tourism business that often detracted from his working hours in the GES, something officially not allowed. But, when it came to being time conscious, something Edward personally valued as an indication of good self-management and moral character, he was careful to adhere to the expectations of service. Given that Edward and I were both at the office

before the other CSs most mornings, we would often talk and it was during these times that he told me about his work and life.

Edward was from a town in a nearby district. He attended a public primary and middle school there. After completing middle school he attended a technical school, studying metals, plastics, and gas. At the time, relatively few pupils continued onto SSS. Far more took the Middle School Leaving Certificate Examination, which qualified them for placement in teacher training colleges and some technical schools. Edward was one of these students, but even at a young age was enterprising and saw the value of passing the "O" Levels for future career and educational opportunities, even if he could not attend senior secondary. While attending technical school, therefore, he simultaneously studied on his own for the "O" levels as a private candidate. This was similar to Daniel who had also studied for and taken the "O" levels as a private candidate.

After finishing technical school, and with his "O" level qualifications, Edward was able to gain admission to a polytechnic, which he attended from 1992-94. Unlike Daniel, Edward had older siblings who were working and helped provide the financial resources for him to continue his education. After completing polytechnic, but without going to training college, he was given an appointment in the GES, as a non-professional teacher, teaching pre-technical skills and technical drawing at a JSS in the Ashanti Region. The 1987 ERP retooled the education system, introducing JSS, which more heavily emphasized a technical and vocational curriculum. This increased the need for teachers with technical and vocational specific training in the classroom, but teacher training colleges were not able to keep up with demand. Thus, shortages of technical/vocational teachers at the JSS level was identified as one of the major obstacles to

implement the 1987 ERP (Konadu, 1994, p. 29). This is part of why people like Edward, with specialty skills, were hired to teach such courses even though they were untrained.

From 1995-2002, Edward taught as a non-professional teacher. Then, in 2002, he did a one-year top-up course at the University of Education-Winneba, Kumasi campus, earning his Diploma in basic education. This granted him the title of a professional teacher. He continued to upgrade his credentials through a distance learning (sandwich) program, and in 2010 earned his Bachelor of Basic Education with a specialization in technology in education. As soon as he finished his bachelor's, he enrolled in a master's program at the same university and was completing his degree at the time we met in 2012.

Edward came from a relatively large family. He was one of seven children, four girls and three boys. All of the children, girls and boys alike, were educated. Edward was the fourth born in the family. His parents were both farmers, and as far as Edward knows, neither was educated. His father had passed away, but his mother was still alive. One of his brothers was quite successful, working in Takoradi in the cocoa industry, in charge of all transportation and shipping for the company where he worked. Edward was proud of his brother, "They have given him a big house. He is a big man now," he told me, holding his arms out to his sides and puffing up his cheeks to indicate what a big guy his brother had become (field notes 10.7.12). His brother was the one who supported him financially to go to school.

Edward was married and had three young children, one girl and two boys. The eldest was eight. Edward's business ventures had been successful enough that he was in the process of building a house behind the District Assembly. In 2014, back in America, I received a phone call from a number I did not recognize with an area code from Tennessee. It was Edward. He had won the visa lottery and was working in Knoxville for Nissan. His family was still in Ghana, but

he had hopes of bringing them over soon. For Edward, he had strived for this life. Like others, however, it was unclear how much his striving and planning had led to his success, versus how much was attributable to luck, which played out in his favor. Regardless, people like Edward, particularly those who were fervently religious, seemed to believe that a striving life was a virtuous life and that God rewarded such a life with prosperity here on Earth.

Kwame: Parental responsibility. Kwame, like Edward, was a CS in the Kuwai District and was also from the Ashanti Region, having grown up in a village in a nearby district. Kwame was the sixth born of eight children: there were seven boys and only one girl among them. His mother and father were both farmers and neither went to school. Much like Edward's family, all eight of the children were educated, but Kwame was the only one to become a teacher. One became an accountant, another worked in telecom, one was a worker (it was not clear doing what) at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), and another was in London pursuing further studies. His sister was a trader and the last born was a farmer.

Kwame went to primary and middle school in his home village and, unlike many CSs, actually did attend SSS in a nearby town. It was not clear what exactly afforded him this opportunity; he did not speak much about his early schooling experiences. After senior secondary he attended teacher training college in Kumasi and graduated with his Certificate A in 1987, becoming a professional teacher. He remembers that he did not want to be a teacher and he fought with his parents about it. Looking back on that time he said, "I always ask the almighty God to forgive me for what I told my parents, that I don't want to be a teacher. You see, teachers are so poor. I had readied myself to become a bank manager, a big man with my tie, with my coat, sitting in air conditioning, and now they wanted me to become a village poor teacher.

Those are the ways I used to think" (field notes 4.10.13). Kwame, like Wonder and Daniel used the phrase "big man" to talk about a person who made money, or who did well. Big people, however, were not known for or associated with work considered morally driven or sacrificial.

While Kwame initially resisted teaching, he soon grew to love the work. When he talked about it he expressed a feeling of fulfillment and satisfaction, knowing that he had helped people rise up in life. Kwame reflected,

> When I was enrolled as a teacher in fact I liked the profession. Yes, I liked the profession very, very much because I am more secure. People used to like me and the children who have passed through my hands, how they used to cherish me….Because of my intuition, because of my advice, they have reached a higher position. Had it not been what I taught them they couldn't be at that position. So, when they come to me, when they call me, even their relatives, they always thank me for what I did for their kids. So, I know I've done a good job, unlike going to other work like being a bank manager. (field notes 4.10.13)

Before becoming a teacher, Kwame wanted to be a bank manager because he saw it as a prestigious, well-paying job that would make him a "big man." While he did not become a bank manager, he still felt like his dream of being successful came true because he had done well for himself. In addition to being a CS, Kwame owned a hardware store in town that his wife tended. The shop had done well enough that he had been able to buy a truck for his business, which doubled as his transportation to get to the schools in his circuit. Every morning he put on dress slacks and a button up shirt and drove himself to work. Talking about his life he said,

> I can say that the dream that I had is now coming true because now I can put on my tie as a manager. Now, I can put on my coat as a manager. Now I have my own car and the

> manager [at the bank] also has his or her own car. It could be the bank's car, but I am using my own car. And the [bank] manager can be living in a rented bungalow, but I have my own bungalow. So, right now, I am a manager in disguise. (field notes 4.10.13)

Kwame had been able to acquire the status symbols and security as an educator that he thought, many years ago, he would find as a bank manager. He also moralized his work as an educator, reasoning that bank managers were not really helping people, but teachers were creating doctors, and lawyers, and those who were going to rise up, giving his work social value. Public goods and services were continually devalued in the public consciousness, so public sector employees, like Kwame, were constantly finding ways of valuing their work, emphasizing the moral and ethical dimensions of their jobs.

Kwame worked hard and felt blessed, but also recognized that for many, finding work in Ghana can be very difficult. He explained that,

> In Ghana it is very, very difficult to get a job. So, if you are a scholar and you want to get a job you are only to attend a professional institution [teacher training or nursing] whereby immediately after your course you will get a job to do….You see, people are clamoring to take that course [at the professional institutions]. We have the university graduates who are jobless. After studying their course they still find it difficult to get a job to do. But, whereby a teacher, after your secondary education and you attend that training college, then immediately after that course you get a job. It's more secure than going to the university. So, people have diverted their attention. Instead of going to university straight away they take teaching as their job first. So, after getting that position [teaching] then you also apply for upgrading and go to university. (field notes 4.10.13)

This was the path that many of Kwame's colleagues had followed, including Edward. This was also a familiar educational and professional trajectory, which Kwame was now helping his own children navigate.

Kwame and Edward both came from big families with lots of children. Both, however, had chosen to have much smaller families themselves. This was reflective, in part, of changing expectations about family size and parental responsibilities, particularly among upwardly mobile families. Kwame had two daughters and he felt strongly that he should not only provide the basic necessities for them, but that he should be able to support them to move up in life, to do better than he had. This was a sentiment also shared strongly by Wonder, who also focused on cultivating opportunities and opening doors for her children to thrive. Kwame's eldest daughter wanted to be a lawyer, and while he supported her ambitions, she would have to take a circuitous route. She was currently attending KNUST, getting a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. After completing her degree she would have to serve one year of national service[12] and Kwame wanted her to come to his district for her year of service and teach in a SSS. He was a practical man and wanted his daughter to get her Diploma in Basic Education after completing her national service so that she could use teaching as a springboard to apply for law school or as a backup profession if she could not gain admission.

This was the kind of strategizing that Kwame, and many other CSs, had also engaged in themselves, and now Kwame was helping his children to navigate the system in similar ways. Being successful for Kwame, like for Edward, was about planning ahead and preparing for

[12] Ghanaian students who graduate from accredited tertiary institutions are required by law to do one year of national service to the country, and are posted to various sectors, including teaching, as service personnel. Service personnel are paid a monthly allowance that is determined by the Ministry of Finance. Service personnel can be posted, upon special request, to corporations, churches, and other bodies, but in these instances the government is not responsible for paying the monthly stipend, rather the host institution is.

multiple contingencies. Employment and opportunities were not stable in Ghana, as had been Edward's and Kwame's experiences. Being proactive about laying plans was, therefore, not only important to them, but part of how they understood what it meant to be aspirational and to strive and succeed in life.

Kwame was prepared to send his younger daughter to university, just like he had with his older daughter, but she wanted to do a professional course instead. He explained that, "First I bought the university forms [admission forms] for her, but when I sat down with her she said, 'I want a professional course and the only course that I want is nursing training.' So I filled out the forms and posted them to the institution and we are waiting for the admission letter" (field notes 4.10.13). Kwame nurtured his daughters' ambitions, but was also pragmatic about job prospects and he saw teaching and nursing as the most secure professions for his children because, at the time, teachers and nurses who completed training courses were generally guaranteed employment, although this was slowly changing as the government persisted in mandating hiring freezes in sectors like education, making it difficult for even trained teachers to find work.

When Kwame's children were young, he was himself a young teacher in the profession and could only afford to rent a single room. Due to financial constraints, his wife and children had to live with his mother-in-law. His wife was a trader and, when the children were young, was also often gone from the house working. The grandmother was left in charge and did not take initiative in sending the kids to school. Kwame was a classroom teacher at the time and he remembers thinking, "How come, as a teacher, how come at this time my child is not going to school?" (field notes 4.10.13). This was not an uncommon scenario, that families were divided due to work and other socioeconomic circumstances. Kwame's experience was quite different from Wonder's, since she had married well and was in a much more financially secure position

when she began having children. Regardless, both Wonder and Kwame were attentive to their children's schooling and sacrificed in different ways for their families; Wonder delayed her own career advancement to raise her family, and Kwame worked to support his, even though it meant being temporarily separated from them.

In order to get his children into school he remembers that he devised a plan. He decided that if the children attended school in another town, and had to take transportation to get there, it would motivate the grandmother to wake up early, bathe them, and prepare their breakfast so that the kids could go stand by the roadside and wait for transportation to go to school. He also felt like it would motivate his kids to wake up early and say, "Mama, I'm ready for school." He remembers, "I went through all these things because my in-law is illiterate, so she doesn't know anything about education….So, I can't force her to send my child to school. But, using my plan, it helped a lot to educate my grand-mom, my in-law to take them" (field notes 4.10.13). Kwame remembers that he looked around for the best schools to which to send his children. Eventually, he enrolled his eldest daughter in a public school. A few years later, when it was time to enroll his younger daughter, his circumstances had changed. He and his wife were more established and he decided to send his daughter in a nearby private school, which he thought was of a higher quality than the government school in the area. His older daughter was doing well in the school she was at and so he kept her there. When he looks back at how each of his daughters performed, however, he feels that his daughter who attended public school did better, "When I weigh their knowledge, I see that the one who attended the public school is far better than the one who went to the private school in terms of their end results" (field notes 4.10.13). It was not clear whether it was the schools themselves that produced the difference in results, or his daughters' own dispositions.

Kwame was an engaged parent, and described what he used to do when he would receive his children's term reports, "When the report came I sat down with them and I would say, 'These are your terminal exams. You see the grade that you got for the subjects? You see the grade you got for the subjects? Are you really doing good or doing bad? Are you progressing or regressing?' Then we would sit down and find solutions to why they were unable to pass a subject. Then I would advise them" (field notes 4.10.13). The way that Kwame talked about reviewing his children's grades with them was very similar to how he talked about his work as a CS, practicing clinical supervision, engaging in constructive dialogue with teachers about what they did well, what they can improve on, and how to move forward.

Kwame was concerned about the roles and responsibilities of parents to ensure children's education. He was concerned that many parents in his circuit today were spending money to send their children to private school without first doing research about the school itself. He felt that this was occurring because there was a false assumption among many parents that private schools were of a higher quality than public schools. He believed that parents should be more thoughtful in the choices they were making, recognizing that learning outcomes in private schools were not always as good as public schools, which he himself had experienced with his daughters. Kwame was dedicated to his work, and through his own experience as a father, and his many years as a professional teacher and now a CS, had a well-developed sense of the kinds of educational choices, challenges, and ultimately responsibilities that parents, families, and communities faced.

Kofi: A commitment to teaching. Kofi's path was quite different from most of the other CSs, but was much more representative of the many people who came to teaching first as

untrained pupil teachers, eventually going to training college and becoming professionals. In 1984, more than 40% of all teachers were untrained (Cobbold, 2015, p. 71). Kofi was among this group, who constituted nearly half of the teaching force at the time. He, like many pupil teachers, came from a lower class family and spent much of his youth looking for and working in a variety of relatively low paying jobs. Unlike Daniel, Edward, or Kwame, he was not particularly concerned with his own prosperity in monetary or material ways, or becoming a big man. He was more oriented towards living modestly and exhibited a strong sense of commitment to public service. Unlike most CSs, he had always wanted to be a teacher and had attempted to go to training college as a young man, but his father forbade it, wanting him rather to follow in his own footsteps, working with him on a cocoa farm. Kofi remembers that he completed middle school and then, without telling his father, took the common entrance exam and passed; "when it [the exam results] came I told my father and he told me that I should rather go to his cocoa farm and help him. So I did" (field notes 9.7.15). But, Kofi's interest in teaching persisted.

Before working the land with his father, Kofi, like many Ghanaians, went to Nigeria looking for work, but returned in 1981 when his father got sick. He went to the Western Region of Ghana, where his father had been farming and took up his father's work, tilling the land. He recalled that, "There wasn't any school in the village. So, the pupils were forging 2 1/2 miles. So, I teamed up with a friend and we established a school in that village….we won the community members' support. So, one year after, the government took over the school. The government brought their own teachers so we went back to our farming" (field notes 9.7.12). At that time, it was common practice that if a community built their own school the government would eventually assume responsibility for it, sending teachers to staff it. This was part of the new climate of cost-sharing and community participation that permeated the education sector during

structural adjustment and that continues today. Communities' "inputs" were often required as a sign of their "buy-in" to a school before the government would agree to staff it.

Kofi continued to help support the school even after the government had assumed responsibility for it, organizing school harvests. The new headmaster took notice of Kofi's hard work and continued support, and eventually employed him as a pupil teacher (a non-professional teacher) at the school. He worked as a pupil teacher in the community from 1984-1987, at which time the circuit officer (now called circuit supervisor) recognized his hard work and recommended that he attend teacher training college and become a professional teacher.

He remembers that, "In 1987 my circuit officer came and discussed with me that he had seen that I can be a good teacher so I have to go to training college…He saw that I could progress. So from there I decided to rise up….He bought the training college form for me and I went and wrote the exams and I was successful. I started my training college education from 1987 to 1991" (field notes 9.7.12). Kofi was humble when he talked about his life, but his stories were animated by common themes of resourcefulness, leadership, and hard work, all characteristics that also featured predominantly in the way he advised teachers when he supervised and monitored them in his job today as a CS.

This is evident, for example, when Kofi advised teachers to work hard and be resourceful during a re-opening check, which was a routine visit made by a CS to a school at the opening of each term to monitor teacher and student attendance and to motivate teachers to perform their best. He gathered the teachers together, "Big men and women of the chalk and board fraternity, I welcome you back to school for the 2012/ 2013 academic year….All that I say is, try to add to what you did last year. Be punctual and regular. The time lost we can never make up in life" (field notes 9.5.12). Kofi offered advice, encouraged the teachers, and listened to their grievances

as they voiced their need for textbooks, report cards for the pupils, and other basic supplies that the government was supposed to supply, but had not.

He implored the teachers to be resourceful and go to sister schools and request to borrow or share needed books, make copies themselves, or have students each buy one book from the market. He warned strongly that, "If we rely on the government we can't know if we are moving forward or not….We have to prove, through our diligence, that we can work to solve problems" (field notes 9.5.12). Such statements were not uncommon to hear among CSs. In fact, various iterations of this narrative were pervasive, continually rationalizing individual responsibility and action as a functional necessity and an ideological value.

After finishing teacher training college and becoming a professional teacher, Kofi chose to teach in rural and deprived areas. He had come from a rural area and felt it was where he was most needed, especially since most teachers did not want to be posted in such areas. He was transferred frequently during his early years of teaching, as was often the case for teachers working in rural areas. His first post as a professional teacher was at a government-run Islamic primary school in the Western Region where he taught for two years. Talking about his first posting he explained, "Knowing where I was coming from [a rural area] I decided to teach in those areas. Even my first school, when we went it was just some sticks with mud plus thatch. The two years I spent there we were able to, we the teachers initiated it, we were able to put up some finished classroom, plus an office, and storeroom" (field notes 9.7.15). After two years he was transferred to the Catholic Unit of the GES and was posted to the Brong-Ahafo Region, still teaching primary school. But, he only taught there for one year before being again transferred, this time to his hometown, where he taught primary school for five years.

In 2000, Kofi was transferred to the Ashanti Region, but he had already taken the university entrance exams and had also applied for study leave with pay. Like Daniel, he gained admission and study leave and so, before he actually began teaching at his new post in the Ashanti Region, went to the University of Education, Winneba and began studying for his Bachelor of Education in Ghanaian Language, Twi. When he completed his degree in 2004, he was posted to teach at a SSS in the Kuwai District.

Kofi, unlike the other CSs, was more explicit about how he got his current job. He explained that while he was doing his teacher training he met and became friends with the man who would later come to Kuwai, in 2005, as the District Director of Education. In 2005, there was also a vacancy at the District Office for a CS, and since Kofi had a personal relationship with the District Director, the Director helped him get the job. Kofi recalls, "Over there [during teacher training] I met the former Director. So, when he became Director he asked me to work with him at the office" (field notes 9.7.12). The District Director had since left, but Kofi remained in his position as a CS.

Although few CSs acknowledged explicitly, like Kofi, that personal relationships and connections helped them advance professionally, many eluded that knowing someone was valuable in gaining promotions and desirable appointments. There seemed to be mixed feelings about this; such advantages were not seen as particularly fair, but since many people capitalized on their connections a certain level of nepotism was almost treated as part of the normal operating procedure. If you had connections, why not use them? Everyone else was. Even CSs, when and where they could, would help put in a good word for a teacher looking for a job, or a transfer, or a promotion and, in this way, CSs gained a certain level of favor (and sometimes even power) among teachers at the local level.

> When asked why he wanted, or if he wanted to be a CS, Kofi responded,
>
> As a teacher you have been in the service for some years and have gained in-depth knowledge in education. I decided that if I became a CS, I could share my experience with the young ones that are coming [newer teachers] so that they also learn from us [older teachers]. Then, since during our time there were certain things that were not included in the school syllabus, I can also learn from the younger ones. This helped me, or these were some of the principles or the philosophies I had at the back of my mind that helped me to want to become a CS. (field notes 9.7.12)

Kofi's explanation as to why he wanted to be a CS was reflective of a deeply democratic undertone. He stressed the importance of sharing and learning from one another across generations, drawing on each person's expertise and strengths; a two-way learning environment.

Although Kofi did not dwell on his educational credentials when he talked about his life and his career, this did not mean he was not attentive to his own educational advancement. He was. In 2011, he completed a two-year course at the University of Education, Winneba, earning his Master's Degree in Human Rights. When asked if he was looking to move up and out of his position as a CS, he answered quite simply, "If my chance comes, I may have no choice" (field notes 9.7.12). He talked about a promotion as humbly as he talked about the rest of his life, as if it was part of his duty and he would do what was needed of him if the time came.

Common Threads

To be a CS indicated upward professional mobility. Some, like Wonder, were more focused on moving up into higher positions within the GES, while others, like Edward, were more interested in advancing and moving out of the service altogether. Success was closely

associated in people's life stories with neoliberal ideological values of self-management, individual responsibility, personal development, hard work, and entrepreneurialism. Many of these values had deep roots in previous eras in Ghana, but mapped onto people's lives in very different ways in neoliberal times.

For example, Nkrumah, in the 1960s, stressed the value of hard work and developed public works projects and created many new public sector jobs, but hard work was about shared prosperity and national development for mother Ghana, not individual growth and capitalist accumulation. Similarly, Acheampong, in the 1970s, advocated for individual responsibility and self-reliance, launching a program known as Operation Feed Yourself (OFY), a national agricultural policy aimed at boosting food production and self-sufficiency, encouraging every Ghanaian to engage in some form of agriculture productivity. But again, self-reliance and individual responsibility in agriculture were about making Ghana's and Ghanaians' food secure in the long-run. In the short term, OFY was accompanied by food subsidies, and was not primarily about whittling away social safety nets or capitalizing on individual responsibility as justification for rolling back the state. In the same vein, in the 1980s Rawlings supported decentralization and grass-roots participatory development, but as part of a populist revolution of the people, not a neoliberal hollowing of the state. Many values that are now recognizable as or have been coopted by neoliberalism, therefore, existed in Ghana in various iterations in previous eras. Therefore, in many ways these values were not entirely foreign to Ghanaians, making them not only palatable, but recognizable as common national tropes.

The way CSs talked about their life stories was both forward looking and agentic, which positioned them as purposeful architects in the outcomes of their own lives. This drew attention away from structural issues of poverty, deteriorating social welfare, and increasing inequality in

their communities, in the education system, and in the country. A central thematic element of their stories was the way they overcame adversity to rise up, which is also a paradigmatic trope of neoliberalism. Any misfortune or uncertainty they could not account for through their own actions was generally attributed to the will of God.

All fourteen CSs were devout Christians, belonging to a variety of denominations including: Pentecostal, Methodist, Evangelical, Seventh Day Adventist, Catholic, and Episcopal among others. Many, such as Edward, Anthony, and Philip, were leaders in their churches. Religion, and particularly the will of God, featured predominantly in daily discourse among CSs and in the classrooms and communities where they worked. In 2012, Ghana was ranked among the most religious countries in the world, with 96% of people identifying as religious (WIN-Gallup International, 2012). The common use of religious rhetoric, therefore, appealed to and resonated with a majority of people. It was also central to the way that most of the CSs made sense of themselves, their work, and their roles in their families, communities, schools, and country. As a growing literature on African evangelicalism and the prosperity gospel makes clear, there is a strong belief in "divinely authored economic success" (Haynes, 2012, p. 123) that has risen alongside neoliberal reforms in places such as Africa. These religious forms place significant value and emphasis on individual efforts towards prosperity, and not only value material wealth, but encourage people to display outward signs of prestige like owning houses, cars, and dressing well. Wonder's close connection to the evangelical church, for example, and her emphasis on being able to spend big money on her children's schooling can be read as part of this overall ethos.

One of the most common themes cutting across all CSs' lives was that of maintaining professional relevance and adequate qualifications. It was now easier than before to earn a

Diploma in Basic Education and then quickly transition to a two-year bachelor program through a variety of distance learning courses, options that had not been readily available when CSs earned their Certificate A teaching credentials.[13] Therefore, more and more teachers were acquiring higher levels of training and education at younger ages, allowing them to advance more rapidly than CSs and other more senior educators had. This was unsettling the older professional hierarchy, where age and professional seniority were closely matched, and created a palpable sense among CSs that they were in competition with younger educators who did not have (or often value) their experience, but had the time, opportunity, and inclination to rise rapidly through the ranks. CSs' stories often referenced such people as being placed in positions in which they were in over their heads and unable to lead effectively; nonetheless, the most viable path to leadership positions was condensing around educational and professional credentials. CSs recognized this, and even if they valued on-the-job experience, they also actively sought to upgrade their own credentials.

CSs were caught in the middle of this shifting system. Older CSs now found themselves working with head teachers younger than themselves who were on higher ranks, or younger CSs, like Edward, found themselves supervising older teachers on lower ranks. More problematic, however, were the tensions created within schools when young headmasters were not taken seriously by older teachers or young teachers no longer took older headmasters seriously because they felt they were more professionally qualified. It was CSs who were often left responsible for negotiating and mediating these new professional relations, even as they themselves navigated these tensions with the people whom they supervised.

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[13] For a more detailed discussion of the structure of teacher education in Ghana see, Amudu, A. & Donkor, A. (2014). The in-in-out programme of teacher education in Ghana: The perception of implementers. *International Journal of Academic Research in Education and Review*, 2(2), 32-48.

The trend of privileging credentials over years of service is part of a wider change towards a school-based meritocratic model, which is often described as a push back against the perennial problems of nepotism and corruption. Academic credentials are commonly associated with and understood as objective measures of merit and capacity, and, therefore, offer a meritocratic measure for professional advancement. Educational meritocracy requires that people invest in individualistic ideologies, believing that they can succeed based on their personal traits and abilities. This is evident across CSs' life stories.

The tensions that CSs faced concerning professional expectations, ethics of work, family obligations, and commitment to teaching, were intertwined with the shifting official value placed on teaching as a profession, the degradation of the public sector (and those who work in it) since the neoliberal shift towards *laissez faire* liberalism, and the new social and political value placed on entrepreneurialism and monetary wealth. CSs themselves had generally not intended to be teachers, preferring other professions instead, but ended up in the GES as a last resort. Once in the profession, however, they were able to find personal value and social respect in their work. Attending to the demoralization of teachers, as public sector workers, and building their morale and commitment to teaching was a significant, although little recognized, aspect of CSs' jobs and a constant tension as they too struggled with frustrating conditions of overwork, underpay, and functioning in an under-resourced and over-stretched sector.

Conclusion

The commonsense discourse of institutional and state failure in the education sector—the neoliberal mantra that states are inefficient—in practice fuels claims that individuals need to be industrious, hard-working, and diligent to overcome the inherently unfair and unjust conditions

the state itself produces. CSs engage with this logic in the day-to-day administration of education and often deploy their own life stories as evidence that struggle is part of realizing success. Themes of self-realization (e.g., Daniel), professional advancement (e.g., Wonder), entrepreneurial spirit (e.g., Edward), and parental responsibility (e.g., Kwame), were threads evident in many of the CSs' personal biographies and animated the standpoints that they drew on and deployed in the schools and communities where they worked.

CSs' life experiences did not unfold in a black box; they were intertwined with the material realities of an education sector undermined by economic austerity, a state animated by political values of participatory democracy, and neoliberal ideological principles that valorized hard work, initiative, and personal responsibility. CSs' positionalities were, therefore, not static, but constantly shifting as their roles and responsibilities changed in relation to the scope and function of the state itself.

Chapter 5: History and Practice of School Supervision in Ghana

School inspection in Ghana dates back to the British rule of the Gold Coast Colony and the appointment of the first Inspector of Schools for British West Africa in 1853 (Opoku-Asare, 2006, p. 109). By the 1880s, there were a few government schools and a growing number of mission schools in the Gold Coast that received small grants from the colonial government. Most predominant were the Wesleyan, Basel, and Bremen missions, whose educational methods and school management models varied significantly.

In order to create a more standard and uniform system for the disbursement of government grants (grants-in-aid), the Gold Coast Legislative Council passed an Ordinance in 1882 for the "Promotion and Assistance of the Education in the Gold Coast Colony" (McWilliam, 1967, p. 30), establishing a general Board of Education and an inspector. The inspector was to report to the Board and ensure that schools receiving government grants adhered to the established conditions on which grants were disbursed. The first inspector appointed by the Board, Rev. M. Sunter, was responsible not only for overseeing schools in the Gold Coast Colony, but also Sierra Leone and the Gambia, an unwieldy task that was not fully realized.

Recognizing the ineffectiveness of the inspector's position, by 1890 the Legislative Council established both a Director of Education and a school inspector exclusively for the Gold Coast. The intensification of school inspection was part of an increased interest by the British in overseeing native education. While missionaries and mission schools' primary interest in education was to use it as a means of civilizing natives, the British wanted an educated class of Africans to attend to their growing administrative and economic needs in the colony. In addition to the government, commercial companies employed educated Africans as clerks, accountants,

and artisans. For the British colonial government, the formal education of Africans required a fine balance of preparing them to take up jobs in the colonial administration, while at the same time instilling in Africans a sense of their inferiority to Europeans so that they would not agitate for equality with those whom they served. This required careful control of the formal curriculum and of school administration, hence the increased importance placed on an effective system of school inspection. This shift in British and colonial government interest, in directly shaping colonial education systems, was increasingly evident across British colonies through the 1930s.

The British system of indirect rule was justified, in part, on idealist notions of self-determination and the idea that there were benefits to both the African people and the colonial administration.[14] In reality, "local governance systems set up under colonialism produced subjects rather than citizens and created systems of management and control rather than representation and enfranchisement" (Ribot, 2002, p. 4). Indirect rule constituted an early expression of decentralized statist control and the British used formal education as a tool of exploitation, attempting to cultivate self-managing, largely compliant subjects, who were capable of and interested in carrying out indirect rule on the pretense of self-realization.

Five years after the 1882 Ordinance was passed, it was replaced by the Education Ordinance of 1887, much of which remained in effect for nearly forty years. It established two categories of primary schools: government schools and assisted schools. Assisted schools were run by non-government entities, generally missions, but received grants from public funds as long as they satisfied the conditions established by the Board of Education. The Education Rules, established by the Board, detailed the conditions on which grants were to be paid. They also

[14] For a detailed explanation of the justifications for indirect rule see *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, authored by Lord Lugard, and published in 1922.

mandated, among other things, what would be taught, by what methodology, and who was qualified to teach.

The disbursement of education grants, which necessitated verification of adherence to the Education Rules, provided the framework for the inspection of schools. Early inspection systems emphasized the importance of inspectors writing reports to their superiors, and teachers keeping comprehensive school registers (McWilliam, 1967, pp. 32-33). Inspectors were also made responsible for administering annual examinations of pupils in reading, writing, and arithmetic (the 3Rs). From 1902-1909, a system of payment-by-results was established as a quality control measure to ensure that children were learning the set curriculum and that the government was getting adequate value for money from its teachers. Government grants to schools and teachers' salaries were, thus, based on student performance on the yearly exams administered by the inspector and calculations made about other factors like attendance (Graham, 1971, pp. 114-115). Teachers' salaries were dependent on a combination of students' results on examinations and inspectors' reports, which setup significant tension between inspectors and teachers. The classic characterization of inspectors at the time was, "an attitude of seniority, omnipotence and condescension, looking into teachers' work and writing reports on them" (Bame, 1991 as cited in Opoku-Asare, 2006, p. 109). One of the consequences of this system of inspection was not only that it established an adversarial relationship between inspectors and teachers, but that it also led to rote learning and teaching towards the test.

In 1909, payment-by-results was removed when new Education Rules were introduced, which were intended to make the curriculum less bookish and improve teaching methodology. After 1909, government grants and teacher salaries were no longer paid based on examination results. Rather, grants were based on two primary factors, "general efficiency of teaching and

standard of equipment available on the inspector's visit" (Opoku-Asare, 2006, p. 110). These changes did not result in the abandonment of rote learning in classrooms, but they did afford a certain amount of professional freedom to teachers and school managers, which had been more tightly constrained under the payment-by-results system.

Just as formal education was an important tool used by the British to mold an elite class of Africans who could work as administrators and clerks for the colony, after independence in 1957, education remained a valuable tool of the state. As would be the case with many post-independence countries in Africa, educational transformation was an important part of Ghana's national development; it was viewed as a powerful "vehicle for cultivating literate and civil society, building new institutions, fostering development in all sectors, and creating new post-colonial identity" (Napier, 2010, p. 369). Education, like the economy, became strongly state-led and was responsible for eradicating the colonial vestiges of elitism and exploitation. Interestingly, however, and as was the case across many of the Commonwealth countries, the formal schooling system remained largely a vestige of the British educational system, closely mirroring the structure and content that had existed during the colonial era. For example, as was evident in CSs' own accounts of their educational experiences, the O level exams (the secondary school leaving qualification used by the British) were still in place when they passed through formal schooling. In fact, O levels were administered in Ghana until 1994.

Perhaps not surprisingly, then, during the first three decades after independence school inspectors were primarily concerned with monitoring schools and teachers for compliance with laws, regulations and professional norms. There are some accounts of inspectors' work during colonial times, but there seem to be few, if any, readily available descriptions of their responsibilities during the first few decades after independence. From senior personnel with

whom I spoke, and who were educated and worked when inspectors were still in the system, it appears that the inspector's job was quite similar to that of the colonial era and relied heavily on administrative work. The administrative work of inspectors, however, was not managerial in the way that CSs' work is today. For inspectors, administrative work was more about the supervision and monitoring of standards: facilities, equipment, discipline, and administration among other things (Opoku-Asare, 2006, p. 110). For CSs, managerialism has meant a particular emphasis on accountability, quantifiable measures, outcomes, and decreased discretion in decision making, which will be discussed at greater length in Chapters 6 and 7.

After independence in 1957, the inspectorate system was administratively reorganized and in 1961 the Inspectorate Division of the MoE was established, and later the Inspectorate Division of the GES was also created. Today, the landscape of school supervision in Ghana is comprised of a two-tiered structure that includes the NIB, which operates at the centralized level, and a decentralized system of supervision and monitoring administered through the Inspectorate Division of the GES. CSs, as part of the GES, work primarily through the decentralized structure of governance. The NIB, established by the 2008 Education Act (778) Section 7(1), is an independent agency of the MoE.

According to the NIB website, the "objective of the Board is to provide a diagnosis of what a school must do to improve by setting and enforcing standards that must be observed at the basic and second cycle levels in both public and private educational institutions." The Board of the NIB consists of representatives from the following organizations and governing bodies: government nominee (chairperson), NIB (secretary), National Catholic Secretariat, Ghana National Association of Private Schools, MoE, Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Pentecostal Council, Universities of Education, West Africa Examinations Council, Federation

of Muslim Councils and the Ahmadiyya Mission, Joint Anglican Diocesan Councils of Ghana, Council for Technical, Vocational Education and Training, and the GES. The significant representation of religious bodies on the Board of the NIB reflects the structure of education in Ghana. Religious bodies have established educational management units that operate under the GES, overseeing the basic administration of religious schools that are part of the public school system in the country (e.g., the Catholic Unit oversees operation of government-run catholic schools). Public schools are thus designated as District Authority schools (also sometimes called Local Authority), indicating they are non-religious public schools, or they are designated by religious affiliation. All basic level public schools are monitored and supervised by CSs.

Phasing out Inspectors and Introducing CSs to the GES

With the introduction of the ERP in 1987, which was part of a wider neoliberal program of structural adjustment, inspectors were phased out and replaced by CSs. The timing of the introduction of CSs to the education system is important because it indicates that CSs were part of a broader set of national shifts towards decentralized administration and participatory democracy. And, in turn, these shifts were part of a set of international education policies that IDOs disseminated (and enforced) throughout Africa to transform educational leadership, management, pedagogy, curriculum, and responsibility. The change from inspection cadres to manager/assistant cadres occurred in a number of countries around this time at the urging of IDOs; for example, in Malawi this shift occurred in 1994 (Kendall, 2004). Similar changes away from traditional systems of school inspection to school supervision also have been well documented in places such as Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe (De Grauwe, 2001).

In Ghana, when asked, it seemed to be difficult for those working in the GES to remember the exact moment in which inspectors became CSs. Most pointed to the late 1980s or early 1990s, confident that the transition was sometime between 1983, when structural adjustment was introduced, and 1992, when the Constitution of the 4th Republic came into being and Ghana transitioned back to a multi-party democracy. When talking about those who came before CSs, I heard people refer to them variously as inspectors, education officers, and circuit officers. There was no apparent consistency in how or why people chose one title over another.

Anthony, the most senior CS in the Kuwai District, began teaching in the GES in 1977. He remembers that, "When I was in school, those circuit supervisors they were called education officers, almost all of them. Or, they were school inspectors. But, I don't know exactly when it changed to circuit supervisors. I don't know exactly, but when I started teaching, when I started teaching from '77…, when I was teaching it was inspectors… In the olden days the districts were not divided into circuits. So, it was when districts decided to create themselves into circuits, that is what brought about the circuit supervisors" (field notes 4.18.13).

Kofi, who became a CS in 2005, the same year as Anthony, was also unclear about when exactly the change from inspector to CS took place. He was not uncertain, however, about what the change meant for school supervision, "The old ones [inspectors] were somehow about fault finding, but circuit supervisors are not about fault finding, but working with the teachers" (field notes 4.18.13). To CSs like Kofi, what was important was not so much when the change happened, but that CSs approached their work and related to teachers in a fundamentally different way than inspectors: CSs provide support and inspectors found fault.

In April 2013, at an in-service training for CSs in the Volta Region that was sponsored by USAID, I met Gabriel, who worked for the Inspectorate Division of the GES. He offered to look

at the GES headquarters in Accra for an answer to when this shift occurred. A few days after the close of the training I received an e-mail saying, "The appointment of Circuit Supervisors, at the basic education level of the Ghana Education Service, started from 1992. This was as a direct outcome of the recommendations of the Sub-Committee of the then National Planning Committee for the Implementation of the New School Reforms which began in 1987" (field notes 4.30.13). Gabriel's finding is consistent with oral memories that others, such as Anthony, recounted.

Lack of clarity about the exact moment that changes in the education system happen is not unusual in Ghana. Frequent shifts in policy can be hard for local level actors to keep up with due to inconsistent communication from the central government to the decentralized regional and district levels. In addition, lack of resources and inadequate institutional capacity can result in slow and uneven implementation of educational policies and reforms. At the same time, it is not uncommon for new programs and policies to be rolled out on a pilot basis or only in areas designated as deprived before being scaled up nationally. This was the case with the capitation grant, for example.

The roll-out of educational reforms and scale-up of policies nationally is also complicated by the dominant presence and influence of IDOs in the sector. With fCUBE, for example, rather than provide coordinated sector support to government for basic education, IDOs funneled aid through uncoordinated projects and programs, with two of the most predominant funders at the time pursuing unrelated projects to support basic education; The USAID funded the Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPS) program, while the DFID funded the Whole School Development (WSD) program. It is important to note that it was not until around 1987, when the ERP was introduced as part of structural adjustment, that foreign funders began to play a major

role in the education sector (Okugawa, 2010 p. 8). Their role, at least initially, was often organized through and in relation to government policy frameworks that they helped develop (or enforced development of), and individual projects conducted by IDOs that were, at least theoretically, aligned with these new "government" policies.

Therefore, at the time that CSs entered the system as part of the larger package of education and governance reforms, there were not only major changes to the content and structure of basic education underway, but also significant overarching shifts in how educational policies were resourced, rolled out, and implemented. Confusion or uncertainty in the exact year or moment that inspectors became CSs is not surprising, and it is likely that it took a period of time for inspectors to be fully phased out of the system and replaced by CSs in both name and the in the way that supervision was practiced. CSs like Kofi, therefore, emphasized the overarching shift in the nature of work, rather than the precise moment of policy change. Kofi, like others, was focused on the supportive and collaborative nature of CSs work, in contrast to the fault finding and punitive approach that inspectors used. This focus indicates that there was awareness, at least among CSs, about the subjective as well as structural shift in state-society relations that occurred at this time.

Decentralization of School Supervision and the Proliferation of CSs' Responsibilities

At the time that CSs entered the system as part of the newly decentralized educational administration system, the World Bank and the IMF were using decentralization as a tool of structural adjustment to weaken the central state by moving responsibilities for administration and governance down the ladder. The discursive premise for this was that central governments were monolithic and distinct from citizens, and that governance that was brought closer to

people's daily lives would be more efficient and effective (Burki, Perry, & Dillinger, 1999; Litvack, Ahmad & Bird, 1998). It was assumed, falsely, that an absolute relationship existed between central and decentralized governance—the more central government there was, the less decentralized governance could exist. Therefore, neoliberal decentralization, pursued as part of structural adjustment, discursively and politically aimed to hollow the central state in the interest of the local. In reality, there is evidence to suggest that centralization and decentralization often occur in complex arrangements that cannot easily be disentangled (e.g., official responsibility for utilizing funds may be decentralized to schools, but the funding is still collected through centralized tax systems, and the amount distributed is centrally controlled) (Almeida, 2006; McGinn & Street, 1986).

In Ghana, mandated divestiture by the state from state-owned corporations and industries, downsizing the civil and public services, and aggressive opening of the economy to free market enterprise all served to undermine the ability of the central state to function. This hollowing of the state happened at the exact moment that a strong central state was needed to support the development of local level governance (Mohan, 1996, p. 90). What resulted instead was a weak central government and a system of local governance that was under-resourced and overburdened. Enter newly defined CSs, who were expected to support teachers and improve teaching and learning in schools and districts that were being flooded by an influx of students as education was made more accessible, but without adequate classrooms, supplies, or professional teachers to accommodate the rising demand for education.

CSs, as the feet of local educational governance, were meant to work closely with people in ways that inspectors were not. Inspectors were primarily concerned with monitoring schools and teachers for compliance with laws, regulations and professional norms set by the central

MoE. Mirroring the structure of the state at the time, inspectors commanded respect and authority, but were removed and distant from the day-to-day operation of schools. Inspectors were responsible for a large numbers of schools, but had a well-defined scope of work, which required little long-term engagement with teachers or schools and little mandate for corrective action. They reported on what they observed, using well-established, objectivist protocols to do so.

CSs, as part of the reconfigured state, have been shifted closer to people and their lives. They oversee only a handful of schools, generally six to fourteen, and because the number of schools they manage has been limited, they are expected to be regularly present and available to schools and communities. At the same time, CSs are responsible not for a discrete set of tasks, as inspectors were, but for a diffuse web of constantly shifting work that requires them to respond to the needs of a vast array of stakeholders, ranging from parents and teachers on the one end, to local businesspeople and leaders, to IDOs on the other.

The proliferation of CSs' responsibilities, their visibility in and accessibility to schools and communities, and their mid-level positionality in the district office has contributed to making CSs vulnerable to being blamed when schools and teachers do not perform well. Daniel, like many CSs, gets frustrated with the responsibilities placed upon him as a CS, and feels that he works without the support and consideration the work deserves from his superiors in the GES.

> One thing about education is that without supervision education cannot move forward. But in the Ghana Education Service everybody at the office [district directorate] looks mean upon the CS…We are serving like a liaison between the schools and the directorate. Like when it comes to the time of sending a letter to a school, they [the directorate] will quickly write the letter, "CS take the letter to this place." Sometimes,

> they know that we come to the office on Mondays and Fridays, but sometimes in the middle of the week they will write a letter and say, come and take to the schools. A messenger must always be a messenger, but you must remember him in your Kingdom too…Everybody looks mean upon CSs. If anything is happening they [district directorate] say it is the fault of the CS. If the schools are not performing well they say the CS. But, they are not resourcing the CS to go on field to work. They give us 50 cedis for the whole term, for 15 weeks, but whereby you buy fuel for only two weeks and then that 50 cedis is finished. They want you to make magic and go to the field and work and come back. Anything about teachers, it is caused by the CS. (field notes 3.16.3)

Daniel recognizes the importance of his work as a field officer and the centrality of his position as a liaison between the District Directorate and schools. He embraces this aspect of his work, but rejects the way that he is treated, the lack of support he receives, and then the blame that is placed on CSs when teachers or schools fail to meet expectations. From Daniel's perspective, the District Directorate, the decentralized authority of educational administration and governance, is not only making his job harder (e.g., calling him to the office to deliver letters when he is supposed to be in the field supervising schools), but also placing unfair expectations on CSs to improve education with needed resources, and then centering blame on them for the perennial problems of underperformance that plague Ghana's schools.

One of the major differences, therefore, between inspectors and CSs is that CSs, as they have become more visible and available, have also become an easy target on which stakeholders can locate blame. Inspectors were more respected and less structurally available: they made observations about schools and reported them to their superiors. They were, thus, less easily made responsible for the failures of schooling than CSs today. CSs cannot possibly respond to all

of the demands, needs, and expectations placed upon them; therefore, it is easy to blame CSs for not doing their jobs. This kind of blame, however, is dangerous because it individualizes responsibilities, obscuring underlying structural problems. Blaming CSs for school failure is not only unfair from a structural perspective; it also tends to lead to a focus on "fixing" CSs: figure out how to make them more efficient and effective at carrying out assigned tasks, and schooling will improve. As with school leadership, teacher training, and school funding, educational struggles are increasingly cast as technocratic problems with technocratic solutions (Easterly, 2013; Ferguson, 1994).

By placing blame on CSs, it draws attention away from more substantial and underlying questions of why it is that CSs are struggling to do their work in the first place and how the educational system itself is overloading these actors. Looking at why CSs "fail," rather than at how to make them better at their jobs, would mean looking at systemic problems within the state itself: how decentralization has created under-resourced and disempowered local forms of governance; or how local participation has become a more politically palatable way to talk about cost-sharing or offloading what used to be government responsibilities onto communities; or how public sector workers, and those in the GES in particular, have been demoralized by neoliberal policies and practices that have undercut their social and monetary value. As this and the next three chapters argue, the social and political landscape of the state is the primary terrain that CSs traverse in the schools and communities where they work. Technocratic reforms to make CSs more efficient and effective, therefore, will never fully address the problems that CSs face, because the underlying problem is not CSs themselves, but the system in which they work.

Clinical Supervision and Monitoring

Increasingly, CSs' work comprises a growing number of tasks and modes of engagement. The rather opaque list of CSs' official roles and responsibilities does little to capture the complex social and political relations that are required to navigate in order to attend to this list. The *Ghana Education Service (GES) Training Manual: Circuit Supervisors Handbook* (2012) identifies CSs as quality assurance officers in schools and lists a number of general functions they are to perform:

- Promote effective teaching and learning in basic schools
- Interpret educational policies to teachers and help them understand educational policy objectives
- Promote effective school management
- Liaise between schools and the district education directorate
- Organize in-service training for the professional development of teachers
- Promote healthy school-management relations
- Monitor the achievement and performance of pupils and staff
- Prepare work schedule for approval of the District Director of Education and submit reports on individual schools to him/her with copies to the school concerned
- Collate statistics on the schools in the circuit
- Undertake other special assignments on request from the district education directorate, the school, or the community
- Recommend heads and teachers for promotion and award
- Appraise the performance of heads

(Government of Ghana, 2012, p. 4-5)

When asked what they do, CSs often explain that they are responsible for supervision and

monitoring. Monitoring primarily constitutes the traditional work that inspectors did, but supervision is quite different in that it is focused on supporting teachers and helping them improve their practice. Dela differentiates between supervision and monitoring, as do most CSs, in the following way; "Supervision is when you go and watch them [teachers] teach, collect information, observe, and then give assistance and offer support. Monitoring is just when you go to check on something, collect information, and do an evaluation. So, supervision is mostly about giving assistance and providing support and monitoring is mostly about doing evaluation and finding the strengths and weaknesses of something" (field notes 1.14.13).

When asked if there is more emphasis placed on supervision or monitoring, Dela indicated that there is no explicit distinction made between the two in everyday practice, but supervisory activities are de facto stressed because they represent the tool more readily available to CSs who are trying to fulfill their duties by improving schools (as inspection is no longer functional in practice). "When you go to the field [schools] what you encounter is what you address. It is the challenges in the field that will tell you what to do," Dela explained. What CSs "encounter," what they see and how they respond, is filtered through their own personal experiences as well as the social, political, and professional pressures that they must navigate. In other words, what CSs respond to in schools is part of the larger social and political landscape in which they operate. This is important because it points to the kind of expertise that CSs' work entails and the types of leverage that they have in achieving their goals: they are supposed to bring experience and expertise to bear in determining what must be done, and then work with a range of stakeholders to accomplish this. Their job, therefore, now entails the opposite of a top-down form of evaluation that requires little local knowledge or professional expertise.

Education policies, systems, and structures, are deeply political (Apple, 2006; Ball, 1990). This is evident in the way that the fundamental shift in how supervision and monitoring are practiced in Ghana is closely aligned with changes in the political configuration of the state itself. Edward, who began teaching two years after Ghana transitioned back to democracy in 1992, feels that, "A lot has changed since democracy. Under democracy they [the government] don't hold you by force. They build schools, and roads, and infrastructure and then say, 'See! Vote for me'" (field notes 9.7.12). In Ghana, as in many other countries that have cycled through eras of military and dictatorial rule, democratization is largely about shifting the governance norms from a paradigm of rule by state force, to governance by consent. These shifts are evident in a number of state policies and practices, and are particularly visible in the education arena. In previous and current democratic eras, investments in education served as an important and visible expression of care by the state for its citizens, and a valuable way of cultivating popular support for democratic governments and governance.

Not surprisingly, then, democratic eras have often been accompanied by expansionist educational policies and educational reforms aimed at "democratizing" educational institutions and relations. Such democratizing reforms are evident across many educational subsectors, from curriculum, to instruction, to infrastructure development, to management, to supervision. This is the case in Ghana where Edward, for example, describes his work as a CS as practicing "democratic supervision," explaining that, "If you don't just come there [to a school] in a rush you can motivate them [teachers] and encourage them, and they will be happy. You are not there to threaten them. It's a democratic kind of supervision" (field notes 9.10.12). There is a thematic continuity between the way the state is expected to function as a democracy and the way that educational supervision activities have been reshaped to focus on achieving governance through

relationships built on rapport and support, rather than ruling by authoritative and punitive measures. Everyday democratic modes of educational practice, therefore, can be understood as important forms of state governance itself.

Edward explained how democratic supervision, also commonly referred to by CSs as clinical supervision, works:

> Together, we [CS and teacher] will share what is happening. You always have to listen to the teacher….At the end of the day you have to reason with the person. You offer collaborative support and together you can help the children. In a clinical situation the person is before you. You have to allow the person to bring out why they are doing something. You have to allow them to defend it and explain. If you do that the person will be happy. You have to advise them by seeking their opinion. Some days back they used something called traditional supervision and there was no room for the teacher to express themselves. Today though the teacher has gone through education and has a certificate, or a diploma, or a degree so you have to know that the person has something to build on, something to offer. (field notes 9.10.12)

The practices of clinical supervision, which are supposed to thrive when CSs and teachers participate in open and constructive dialogue, are aligned with expectations that the democratic state fosters opportunities for citizen participation in decision making processes. The change in emphasis from traditional to clinical supervision has been documented in other counties, such as Zimbabwe, for example (Moyo, Mupande, Musara, & Shumba, 2001, p. 298). Traditional supervision was focused almost exclusively on compliance and, as Edward notes, there was no expectation that the inspector's work would be dialogical and consultative.

When talking about and explaining the practices of clinical supervision, CSs tend to draw

on and use a strong medicalized discourse that forefronts the prescriptive way in which they understand their roles and responsibilities in this kind of dialogic and consultative relationship with teachers. They craft narratives in which they talk about themselves as doctors treating patients who are teachers, students, parents, communities, and even sometimes the education system as a whole. Kwame, for example, explained his work as clinical supervisor as follows:

> It's like what the doctors are doing in the consulting room. You need to counsel them [patients]. Prescribe the correct dosage and then in two weeks you ask them to come for a review so that you can see how well the patient is….It is the same thing we [CSs] are doing here. I went there [to the school], I prescribed to them [teachers], I counseled them [teachers], so in a follow up visit I will come and check whether or not what I prescribed to them, how I counseled them, whether or not they were able to take it. And are they on the right path? Or are they having any difficulty?…I will ask the headmaster to check, but I will come back and check. I will do a follow-up visit. Because if you prescribe and counsel without checking up it means that you will not be able to know whether what you are doing is yielding a positive response. (field notes 9.18.12)

The way that Kwame, and others, talk about clinical supervision as being similar to the relationship between a doctor and patient actually has significant implications because it points to an ideological starting point and subtly brings to the fore complex power relations that circulate in these kinds of supervisory relationships.

The interaction between doctor and patient, according to Feierman (1985), is fundamentally a social interaction in which the doctor offers the patient an explanation, a rationale, for what is happening within the patient's body. Rather than understand the doctor's interpretation as objective, Feierman makes clear that, "therapy shapes ideology by interpreting

the patient's experience of illness" (p. 75). Feierman draws on the work of Taussig (1980) as illustrative, "American doctors working under capitalist conditions interpret disease as a thing, an object separate from social relations—one which resembles a commodity. The doctor's interpretation makes illness an individual experience rather than a social one, and denies the importance of the social conditions out of which disability emerges" (p. 75). In this way, Feierman argues that, "therapy shapes ideology by interpreting the patient's experience of illness…the person who controls therapy serves as a conduit transmitting general social values, but is also capable of reshaping and reinterpreting those values in the healing process" (p. 75). Being able to name your experience of yourself and your world is not value neutral, but rather steeped in relations of power. The doctor who interprets disease as an individual experience, rather than a social one, or the CS who moralizes with a teacher about their duty to teach, is not only conferring a particular explanation that appears as though it is normal and natural (i.e., commonsense), she or he is also acting from a particular point of power within that social assemblage.

To be in a position to name illness, or to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses, is to be in power over, rather to be in interaction or dialogue with, which can be deeply undemocratic and disempowering. Similar to the doctor-patient relationship, CSs too act from a particular point of power in the way they identify problems in teachers' practice, counsel them on how to make change, and prescribe particular actions for teachers to take. CSs are fundamentally involved in shaping teachers' experiences and understandings of their professional practice and through this process are involved in the daily shaping and transmission of social values, roles and responsibilities, and notions of what makes good and bad teachers. For example, responsibility is a common theme that centers in many of the conversations and interactions CSs have with

teachers when they visit schools. CSs not only advise teachers about the rudiments of classroom practice, but in the environment of constraints that educators operated, CSs spend significant time and effort rationalizing for teachers why they must be committed to and responsible for their work as teachers, and why they must follow bureaucratic rules.

Much of the diagnosing and prescribing that happens in school settings, therefore, is on a more conceptual level, and involves defining the moral parameters and social ethics of what it means to be a teacher and why teachers have a duty to teach. Kwame, for example, when meeting with a group of teachers who he perceived as being lax in their attendance, classroom performance, and the general quality of teaching and learning at the school advised them about their social responsibility not only as teachers, but as patriotic citizens:

> When you get to the hospital and a doctor does not respond to you, what do you say? The doctor is not responsible. The doctor is not helping the country. When you get to the bank and the bankers are not ready to serve you, what will you say? They are wasting our time. It is the same thing, like you as a teacher. You are also there to teach and if you are not doing the right thing, if you are not teaching the children well, you are not responsible. Will you just go there [to the classroom] and sit there and when it is time for you to close you go to your house? It is your duty to teach and if you don't it means you are not helping them [the children]. But, as a patriotic citizen, as a patriotic citizen, it is the taxpayers money in which they [the government] use to sponsor you [teachers] in the training college. It is the taxpayers' money which they [the government] use to put up the structure, the school building. It's the taxpayers' money which they [the government] use to buy textbooks and other materials for the schools. But, if you [the teachers] refuse to help the children so that they also can enjoy that labor or that fruit, it means you are so

> greedy. You [the teacher] want to use it [your education] for yourself only to enjoy. You are not patriotic, you are not a good Christian. (field notes 9.18.12)

Kwame uses a moralized discourse to draw a connection between teachers' failures in the classroom to personal traits such as being irresponsible, greedy, unpatriotic, and bad Christians. It is not uncommon to hear CSs talk to teachers in this way, tying each individual teacher's morality and their responsibility to teach to a larger social responsibility to give back to and develop the nation. Kwame recognizes that teachers have a particular social responsibility to which they are bound because they are public employees.[15] Whether teachers face obstacles, confront and navigate untenable conditions of service, or struggle to provide education with inadequate resources is secondary to their responsibility to teach, fulfilling their part of the social contract.

Supervision, Relationship Building, and Shifting Lines of Power

Older CSs like Anthony and Kofi were not only educated in a school system that was under the supervision of inspectors, but as young teachers they worked under the direct oversight of them as well. Anthony, for example entered the GES in 1977, which means that he worked for at least a decade under the purview of inspectors. Inspectors themselves worked for a state that was more absolute in its authority; mirroring the state, their power too was absolute and that is what people tend to remember. Christopher, the head of the science department at a college of education in the Volta Region, like Anthony, has been a professional educator for more than twenty years and is considered a senior educationalist. He is keenly aware of and familiar with

[15] As of the 2014/15 academic year the government withdrew support for teachers' training by no longer providing school and living stipends for teachers attending colleges of education, rather suggesting that teachers must take out private loans to cover expenses while being trained as teachers. This has led to mass outcry and fear that the government will not be able to compel teachers to teach, for example, in rural or undesirable areas.

the shifts in educational policy and practice over time and is deeply reflective about these changes, and what these changes have meant socially, professionally, and institutionally.

When asked about school inspectors, Christopher's narrative focused on the fear that inspectors evoked among teachers and the wider community, including traditional leaders, who were themselves highly respected and often feared. This fear translated into respect and power for inspectors. As a result, inspectors were perceived to be able to efficiently oversee a much larger network of schools than CSs do today. This comes through in Christopher's memory of inspectors,

> Formerly there was a whole sector, 50 schools, 60 schools to one inspector. When you heard that the inspector was coming you would be on your toes. Even the head teacher himself had no time to prepare for the inspector. The inspector would hide himself. So every time, he [the inspector] would see to it that things were going on very well. When the inspector came he went and hid somewhere and would be looking at the school and marking [taking notes] before he entered. So when he entered it's just like a policeman. Everyone began to be afraid of him. Yes, the traditional rulers, everyone in town. (field notes 3.18.13)

Christopher's focus on the surprise nature of the inspector's visits and their ability to catch teachers unaware is important because it draws attention to the punitive nature of the school inspection regime at the time, which was aligned with the often punitive nature of the state itself. Between independence in 1957 and the establishment of the 4th Republic in 1992, there were an array of governments, some of which were repressive, many of which pursued forms of aggression against particular segments of the population, and all of which struggled to maintain power. The inspection system's fear-based approach created a relationship between the state and

both communities and its lowest-level civil servants (teachers) that mirrored the more authoritative nature of the state.

Because inspectors were feared, there was no expectation that they would befriend teachers and cajole them to work by winning their approval and confidence, as CSs do today. It was not an inspector's job to understand each individual teacher's challenges and needs and create a tailored response. The monitoring process that an inspector followed was fairly narrow, as the intent of inspection was primarily to evaluate teachers and exercise and assert control and power over schools and communities. This was particularly evident in the evaluative role they played in the payment-by-results system. Today, the fear of inspection is diffused, in large part because CSs have a diminished, essentially non-existent, system of teacher and school rewards and punishments from which they can draw.

Daniel, for example, understands that building rapport with teachers is not only expected, but necessary because teachers today are not compliant and respectful of authority and CSs lack the means to discipline and sanction them. He explains that when CSs supervise teachers, they must praise them first in order to make teachers want to do the work:

> You don't have to be searching for the negative. If you do, always you will see it. No one is perfect. No one is perfect. So when you are going out you have to praise them [teachers]. You see, you praise them and then they become happy….We are always with them so we know how to talk with them so that they do the work. These days teachers are not like the old teachers whereby they were timid. This time teachers are not timid because they have other avenues and know people at higher places than some of us [CSs]. If you want to disturb them, if they like, they can take you on….Some of them their brothers are lawyers. Maybe you are the CS and you want to suppress them [teachers].

> They will not take it kindly from you. So you have to find other ways to talk to them, you have to persuade them to do the work. (field notes 2.18.13)

Daniel is conscious of the fact that as a CS he must be diplomatic and encourage and support teachers in order to get them to work. He notes a change not only in teachers, but in the structure of the system in which teachers and CSs work, indicating that CSs do not have absolute authority over teachers and that teachers, rather, often have the means to subvert CSs' authority.

The way that Daniel explains CSs' positionality today makes it appear as those CSs' work is now sometimes fear-based, but instead of people being afraid of CSs (as they were of inspectors) it is CSs who are afraid of teachers. In other words, power used to be top down; inspectors had a particular position of power over schools and communities and wielded it sometimes mercilessly. Now, power is much more available—the lines of power are much less clear and at least to some extent, power is decentralized and visible from the bottom-up as well as top-down from the state. The state's power over CSs is the power of saying they are doing a bad job, and it is wielded often to ask even more from them. The power of connections and relations wielded by some teachers can catch CSs in whole different forms of problems, which are not directly managed by the state. This unsettling and redistribution of power complicates how CSs can and do engage with teachers and requires that they build an entirely different kind of supervisory relationship.

Relationship building, therefore, is now at the center of CSs' work, and CSs recognize that there are particular ways for them to build the kind of relationships with teachers that lead to good supervisory outcomes. For example, Daniel explained,

> If you [the CS] are going out for observation you don't think about only the negative side. Think about the positive side. See that all that the teachers are doing well you

> congratulate so that they continue. But, if you are going in [observing] for only lapses then you are not a good supervisor…this time we are all human beings. When you see them [teachers] you congratulate them and they will be willing to do the work for you. (field notes 2.18.13)

What Daniel is describing here are expectations about how clinical supervision works and the recognition that an important part of CSs work, unlike inspectors, is morale building. When CSs encourage teachers, building their morale, teachers reciprocate by being more responsive to CSs' advice and guidance, which Daniel talks about as teachers who are "willing to do the work for you." Morale building is such an important part of a CSs' job that to be too negative or fail to build morale is actually seen as bad supervisory practice. What is being described here is part of the unofficial social contract between CSs and teachers that is not tangential to, but instead indicative of, the new kinds of social and professional engagements that have emerged in Ghana as bureaucratic actors learn to function in a hollowed-out democratic and decentralized state.

Wonder, for example, after a morning of observing primary school teachers, gathered them together to advise them about how to improve their teaching. Before offering any corrections, however, she explained why monitoring and giving advice was important and how it would help them to one day advance in their profession.

> We monitor and we teach you the job. One day we [CSs] will not be here anymore. You will see us as pensioners. By then you [teachers] will be the next circuit supervisor. Maybe this man [one of the teachers] will be the District Director… .It is as if you are coming to take our place. But, it depends on how you rise up. The place [classroom] is not a permanent place. It's not a permanent job [classroom teacher] for anybody. You can become the head teacher of this school. We [CSs] all started so young, young like

> the way you also started. It is a ladder we are climbing. When we reach career exit out of the service, then we expect you to do the work the way we are doing it. So, if we don't monitor you in the correct way the standard of education will still continue to fall because we have not imparted anything to you that you will use to raise the standard. That is why impartation is very, very essential at this stage. There are things that I learned from the circuit supervisor and I am still using them. I also started so young like you. I started at the age of 22, I started teaching, you see. So, if I'm here today. Then, tomorrow you will also be here. I think I am clear. (field notes 2.7.13)

Wonder was careful to build a sense of shared history with the teachers, pointing out that she, like them, started out as a classroom teacher. Using herself as an example, she reinforced the idea that there are opportunities for career advancement open to them in the teaching profession, just as they were open to her. But, just as she followed her CSs' advice, they must follow hers and learn from her experience if they strive to advance up the GES hierarchy. Rather than demand that teachers follow her guidance, Wonder rationalizes with them about why it is her duty to give them advice and why following it is actually to their professional advantage.

Changing relations of power and the shift from traditional inspection to clinical supervision has meant that CSs must be flexible in how they approach and respond to teachers. This is a fundamentally new kind of social and professional engagement and has had significant implications for expectations about the kinds of relationships and contact CSs have with communities, what kinds of authority they can claim and leverage, and how professional expertise and respect are constituted. Whereas inspectors had minimal physical contact with teachers and schools, CSs are expected to have maximal contact. Whereas inspectors governed teachers from afar through fear and threat, the foundation of CSs work is relational and requires

that they build rapport and trust, and cultivate and reinforce teachers' own self-interest, as Wonder did, in engaging with and responding positively to the supervisory process.

As CSs practice "democratic supervision" in schools with teachers, they are negotiating how democratic governance works in the quotidian: the conditions for engagement; expectations about responsibility; and what compliance with laws, regulations, and professional norms looks like and how they should be achieved when "force" or "suppression" are no longer sanctioned modes of state governance. An important means of achieving consent through democratic governance is instilling in citizens a sense that with rights (the right to education in particular) come responsibilities (e.g., compliance with professional norms or commitment of personal resources in cash or kind), and that it is every citizen's responsibility to participate in a democratic society.

CSs take significant time in their daily practice to explain to teachers how clinical supervision works, stressing that the job of the CS is to diagnose problems and the responsibility of the teacher is to follow the advice given. Again, CSs draw on a medicalized discourse in the way they talk about their work as clinical supervisors. CSs, however, frame the relationship between supervisor and supervised as one of mutual care and respect. Kwame, for example, was making a routine visit to a rural school in a small town in his circuit to inspect teachers' lesson notes. He arrived at the school early in the morning just after morning assembly as students dispersed to their classes. He waited until students were settled in and working before gathering the teachers from the primary and JHS together. Rather than collecting teachers' lesson notes for inspection, as is routine procedure when practicing clinical supervision, Kwame announced his mission for coming to the school that day. He also took time to remind teachers that his purpose was not to find fault and discipline them, but rather to provide advice so that they could improve

upon what they were doing. He stressed that the kind of supervision he was doing was quite different from the traditional supervision of the past:

> You see in this area we are not practicing traditional supervision whereby the circuit supervisor will write a bad report and also challenge teachers, only asking why you [teachers] haven't done certain things. This thing [traditional supervision] has been changed to clinical supervision where you go in to support teachers. That is my duty. If you do the wrong thing and I carry the message to the office, do you think I'm helping the school or you yourself? No. I need to correct you. But, if I make a correction and you don't take it, then I have to let the office know. So my coming here is to support you. Maybe one or two teachers have a problem in preparing their scheme of work. So, whatever you have done I will carry on my business and inspect your work so that I can correct you, and also advise you. (field notes 9.18.12)

Part of taking time to explain the parameters of clinical supervision to teachers is to make clear the distribution of responsibility. The CS is responsible for identifying and making corrections, but the teacher is responsible for accepting and applying the proscribed advice. Kwame makes clear that to simply report teachers' mistakes to the office without first advising them and giving them a chance to improve would be inappropriate and a failure on the part of the CS. But, he also makes clear that if he tries to help the teachers and they do not appropriately alter their actions, then it is his responsibility to report them because it is the teacher who has violated the norms of engagement for clinical supervision.

This subtle defining of roles and expectations, drawing the parameters around when CSs are and are not responsible for teachers' performance, is critical for CSs as they are under scrutiny and blame for the falling standards of education in the country. For CSs this also

illustrates the new moralizing form their job takes, when there are no longer rewards and punishments available for CSs to use to induce behavior change. For example, reporting teachers to the district office is a hollow threat, as there is little the district office can or will do to sanction teachers, as will be discussed at greater length below. Therefore, what we see here, in Kwame's interaction with teachers, is a clear moment that makes visible the kinds of negotiations, rationalizations, and work that CSs must do as functionaries of the Ghanaian state.

Therefore, for CSs, building rapport and gaining the respect and confidence of teachers, rather than demanding that teachers act in particular ways, "suppressing" them, is essential to their work and characteristic of the structure and authority of the state itself. The Ghanaian state now requires that CSs convince people to work, because the state can no longer compel them to by force or threat, because it neither has the capacity to do so, nor the political mandate. In this sense, the state today, and CSs' work within it, is constituted by the legacy of SAPs and democratization. SAPs diminished the central state's capacities, and democratization rationalized the removal of these capacities as desirable by making the state less capable of "suppressing" people.

Diminished Authority

As was noted above, CSs face significant challenges in navigating issues of power and authority. The difficulties they face come both from the teachers below them and those in the GES hierarchy above them. As a result, they have developed nuanced ways, that are not always productive to improving teaching and learning, of assessing how and when to respond to teachers about problems they find in schools. As of 2010, approximately 9,000 teachers were graduating from colleges of education every year, but as many as 10,000 teachers were leaving the

classroom for a variety of reasons (Cobbald & Asamani, 2015, p. 112). In addition, while the number of primary school teachers increased overall in the late 1990s and 2000s, the percentage of trained teachers declined; in 1999 72% of primary school teachers were trained, but by 2013 only 53% were. The ratio of trained teachers to pupils in the classroom as of 2013 was 59:1 (UNESCO & EFA-GMR, 2014, p. 8). This is part of the reality that CSs must confront.

Teachers know there are not enough of them and so their jobs are relatively secure and CSs are aware that the GES cannot afford to fire teachers, so disciplining teachers can be difficult. Bless observed that, "The government doesn't have enough teachers as it is, so they are careful not to threaten those who are in the classroom so that they don't lose them too" (field notes 3.3.13). CSs in both the Boto and Kuwai districts could not remember a teacher ever being fired. Teachers who did not meet professional expectations were regularly transferred to other schools or on very rare occasion their salaries were embargoed, but firing teachers was virtually unheard of. This leaves CSs in a bind.

Selorm, as are other CSs, was both frustrated and realistic about his situation and options in disciplining teachers. CSs were often blamed for not being firm enough with teachers, and for not writing them up and reporting them to the office, but Selorm reflected on how difficult it is to be firm when you do not have the support of the district office. Making threats of disciplinary action that are not followed through on can actually be more problematic than not for CSs:

> Officers [CSs] who go to the field to fish out information on practices on the ground, what protection are they given? You see, if I should go out and bring issue bordering on corruption and nothing is done to those people [teachers] by the authorities [those at the district directorate], do you think if I go there [to the school] next time those people will even regard me? No! Let's say it happens to David. David has seen something and

> reported it to the office and it was not treated well. So when David goes back to the school he faces a problem. The teachers do not even mind him. Seeing that will also make me feel reluctant that, ahh it has also happened to somebody so if I should do it the same thing will happen to me. So why wouldn't I keep quiet?. . .When we take the case [reporting a teacher] to the office, in the long run it is not handled well by the office, and it rather affects us. And you know that when you send that case to the office that is how it is being handled. (field notes 2.18.13)

Selorm stresses that the issue is not whether or not CSs are firm with teachers, or whether they are lax in their work, but that CSs have to make calculated decisions about how and when to be firm in order not to undermine their own authority. Being asked to go into the field and search out people who are not doing their jobs puts CSs in a vulnerable position. If they report teachers back to the office and nothing is done, then CSs quickly learn to either look the other way, or devise other means of addressing the problems they face as a fundamental part of maintaining their authority.

Selorm continues to explain that even though they are not supposed to, some CSs take small amounts of money from teachers to overlook things they find during supervisory visits, like improper maintenance of records or being absent without permission.

> Everyone likes to pass the blame. You see, when it happens like that [when CSs take small payments], some circuit supervisors may think that if they take money and leave the case to die it will be better. When they take the case to the office, in the long run it is not handled well, and it rather affects them. And you know that when you send that case to the office that is how it is being handled, and someone offers you money, the tendency

> is there that they may take it. So, such things may be going on. But, in the real sense, it shouldn't be so. (field notes 2.18.13)

While Selorm acknowledges that CSs really should not be doing this, he rationalizes that sometimes taking a small payment and looking the other way happens because there is little confidence that the district office will respond appropriately. In fact, being able to get a bribe is sometimes the best a CS can do to make a teacher realize or acknowledge that what they are doing is wrong. The giving and taking of small bribes should not be simply dismissed as petty corruption, but is part of the complicated terrain that CSs and teachers are navigating as they work to maintain and negotiate authority and keep schools functioning in less than ideal circumstances. It also is acknowledgment that CSs themselves are not perfect and can sometimes be tempted to take money. It is often easier and more lucrative for them to just turn their head the other way, especially when they themselves have little fear of being punished.

Shifting Values

Kofi was performing a re-opening check, a routine visit made by a CS to a school at the opening of each term to monitor teacher and student attendance and to motivate teachers to perform their best. Kofi gathered the teachers together and declared:

> The salary is nothing to talk about. But, all the same, if we handle ourselves and help the pupils God will help us. Our job is not a bad job. It is a noble one. It is only that Ghanaians don't see what it takes to be a teacher. If we do it from the bottom of our hearts God will reward us, not in Heaven, here (field notes 9.6.12).

Kofi's comment, "God will reward us, not in Heaven, here," was important, as it signaled one of the most salient themes cutting across all CSs' lives today; tensions between value attributed to

ethical and moral actions versus value accumulated in material wealth. The older generation, of which many CSs belong, talked about doing the work from their hearts. Anthony, for example, explained that inadequate budgets and no allowances has caused CSs to have to pay for things like fuel and supplies out of their own pockets, and while this was frustrating it had not prevented them for working because, "the work is from our hearts" (field notes 10.5.12). In contrast, CSs and other senior educationalists often complained that young teachers were in the profession today looking for money and were uncommitted to their work.

Christopher felt strongly that, in the past, teaching was a more prestigious profession and so educators were more committed to their jobs, but today there is little prestige in teaching so people find value in money instead:

> Teachers used to have prestige from it [teaching] and then society also recognized them and respected them as such. But now, as of now, money has engulfed them [teachers]. Money has engulfed all the workers. They want higher salary, higher pay. So, because of that people are not dedicated too much to the work as before. They are not dedicated to the work here. (field notes 3.18.13)

This is in contrast to many educators, particularly older ones, who recognized value as being attached to hard work, which was both moral and ethical and, therefore, rewarded by God in heaven and on earth. These kinds of complex negotiations that cross social realms and temporal ones alike are not secondary, but primary to CSs' daily work and form the undercurrent of monitoring and supervision itself.

CSs themselves, however, also face similar criticisms, particularly younger ones like Edward. It is not uncommon to hear older educators complain that, "Today CSs are small, small boys looking for money. There is no commitment to work. They didn't used to work for the

money, but these young, young ones are only looking for money. They aren't committed to the work" (field notes 3.28.13). CSs, therefore, are not distinct from or immune to the demoralizing depictions of public sector workers today. In fact, there is a growing literature looking at the deprofessionalization and demoralization of public sector workers (Dominelli, 1996; Ozga, 1995; Willis, 2005). I found that the CSs with whom I worked, like many of the public sector workers depicted in this literature, cared deeply about their work. They were invested in the well-being of the teachers with whom their personal and professional lives were intertwined.

Conclusion

CSs' official job description in the *CS Handbook* (Government of Ghana, 2012) specifically states that they are to promote "effective teaching and learning in basic schools." There is little recognition, however, of what CSs must actually spend (an inordinate amount of their time) in order to ensure even the most basic functioning of schools: helping teachers navigate the overwhelming challenges of teaching in under-resourced settings; instructing teachers without training how to manage overfull classrooms; strategizing with teachers about how to teach without materials; instructing teachers about the best way to combine multi-grade classes when there are not enough teachers; and helping teachers and children deal with the perennial problems that accompany schools that lack basic infrastructure like toilets, running water, and electricity.

CSs are also responsible for ensuring "effective school management," but there is little attention at either the decentralized or centralized level, or among IDOS, to what it takes to make sure teachers are regularly present and utilizing contact hours efficiently. The significant social work that CSs do outside of classrooms to ensure teachers are able to teach, like helping them

secure housing, navigate financial constraints, and provide general social and emotional support to teachers who are coping with the pressures and strains of teaching children in contexts of multi-generational poverty are not captured in official job descriptions.

The expertise, knowledge, and professionalism that CSs bring to their work is developed through years of on-the-job experience, including having been teachers themselves, which allows them to identify with teachers and build credibility as insiders who understand the struggles teachers face. The important morale building that CSs do with teachers, therefore, is grounded in a deep understanding of what it is like to be an educator in a field that increasingly lacks social prestige or opportunities to leverage expertise into professionalism. As Daniel articulates, "We are not raising ourselves. We make ourselves like one of them" (field notes 1.19.12). A significant part of a CSs' job, therefore, is the ideological labor they perform for the state, building commitment among teachers to the work of teaching in the face of significant personal, social, and political challenges, and promulgating particular models of participation, equality, and relationships of mutual dependence, support, or comfort.

The unofficial, but critical, responsibilities that CSs perform rationalizing with and encouraging teachers increasingly dominates their work, leaving little time to attend more directly to teachers' classroom pedagogy, provide in-service training and support for subjects that are difficult to teach, or help teachers strategize about how to support children who have fallen behind. These are the aspects of CSs' jobs that are most commonly identified by external bodies, like IDOs and the central MoE, as central to educational quality improvement. Yet, they are aspects of CSs' jobs that are very difficult for them to accomplish when the majority of their time must be spent in activities focused on legitimation and morale building, and as will be discussed at length in Chapters 6 and 7, data collection and report writing. When the focus is on

the official tasks that CSs struggle to fulfill, then it is easy to miss the nuanced ways that CSs compel teachers to work when salaries are not paid, when classrooms are under resourced, and when students come to school ill prepared to learn. What we see is a process in which the state constantly asks more and more of those at the bottom without providing the needed resources.

Chapter 6: Being Statistical: Data Collection and Reporting

Ghana, like all African countries, is under scrutiny to achieve the goals set forth by international frameworks such as Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To do so, the state is expected to collect and report on a growing body of indicators that are designed to measure what are considered universal aspects of educational system quality and progress across disparate countries. Within this framework of global educational assessment and accountability, political and administrative decentralization processes, which were in part undertaken with pressure and support from IDOs, position CSs to play an important bridging role. They are expected to work "down" to teachers and schools and "up" to IDOs and funders, collecting the kinds of data from the former that are necessary for the state's encounter with the latter development apparatus.[16] The focus on indicators and targets, and the attendant need this creates for ever more techniques and technologies of measurement and evaluation, feeds into a growing global audit culture (Jansen, 2005; Power, 1999).

In the 1980s and 1990s, alongside neoliberal SAPs, "audit," a term once associated with financial accounting, was ideologically broadened and entered into an array of new work domains, including education. The repertoire of meanings associated with social auditing came to include "'public inspection,' 'submission to scrutiny,' 'rendering visible' and 'measures of performance'" (Shore & Wright, 1999, p. 559). In the education sector, the global audit culture is focused on ensuring performance (e.g., making teachers sign performance contracts), quality assurance (e.g., the common public discourse of CSs as quality assurance officers), discipline

[16] For a further discussion on the development apparatus and the development industry see Mosse, D. (2004). Is Good Policy Unimplementable? Reflections on the Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice. *Development and Change*, 35(4), 639–671. Also see Ferguson, J. (1994). *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

(e.g., the increased, and increasingly interventionist, developmentalist concern over the indiscipline of teachers and students who show up late or absent themselves from school), and a range of other measures.

Audit culture, and attendant New Public Management, rely heavily on quantifiable measures and are fundamentally premised on the assumption that the collection of good data will reveal Truth, with a capital "T" (Merry, 2011; Strathern, 2000). Among IDOs and funders, those driving audit culture in the development industry at the global level, there is a sense that not only are the data necessary to achieve change by informing evidence-based practice (Davies, 2003), but the act of collecting data itself makes systems and people more transparent and accountable (Shore, 2008), leading to individual behavior change and improved educational quality. From this perspective, the collection of data can be thought of as a kind of ritualized performativity (Ball, 2003) of appropriate developmentalist identities. In contrast, this chapter will show how the ever increasing focus on collecting standardized data, following set procedures, and creating a paper trail as proof narrows the ways that actors like CSs are able and willing to do their jobs, and the quality of the jobs they do. CSs are well poised to understand and respond to the deeply social phenomena that underlie school supervision. In the recent past, such responses were considered central to their work—this is the work of clinical supervision described in Chapter 5. The growing focus that CSs "be statistical" in whatever they do, as will become clear below, is in tension with the relational and social work that CSs do.

Inspection provided a particular, top-down approach to engagement with schools and to building a respected professional identity. Clinical supervision replaced the inspection model, rendering this older model politically and socially outdated. Clinical supervision was cast by the state and CSs as morally superior work—work that might be harder exactly because it was more

democratic in its functions and outcomes. It required greater participation from CSs, teachers, and communities, but in turn it promised greater local control. The professional identities of CSs were transformed into democratic managers—of quality, of teacher labor, and of state and community expectations. This work is extremely difficult and requires CSs to navigate the tensions and contradictions between increased responsibility and decreased resources at the CS, school, and teacher level. CSs, however, identify the relational work this requires as one of the most important aspects of their job, and the one that is most central to their professional identity. The deterioration of state support for the relational work that is important to CSs' professional identity, therefore, results in a denigration of their position and legitimacy in the schools and communities where they work. This denigration is akin to the deteriorating prestige that teachers experienced in the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover, as will become clear, the increasing focus on "being statistical" actually hamstrings CSs from doing their jobs in the ways most likely to improve educational practice and to maintain their legitimacy.

CSs are an important part of the techo-rationalization (Mitchell, 2002) that renders education "statistical," and that provides the means of instituting state managerialism through reportage, standardization, assessment, filling forms, and data collection. This chapter will walk through the types of statistical interactions that CSs frequently engage in, illustrating how the collection of enrollment and staffing data, for example, are never just about collecting data themselves, but rather are always tied to a complex web of interests that deeply affect the shape, scope, and tenor of CSs' work. Below, I begin to describe and analyze the web of statistical relations that CSs navigate, starting where each school year begins: My First Day at School.

Capturing "My First Day at School"

It was September 4, 2012, the first day of the new academic year. This day is marked across the country with My First Day at School, a nation-wide activity initiated by the government in the early- to mid-2000s, to encourage enrollment for first-time students. In the Kuwai District, as was the case across the country, CSs and other GES officers from the District Directorate of Education divided into teams to visit schools, delivering juice boxes and little packages of biscuits, interacting with the children and teachers, and encouraging everyone to work hard and contribute to the development of the nation.

The annual activity is largely a public relations campaign, a visible way for the government to show communities its commitment to education. For CSs, this activity brought them, in a very visible and formalized way, into communities as government representatives. They carried the message, in the form of biscuits, juice, and motivational speeches, that the government cares about you and is invested in education for all children.

There was, of course, also a more immediate material interest to this activity for the state. In an environment focused on achieving EFA and the universal education targets embedded in the MDGs, accounting for and reporting new enrollment was an important way for the state to demonstrate progress towards achieving universal basic education, both internally to its people and externally to IDOs and funders. Investing a relatively small amount in the distribution of juice and biscuits was, perhaps, a good way to get children through the school door and officially enrolled at the beginning of the academic year, and of course accounted for in the enrollment data. Whether children stayed in school was another matter entirely.

As children ate biscuits and sipped on their juice boxes, CSs were tasked with filling out reporting forms, which they carried with them to record the enrollment numbers for new entrants in kindergarten class 1 (KG1) and primary class 1 (P1). Emphasis was placed on disaggregating

data by sex, an important detail in the current climate where achieving and documenting gender parity in schooling is a primary concern. In addition to enrollment, the form also had a space to record community participation (e.g., was anyone present from the community like SMC or PTA members). As has been discussed in previous chapters, "participation" is important to the notion of democratic citizenship and decentralized responsibility, and critical to the idea that local level governance includes support, investment, and "ownership" by the people. Documenting participation, therefore, was part of the decentralized accounting by the state of citizens' involvement at the local level. In actuality, participation, as recorded on the form, was distilled to simply indicate whether someone from the community was present, a largely procedural, rather than substantive, measure.

For My First Day at School, I was assigned to accompany Kofi, one of the more senior CSs in the district, two other GES officers, and a classroom teacher, Pat. Pat explained that teachers were chosen at random to participate in the event, but that also sometimes CSs and other GES officers came to the schools and observed teachers' output of work and how they taught. Those who were doing a good job, like herself, were selected to be part of special activities such as this. We traveled from school to school that day in a white 4x4 truck. "Ghana Education Service, Kuwai District," was stenciled in black worn letters across the side. After leaving the district at 9 a.m., we traveled down an unpaved road for about ten minutes before arriving at the first school of the day, one located in a semi-rural area of the district.

When we arrived, a number of teachers were gathered on the porch of the school chatting, some children wandered about the school compound, and others gathered in their classrooms. There was no teaching occurring on this day, nor is there usually an expectation that much teaching will occur during the first week of school, as students who do plan to attend

school during the year often appear a few days late. We greeted the teachers and the headmaster rang the bell to assemble the children. They responded promptly by gathering in the main schoolyard and standing in lines, facing the porch, grouped by gender and class (i.e., KG1, KG2, P1, etc.). Kofi addressed them, welcoming them all back: "God has brought you back to learn. If you want to be someone in the future like a doctor or a minister you must learn well" (field notes 9.4.12). As he talked, Pat and the other two GES officers passed out biscuits and juice boxes to the new entrants in KGI and P1 classes. Kofi turned his attention to the older children and advised them, "Be regular, come early, and be punctual. You are the seniors here. Do something good so the younger ones will learn." He then turned back to the younger children and also told them to take their learning seriously.

Before leaving, Kofi took the enrollment reporting form out of his bag and asked the headmaster, "How many new entrants do you have?" The headmaster shrugged and called the KG teacher over and asked her. Rather than consulting the school registry, the KG teacher turned toward the assembled children and counted the girls and boys standing in the KG1 and P1 lines and reported the number to Kofi, who wrote it down on the form. Because it is not common, or expected, that all students will come to school and be present the first week, and this is perhaps particularly true for the little ones, teachers and CSs alike did not take the data collection exercise that day particularly seriously, as it was not assumed that "real" enrollment data could possibly be collected. Thus, counting everyone on one particular day as "new entrants" was no sillier than the governmental assumption that on the first day of school, all or most students would be present.

Next Kofi inquired if anyone from the community was present. The teachers looked around, murmured amongst themselves, and then pointed to a man standing with Pat and the

GES officers, indicating that he was one of the parents. Kofi recorded his presence on the reporting form. When he finished, the form read:

> **New Entrants**
>
> KG1: Girls 12, Boys 14
>
> P1: Girls 5, Boys 7
>
> **Community Participation**: A patriotic citizen participated in the activities
>
> **Comments if any**: Teachers were in school to welcome us. It was a successful exercise (field notes 9.4.12)

At other schools we visited that day, events unfolded in a similar manner: children were assembled, biscuits and juice were passed out, Kofi visited with teachers and students, and reporting forms were filled out. At one school, Kofi explicitly told a teacher that he needed their enrollment statistics because, "The Director says we have to write a report" (field notes 9.4.12). Two days before the activity had commenced, the District Director had posted a notice on the announcement board at the office stating that no officers would receive their allowance for this activity without first submitting a report within twenty-four hours. The government, on occasion, gave a small amount of money to GES officers to participate in or carry out particular activities as motivation and encouragement to ensure that activities actually happened. Allowances were also used at times to cover the cost of expenses incurred, like fuel for vehicles. The government's payment of allowances for My First Day at School indicated the importance placed on the activity by the state. Interestingly, the payment of allowances is treated like an incentive by the government for its employees, when in actuality the government should already be paying allowances as a routine compensation for allowable expenses, but does not.

Kofi's job that day was to collect the required information and report it to the District Directorate, which he did. At times he would pull the form out at the very end as he was leaving, or he might lay it on the desk and gesture toward it as he talked and joked freely with teachers, who were clearly quite comfortable with him. Together they would fill out the forms, counting children, recording enrollments from memory, and only sometimes consulting the official class registries. Never were the data double checked or confirmed for accuracy. This was not a sign of corruption, but instead, as shown in the example below, reflected relationships of trust between CSs and teachers. It also perhaps reflected an understanding by CSs and teachers that official policy was out of step with what drove enrollments and attendance on various days.

At one school, for example, which participated in the national school feeding program, the cook had not come to work that day so many of the children left before the morning meal when they realized they would not be fed. As a result, the number of children in school when we arrived was quite low and the headmistress worried that this would reflect poorly on the school. Kofi eased her fears, expressing understanding and compassion for the situation. Trusting her, he asked how many children were enrolled and then recorded the number she gave. This was an important moment insofar as it illustrated the disparities that often exist between the number of children officially enrolled in school and the number who actually attend on any given day. For the purposes of this activity, who was in school was less important than who was supposed to be there. As was clear, even in the way forms were filled out, Kofi fore-fronted the relational aspect of his job, spending time talking with teachers, asking questions, addressing students, and first and foremost engaging with people. Filling in data on forms was secondary. To the extent that this prioritization was maintained, the numbers recorded were probably more reflective of average enrollments than the vagaries of enrollment on a particular day.

At the end of the day, after returning to the district office, Kofi and another one of the GES officers that had been with us, Christopher, reviewed each of the reporting forms that had been filled out. As they did so, Kofi instructed Christopher to inflate the enrollment figures so that they reflected the extra biscuits and drinks that we had left at the schools for the teachers and other children to enjoy. Kofi explained that he wanted Christopher to make the changes so that the management at the office did not bother him about it. Kofi's concern was not the accuracy of the enrollment statistic, but rather making the forms match the number of biscuits and drinks distributed, so that he did not experience the overblown administrative response such numerical mismatches generated. In other words, Kofi knew that explaining a mismatch between enrollment figures and the distribution of biscuits and drinks would be more of a nuisance than potentially dealing with falsely reported statistics.

Kofi's attention to the seemingly petty issue of accounting for the distribution of biscuits and drinks is actually quite telling as to where the focus of the developmentalist state resides. It is very difficult for local level government, much less the centralized state itself, to verify data, double check enrollment numbers, or tease about how and why numbers do not align. It is much easier to make a spectacle of something like unaccounted biscuits and drinks, and to blame CSs for syphoning goods or mismanaging their disbursement, acts which serve to draw attention away from much larger and more serious structural and material struggles of the state. Thus, CSs, such as Kofi, are made accountable for easily quantifiable material items that serve as proxies for deeper and more important forms of accountability. Kofi, and others, are savvy to this and adjust their behavior accordingly. And this is how the school year began.

Creating Reporting Instruments

It was a Monday morning in early September, and now the second week of the academic year. As is the case on most Mondays, the six CSs in the Kuwai District gathered at the District Directorate to plan their week's activities. Across the country it was normal practice for CSs to meet at the "office" (as CSs call it) on Monday mornings, check in and plan for the week, and then visit schools to perform supervision and monitoring activities Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Fridays were generally reserved for reporting back to the office and writing and submitting reports on what was accomplished during the week, as well as what challenges were met. That left only three full days a week for CSs to be in the field.

This morning, like others, Edward was the first CS to arrive, and was already seated at his desk working when I got to the office at 8:30 a.m. He informed me that Anthony had called a meeting that morning for all the CSs to sit down together and set their Action Plan for the term. The Assistant Director of Supervision's post was currently vacant, and until it was filled, Anthony, as the most senior CS, was unofficially standing in, helping direct and coordinate supervisory activities.

An Action Plan was a week-by-week roadmap that CSs were supposed to develop at the beginning of every term, laying out what activities they would carry out each week, including specific objectives and expected outcomes. This activity paralleled, at the decentralized level and on a much smaller scale, the focus at the centralized and also international levels on education sector planning, which was meant to create a roadmap for achieving goals and targets in a set period of time. At the centralized level in Ghana, national education plans were not made in a vacuum, but were created in consultation with and endorsed by IDOs. Ghana's *Education Strategic Plan 2010-2020*, for example, was signed and endorsed by UNICEF, DFID, USAID, UNESCO, the World Bank, the World Food Program, and the Embassy of Japan (Global

Partnership for Education & Ghana Development Partner Group, 2012). For CSs, creating Action Plans was embedded in this broader national and international context of educational planning.

When I asked Edward on the first day of school the previous week about the Action Plan for the term, he explained, "We can't set it yet because we have to know the programs that are coming first. You can't plan until you know all of these factors, or you plan for nothing. Maybe the management [the district director and the other frontline officers] will send you to a workshop for three days or one week. So, we have to wait before we set our plan" (field notes 9.4.12). It is often difficult for CSs to set and then adhere to Action Plans because they must accommodate unexpected meetings and trainings, deal with unforeseen conflicts and issues that erupt in schools, and attend to programs and projects that often require special attention, among other things. The volatility of their schedules and the expectation that they are responsible for responding to any issue that arises in their schools can make accomplishing normal supervisory activities, like observing teachers deliver lessons and giving constructive feedback, quite challenging. The form that the Action Plan takes, like the log frame, is linear in a way that does not match CSs' jobs. The tool they are asked to use to hold themselves accountable, therefore, is a deep mismatch with their actual efforts to attend to schools successfully. This kind of mismatch is not dissimilar from the way that the enrollment exercise that accompanied "My First Day at School" was also a poor fit for understanding who is in school, why, and how frequently.

At 9 a.m. Anthony arrived, setting his black shoulder bag on his desk and perching on the side as he talked to Edward. He had a gentle affect, but was serious about his work and had taken to mentoring Edward, who was new to the job within the last year. Without routine and comprehensive training for all new CSs, many must learn while on the job and rely on their more

senior peers to provide guidance and support. Anthony, as Edward's elder (both in age and job seniority), mentored him, and Edward was grateful for his advice. "Whenever you go to a school you are to write a report," Anthony instructed Edward, who took notes as he listened (field notes 9.10.12). "Include the purpose and give your feedback. If there is a need for follow-up then it will be done….This week you should make a report about enrollment and staffing, you should collect data on teachers," Anthony explained.

It was already week two of the term and the main designated activity, as Anthony indicated, was collecting staffing and more enrollment data. Week one had been largely focused on the collection of enrollment statistics for new entrants and ensuring that teachers and students alike were reporting for school. The first two weeks of the term were always concentrated primarily on data collection, rather than substantive supervision. The data collected, and the data collection process, was part of the way the government interfaced with its own employees (e.g. holding them accountable), its people (e.g., demonstrating oversight), and IDOs (e.g., being held accountable). This was illustrative of where CSs and their superiors were placing emphasis; the focus of work tended towards monitoring and gathering data and statistics for the district to report to others, drawing time and attention away from CSs' primary role as clinical supervisors.

It is important to note, as we saw in the example above, that when interacting with school staff around this form of data collection, CSs did not engage in supervision. One might, for example, imagine a situation in which schools were being asked to collect data for reporting and CSs were asked to play a clinical supervisory role in mentoring schools in how to do this most effectively or appropriately. One might also imagine a situation in which CSs were engaged with schools in data collection on, for example, enrollment, and they had the right and responsibility to strengthen data collection processes by reporting back on problems that existed with current

data collection processes (such as their timing, their incentives, etc.) This was not how CSs or schools engaged in these activities.

In the Kuwai District, at the beginning of the 2012/13 academic year, CSs were particularly concerned with collecting staffing information. There were a number of overlapping reasons for this focus. First, the district was having an unusual problem. Rather than the perennial issue of understaffing experienced in more rural areas, the district was overstaffed. Kuwai was a desirable place to work and live because it was located not far outside of Kumasi, which provided teachers with many opportunities to pursue further studies, engage in additional business activities, and live close to an urban center without having to pay the exorbitant living costs. This drew many teachers to the area, and due to inadequate mechanisms at the national level for regulating the disbursement, transfer, and engagement of teachers, Kuwai was overstaffed.

At the same time, IDOs, and hence the Ghanaian government, began to focus on "ghost workers" (people who receive paychecks, but were never or are no longer employed) as a major inefficiency of the system. The focus on ghost workers was not just a concern in Ghana, but part of a global policy and practice promoted strongly by the World Bank in the 1990s and 2000s as they tried repeatedly to argue that the problem was not that more resources were needed, but rather that inefficiencies just needed to be cleared from the system. In Ghana, in the early 2010s, ghost workers and payroll inefficiencies became such an issue for IDOs that the EU temporarily suspended budget support to the Ghanaian government until these nonexistent workers were cleared from the payroll. In this climate of heightened attention to accounting for workers, CSs were under pressure to collect comprehensive staffing information so that the directorate would be informed of its staffing situation, and assumingly could account to the national government

for it, if called on to do so.

CSs set out not only to document who was teaching in which schools, but also any and all staffing issues that arose, particularly evidence of non-performing teachers and those who had "overstayed." In Kuwai, overstayed teachers were those who had been teaching in the same school for eight years or more, after which period they were supposed to be transferred to another school in the district. Districts could set their own standards for how many years a teacher worked in a school before they were designated as overstayed. This was part of the decentralized authority given to districts, allowing them some latitude in the management of their own schools. It was thought that working too long in one place would lead teachers to be lazy and non-responsive to supervision and authority. CSs faced a similar protocol. They were supposed to be transferred between circuits every two years to keep them from getting too friendly with teachers and hence lax in supervision and the enforcement of discipline. Neither CSs nor teachers, however, were transferred as regularly as was expected, likely due to a lack of administrative capacity and the relatively low priority within the District Directorate to spend time and energy transferring teachers and CSs who were performing well in their current posts

Collecting data and reporting on staffing was, therefore, animated by this larger, multilayered, and relatively complex context, and having worked in the office for many years, Anthony was aware of these kinds of overlapping interests that put pressure on CSs to collect staffing data.

By 9:30 a.m. all six CSs had arrived and Anthony announced that he wanted everyone to sit down together to plan the weekly activities for the rest of the term, "I want us to design the itinerary for this term," Anthony began. "We have finished with week one, My First Day at School….Week two. What will we do?" he asked rhetorically. "I was thinking we should go to

schools to collect data on enrollment and staffing," Anthony said, answering his own question. Most CSs nodded in agreement, but Kofi pointed out, "Before we can do that we have to design an instrument to use to collect staffing data." There was general agreement and the CSs began to discuss the instrument's design.

Anthony advised, "As you collect information on staffing and enrollment, also collect information on school facilities. The data on school facilities should be part of your data collection on staffing and enrollment." He then gave examples of what to check for when collecting facilities data: ICT, library, urinal or toilet, and classrooms. Edward had continued to take notes, and as such was selected by the other CSs to draft the instrument they would use. Michael wondered out loud, "should the instrument also capture the number of years each teacher has been posted at each school?" Similarly, Kofi asked, "Is the date the teacher was posted to the current rank important to us?" Michael responded, "It is if we are talking about a teacher's promotion." Kofi added, "It is very important to have their [teacher's] contact numbers as well." The conversation continued for quite some time with discussion about whether or not the instrument should include columns to capture data on teacher transfers, the number of years a teacher has been posted to a school, and a host of other information about teachers' professional history.

Basic data like staffing information is routinely collected but, instead of a standardized form, CSs and their supervisors seem to be constantly re-designing and re-creating instruments. This is not just something that happened in Kuwai, but across districts and regions. On occasion, someone would produce a form from a workshop or training they had attended, or a copy of a form from the office files that had "INSPECTORATE DIVISION" scrolled across the top. But, rather than use these forms as they were, CSs and their supervisors would review and revise

them, or start anew, time and time again. Sometimes this was done because information was needed for a specific project, or because a funder was requiring particular data points, or wanted certain questions answered, or wanted a specific protocol used. Most of the time, however, it appeared that recreating forms was about tinkering with them, making sure the right kind of data were being collected, creating or changing categories, and negotiating and deciding through a collective process what did and did not belong. The instrument design process becomes a central moment in which CSs engage with one another, thinking through what it is they were doing and why. In other words, recreating forms through an interactive group process was a way of inserting their professionalism into a task that could otherwise be largely deprofessionalizing. At the same time, there seemed to be some administrative short-term memory loss that required this constant recreating of forms due to lack of copies of previous versions and inadequate record keeping.

Because each district seemed to be continually designing and redesigning their own forms and instruments, data forms were not uniform across time, space, or use. They were, however, standardized in the sense that the types of general data that CSs deemed necessary to collect were largely the same no matter where you went: staffing allocations, pupil enrollment, school infrastructure, and a range of measurable evaluations about students' and teachers' performance, such as lesson note preparation or the assignment and completion of exercises. Pressure for CSs to collect standardized data hollows out their expertise as clinical supervisors, which requires individualized and context specific knowledge, and instead shifts their attention to the collection of universalized (in some cases literally globalized) and externally-focused data, a deprofessionalized task. This is a moment of tension for CSs because this kind of data collection is not oriented toward relationship building or creating change in teaching practice. It

is more like what inspectors used to do, but without the power.

Pushing back against this kind of deprofessionalization, as will be evident below, CSs not only create a dialogic space around the design of data collection instruments, but they also often transform what could be moments of rote recording of data into robust interactions with those from whom they are collecting data. This preserves the relational nature of their work and affirms their professionalism as clinical supervisors, even when externally-oriented data collection itself becomes a central aspect of their supervisory work.

Collecting Staffing Data

The following day, Tuesday, I visited schools with Anthony as he met with headmasters and headmistresses to talk about the staffing situation in their schools, as was decided would be the focus of the week's activities the previous day. Anthony did not have a formalized version of the instrument that he and the other CSs had discussed, but he did visit schools with the explicit intent of collecting staffing data. After dedicating significant time to designing instruments, it was not uncommon for CSs not to use the forms created. It was hard to get access to computers and printers and there was virtually no budget for making copies of forms. Since printing and copying often cost CSs money out of their own pockets, they would do without printed forms, taking general notes in their notebooks or on paper instead, later to be transferred to reports. Before meeting me at the District Directorate, Anthony had visited two primary schools on his way to the office. He had made a last-minute decision to stop at the schools since he was passing by them anyway, a not uncommon reason why CSs went to schools for monitoring and supervision visits. He explained that, "At the first school there was a problem of too many teachers so we discussed the problem to see how to solve it. We decided that they should divide

the classes and find classrooms" (field notes 9.11.12).

It is important to note that Anthony's approach to dealing with there being "too many teachers" reflects the way he thinks about the teachers he supervises as colleagues and people, not just numbers. The solution he devises, therefore, is not simply to forcefully transfer people or fire them. In other words, his response represents a different understanding of and answer to the idea of what to do about too many teachers, than that desired by the World Bank, for example, which is likely to identify overstaffing as a system inefficiency, or label such teachers as redundant.

Anthony's impromptu decision to visit schools had delayed his arrival at the office that morning and we did not head out until almost 11:00am. Given that the day was creeping away, Anthony decided it would be judicious for us to visit schools within walking distance of the directorate only. The first school we visited was the government-run Islamic school closest to the directorate, where we met at length with the acting headmaster in his office. The visit lasted long enough that it was the only school we would make it to that afternoon. These kinds of prolonged supervisory visits were necessary from the perspective of clinical supervision; however, they were increasingly out of pace with expectations that CSs be effective and efficient in their jobs. When CSs stayed too long at a given school this created tension with the office because it often meant they did not visit schools the expected amount of times in a given period, or it would take longer than expected to reach all schools for each activity, delaying the number of activities that could be effectively completed in a term. But, when CSs stayed too briefly at a school this created tension with teachers, who felt CSs were not doing their jobs well. This could jeopardize CSs' authority and diminish teachers' respect for them. CSs were, therefore, constantly having to

triage the needs and interests of teachers and the office against their own.[17]

Below, rather than highlight only moments related directly to "data collection," I will take you into the school that Anthony and I visited and with us through the entire data collection experience. This will give a sense of the issues raised in this "simple activity" and how CSs handle them. This was a typical visit to a school with a CS to collect data on a school's staffing situation. Collecting data was the impetus for the visit, but the visit itself was primarily focused on one-on-one conversation between Anthony and the headmaster, teasing out major challenges and difficulties the headmaster was facing in the school and concerns he had (field notes 9.11.12).

Data collection. After greetings were made and we were settled in the headmaster's office, Anthony announced the reason for our visit, "I want to find out about staffing. Who is new and who is old here?" Before the headmaster could respond, however, Anthony decided that he should greet the staff himself and the headmaster nodded, leading us into an adjoining room where some of the teachers were working, preparing lesson notes and teaching materials.

The headmaster introduced Anthony to the teachers, some of whom were new and Anthony had never met. One of the older teachers spoke up immediately, "CS, it is a year now and I have not been paid." Another chimed in jokingly, "We need money!" "You'll be paid. You'll be paid," Anthony responded calmly. Then he paused and added, "Money is not the most important thing. The government is paying young teachers today while they study to get their diplomas. But, in the past, when I was going through training, it wasn't like that," he reminded

[17] There is a comparison to be made here with research done in medical anthropology on the complex systems and logics of triage, and their local and global convergences. For additional reading on triage see Nguyen, V. (2010) *The Republic of Therapy: Triage and Sovereignty in West Africa's Time of AIDS*. United States: Duke University Press.

them, indicating that they have it better than he did, and they should be grateful.[18] These kinds of offhand exchanges are significant insofar as they are part of the daily discourse that CSs engage in as they interact with teachers in schools. They serve to reinforce CSs' solidarity with teachers, affirming that they too have struggled, but also regularly emphasize the idea that material interests should not drive work or one's commitment to the job. This is an ongoing theme that CSs are constantly reiterating with teachers, and is particularly important given the reality that salaries are often delayed and schools, even when they are overstaffed, are still under resourced in terms of teaching and learning materials and basic infrastructure. Therefore, reinforcing to teachers that they must work regardless of circumstance is critical if teaching and learning are to go on.

The headmaster led us back to his office and as we left we could hear the teachers continue to laugh and joke, shouting, "CS, CS we need money. These are the kind of things you should be championing" (field notes 9.11.12). Anthony smiled, but did not respond. Sitting back in the headmaster's office, Anthony and the headmaster began discussing the staffing situation. The headmaster listed the teachers currently employed at the school and what they taught. As they talked, Anthony took notes. He asked if the school had any overstayed teachers and the headmaster responded, "There is a problem with overstayed teachers here. Some have been in the school fifteen or sixteen years" (field notes 9.11.12). "I know the problem is a general problem," Anthony responded and then added, "I told you to bring a list of overstayed teachers to the office." "I did," the headmaster protested. "The headmaster from this primary school did not bring his list," Anthony said. This particular school, as did many, had both a primary school

[18] At the time of this research, the government was providing teachers a stipend and paying their expenses for them to go through training. The following year (2013/14) the stipend was removed and teachers now pay their own way, forcing many to take out loans.

and a JHS, comprising one complete basic school. Ideally a primary school and JHS, even when on the same site, are run by different headmistresses or headmasters. In many places, due to staffing shortages, this did not happen, but in Kuwai, the situation of overstaffing allowed for a full complement of teachers and heads to be posted to most schools, including this one. "I brought *my* list," the headmaster reiterated. Anthony nodded, recalling that he did in fact remember seeing the list arrive. Supportive of the idea that overstayed teachers should be transferred, the headmaster commented, "I saw them [human resources] making transfers at other schools. It's a good activity." The District Directorate of Education, as did all directorates across the country, had a human resources department (HR) that could initiate transfers within the district. This was part of the decentralized responsibility given to districts so that they could at least minimally control teacher allocations within their administrative areas. HR was not, however, easily able to transfer teachers across districts, which is part of why Kuwai continued to have a problem of overstaffing.

Anthony queried the headmaster, "Has the primary headmaster overstayed?" "No," the headmaster responded, "It's only his fourth year." Pausing, and then leaning forward, he quietly said, "I don't want to talk much, but the head should have absolute control over his teachers, that is all I will say." Anthony nodded, understanding that the headmaster was indicating his concern over the way the primary school head was running his school. The headmaster shook his head and added, "The English over there is not good," a common concern in many schools where children speak English as a second language. This is particularly problematic, however, given that the BECE is given in English at the end of JHS. Children who do not learn English well often fail the test or perform poorly, in part because of language barriers. We sat in quiet for a moment before the headmaster spoke again, "To be honest, the BECE results were a blow to us.

It was very sad." The school had not performed well the previous year and there was agitation in the community and among the staff about why the children's scores were so low, with significant blame pointed at the JHS teachers. Compassionately, Anthony responded, "I saw your effort here," making it known that he did not blame the headmaster alone for the results.

The headmaster had been working to distribute the blame in the subtle comments he had made moments earlier about the primary school head. It was common for JHS teachers and heads to complain that they had inherited students unable to read and write at a level necessary to prepare for or perform on the BECE. Making it known that the primary students were not learning English and that the headmaster was not controlling his teachers was a way for the JHS headmaster to deflect blame from himself. But, Anthony was not there to rebuke the headmaster for the BECE performance of his students, although he was concerned about the situation and wanted to help find ways to improve performance on the BECE in the coming year.

Anthony and the headmaster continued to talk about challenges the school was facing. As a government-run Islamic school, children engaged in Islamic and Arabic studies first thing in the morning, taught by *mallams* (religious leaders). Then, at 9:30 a.m., they switched and began studying the regular government curriculum for the rest of the day, which was taught by GES teachers. This caused complications with what time regular GES teachers should report in the morning, questions about whether or not children and families were more focused on Islamic or secular studies, and difficulties getting through the regular curriculum in a shortened school day. Anthony made suggestions about how to deal with some of these issues: add time on to the end of the school day to make up for the late start; hold extra classes after school to help children catch up in areas where they lagged behind; only promote P6 students to JHS if they were competent in reading and writing; and work with parents to encourage them to give their children

psychological and moral support in their studies.

The headmaster implored Anthony to meet with the teachers to tell them all these things. “It would be good if you could come and meet with the teachers and give us some conditions to abide by and if they don't abide by them tell them that they will go.” The headmaster clearly felt that the CSs’ words had weight and were valuable in establishing expectations for work within the school. Anthony agreed that it would be good for him to meet with the teachers soon. Conversation wound to a close and Anthony requested the logbook so that he could record our visit. All school activities were recorded in the logbook, which served as a formal record for the district. Anthony wrote, “Visited the school to collect data and information on teachers and pupils and to discuss with head the causes of poor performance on the 2012 BECE.” All visitors to the school were supposed to sign the logbook, so we both signed our names below the entry.

The headmaster thanked Anthony for visiting and for his advice and walked us to the school gates. As we left he handed Anthony 5 cedis (roughly US$2), apologizing for not having water to offer us when we arrived, as per custom. Anthony took the 5 cedis and laughed. These small exchanges of money were important as they served, in this case, as a goodwill gesture, but in other cases as a way of offering small incentives to CSs to either look favorably on a school or to look the other way at a particular situation that may have arisen.

For Anthony, collecting data was not an impersonal exchange of numbers, or the rote filling out of forms. Rather, it was a dialogic process that included nuanced affirmations of recognition (Anthony assuring the headmaster he had noticed his effort), negotiation of responsibility (the headmaster pointing to the shortcomings of his colleague), and problem solving (Anthony’s suggestions about ways to improve student performance). In this way, Anthony was able to collect data, a central expectation by the District Directorate, while also

continuing to build individual and personal relationships with those he supervised, an important part of being able to cajole teachers to work in challenging circumstances, and central to his identity as a professional.

Reporting and Report Writing

A few months later, the school year was well underway and across the country in the Boto District of the Volta Region, CSs also struggled to maintain and assert their professionalism amidst similar pressures to collect data and report on findings in standardized and uniform ways, which whittled away at their autonomy and their ability to use discretion in the supervisory decisions they confronted daily. Standardization and uniformity are aspects of the de-localization of these processes, and of their value for external purposes, which helps explain why these data collection activities are often so shallow. The ways that CSs navigate this middle area of data collection start to reveal developmentalism and the missing middle that is inside that "black box of unknowing between development policy and its effects" (Mosse, 2014, p. 641).

The Assistant Director of Supervision in the Boto District, Mawuli, sat behind his desk reading through a stack of papers, marking them with a red pen, and then stamping and signing each one before turning to the next. "Most of the work CSs do is effectively on paper," he said looking up from his work and pulling two papers from the drawer, handing them to me and explaining that they were report sheets that the CSs were to use when they visited schools. One was for term reports of teacher performance and the other was to record teachers' output of work. Mawuli explained that it was important that CSs collect data as they visited schools, using these types of uniform reporting sheets, so the collected data could be easily compiled and sent to the planning department, one of the decentralized departments within the District Directorate

(field notes 7.9.12). Mawuli had created the instruments he showed me himself in the hopes of standardizing the CSs' collection and reporting of data. Thus far, however, he had not had much success in getting them to use the forms. CSs in Boto, much like in Kuwai, were not apt to use predesigned reporting forms that they had not themselves deliberated over.

CSs have long been expected to write reports. What was changing as external pressures to collect externally-oriented data increased was not report writing as a job responsibility, but rather expectations about the specific form and content that reporting would take. CSs had tended towards writing descriptive reports that included details about particular teachers, schools, and communities. From the perspective of clinical supervision, these reports were, in fundamental ways, diagnostic, focused on identifying the challenges that teachers and schools faced. There is a similarity to be drawn between the way doctors and nurses are being pushed to use checklists in order to address "faulty thinking processes" (Ely, Graber, & Croskerry, 2011), reduce patient harm, and improve medical outcomes (Gawande, 2009), and the way CSs are also being moved towards using pre-set checklists in data collection. In reality, however, the use of checklists in the medical field can lead to or put diminished importance on engaging with patients to learn their story and take an oral medical history. Checklists can also be externally oriented (e.g., insurance companies rewarding doctors for using checklists). This is not dissimilar from the way that CSs' focus is also shifted when checklist style data collection is encouraged and externally oriented. As one can imagine, this can have unintended repercussions in both clinical and educational settings.

In their own reports, CSs presented their professional assessment of a given situation, as well as provided a more straightforward recounting of activities undertaken in a set period of time. In these reports, CSs' professionalism was based on claims of knowing and

understanding—particularly places and people, but also educational practices and systems, such as classroom overcrowding, PTA tensions, and who controlled local resources. Now, however, Mawuli was under pressure from his superiors at the regional level to produce more "usable statistics," and was instructed that CSs' reports should be standardized and contain specific, more formulaic data. Therefore, he needed to change the style of CSs' reporting to conform to instructions coming down the pipeline from the regional level. This was often how "decentralization" worked in the quotidian.

The changes regional actors, and thus Mawuli, sought to make were not simply procedural adjustments to reporting style. Rather, they subtly and more fundamentally would reformulate the kinds of professional understandings and claims CSs could make to upper level management about what was going on inside schools and why. At a weekly meeting at the District Directorate, Mawuli gathered the eight CSs together and explained his expectations about how CSs would henceforth write their reports. "Writing reports, it's not like taking a paper and writing lengthy things for us [your superiors] to look at and summarize. Now there will just be an instrument you fill in. Reports will be largely based on the collection of standardized data using instruments" (field notes 3.22.13).

Mawuli encouraged the CSs to let what they saw happening in schools inform their reports, but he stressed that their observations must be translated into statistics in order to be legible and valid to their supervisors at the District Directorate: "All reports must be supported or covered by statistical data. Now there is too much writing in the reports you submit. Let's be statistical in whatever we do," he advised (field notes 3.4.13). The pressure to "be statistical," which was transferred down from IDOs and central and regional government offices, was a real affront to CSs' professionalism. It decentered the valuable work they did "in the field," the

phrase they used to signify their direct work, as clinical supervisors, with teachers in schools and communities.

These tensions about how to report on schools, and thus, in fact, how to supervise, played out in the routine interactions between CSs and their supervisors. For example, David, a CS in Boto, submitted his fortnight report to Mawuli, who flipped through the pages and then began to read the report out loud,

> The following were discovered during the period. Some of the teachers have not been stating TLMs [teaching and learning materials] and for that matter lessons are delivered in abstract. Those who stated TLMs stated them wrongly as it was evident in their lesson notes where you can see, for example, that they wrote pupils' textbooks, teacher chalkboard illustration, etc. Teachers did not indicate the time at which TLMs would be used during the lesson delivery process. (field notes 3.5.13)

"These are all general statements," Mawuli commented in a dissatisfied tone. Riffling through a pile of papers on his desk he grabbed a standard reporting format sheet he had designed and handed it to David, instructing him, "Use this format and I will know the information specifically." The form had a chart for David to fill in, indicating each teacher's name and then subsequent boxes that could be checked or filled in indicating if a teacher did or did not have a variety of TLMs, how many, what kinds, if the teacher did or did not use them properly, and so on and so forth. The information captured on this particular reporting form relied mostly on David filling out pre-designated boxes, rather than summarizing his findings descriptively.

CSs in Boto were clearly being pressured to use instruments and report more standardized data, but, much like Kuwai, CSs were continually resistant to reporting rote data. In fact, over the course of the term, Mawuli repeatedly counseled the CSs under his charge about

being more statistical, and time and again I observed CSs turn what could have been moments of depersonalized data collection into individualized supervisory exchanges with teachers.

There was a long silence as David looked over the reporting form and then looked back through his own report, comparing the two. “If people [teachers] are doing something wrong, what do you do?” Mawuli asked David. “I caution them,” David responded. Wonder, who had just been promoted to the office as a CS a few months earlier, had quietly entered the room and stood next to David. She was one of the few CSs I knew who actually carried around a copy of the *CS Handbook* (Government of Ghana, 2012) in her portfolio as a reference tool. Wonder joined the conversation, seconding David’s suggestion, “We [CSs] don't need to write a report on it [what the person has done wrong]. We can organize a conference with the person after our monitoring” (field notes 3.5.13).

Both Wonder and David made clear that their first line response to a problem with a teacher was to address the teacher directly, not to report them to the office in writing. Indeed, CSs across districts consistently centered problem solving, not report writing, as an important professional value. Anthony, back in Kuwai District explained, for example, that having good problem solving skills was what actually made CSs good at their jobs.

> We work with people. If you are not that tactful and not resourceful there will always be a lot of problems. And the more you report every issue to the District Director he will think that you can't do the work. You see, when you report every issue, the smallest issue, "sir, my teachers are fighting.” “Sir, my pupil has done this,” “Sir my teachers are doing this." It shows that you are not a problem solver. Eh heh, so as much as possible as a circuit supervisor you need the skills to solve and handle issues and situations. You must be able to convince and mediate, and use all those skills. (field notes 6.29.12)

Anthony, as did other CSs, rarely if ever talked about report writing and data collection as something that improved teaching and learning in schools, or that helped CSs work with teachers. Being able to solve problems and issues independently without reporting every issue to the office was an important part of CSs' autonomy as professionals and was central to their feelings about their own efficacy. As noted earlier, it was also likely central to their capacity to improve teaching practices. Sending in reports, to which there were no effective responses, did not result in useful feedback to teachers about their teaching, other than the notion that they could do what they wanted with no external repercussions. Pressures, therefore, to have CSs constantly report back to the office so that the office could make decisions about what actions should be taken were at odds with CSs' sense of professionalism and undermined their use of discretion.

CSs were juggling contradictory logics; they were the closest actors to teachers, responsible for guiding and supporting them, but they were also now supposed to assume a more objective and distant stance, tasked with collecting and reporting to the office. This objectivist and distanced stance differed in important ways from the stance of the inspector because it did not appear to be linked in any clear way to school improvement, and because this form of engagement had previously been politically delegitimized. The more CSs focused on collecting and reporting data as the office wanted, the further removed CSs were from teachers and the less likely they were to be able to positively affect teachers' classroom practices, and hence educational quality, a major objective of their job.

David, Wonder, and Mawuli continued to negotiate expectations about how CSs should respond to problems they identified in their schools. Mawuli, responding to David's and Wonder's claim that they should address teachers directly when issues arose conceded that this

was an acceptable response, "You are doing your job. That's good," he said. But, he then stressed the need to collect and report standardized data, emphasizing that it was actually the data itself, and not CSs' assessments of situations, that would reveal the real problems schools faced to the District Directorate, "Using instruments to identify specific challenges is necessary. The challenges will be reflected in the information collected in these instruments….and at the end of the day we at the office will know where a teacher has a problem" (field notes 3.5.13). Mawuli not only placed emphasis on CSs following a standardized reporting format, but in the process also reinforced the idea that collecting the right kind of data in the right kind of way would reveal some kind of objective truth about what was happening in schools.

This kind of data collection as truth telling, however, continually draws attention away from underlying structural and material constraints that educators face and rather focuses on what teachers are or are not doing, as if their actions as individuals are itself the problem. For instance, data may make more visible which teachers report to school late, but it will not as readily reveal the challenges teachers face finding housing in the communities where they work, or that teachers who have to travel longer distances from home to work without reliable transportation are more likely to routinely report late to work. Or, data may bring into focus which teachers regularly prepare their lesson notes, but they are less likely to reveal whether those same teachers are able to adequately deliver the content of their lessons in an accessible way to their students in the classroom. Fore-fronting CSs' value in terms of collecting and reporting data for the District Directorate or other external actors to use, rather than teasing out teachers' challenges and responding to them, is deprofessionalizing and it is non-participatory. The implication for CSs is that they, CSs, should not be trusted to use their discretion in the practice of their jobs, that all action should be informed and driven first by data, and that they

should act based on decisions made by those above them.

Deprofessionalization happens, in part, by devaluing CSs hierarchically, by reinforcing a top-down and managerial system of educational administration that constrains CSs' ability to respond to and work with teachers to address the perennial challenges they face. When CSs are primarily tasked with collecting and reporting data for other actors to use, this largely reinforces CSs' utility as cogs in a top-down and undemocratic process in which their (and teachers') voices, opinions, and interests are minimized and often cut out of decision making processes altogether. Not only is this fundamentally undemocratic, but it also effectively minimizes substantive participation at the grassroots level, making decentralization a largely hollow act of democratic governance. Lastly, this type of data collection is also ineffective, making it even more difficult for CSs to support teachers and schools in their efforts to improve quality without improving financial resources. It is ineffective because it basically cuts out the bridging capacity of CSs' role, which is exactly what is wanted from them theoretically

The requirements for collecting standardized data and the simultaneous expectation of practicing clinical supervision and responding to individual teacher, school, and community needs results in complicated internal and external contradictions. CSs must navigate these contradictions, which have significant implications for their identity as professionals. On the one hand CSs are to be objective data collectors, and on the other hand they are expected to build relationships within each school and community that are reflective of deep understandings of localized needs and challenges, the kinds of things that are not meant to be and often cannot be captured in universalized measures. The objectivist and universalist stance that CSs are expected to assume in the collection of an increasing body of statistics is actually deeply deprofessionalizing in that it does not require any particular kind of expertise, special

knowledge, or training. In contrast, the requirement of localized knowledge needed to practice effective clinical supervision is much more professionalized in that it necessitates a broad and nuanced understanding of pedagogy, school practices, and local contexts.

This tension between the deprofessionalized and professionalized aspects of CSs' work is further confounded because local knowledge is what IDOs and the state are counting on when they hold CSs responsible for policy and project implementation. But IDOs and the state are overloading this mode of professionalism with constant demands, using it for new (and sometimes not well aligned) purposes from CSs' perspectives. At the same time, the types of IDOs who rely on CSs' local knowledge mistrust that knowledge when CSs make evaluations or respond based on their professional discretion. Thus, there is a simultaneous increase in focus on universal and objectivist measures that deprofessionalize CSs, while there is also a rise in demands on CSs to serve as local experts. It is these deprofessionalizing and professionalizing tendencies that create a difficult and contradictory professional identity for CSs, which often results in a lose-lose situation for them.

Moments of Confrontation

CSs do not take lightly their subjection to processes which disentangle them from the lives of teachers and undermine their use of discretion and judgment in assessing and responding to the complex challenges that their schools and communities face. In discrete moments of confrontation, these tensions boil up and are aired. Dela, for example, in a disagreement with his boss, Mawuli, over how to sanction a teacher who had vacated his post, vocalized his frustration, "Management [front line officers in the District Directorate] doesn't trust CSs." Mawuli responded, "You are surprising me….the administration in the office was not aware of the

problem and meanwhile you were working on it. The information came late to the office." Dela, now very hot, slammed his hand on the table and stood up saying, "If you don't trust the circuit supervisors, then I see no reason why we should work with you." Mawuli cut off Dela, quickly responding, "We don't work on trust in government departments. We don't work on trust. We work on principles" (field notes 5.3.13). Trying to cool the situation down, as Ghanaians are apt to do, Daniel came over to the table where Mawuli and Dela had been sitting and tried to point out that the issue the two were arguing about was general, not personal, and that they should not be getting so angry with one another.

By this point, however, Dela and Mawuli could not let the argument go. Dela sat back down and Mawuli began discussing with him how he should have written a report about the matter to inform the office. Dela, still displeased responded, "Why do you trust a written report!" (field notes 5.3.13). This was a poignant and very human moment that made clear the struggles CSs face to maintain respect and authority in a managerial system of oversight and accountability, moving away from valuing and trusting people to work for each others' good. For CSs, writing reports was not just time consuming and burdensome, it also fundamentally devalued them as people and professionals, undermining their work in schools and communities, on the frontlines of the state.

Mawuli, taken aback, explained, "The way you handled the situation is not the issue. But, you should have written a report on it. The teachers will take you on and if you have not written a report about it you can't do anything to defend yourself. You can't show that you have done the right thing" (field notes 5.3.13). Mawuli had himself switched into the mode that CSs often used when supervising teachers he was now trying to calm Dela and explain that the reason he wanted Dela to write a report was for his own protection, ensuring that if teachers challenged his

decision he could stand firm against their accusations. It was common for CSs themselves to use this tactic with teachers, explaining that teachers had to do particular things, like mark school registers and keep proper records, as a means of protecting against future problems that might arise for them if they did not. This aligned CSs (and in this case Mawuli), with the interests of those they supervised, refocusing record keeping and report writing around self-protection and self-interest, while decentering the seemingly bureaucratic and deprofessionalizing work that accompanied such reporting. Significantly, the kinds of interactions that Mawuli was engaged in with Dela, and that in turn Dela engaged in with teachers, were part of how accountability in the form of records and reports was not only instituted by the state, but also negotiated and rationalized by its frontline workers. This institutionalization of accountability, however, was not taken lightly, as was clear in the animated frustration that Dela expressed as he engaged with Mawuli.

It was quiet for a moment and then Mawuli added, "You must be principled in your work" (field notes 5.3.13). The two men sat in silence for a few minutes and then, more subdued, talked at length about what kind of reports and letters should be filed and the differences between work reports and situational reports. Mawuli explained that Dela was expected to submit a situational report for issues such as this one, where a teacher has vacated his post and the District Directorate needed to take action. In the end, the two agreed that once proper documentation was in place, the District Directorate would attempt to embargo the teacher's salary.

The issue of "trust" versus "principles" is important and is at the center of much of the professional tension CSs navigate. "Trust" can be read as an expression of old forms of work, where professionals commanded authority and respect, as did the state itself. The state expected educational professionals to work with discretion to determine their responses to teachers and

schools, and they did. In the Ghanaian state today, however, the state has lost its authority and its ability to compel workers to labor. Therefore, "principles" can be understood as forms of oversight meant to ensure that workers conform to particular expectations about how, when, and where they perform their jobs. CSs resent the loss of trust, in part, because it translates into a loss of autonomy, authority, and latitude in how they can perform their jobs, often making it much harder to meet the needs of teachers and address problems in their schools.

Conclusion

Data, assessment, and reporting structures that are being used in the education sector attempt to universalize away from local relations and politics through the collection of abstracted data. In relation to CSs, abstraction occurs when CSs, who know the people and places that animate the data, are excluded from both selecting what data are important to collect and of making sense of what is collected. What results is largely anonymized and decontextualized numbers that are used to represent people and their lives. In this abstraction, there is an effort to reorient actors away from each other (or to valuing each other) and toward an instrumental use of each other.

This is part of the move inherent in audit culture to seeing people not as people, with complex and dynamic lives, but rather as "units of resource whose performance and productivity must constantly be audited so that it can be enhanced" (Shore & Wright, 1999, p. 559). If CSs are allowed to generate and interpret data, it also means they are allowed to bring to life people and their worlds, which disrupts the process through which people can be abstracted and made "units of resources." One of the major problems, however, is that the more CSs are cut out of the process of generating the categories of data deemed important and interpreting and responding to

data once collected, the more likely a gulf between what is actually happening in schools and communities and the kinds of responses that are devised to address them.

Chapter 7: Managerial Morality

The managerialist state is constituted through and constitutes both technical and moral techniques of governance. Chapter 6 focused on how CSs' work is being made into part of the techno-rationalization of the developmentalist state. This chapter focuses on the moral and normative sides of managerial governance and moments when managerialism not only intersects with moralized discourses, but itself becomes moralized as part of the discourse of governance itself. Pierre (1999) identifies two major dimensions in which local government can be assessed: democratic-participatory and managerial dimensions. From a democratic-participatory perspective, "local government is an instrument for the management of political conflict" and in contrast, from the managerial side, "local government is seen as a public organization resolving collective needs and interests through service production and delivery" (Pierre, 1999, pp. 377-378). There are tensions between these two modes of governance, which place often contradictory demands on local-level actors. In many countries, including Ghana, managerial governance has come to dominate over participatory-democratic modes of local governance.

Treating workers primarily as "units of resource" (Shore & Wright 1999, p. 559) is not only central to audit culture and managerial governance, but is part of the larger neoliberal social project to transform people into self-managing individuals. As this happens, it is not only daily tasks that change (e.g., collecting data and writing reports rather than providing regular pedagogical support), but also the way people conceptualize the work they do, its value, and purpose. In so doing, the meaning of the state and people's relationships within it are transformed; emphasis is on enhancing the efficiency of public service delivery and output performance, with a focus on management as an essential task across all sectors of public and

private life, of which there is a blurring of the spheres. Management itself, for example, was a moral and normative value that CSs equated with good leadership, part of how they described themselves as professionals, and an essential part of their job in the developmental state (e.g., managing the human capital of the nation).

Moral anthropology points us towards the need to think about the moral dimensions of governance and the importance of analyzing morality as a critical domain of commonsense. Fassin (2008), for example, calls for a moral anthropology, "which has morals for its object – in other words, which explores how societies ideologically and emotionally found their cultural distinction between good and evil, and how social agents concretely work out this separation in their everyday life" (p. 334). CSs, as state agents and citizen actors, draw on and deploy deeply moralized discourses in the everyday practices of school supervision and educational management in the evaluations and judgements they make, for example, about who is a good or bad teacher, what kinds of parents are and are not responsible, or when and why the state is or is not to blame for educational failures.

The moral discourses and practices of managerial governance that CSs draw on and deploy will be explored below. The first half of the chapter looks at the way in which CSs conceptualize their job as managers and in turn the close relationship imagined between management and leadership. As will be evident, CSs make a particular moral and normative evaluation about management as an essential quality of good leadership. The second half of this chapter hones in on the institutionalization of the new performance appraisal system that is supposed to be used to evaluate workers across all public sectors in the country, including the GES. Performance appraisal presents a cogent illustration of how managerial forms of governance tend to override democratic-participatory ones. This is again a good example of data

collection, but also of the ultimate form of universalization, which makes evident the absolute transformation of the potential for participatory or bottom-up performance appraisal.

Managing Human Beings

The conceptualization of people as something to be managed comes in large part from human capital theory, which is the now predominant framework through which education and national development are understood in Ghana, as was discussed in Chapter 1. Human capital theory argues that education increases people's productive capacity and that a nation's level of development is dependent on their stock of human capital. Hence, educators are tasked with managing the nation's most valuable productive resource, and management metaphors feature predominantly in the way CSs frame educational work.

The organizational, political, and bureaucratic environments in which CSs work have a profound influence on the overarching way they frame their professional worlds and identities. For CSs, management and managerial activities not only featured prominently in explanations of and rationalizations about what kinds of teachers were and were not good at their jobs, but they were also central to how they conceptualized their own roles and responsibilities. They often described themselves primarily in managerial terms, even in response to questions that in no way indicated such a focus. When asked what makes a good leader, for example, Kwame explained, "A leader has to manage, but a manager may not be a leader" (field notes 9.18.12). Similarly, Edward noted that, "Those who are working with ladders and trees, forestry people, their resources are trees. But, we CSs are managing human beings...and managing human beings is not easy" (field notes 10.8.12). There is consistency across regions and districts in the way that CSs talk about human management as a core function of work.

There are also clear and identifiable management qualities that CSs use to distinguish good leaders from bad ones, and leadership itself was in turn primarily defined in managerial terms. Edward was particularly articulate about the frequently discussed relationship between good management and good leadership.

> You see, a leader should be fair and firm. You must champion the aspiration of those under you. Sometimes it's a reality. You don't have to close your eyes on realities. Sometimes you have to encourage their heart…. you use small things to achieve something big as a manager. Not that every time there should be huge resources before you can work and achieve results. We call that being efficient and effective. Sometimes I have to use something small to achieve something big. That's when I say, "This man is an effective leader." If you select five leaders and give them such an amount, a mere $1,000, others will use it effectively and achieve something bigger. Others will complain that, "this money is small." So, it's like, what do you call it? Management styles. (field notes 10.8.12)

Edward was alluding to the "do-more-with-less" efficiency mantra, which was not only part of how the hollowed, neoliberal-developmentalist state today came to exist, but also a defining feature of how people within it are required to function. The outcome of CSs' management activities was dependent on how individual people managed (themselves and others), and thus management itself was a ubiquitous part of being an individual in the Ghanaian education system, and indeed the state. Some people were better at managing than others and, therefore, some people thrived while others did not.

For example, Edward recognized that the government did not always release funds through the capitation grant to schools in a timely fashion and that resources were often scarce.

But, he stressed that in schools what made good leaders were headmistresses, headmasters, and teachers who managed scarce resources well and made meaningful progress with what little they had. This kind of management of scarce resources was exactly how the education sector was able to function at all in its current hollow form and, therefore, good management was both a normative value and also a material reality of schools that still functioned. Efficiency and effectiveness were no longer just expectations of work, but became central to Edward's conception of thriving itself and part of how he evaluated people and the work they did.

What mattered most to Edward was not the amount of resources given to a person (there would always be too little), but rather the way a person managed themselves, drawing on and cultivating their personal abilities, ingenuity, and attitude. In other words, developing their human capital and the efficiency with which they put it to use. This parallels the World Bank's constant refrain that the problem is not fundamentally the amount of money or resource available in a sector, but rather the efficiency of its use. This translated into a focus on the values of empowerment and self-actualization, the "guiding principles" of audit culture and managerialism (Shore & Wright 1999, p. 559). These themes, which Edward explicated, were also closely aligned with his own worldview and life experiences. As detailed in Chapter 4, Edward was particularly entrepreneurial and saw his work in the education sector as a stepping-stone to greener pastures. He was constantly managing multiple small enterprises and desperately wanted to make it to America, which he eventually did.

Edward was not the only CS, however, to hone in on the "guiding principles" that animated the logic of audit culture. Daniel, for example, as also discussed in Chapter 4, focused on "self-realization" as a central personal value and part of how he made sense of whether he and others were on the right path in life. For Daniel, self-realization meant knowing what you wanted

and forging ahead to get it. Like Edward, for Daniel, in an environment of constraints, forging ahead meant doing more with less. CSs' focus on being efficient, both in the personal pursuit of goals and in the professional management of schools, is well aligned with a robust literature on the "rising tide of 'efficiency' in contemporary education" (Welch, 1998, p. 158; Winkler & Sondergaard, 2008). Efficiency, therefore, has emerged as both a personal value and part of the material reality of managerial governance.

While there was always a lack of resources, a systemic challenge, Edward's gaze was individualized, focused almost exclusively on how people chose to respond to systemic constraints, rather than honing in on the constraints themselves as the primary problem. He saw it as a CS's job to encourage teachers: "champion the aspiration of those under you" and "encourage their heart," he said. While Edward took it as his responsibility to be a champion for teachers, he squarely placed the responsibility for the achievement of results on each individual under him. From Edward's point of view, people chose to be "efficient and effective" or they chose to "complain." This framing continually brought individual responsibility to the fore, while obscuring systemic challenges and constraints. Constraints were recognized as a fixed reality; what people chose to do about them was the dynamic and meaningful variable that was the focus of management and, hence, the work of leaders such as CSs.

Management and morality

Kwame was frustrated with the behavior of many of the head teachers under his supervision after having spent a day visiting schools in his circuit checking teachers' lesson notes. He had found that many teachers were writing incomplete notes that lacked detail and failed to indicate what teaching and learning materials they would use, yet the heads were

signing off on their teachers' lesson notes without corrections. In addition, when he talked with teachers about how things were going in their classrooms, teachers expressed frustration because they did not have books for children to learn from. One teacher, quite distressed, explained that, "The children do not have reading books; it is only me [the teacher] that has a personal copy that I use. I write the passages on the board for my students, but by the time I have written the passage the time is spent" (field notes 9.17.12). When Kwame asked the teacher what his headmaster had suggested he do, but the teacher shrugged and indicated that the head teacher had not spoken with his headmaster about the problem. Kwame was quite irritated with the headmaster as he expected him to be aware of what was going on his classrooms and proactive about the challenges that his teachers faced. Before leaving, Kwame advised the teacher to borrow books from nearby schools, collect other reading materials like newspapers for children to practice reading from, and to diversify his lessons so that children did not only focus on reading, but also practiced their writing and composition skills.

As we drove back towards the District Directorate, Kwame talked at length about the relationship between head teachers' administrative approaches and their leadership within their schools:

> Always, you [heads] need to be where the teachers are to help them solve their problems. There needs to be a cordial relation between you and your teachers. There are different types of what? Administration. Some will operate under autocratic, some people will be laissez-faire, some will be so, so, and so leadership style. But, as a head, when the teachers are not cooperating with you it means some of your style of leadership is not good. (field notes 9.17.12)

Kwame then paused before turning his attention towards himself, using his own approach as an example of how good leadership was practiced. He had a strong moral lens and focused primarily on his responsibility to teach people to do the right thing. If a teacher failed to comply with his supervisory recommendations, it was not his fault and he was then compelled, and justified, in initiating disciplinary action.

> I am fair and what? Firm. But, I always teach you [those he supervises] how to do the right thing. So, if after teaching you how to do the right thing, you are not doing it, I will give a query, because I have done my part…After explaining all these things to you, if I come back and find out you have not done the right thing, what is my next line of action? I have to give you a query to explain why you are not doing the right thing. So, based on that question, if I am satisfied I will keep it. If I'm not satisfied I will recommend it to the Director for you to be transferred or for him to invite you to the disciplinary committee. (field notes 9.17.12)

For Kwame, as for others, "do the right thing" was both a moral statement and an administrative prescription, translating management and administration—CSs' primary duties—themselves into the moral realm.

Approaching supervision from a moral register was an important way for CSs to rationalize their own determination to develop a professional career with few financial benefits. It was also central to their appeal to teachers (who of course faced similar professional pressures), tapping into overarching social values of self-management, self-realization, and empowerment, which were aligned with the overarching neoliberal ethos in the country. The cultural dimensions of neoliberalism and neoliberal moral restructuring have been documented in other places as well, such as Uganda (Wiegratz, 2010). At the same time, however, CSs also still

drew on older forms of morality that were more aligned with the socialist era and tapped into nationalism and solidarity, making moral appeals to development and nation building that seemed to echo Nkrumah's and even Rawlings' appeals to education for Mother Ghana.

It was far more likely that CSs could get teachers to change their behaviors by making moral appeals for action, than if they relied on a system of sanctions and punishments, which were not tools readily at their disposal. This approach to align behaviors with certain expectations through an appeal to individual moral righteousness and empowerment, of course, also mapped onto the democratic and decentralized state itself, which builds authority and legitimacy through complex moral discourses about citizens' rights, freedoms, and responsibilities. CSs brought these discourses to life, deploying them through their supervisory practice, as they recruited people (teachers in particular) to engage with the state on moral grounds. Moral discourses of governance were effective at making people personally responsible for the systemic successes or failures of the state, reinforcing a deeply individualized culture of accountability in the quotidian.

Dela, in the Boto District, for example, made a surprise visit to a school in his circuit early one morning, arriving before the teachers' official reporting time. Dela grabbed a chair and sat at a distance under the shade of a tree in the school compound and observed as teachers arrived, noting the time that each signed the time book, an official school record. At 7:45, the official reporting time, few teachers had reported to work. Dela waited patiently to approach the school and make his presence known until most of the teachers had arrived for work. Once he was satisfied that enough were present, he walked to the porch of the school and announced his visit. Rather than send the teachers, who were already running late, to the classroom to teach he gathered them together to discuss what he had just observed. Consulting his notes as evidence,

Dela began,

> The first teacher came at 7:55, the head came at 8:00, and the last teacher came at 9:33am. There is too much lateness at this school. 95% of the staff came late. It's not the best. At 7:45 everyone should be at school. So let's try it. Let our conscience be our guide. What is right, we know it. When guided and directed by our conscience we will know the right thing….So, keep to our time and have commitment to our work and we can make it. (field notes 1.10.13)

Rather than threaten the teachers with a formal administrative sanction, such as the withholding of pay or reporting them to the office, Dela made an explicit moral appeal, insinuating that the teachers were acting without conscience and that this immoral behavior would have a detrimental effect on teaching and learning. Importantly, Dela did not distance himself from the teachers he supervised, but rather aligned himself with them by using phrases such as, "our time," "our work," and "we can make it." In so doing, Dela created a sense of shared responsibility and morality, implicating himself in the actions of those he supervised. The morality that governed personal and professional conduct was not something that Dela distanced himself from, but rather included himself in, tying his own professionalism to theirs.

This is an example of what good leadership and management looks like, but it can also be read as an effort to build a "community of practice" in which different norms make individual accountability an aspect of group accountability. Regardless, CSs are part of a larger project of public service reform that has made them both the subjects and agents of change. They are not only being constituted as managers, and are themselves managed by normative techniques, but in so becoming they have learned to manage in deeply moral and normative registers.

CSs' use of moral and normative discourses may have been prodded not only by the

management techniques that they experienced, but also by the management techniques available for success in a system with few clear mechanisms for disciplining teachers. The Ghanaian state cannot effectively dangle rewards in front of teachers (like promising a promotion), or threaten them (we will report you), because the state has little, if any capacity for either rewards or punishment at this time. The effects of the SAP on the state's control of the civil service in particular emphasizes the hollowness of the state's reach. Normative regimes and moral registers are one of the most accessible and effective tools CSs can and do employ, both out of practicality, and because of their own belief in the rightness of the morality they govern through.

It is worth noting that these forms of management are also discursively privileged in participatory development and democracy discourses, which link morally steeped arguments about the rightness of the participatory approach and process itself (e.g., the potentiality for empowerment) with material claims to efficiency and sustainability (Cleaver, 1999). Lastly, as a final note on the complexity of how and why moralizing works and is so powerful as part of managerial governance, it must be acknowledged that much of the moralizing that CSs do is steeped in religious overtones, which resonate powerfully with Ghanaians.

Ghana, as has been previously discussed, is an overtly religious country. Therefore, when Kobla asserts, for example, that "Every teacher wants his reward on earth" (field notes 3.16.13) he is drawing on a religious discourse to make a moral judgment about teachers that is widely understood and recognized by the general public. In other words, Kobla is commenting on the selfishness of young teachers who will no longer sacrifice themselves and work only to be rewarded in heaven (as teachers used to), but who now expect to reap a material benefit from their labor in this life here on earth. In another example, the District Director of Education in Boto stood before a group of newly trained teachers at a district orientation and told them, "I am

using my initiative as a Director to move heaven and hell. This orientation course is necessary to induct you into the service, which is why money, or no money, we have to squeeze ourselves to have this orientation for you" (field notes 3.8.13). The District Director uses a religious reference to make clear to the new teachers his dedication to his job and to the profession, and his expectation that sacrifices will be made in order to ensure that the necessary work will be done. It is almost as if what teachers are being inducted into or oriented towards is a moral professional code about the sacrifices of the job as an educator. The convergence of religious and moral discourses and their cooption into managerial discourses of educational governance are, therefore, multi-layered and powerful in their social, cultural, and political reach into people's personal and professional lives.

Moral Supervision

CSs artfully moralize whether teachers follow the correct procedures of their jobs through routine supervisory encounters. For example, Michael showed up unannounced at a school in his circuit. In short visits, such as this one, he often focused on checking the monitoring charts that were supposed to be posted on the school's office walls: the teacher attendance chart, lesson note submission, output of work, staff allocations, the school time table, among others. Michael called a wall filled with such charts a "talking wall." According to him, "Unless you doubt what you see, you can check the wall quickly to get a picture of what is happening in the school when you visit" (field notes 10.23.12). This particular morning, Michael looked at the charts posted and noticed that some of the teachers were marked as having submitted their lesson notes late, or not at all, and queried the headmaster as to whether he had spoken with the teachers about this. "Yes," the headmaster responded, but suggested that it might help if Michael talked to the

teachers himself.

The proper preparation and submission of lesson notes was considered essential to teaching and was a primary responsibility of the teacher. If a teacher did not prepare lesson notes it was seen as a sign of negligence, and often treated as tantamount to not showing up for work. CSs assumed that teachers without lesson notes were being lazy and could not properly teach. Selorm, for example, took lesson note preparation so seriously that during one supervisory visit he advised teachers, "If you know you did not prepare lesson notes, please absent yourself from school. On no account should you come to school without lesson notes" (field notes 1.15.13). Michael, like Selorm, took the absence of lesson note preparation as a red flag and was quick to address teachers' lapses. This drew attention away from what was actually happening in the classroom and rather focused the supervisory gaze on tangible and quantifiable measures of a teacher's work. A teacher's lesson notes could be seen, marked, and evaluated much more easily and quickly than their teaching could be observed, their students' learning measured, and their effectiveness quantified. It was not surprising, therefore, that in the current overall climate of accountability in which CSs were themselves being judged, that they had developed an acute supervisory focus on closely monitoring such things as teachers' lesson note preparation and submission.

Michael summoned the first teacher he intended to query into the headmaster's office. A tall man with broad shoulders entered the room and stood before Michael. Without rising, Michael pointed to the charts on the wall. For more than two weeks now, since the sixth week of the term, the teacher had not submitted his lesson notes to the headmaster to be vetted. "What's happened since the sixth week?" Michael asked the teacher. "You haven't come to school? You're not teaching?" he said and then waited until the man answered. "I have come and

have been teaching," the man responded, "I just forgot to bring my lesson notes for submission." There was a pause and then he added, "It wasn't intentional." Michael shook his head, "For two weeks you have not submitted your notes. That's intentional. It means you don't care." "I care," the teacher insisted in a distressed tone, "I care" (field notes 10.23.12). It was subtle, but Michael had slipped into a normative register and now rebuked the man not only for failing to complete the work expected of him, but for doing so intentionally out of disregard for his job.

The teacher attempted to offer an explanation as to why he had not submitted his notes and Michael listened, but was unconvinced. When the man had finished, Michael responded, "In the JHS, you are better off than your colleagues in the primary school. You are teaching just two subjects while those in the primary school teach all the subjects. You write only four lesson notes; English for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and then math. So you are at the JHS, please prepare yourself," he implored. The man was quiet and said nothing and Michael then added, almost as a warning, "I hope you are sowing well here so at the end of the day you leave." Michael was signaling to the teacher that he should be careful about his work, because what he did now would follow him and impact the types of opportunities he would have in the future. As was often the case after a CS warned a teacher, the teacher thanked Michael, "Thank you for the advice, sir" (field notes 10.23.12). This was a sign of respect and an acknowledgment that he heard the warning his CS had given him. The man quietly left the office and returned to his classroom.

Michael then summoned the second teacher. A slight man entered the office with his notebook already in hand, well aware of why the CS had called for him. He had been waiting on the porch and overheard the previous conversation and entered ready to advocate for himself. Michael looked at the teacher and sighed, "It's the same story with you. For the past two weeks

you haven't taught." In response the man opened the notebook he held in his hands. "What are you going to show me? Your lesson notes?" Michael asked. "It's not me you're supposed to show your notes to," Michael continued. He then pointed at the chart on the wall and began reading all the weeks that the teacher had not submitted his notes to the headmaster for vetting. The teacher persisted and handed Michael his notebook, "I have prepared my notes, I just haven't submitted them." Michael held the notebook, but did not look closely at it. At this point, he was more concerned with the fact that the teacher had not followed protocol and skirted authority by failing to submit his notes to the headmaster. Michael looked the teacher squarely in the eyes and said, "I won't say something is white when it is black. It is my nature. I told you that when I first met you" (field notes 10.23.12). Michael had again moved into a moral register, placing strong emphasis on the difference between right and wrong, indicating that he could not be swayed to approve of the teacher's actions; the teacher may have written his lesson notes, but he did not submit them, which put him in the wrong.

At this point, Michael was getting agitated and began to remind the teacher why lesson notes were so important, "Everything is tied to the lesson notes. Lesson notes are the first point of contact." The teacher, however, was also quite frustrated, feeling it unjust that he be called out for not having his notes vetted; meanwhile teachers who did submit their notes failed to use them in the classroom and did an insufficient job teaching. "Master, I am in the field. Some teachers prepare their notes nicely and then just put them aside throughout the week and never use them. Then, the CS comes and they are free because they have prepared their notes." Michael responded sharply, "The person is not free. I will never let them be free. I will make sure the exercises you assign match what you have said in your notes and compare the two." Michael pointed to the chart on the wall that read "Output of Work," and explained that he was careful to

make sure that teachers not only wrote lesson notes, but that they followed through on what they said they would teach (field notes 10.23.12). Teachers' output of work was measured by the number of exercises they not only assigned their pupils, but also marked and gave students corrections on. A CS could check this by looking at a teacher's lesson notes and then cross checking the assignments that could be found in the pupils' exercise books. Michael, as did other CSs, periodically did this at various points during each term.

This kind of oversight was frustrating for the teacher, as he felt it had little relevance to whether he was effectively teaching and whether his students were learning. He explained that his lesson notes did not always match the assignments given because he often had to adjust a day's activities if students were not learning as quickly as he had anticipated, "I use my discretion in my teaching and assignments," he explained. Michael did not accept this explanation; "No! It means you didn't plan well." As can be recalled from Chapter 6, this is a similar type of argument to the one that Dela had with Mawuli about the issue of trust versus principles guiding work. Just as Mawuli stressed the need to create and follow written documentation, and Dela pushed back, so to was the case here between Michael and the teacher. This is important as it illustrates the nuanced way in which CSs, while they may resist managerial efforts to make them accountable and transparent, in turn focus on enforcing similar oversight measures with those they supervise, whittling away teachers' professionalism and use of discretion in much the same way theirs is.

The teacher, however, did not give up, and gave an example of why his lesson notes were not an accurate reflection of his work in the classroom, "I may plan to teach all the topics in my lesson notes in fifteen weeks. I may plan to teach the life cycle of flowering plants for two weeks, but if I don't finish I can't just leave it behind without finishing. So I stay longer on that

topic." Michael listened and then pointed to a column in the lesson notes, "That's why there is a remarks column. You remark about what happened in the classroom." The teacher nodded and then said, "I have found that students are deficient in different areas so I can't finish everything." Michael advised, "This is why you need remedial classes. You must be innovative. If you find they are lagging behind that is why we have extra and remedial classes." The teacher looked down, "Master, it's not easy," he said. Michael looked at the teacher and, as if in solidarity, said, "Every time I come here I spend my own money for transportation," an acknowledgment that the work is not easy for any of them and that they all, including himself, sacrifice for the job (field notes 10.23.12).

The headmaster, who had been sitting quietly in the office through the entirety of the morning, now spoke, reiterating what Michael had said, advising the teacher to make sure to fill out the remarks column in his lesson notes. The teacher nodded and then asked Michael, "May I take leave?" Michael nodded, "Yes. But make sure you submit your lesson notes. Do you know the essence of lesson notes?" Michael asked as the teacher turned to leave. "To guide me," the teacher responded. "Who is ME?" Michael asked with emphasis. "What about someone else," indicating that if the teacher was absent from the classroom someone else would need to take up his notes in order to teach his class. "I have been in the service for eight years now," the teacher replied almost laughing, "I have never seen a case where a teacher didn't come to school and someone takes the lesson notes and teaches. I have never seen it. It's never done!" (field notes 10.23.12). To the teacher, this was an outlandish suggestion and completely out of the realm of possibility. It may have been the case that someone was supposed to use a teacher's lesson notes to teach in their absence, but in all his years in the service, he had never seen it happen. Michael

did not seem interested in arguing with the teacher about this and let it go. The teacher left, Michael and I signed the logbook, and with that the visit came to a close.

Michael's primary focus on procedural matters of the job (e.g., did teachers write and submit lesson notes, was not uncommon when CSs visited schools. The focus on procedure, however, provided the scaffolding on which a moralizing discourse of accountability was built and reinforced time and time again through a multitude of these types of interactions. CSs are fundamentally engaged in regulating this discourse, even as they themselves are regulated by it. This moralized discourse is effective, in part, because CSs weave it so artfully into accountability itself, essentially making acts like lesson note preparation and submission proxies for one's moral character.

As old forms of professionalism are continually undermined, moralizing becomes a way to claim a new form of professional ethics, which is aligned with the managerial logic of the state that makes everyone self-managers, requiring people to constantly learn to manage themselves better. Therefore, what is good and moral is embedded in managerial logics and practices, deeply personalized, and deployed as an available form of professionalism.

It is important to note that while Michael's visit was focused on teachers' lesson note preparation, he did not simply check whether teachers prepared their notes, and if they did not, write a report to be delivered to the office informing the district administration of the teachers' failures. Rather, Michael took seriously his responsibility to advise and guide teachers, building a rapport and relationship with them. In this way, while he was responding to a climate of managerialism and accountability that trained his focus on quantifiable measures of effectiveness, like lesson note preparation, he was also subtly resisting the deprofessionalization that could accompany such work by still attending to and focusing his supervisory encounter

around the relational work that clinical supervision entailed; discussing with teachers their lapses, counseling them on how to improve their work, and why it was important. Therefore, Michael, like other CSs, was constantly engaged in a complex process of both reifying and resisting a culture of accountability and a managerial ethos that permeated not only the education sector, but the developmentalist state more broadly.

Performance Management and Appraisal

The educational culture described above and in Chapter 6, which is increasingly driven by managerialist impulses and the pursuit of accountability, has led to a number of visible changes. In April of 2013, I attended a workshop in the Kuwai Dfor CSs and head teachers titled "Public Service Performance Management." The workshop aimed to train GES supervisors on how to undertake the new staff performance planning, review, and appraisal process and use the attendant forms properly. The new appraisal process is part of the larger reform of public service management and the new Performance Management Policy for the Public Services of Ghana.

At the workshop in the Kuwai D the District Director welcomed everyone, emphasizing that, "the appraisal we will now be using is being used nationwide by all sectors" (field notes 4.8.13). The Director wanted to make clear that the appraisal process was not unique to the education sector, placing a subtle but important emphasis on the top-down directionality of the new mandate. This added weight to the process, but also deflected responsibility from the Director. By indicating that this was a nationwide exercise, the Director was making clear that it was not his decision to adopt this new form of appraisal. This was important, as many of the CSs and heads were already complaining about the amount of time it took to fill out all of the appraisal forms.

While Ghana continues to push forward with initiatives to strengthen decentralization, there is the simultaneous and continued push to standardize operations across decentralized sectors in order to assure accountability and transparency in government operations. It was not just CSs who were expected to act on "principles," as was discussed in Chapter 6; their supervisors and superiors were as well. The workshop that day was primarily led by Ms. Abenaa, the Assistant Director of Human Resources. After the Director finished, Ms. Abenaa began by explaining the government's rationale for implementing a new and aligned performance appraisal process across all public sectors.

> We are all going to use one appraisal form now. That is what we will do. They [government] want GES to use this form so that the appraisal system will be universal no matter where you go. This same appraisal form is being used in other sectors too for non-teaching personnel. Why this appraisal form?...They [the government] have changed the forms to increase transparency and accountability. As the Director explained, the directors will appraise their front line officers, the front liners appraise their heads of departments, the CSs appraise their headmasters and headmistresses, and the heads appraise their teachers. (field notes 4.8.13)

This new system of appraisal was itself hierarchically top-down, with each appraiser assessing the performance of the worker directly below them in the system of GES administration. This new appraisal system drew on the supervisory structure that was already supposed to be in place. CSs served as the primary supervisors for head teachers, and head teachers were in turn responsible for the day-to-day supervision of their teachers. CSs, of course, also supervised teachers and their work, but it was headmasters and headmistresses who had the most daily contact with their own staff and were responsible for alerting CSs of particular problems in their

schools. When CSs visited schools, they often consulted first with head teachers before entering classrooms or addressing teachers directly, in order to preserve the hierarchical structure of authority. Those who worked in closest proximity to one another were thought to be in the best position to evaluate one another's work. In this way, performance appraisal also aligned with a decentralized structure, distributing responsibilities incrementally down the ladder from the top to the bottom. Front line officers would evaluate CSs, CSs in turn would evaluate heads, and heads would evaluate their teachers. As the performance appraisal system was not yet in full use, it was not clear whether this hierarchical structure of supervision would in fact be preserved in the evaluation process once on the ground.

As the workshop progressed, there was a significant focus on both the four step process of appraisal that CSs and head teachers should use—performance planning, performance review, performance appraisal, and decision making—and how to set and evaluate performance targets and fill out appraisal forms properly. Ms. Abenaa walked the participants through how to identify key result areas, set appropriate targets to measure progress, and identify necessary resources to achieve set targets. "What are some of the key result areas for teachers?" Ms. Abenaa asked those gathered. A man who identified himself as an assistant headmaster volunteered to answer and listed what he saw as his key job responsibilities: "One is general monitoring and supervision of teaching and non-teaching staff; Number two, deputizing for the head when the head is out of school; Three, inspecting the work of teachers, particularly during class hours." Ms. Abenaa stopped the man and suggested that he divide supervising teaching and non-teaching staff into two separate key areas. Nodding, the man continued, moving on to what his targets for appraisal would be, "Okay, target one, I should make sure that all teaching staff have performed efficiently and effectively." There was a murmur among the crowd and someone

called out, “How will you measure that?”

Ms. Abenaa responded, “Your targets should be specific and measurable. The Director suggests that exams are one measure that could be used.” There was a momentary lull as the assistant headmaster considered other ways he might measure efficiency and effectiveness. He then amended his target, “Okay, I will make sure that all teaching staff have reported on time.” “Good,” Ms. Abenaa responded and then continued, “How will you check that?” “I will check the attendance register,” the assistant headmaster answered. Ms. Abenaa nodded in approval. This process went on for quite a while, with Ms. Abenaa emphasizing that key result areas should be identified from official job descriptions and that performance targets must be measurable. Attendees pointed out other key areas found in their job descriptions, such as supervising teachers and vetting teachers’ lesson notes, and the group brainstormed assessments for these tasks as well (field notes 4.8.13).

While the examples given were primarily from head teachers, the types of measurable targets identified were well aligned with the types of things that CSs were also already apt to look for when they visited schools, as was evident above (e.g., Michael and Selorm’s attention to lesson notes). This served to further reinforce procedural measures of accountability across all supervisory levels, while further obscuring substantive measures that were more likely to shed light onto the teaching and learning actually going on inside the classrooms.

Overall, the process was relatively democratic in terms of the participation of diverse actors. The terms of participation, however, were tightly constrained by statistical and managerial logics. For example, the second half of the workshop shifted to focus on how appraisers would report progress on identified targets, with sustained emphasis on the need to use percentage measures to signify improvement. Ms. Abenaa indicated that there was a right

way to record progress:

> Give percentages for each target depending on the progress of the teacher to meet the set targets. If the teacher didn't submit lesson notes for vetting every week or didn't give 10 exercises per week, then what percentage did they give? Maybe 70%, so that is what you can write for the performance assessment, 70%. You write the performance in percent under the progress review column. For example, target number one, by the end of April teachers will finish filling their promotion forms. It may be that for the progress review that only 80% of teachers were able to process their promotion forms. In the remarks it may say, some teachers did not get the information and therefore did not fill out and submit their promotion form. Sometimes teachers say they did not hear about the promotion forms so they aren't able to fill them out. (field notes 4.8.13)

While there was space on the form to write explanatory notes as to why a target was not achieved, performance scores were based on percentages: 80% or above was considered outstanding and was given a 1 on a 1-5 scale; 79%-65% was very good and received a 2; 64%-50% was satisfactory and was a 3; 49%-41% needed improvement and was given a 4; and 40% or below was unsatisfactory and was given a 5.

Back in the Volta Region, the CSs from the Boto District were busy learning how to implement the new appraisal system. They attended a two-day workshop in the regional capital, sponsored by USAID, where the new performance appraisal process was one of the topics addressed. When the CSs returned to the district, Mawuli additionally met with them at the district directorate to help ensure that they knew how to develop evaluation measures and fill out the performance appraisal forms properly so that they themselves could evaluate their head teachers, but also so they could in turn guide and assist their heads on how to appraise their

teachers. His explanations were consistent with how Ms. Abenaa had explained the same appraisal process in the Kuwai District,

> The key results come from the job description. You have to take the person's job description into account before setting targets. Areas of achievement are outlined before you set targets. You decided that you will do this, or you want to do that, or do that, that, that. You lay down about five key areas. Then you look at the resources that are required before you start monitoring the person. (field notes 5.3.13)

"What if I say all my teachers will be regular and punctual?" Kobla asked. "Then you would check the time book and check the logbook, to see the way they [teachers] are going about it," Mawuli responded. Then he explained that the CSs were to help their teachers set their own targets, suggesting that a teacher might decide his or her target was, "I will assign 10 exercises per week for math." Mawuli emphasized that the target set by the teacher must be observable by the CS, "You must make sure you observe it. It has to be something that can be observed and checked." Mawuli gave more examples of things that could be observed: the use of teaching and learning materials (TLMs), pupils' reading proficiency, student and staff attendance, exercises assigned and corrected, among others. "If a teacher says that by the end of the year he expects about 60% of the children to be able to read, then the CS or the head teacher is supposed to go to the class to sample the children periodically to find out if that target is being achieved," Mawuli explained.

Traditional appraisal was prescriptive in nature and focused on what had to be achieved. In contrast, the New Performance Management (NPM) system was more normative and concentrated on how to make it more likely that people would motivate themselves to achieve goals and objectives (Public Service Commission, p. 12). There is an important parallel to be

made with the state itself. Prior to democracy, the state was prescriptive in nature and demanded what had to be achieved. In contrast, the democratic and decentralized state today has to operate in a normative register because it does not have the authority to be prescriptive. The focus, therefore, is on what is likely to happen, or what should happen, but not necessarily what will.

Not only was the new performance appraisal process itself described consistently across districts and regions, but even more interesting was the consistency in the way that the substance of appraisal was understood. This indicated that even in the current climate of decentralization, there remained a strong national conceptualization about what constitutes "good education," which was also largely aligned with and supported by IDOs' ideas about good and appropriate educational practices. Everything from job description, to what were considered key areas that could and needed to be evaluated, to what constituted a measurable and observable target were virtually the same in the Ashanti and Volta regions. For example, the appraisal process continually reinforced a focus on outcomes rather than process, which is consistent with the developmentalist frame globalized by actors like the World Bank, USAID, and DFID. This meant that CSs were more likely to ask questions like, "how many children are proficient in reading?" than, "what kind of support do teachers need to help their students achieve reading proficiency?" This outcomes-based focus also made student performance on exams, such as the BECE, appear as an appropriate indicator of teacher efficiency and effectiveness, which was problematic given that student performance on the BECE had little to do with any one teacher and a lot to do with the wider system and environment in which children were (or as the case may be, were not) learning.

Outcomes-based measures may be easy to quantify, but they say little about teacher-student dynamics, classroom practices, or the wider socioeconomic and political context that

weighs heavily on teaching and learning. This is well documented, for example, in critical development literature (Donnelly, 2007; Jansen & Christie, 1999) and in the United States, in critical literature on No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (Fusarelli, 2004; Price, 2003). In fact, when asked how performance percentages were being established, Mawuli conceded that they were not, in fact, based on anything in particular at the current moment. Performance appraisal was supposed to be a year-long process, but here it was, nearing the end of the academic year, and CSs were being required to implement it at the last minute. Mawuli explained the situation,

> What they [appraisers] are doing now, you can see it's by speculation. I mean, there is no reality in most of the things. It's like I can only decide to be nice to you and write something, because none of them can say that truly they have assessed the person. And if you read, any experienced person reading this proposal [the appraisal forms] knows that this [the appraisal] was guessed. To say from 60%-70%, where is the 60% coming from? There was no previous appraisal. Now you are telling me from 60%. Meanwhile, there is a column where the previous and the current must show, and you don't have it. If the person is new and he is now setting a target, and you go through the evaluation before you arrive at the final destination, before you can now fill in that thing and say that, that person has this and that. So, I look at the whole thing, it's so funny. (field notes 5.3.13)

Mawuli's explanation illustrates how an honest effort to respond quickly to the requirement to use the new performance appraisal system can and does quickly become infused with "subjective" decisions. A year from now, the kinds of subjective decisions being made about a teacher's performance could easily be viewed as petty corruption, mismanagement, or incompetence. More importantly, however, was the likelihood that teachers would once again feel that the system was deeply unfair.

This approach to performance management was also illustrative of the hurry-up mentality of development, often accelerated by external timelines imposed by IDOs and funders, which results in local level actors, such as CSs, being forced to rush headlong into each new policy, program, and project that was the focus of the day. The frantic and frenetic energy produced through this process was an essential characteristic of the Ghanaian state in its current developmentalist form. Part of what this frenetic energy did was keep people focused on discrete actions, making it difficult to connect one to the other or create internal cohesion. What was cohesive was the constant scramble to attract the resources of funders and then to respond to their demands, which ensured that the state remained subject to external logics and resources. CSs and their supervisors, heads and their teachers, were not blind to what was happening and could see how arbitrary (and sometimes deeply counterproductive) these initiatives were. Nonetheless, time and energy were poured into fulfilling the managerial demands of projects like performance appraisals, in part because such a response was used as a proxy to indicate one's ability to perform appropriately in a culture of accountability.

Conclusion

The education system in Ghana today is an important epicenter of rationalizing the much larger socio-political and economic project of establishing an audit culture in which performance, credentials, accountability, and transparency all figure centrally into individual and state narratives of success and failure. International and national pressures to be accountable and transparent in the education sector foster a strong managerial culture that emphasizes abstracted assessment, measurement, and evaluation as central to achieving quality education (Shore, 2008; Jansen, 2005). In this context, CSs are at a crossroads, both tasked with employing the

technologies of accountability as a central part of their work, but also at the same time the subjects of accountability, themselves being measured and evaluated in increasingly intrusive ways.

In practice, we see this translate into expectations that CSs will be statistical in whatever they do, act based on universal principles and not on relational trust, and follow increasingly standard procedures in the ways they practice monitoring and supervision in the schools under their purview. While CSs may resist these deprofessionalizing impulses, which undermine their use of discretion and decenter them as knowledgable experts, they also participate in them, needing and wanting to maintain their relevance in this system.

Resistance to and participation in a culture of accountability is a messy and complicated business for CSs. As they perform and participate in the rituals of measurement and evaluation, CSs take what could be seen as relatively hollow acts and deploy them through deeply moralized discourses that weave the culture of accountability deeper and deeper into the logic of schools' everyday lives. We see this evinced in the ways CSs respond to teachers' transgressions in a deeply moral register, advising them, for example, to "do the right thing" and "let our conscience be our guide."

It is no coincidence that the teachers and CSs who are recognized as respected and committed to their profession are also those who can "use something small to achieve something big," "work and achieve results," and have "skills to solve and handle issues and situations." Educators are working in schools that are notoriously under-resourced and in a profession that lacks prestige, which means that it is particularly necessary to not only build morale among teachers, but also actively create a sense of purpose about why being an educator is important for individual and national development. In this context, CSs understand fostering self-management

not just (or primarily) as an administrative task, but as an essential quality of good leadership and an important part of the social and relational work they do. There is explicit acknowledgment that managing human beings means building rapport with teachers and that each person is different, requiring that CSs be attentive to individual personalities, even as this attentiveness is deployed, through a normative register, to attempt to bring all teachers into line with certain bureaucratic/assessment standards. Management for CSs, therefore, is not just about being more effective and efficient in the classical sense, but rather is about effectively navigating and mediating the social, political, and personal tensions that govern teachers' professional lives.

The pressure to be more managerial, however, comes in part from the persistent decline across the country in educational quality, despite relatively high investments by the government and international funders in the sector. High levels of investment compared to other sectors of the state and the levels of investment by other countries in the region in their education systems, however, should not be confused with adequate levels of funding. The education sector in Ghana is still estimated to be underfunded by an estimated 7.2 billion cedis from 2010-2020. Therefore, calls for accountability and transparency by the state and IDOs, in particular, are closely tied to the idea that the falling standard of education is the result of both poor management of money and resources and an incompetent and unprofessional workforce. This framing systematically fails to recognize the multitude of other factors affecting educational quality. Therefore, national and international calls for accountability are premised on the assumption that immorality itself is the root cause of educational failure: corrupt bureaucrats and lazy teachers are ruining education. It is no wonder that, in this context, CSs use a strong moral register both in their interactions with teachers (managing down), in the sense they make about being an educator (managing themselves), and in the work that they are tasked to do, even when they recognize its limitations

(managing up).

Chapter 8: Death of a School

At the end of March 2013, USAID sponsored a two-day workshop in the regional capital of the Volta Region. The workshop brought together CSs from multiple districts, including those from Boto. It was a refresher course intended to review best practices in the areas of planning, assessment, and community mobilization. Midway through the first morning, participants were divided into small groups to share strategies about how to raise funds to support their schools, a necessity in the current climate where schools are perpetually under-resourced and expected to fill the economic gaps themselves. Community participation came into focus as the central topic of conversation, as was often the case when it came to matters of school funding.

In the IDO parlance of democratization and decentralization, community participation was evidence of local ownership, investment, and fulfillment of citizen's responsibility. But, since the institutionalization of "free" education, the notion of community participation also served other purposes, including as a more politically palatable way of talking about cost-sharing, and as a means of distributing the costs of education away from the state and onto schools, communities, and families. The CSs worked in their groups for almost an hour to generate ideas, and just before lunch everyone re-convened so people could share their discussions and plans.

Peter, a CS from a district close to Boto, stood first, introducing himself. He proudly shared one of the community-driven innovations from a school in his circuit: "Every two years they [the community] assume that the school is dead and they are going to have a funeral for the school" (field notes 3.25.13). The suggestion that a community pretended its school had died and that they held a funeral for it to raise funds caused an eruption of responses from the other CSs in

the room. "YES," Peter said, confirming, amidst disbelief among many gathered, that the community had in fact declared the school dead. The workshop facilitator, however, showed support for the initiative taken by the community: "This is what? Innovation!" he said. Innovation, a trait deeply valued as a marker of the entrepreneurial spirit of neoliberalism, was here positioned as necessary to sustain education in the Ghanaian state today. Its form might be deeply socially suspect and economically marginal, but the act of innovation itself must be recognized, celebrated, and encouraged. Peter, regaining his confidence, continued and explained that the money people contributed at the school's funeral went to the PTA, becoming part of the development funds for the school.[19]

Chatter had erupted by this point among the CSs as they debated whether it was appropriate to hold a funeral for a school, even if it was a way of raising funds. A few CSs called out jokingly, "The school is dead. The school is dead." The second workshop facilitator responded, "Let's be more positive," indicating that perhaps killing the school was not the best way to raise money (field notes 3.25.13). Funerals in Ghana, however, are not the kind of solemn affair one might imagine. Rather, they are full of life, with music and dancing. They are a form of celebratory mourning that are expensive to orchestrate, so donations are collected to offset the costs. Everyone with a relationship to the person is expected to contribute a bit, just as they are expected to participate in the funeral itself.

While this was the first time I had heard a funeral suggested as a school fundraiser, it was not the first time that I had heard funerals and education heatedly discussed together. Across the country, parents were being routinely advised to stop spending lavishly on funerals to the neglect

[19] In the decentralized structure of education, PTAs had been made primarily responsible for revenue raising functions, while School Management Committees (SMCs) were supposed to operate more like school boards (World Bank, 2004, p.10).

of their children's education. In the Volta Region, for example, the Ghana News Agency reported that a CS had met with a PTA and, "advised parents to desist from using their scarce resources on expensive funerals instead of their children's education" (GNA, 2014). To see a community reappropriate the notion of a funeral for the benefit of the school really was innovative, though what it says about people's conception of schooling, life, futurity, death, and state survival is complex.

The second workshop facilitator again interrupted the discussion, emphasizing the need to be positive, "What I'm saying is, we have to be positive. Is there no other way of bringing this thing [fundraiser] other than saying you're going to observe a funeral?" (field notes 3.25.13). Again, chatter amongst the CSs slowly rose, getting progressively louder until someone clapped to get everyone's attention. I turned around and saw that it was Selorm, from Boto, who stood in the middle of the room and addressed Peter, "What you're saying is, that it is very good that they [PTA] have a way by which they get contributions for the school?" "Yes," Peter nodded. People began to murmur under their breath and Selorm again spoke up quieting them. "We are learning from each other….As you go around you will be sharing these things with your schools" (field notes 3.25.13). Selorm was now using the clinical supervisory format to direct conversation; first point out something positive before discussing the negative. This was an effective strategy of group leadership, as the other CSs seemed to recognize it and tailored their behavior accordingly, also finding something positive about Peter's example, primarily that the community had found a way to raise money.

Then, as the pattern of clinical supervision dictates, Selorm brought up his concern and explained, "In my circuit, the District Director of Education introduced this activity, but the District Chief Executive stopped it because if children begin to die in the school it would bring

so much trouble" (field notes 3.25.13). The fear was that announcing a school had died, and then holding its funeral, could set in motion a series of unfortunate and unintended consequences. It is a widely held belief amongst the Ewes that bad things can follow families and lineages (e.g., untimely deaths and accidents). A child's death in a school that had been revived by a funeral might bring serious problems to the school and administrators, who could be held responsible for setting this field of action in motion.

Peter responded to Selorm's concern by explaining that it was not a "funeral," as in the English usage of the word, but rather a *tromfe,* the Èʋe word for funeral, and that he was simply translating since the workshop, sponsored by USAID, was being conducted in English. He seemed to be indicating that a "funeral" had a solemnness and a strong association with death, but that *tromfe* was far more celebratory in nature. Therefore, a funeral was inappropriate, but a *tromfe* was not because it operated as a social gathering rather than a way to mark death, and was a means of celebrating the life of the school. Although subtle, Peter appeared to be attempting to negotiate a complex cultural and linguistic terrain between Èʋe and Western practices and their meaning; this effort then transformed into a debate between CSs about whether a "funeral" and a *tromfe* were actually the same thing, and whether it was acceptable for either one to be held for a school that was expected to continue to operate into the future, and that was in fact supposed to represent students' futures.

This was what clinical supervision was supposed to look like: deliberative, messy, and participatory. These kinds of interactions, however, took time, which was often out of step with increasing expectations of CS efficiency. Therefore, such exchanges were frequently cut short in actual supervisory encounters between CSs and teachers in the field, and among CSs in their

offices. Peter, a bit defensive, continued to protest, "It's not an actual funeral. It's rather enjoyment. It's *tromfe"* (field notes 3.25.13).

The conversation eventually shifted to the major topic of concern, which was how the activity generated revenue, who contributed, and in what ways. Peter explained, *"*The contribution they [community members] make is for the school. Everybody will pay, like they donate during funerals. But, that money is not going to any funeral. It's going into the coffers of the school. They [the PTA] have already made plans for what they are going to use it for" (field notes 3.25.13). Misuse (and syphoning) of school funds was a common problem, and Peter was careful to emphasize that the PTA already had a plan about what they were going to do with the money. Future planning was seen as important in guarding against corruption and also indicated a development mindset among the community; project planning was a key marker of "good" development.

Kobla, also from the Boto District, then asked, "I want to know if the school also contributes to that *tromfe*?" "No, it's the parents who send their children to the school," Peter answered and then clarified that the school had raised money by organizing something akin to a welfare association through which parents and community members paid in for the *tromfe*. Most District Directorates of Education organized district welfare associations for teachers, a paradigmatic example of how decentralization shifted responsibility for people's welfare down the ladder. Teachers paid a set monthly fee to the district association and then, if they died, the association contributed to covering the cost of the funeral. Selorm wondered, however, how this worked for a school and asked, "Does the school register itself as an individual in the association, like other people do?" (field notes 3.25.13). "Yes," Peter clarified, but then explained that while the school registers as an individual, it does not pay into the association like

others do since the funds are really just for the school and, in that way, it was not a normal welfare association. Not only was the school's welfare being handled in much the same way as teachers' in the hollowed out developmentalist state, but in the neoliberal context of Ghana, the school had also taken on an individualized identity, which resonated with the subjective shifts ushered in by neoliberal ideology. This was consistent with the move, in the West, to talk and think about corporations as people.

The questions asked and opinions offered by CSs about who should be paying into the association was, at its core, a discussion about individual and community responsibility for supporting education, and a discussion about the causes and potential consequences of the "death" of the school—historically viewed as itself a primary driver of community health and growth in previous eras. It was these kinds of interactions between CSs that were important to developing a collective and agreed understanding about what schools needed and should in turn be expected to provide, and what community participation should look like, who should be involved, and why.

Wanting to move to the next topic, the first workshop facilitator called out, "Okay, okay, let's go on. Please, time consciousness" (field notes 3.25.13). But, the CSs resisted, still focused on the conversation at hand, "Please, we are sharing ideas," a CS responded. Whereas in the field it was teachers who often pleaded with CSs for more time to deliberate, and it was CSs who cut conversations and visits short, here the tables were turned. But, unlike in the field, where CSs were under pressure for the district to limit the time spent in each supervisory visit in order to regularly reach the number of schools expected of them, here the workshop facilitator had more latitude and allowed the CSs to continue. For nearly twenty minutes more the CSs sat amongst

themselves discussing the potential merits and problems of using a *tromfe*, or a funera,l as a fundraiser.

The school, of course, had not actually died, but there was a symbolic significance that cannot be overlooked. It was as if the school, starved of funds and support from the state, had wasted away. In response, the community was made responsible for its well-being and for breathing new life into it. This is a stark example of what happens to public goods and services in a democratized and decentralized state that has been hollowed of its ability to fulfill what used to be its core responsibilities; as the government withdraws over time, the community is made responsible for something that was once the domain of the state. This school, from a relatively affluent area, was successfully revived through its "death," but as one can imagine, when a school's thriving is dependent on the commitment of time and resources from its community, schools in poorer areas tend to fare worse, raising serious concerns about equity. This is also a good example of the tremendous amount of work that middle figures like CSs do to try to rationalize and explicate the needs of the school, and to devise ways of supporting it.

There was the further issue, however, that the death of the school was not something that happened only once, but rather, as Peter explained, was cyclical, happening every two years. This recursive and thus exhaustive quality to the dying and reviving of the school is indicative of the Ghanaian state and CSs', teachers', and citizens' relationship to it. This cycle makes bare the constant condition of crisis that exists inside the developmentalist Ghanaian state in its neoliberal form. Crisis is never over because neither the state nor the community really has the means (or the control over its means) to make the school live and thrive with any kind of permanence.

Crisis, however, is notoriously productive for neoliberal governance and the global capitalist economy, because it reinforces the ideological claim that states are inefficient, that

individuals should be made responsible, and that both are most effective when they operate using market principles (Harvey, 2007; Klein, 2007). The cyclical death of the school, from a neoliberal perspective, is evidence of the perennial inefficiency of states, the continued failure of people to take up their responsibilities, and the recalcitrance of both to successfully fashion their behaviors after the free market. And this is the complex reality of the life cycle of a school and an education public servant in the neoliberal era; the school exists in the indeterminacy of never being able to be fully claimed by the community or the state. The continual failures of the state and the inability of communities to fill the gaps left as the state recedes feeds the neoliberal claim that states and people need to be more efficient and effective, able to do more with less. These logics and processes are what lie at the core of managerial governance and the culture of accountability, guiding the roadmap of development, and mapping out the uneven and sometimes contradictory terrain on which CSs find themselves.

The open-ended ethnographic methodology employed in this research brought to the fore the way that CSs see themselves as knowledgable experts for their deep and nuanced understanding of place and people. In the above example, it is evident that CSs' localized knowledge and their deep care for their work were central to the sense they made about, and the practices they employed to appropriately revive and sustain, dying schools in the current context of the developmentalist state. Open-ended ethnography, which required delving into the lives and practices of CSs as they traversed the space between the managerial demands of global governance and the educational needs and interests of the schools and communities they serve, made clear the complexities of how development works in the quotidian.

The Productivity of Unrealized Development

There is an almost cruel, indeterminate optimism to the idea that communities can save schools as the state recedes, or that public education can flourish as it is made the responsibility of individuals. Berlant (2011) suggests that "cruel optimism" occurs when the object of optimism itself undercuts the optimistic outcome. For example, the belief that "quality public education" requires significant investments of time and money from individuals, or that "development" is achieved through sacrifices made by the populace, leads people to behave, in an effort to achieve these goals, in ways that further undercut people's ability to achieve the object desired. Hence in the Ghanaian state today, we see many CSs tirelessly investing their labor and resources into converting the educational failures of the hollow state into "greener pastures" for the development of the nation. This, however, is cruel optimism in all its glory.

Cruel optimism is the condition of remaining attached to something that will not be realized, but, yet, cannot be let go. CSs, who take it as their duty to make education thrive in the recesses of the state, managing to always do more with less, are cruelly invested in the unlikely promise that one can do more than just endure the conditions of neoliberalism that are constitutive of the Ghanaian state today. The more invested CSs, and teachers, and communities become in achieving education and development, the more the object of desire itself becomes increasingly draining, it becomes a site for exhausting people and their dreams. However, when resources are limited and people live contingent and insecure lives, not having the promise of education and development might well be even more psychologically painful than striving for it, particularly if it represents the most viable or imaginable hope for a better future, as education does in the developmental state today.

This persistent investment in the often hollow promise of education is evident, for example, in the way that Edward confides that, "There is no capitation grant coming, but we

(CSs) have to tell the teachers that they can teach without it. There is no capitation, but we have to tell the teachers to do SBI (School based in-service) with no resources. We have to tell them small lies. We can't tell them the truth, or they will become so frustrated that they won't do the work" (field notes 10.5.12). Edward knows that what he asks of teachers is not just and is sometimes not possible, but, like others, he recognizes that the conditions for education to thrive are so compromised that the only option is to lie to teachers in order to maintain at least a façade that the education system can function if everyone just tries hard enough and sacrifices. And, more often than not, Edward, as do others, really does believe that if people are more efficient and effective, or sacrifice more, or work harder, or wait long enough, education really will succeed in lifting their lives and the life of the state. Without at least the semblance of promise, or hope, the alternative is the complete failure of the education system, and the end of the optimistic promise of development itself.

The maintenance of education as a functioning site of hope is quite pervasive and an important part of people's relationship to the state. Bless, a lecturer at a College of Education in the Volta Region, makes this clear when he explains, "The government pretends to be paying teachers and so teachers pretend to be teaching" (field notes 3.28.13). As government salaries are often late to come, or never come at all, teachers often feel that the government is only pretending to pay them, so in turn, they show up to school and do the minimum expected of them. While CSs, lecturers, and teachers are not naïve to the realities of the cruel optimism they hold, they continue to strive for education and the development it promises—even when the striving is viciously tiring. In fact, the more sacrificial education is in its claims on resources, the more it seems to provide the optimistic feeling that things MUST come out right. The loss of that feeling may thus be even worse than the alternative of giving up the shallow promise of

development that education offers, and giving up the draining labor and resources that people currently put into this object of optimism (Berlant 2011).

Letting Die

Drawing on Povinelli's (2011) work on "making live," "making die," and "letting die" (p. 22), the neoliberal Ghanaian state can be understood not as making its people live, but rather as letting the majority of its citizens die. Those who are let die are "allowed to continue to persist in the seams of neoliberalism…until they exhaust themselves" (Povinelli, 2011, p. 95). Letting die is an "amorphous condition" (p. 44) that thrives in the future anterior promises of development, where potentiality becomes actuality.

But so far as development is never (and in the hollow state never can be) realized for the majority of Ghanaians, its actuality is always pushed to the horizon. It is this pushing that allows for present sacrifice to be valued and celebrated as a necessary responsibility of citizenship, as is evident in the predominant discourse that CSs draw from and deploy about their own struggles and sacrifices (and the necessity that others do the same) in the name of self-actualization and progress. The teleological promise of development (and education) is a powerful tool that justifies continued investment by states and people in a promise of a brighter future for themselves and the state. The development apparatus, and the IDOs that are central to this globalized system, whittle away at states' sovereignty by narrowing and conditioning the parameters of acceptable and viable forms of state governance. This happens in official policy, but also, and perhaps most effectively, by recruiting people themselves into the project of self-governance by making them responsible for their own well-being, a process that is closely monitored and supervised by CSs in the education sector.

Socialist and democratic governments alike, in Ghana, have carried the durative message that education is for development and that the drive for development is what binds state and people in common cause. Therefore, Nkrumah's education for the masses, Rawlings' mass education for a populist revolution, and the neoliberal push towards universal education to develop the human capital of the nation get woven into and onto each other, creating a strong and historically grounded nexus around education as a fundamental, and participatory, aspect of the citizen-state relationship. Despite differences in what education (and participation) has meant and how it has operated, education has been subtended by an overarching trope of developmentalism across disparate periods of the Ghanaian state. Education, therefore, is not tangential to, but is, in many ways, the state itself—its financing, its personnel, and its socializing engagement with its citizens. This makes educational governance a critical part of state governance writ large.

Conclusion

As Mosse (2004) points out, there is a persistent gap in ethnographic research prying into the "black box of unknowing between development policy and its affects" (p. 641). This dissertation has delved into the lives and practices of CSs, mid-level bureaucrats who live and work in this "missing middle" (Unterhalter & Dorward, 2013) on the frontlines of the developmentalist Ghanaian state. The focus of this research has been to understand how development works, not make evaluative claims about if it does, or prescriptive recommendations about how to make it better, both of which are part of the neoliberal project itself.

Traversing the frontlines of the state with CSs provides new possibilities for understanding the developmentalist state and neoliberal global capitalism from the perspective of those whose

work is constituted by and constitutive of its primary mechanisms (democratization, decentralization, and privatization). Studying CSs allows us to see the continual blurring between those who are the agents and targets of neoliberalism. The constant sense of crisis that pervades the education sector, as investments remain high and outcomes remain low, continually focuses attention on reforms aimed at tinkering with the architecture of the state, making it more efficient and effective. These reforms condense around actors like CSs, who are seen as both the agents (increasing educational supervision and management) and targets (being inefficient and ineffective in educational supervision and management) of such reforms. The perennial quest to better use limited resources requires actors such as CSs to reinvest ever more of their time, energy, and capital in the hollow state, which ensures that the state itself remains alive, however "zombie"-like (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2002), continually pushing development and people's individual and collective well-being to the future horizon.

This work critically questions education policies and their consequences, but it is not intended as a prescriptive analysis of what should come next. The purpose of this research is to lay out clearly the logic through which education survives in the current neoliberal Ghanaian state and to pose the most basic question: is this just?

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