

**THE DETERMINANTS OF CAREER CHANGE AMONG HOLDERS
OF HIGHER DEGREES: THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
EMPLOYEES**

BY

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this thesis, “The Determinants of Career Change among Holders of Higher Degree: The Case of University of Ghana Employees” herein presented for a degree of Master of Philosophy in Sociology is the result of my own investigation and that this thesis has neither in whole nor part been presented elsewhere for another degree. References to other authors have been duly acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Thesis to the memory of my late husband, Yaw Kesse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This MPhil study has been a long and very exciting journey. Throughout the process there have been many obstacles coupled with some degree of anxiety and uncertainty; all these were finally allayed and surmounted thanks to the blessings of the Almighty.

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ABSTRACT

The study entitled “Determinants of Career Change among Holders of Higher Degree: The Case of University of Ghana Employees” was undertaken to ascertain the major factors which influence individuals to change their careers at certain stages of their working life. The purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were used to select twenty-five members of faculty willing to participate in the study. A concurrent mixed-methods approach was adopted. Specifically, the study aimed at identifying the individual and organisational factors that influenced career change. A structured interview was adopted to collect data on participants demographics, individual and organisational characteristics, with open-ended questions eliciting qualitative data to address participants’ reasons for choosing university teaching as a second career, the process they went through to effect the change and the outcome of the career change behaviour on job satisfaction. The findings showed that a range of individual characteristics were associated with career change. Majority of the participants who switched to their present career were within the 31-40 year bracket. Higher level of education was the most important human capital factor whereas job security and better salary were the dominant organisational factors that influenced career change. Enhanced job opportunity, better salary, and the desire to impart knowledge were key reasons that accounted for the change in career among the male participants. For the female participants in particular, time for family was the most important reason for the career change. A major outcome was that the career change had been successful and worthwhile. Skills acquired by the career changers before taking up their teaching jobs impacted on the overall job performance of the participants with attendant benefits to the University. Future research should seek to address the multi-faceted aspect of this important subject namely, factors influencing career change among mid-life individuals, longitudinal study that tracks individuals throughout the career change process, and quantitative studies to assess job performance and benefits to the organization.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to Study

Like the world economy as a whole, changes in both jobs and in careers in today's information society have been subjected to the globalisation process. According to Hoyt, (1987) and O'Toole (1981), today's computer is characterized by rapidly advancing technology and accompanying economic and social change. These technological changes demand constant adaptation to new methods of work, and often to new occupations. Similarly, widespread economic restructuring of the past decades, that is, a shift from manufacturing to service sector jobs has changed the way people are connected to the labour market. Recent studies (e.g. Carless & Arnup, 2011; Blau, 2007; Bahr 2005; Boswell et al., 2005; Blau et al., 2004) have examined how these changes affect personal employment decisions. At the same time, there are heightened interests in the self-initiated career change decisions and how they predict behaviour of workers globally.

Traditionally, organizations were characterized by rigid hierarchical structures and they operated within a stable environment. Careers therefore were predictable, secure, and linear. People competed for promotions (Rosenbaum, 1979), and climbing up the ladder was the ultimate indicator of success (Townsend, 1970). Consequently, Wilensky (1961) referred to career as "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered (more-or-less predictable) sequence" (p. 523).

Nowadays organizational and environmental systems are highly dynamic and fluid, making careers more unpredictable, vulnerable, and multidirectional within (Baruch, 2006; Cesinger, 2011). Boundaries within organizations and beyond have faded

(DeFillippi and Arthur, 1994) and individuals keep moving from one career to the other (e.g. Rousseau, 1995). Thus changing jobs is now considered as a desire for personal and professional growth, rather than a sign of personal instability or indecision. Several factors have been found to influence the decision to switch a job or career and these have included economic reasons (Boswell et al., 2005), job security (Bahr 2005), time for family (Brown et al., 2012), self-actualization (Blau, 2007; Boswell et al., 2005; Blau et al., 2004), dissatisfaction with previous work (Mobley, 1982; Dalaba, 1975;) and others.

In a longitudinal study for example, Carless and Arnup (2011) examined the effect of individual and organisational factors on career change behaviour. Although their findings revealed that a range of individual characteristics such as openness to experience, extraversion, gender, age, educational level, and occupation tenure, were associated with career change they concluded that job security was the only factor that explains career change (Carless & Arnup, 2011: 80). In another study, Richardson and Watt (2005) identified five factors relating to social status namely, career fit, prior considerations, financial reward and time for family as reasons for career change.

Although little data exist to substantiate career movement, researchers, governmental entities, and career professionals all over the world offer information indicating that such movement is not only showing a continuing trend, but has become common in the workplace today (Hall, 1986; Cesinger, 2011). Heppner (2006) estimated that 5 to 10 percent of Americans change occupations each year. This information signifies that most individuals will undergo several career transitions during their lifetime, a movement that may include a shift from one job to another or a complete change of careers (Fouad & Bynner, 2008; Jackson *et al.*, 1996). It also suggests that the functions and meanings

derived from work are shifting (O'Toole, 1981; Snyder, 1978). All these are indications that a lifelong stationary career is no longer tenable in the modern day globalized market (Wise & Millward, 2005).

Likewise, in Africa, there seems to be a shift in the predominant view regarding career as a one-time, irreversible decision. For instance, in an investigation of career change amongst previously disadvantaged individuals in South Africa, Chudzikowski (2012) found that individuals are increasingly changing their professions due to several reasons including socioeconomic factors. In Ghana, the situation is not different as more individuals with diverse background keep switching from established careers to new ones. Even though there is very little information to this effect in the country, the phenomenon is evident in the proliferation of organisations such as the banks and universities which create employment opportunities for middle class workers. Furthermore, non-traditional mode of programme delivery such as distance learning has been very instrumental in helping career changers prepare for their second careers. This is partly due to both real and perceived beliefs associated with such professions as being prestigious and well-paid enterprises.

Although several factors including the need to open up the economy to propel development in Ghana have been given, one can equally not lose sight of the fact that, in recent years, the number of people voluntarily choosing to switch careers is increasing (Richardson & Watt, 2005; Wise & Millward, 2005; Mercora, 2003). The 2010 Population and Housing Census Report showed that although about 80 percent of the Ghanaian workforce is employed in the informal sector, about 21% of those engaged in the formal sector are engaged as service and sales workers (GSS, 2012). More

importantly, in the Greater Accra Region, the most economically active population are more likely to be engaged as service and sales workers (35.7%) due to the proliferation of the service industry such as banks and educational institutions (GSS, 2012).

For instance, aside the two public universities (University of Ghana and University of Professional Studies) in Accra, there are a lot of private ones springing up in recent times. One implication of this change is that more highly qualified lecturers will be needed to address the problem of increasing student enrolment. It is therefore not surprising that more people continue to sign up to become teachers, particularly at the university level. Even more encouraging is the fact that some of these new entrants have consciously chosen teaching in preference to a career in which they were already established. What is unique about this group of career changers is the fact that their decisions were apparently voluntary. Their behaviour is considered puzzling because in many cases they leave more lucrative careers for the teaching profession. The obvious question arises: what motivates them to do it?

Research has also shown that this cohort of new entrants mostly referred to as “mid-career academics” play an important part in bolstering the profession and signalling that teaching as a career still holds attractions (Lee and Lamport, 2011; Thomas and Robbins, 1979). For this reason they are duly acknowledged by various educational institutions. As an example, according to the Strategic Plan (2014-2024) for the University of Ghana, Legon, at least 60% of eligible mid-career academics should have access to competitive UG research and training support and access to external support. However, there is very little information about the processes these individuals go through in order to effect the change to teaching and the reasons that influence this decision.

Career change can be distinguished from job change which is a movement to a similar job or a job that is part of a normal career path. Several studies (e.g. Feldman, 2002; Rhodes & Doering, 1983) have attempted to define the concept of career change as well as examining the reasons why people change from their initial choice of careers. For example, Feldman (2002: 76) defined career change as “entry into a new occupation which requires fundamentally different skills, daily routines, and work environments from the present one”. The present study, however, focuses on voluntary career change which refers to a wilful and intentional change in one’s career from one occupation category to another (Perosa & Perosa, 1984). Specifically, the study will examine reasons why people choose lecturing as a second career and the processes they go through to effect the change.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although there is much literature on the reasons why people choose teaching as a career, there appears to be less research into the complexity of this process for those who enter the teaching profession having already had one or more previous career ‘identities’ (e.g. William, 2010; Richardson and Watt, 2005). Other studies have also reported similar findings (Lerner & Zittleman, 2002; Priyadharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003; Richardson & Watt, 2006), with Lerner and Zittleman claiming that “the literature on career switchers into teaching is generally characterised by its absence” (p. 1). Of importance to this study, is the group of individuals who enter into university teaching after having experience in other careers.

The traditional path to university teaching career has involved entering the profession immediately after graduating from the University. However, the demographics of new university teachers, commonly referred to as “lecturers”, are changing. Only about one-

half of those who have become university teachers in recent years have done so immediately upon graduating from higher learning, with an almost equal number of second-career teachers filling the lecture halls (Cochran-Smith & Ziechner, 2005). Any number of factors may cause this potentially life-changing event to be set into motion, including a desire for fulfilment, more family and leisure time, and opportunities to serve the community (Lee & Lamport, 2011; Chope, 2001).

According to Brown (2002), “despite the influx of individuals searching for new occupations, there are few studies on the processes they go through to effect the change. Similarly, in Ghana research on the population of non-traditional entrants to university teaching profession, especially those who have had prior professional careers is very limited. Additionally, in the western world where a lot of studies have been conducted on the phenomenon, majority of these have focused on why people change careers into primary and secondary education. Further, while much of the available research is concerned with career changers’ motivations to teach (Richardson & Watt, 2005; Richardson, Gough, & Vitlin, 2001; Serow & Forrest, 1994), it appears that less attention has been paid to their experiences, and the process through which they effect this change. This study seeks to explore the gap in literature of the experiences of career changers and the reasons why they choose lecturing as a second career in Ghana. Are these reasons influenced by conditions in their prior professions? Are they necessitated by pull factors associated with university teaching? Or are they related to individual traits as reported by several studies (Carless and Arnup, 2011; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Rhodes & Doerings, 1983) on the phenomenon. This research aims at finding answers to these questions.

1.3 Objectives of Study

The main objective of this study is to explore the determinants of career change among holders of higher degrees in University of Ghana. Within this overall objective the following questions will be addressed:

1. to identify the individual and organisational factors which influence career change
2. to examine the reasons why individuals choose lecturing as a second career and the extent to which these are gendered;
3. to understand the processes career switchers go through in order to effect a career change into university teaching;
4. to describe the outcome of career switch into university teaching on job satisfaction and also ascertain the benefits to the new organisation.
5. to make recommendations on how to manage career choices and aspirations and highlight the benefits of the change to the organisation.

1.4 Research Questions

The main objective of this study is to explore the determinants of career change among holders of higher degrees in University of Ghana. Within this overall objective the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the individual and organisational factors responsible for career change?
2. What conditions stimulate the decision to switch career to university teaching and to what extent are these gendered?
3. What are the processes career changers go through to effect the change?
4. What influence does career change have on individual job satisfaction in Ghana?
5. Do career changers bring any benefits to their new organisations?

1.5 Significance of Study

Career change is among the most critical decisions in a person's lifetime. This decision has a far-reaching impact on a person's future in terms of lifestyle, status, income, security and job satisfaction.

Many research studies on the topic have been done in other African countries and especially in the western world. For example, Mercora (2003) carried out a study on the topic: "A qualitative study examining the motives and determinants of a voluntary career change into education". Surprisingly, in Ghana, not only have there been very little empirical studies on career change into university teaching but also the phenomenon in general has not received the necessary attention. Thus a study that aims at examining the determinants and consequences of career change in the Ghanaian context will help address this gap in literature especially in the area of sociology of work and industrial relations.

It will also be relevant to individuals considering a career change, for organisations that are downsizing or restructuring, and for career theory and counselling. These will help provide a better understanding of job retention, job satisfaction, and performance in Ghana. In addition, the study of the relationship of gender, work experience, and career switch will aid gender advocates to understand more fully the background variables and problems faced by various categories of women and men as they choose their careers. This study will also challenge policy directions in creating better and more balanced opportunity programs that will help people in their career decisions.

According to Marcus and Donald (2001), for people to excel in their chosen field and to find lasting satisfaction in doing so, they need to understand the unique patterns of their

personality, and to find jobs which fit both their personal needs and their skill set. A study on how personality affects career decisions will provide a vital information that would help individuals make the right career choice and reduce dissatisfaction with careers, curb switches in careers and ameliorate the entire quality of life.

More importantly, according to Chen (2006), quality in teaching and learning can only be enhanced if faculty members are satisfied and content with their job. Thus an understanding of why individuals change careers in order to teach is key to retaining and satisfying this cohort of teachers.

1.6 Definition of Concepts

The study makes use of terms and concepts that must be put in context for clarity.

Concepts and terms used are defined as follows:

Career

This is defined as the evolving sequences of a person's work experiences over time (Arthur et al, 1989)

Career Change

Changing to a work position in a different occupation category or field, where previous skills and responsibilities are largely irrelevant and new training is undertaken (Carless & Arnup, 2011).

Higher Degree

Second and/or post-graduate degree

University of Ghana Employees

Refers to the teaching staff

Voluntary

This refers to a wilful and intentional act.

Boundaryless Career

A sequence of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of a single employment setting (DeFillipi & Arthur, 1996, p.116).

Midlife

It refers to period of a person's life span between the age of 35 and 60 years old (Bahr, 2009).

Process of Career Change

“movement across occupational boundaries” (Hess, Jepsen & Dries, 2012, p. 280).

Job Change

“movement to a similar job or a job that is part of a normal career path” (Rhodes & Doering, 1992).

Second Career

a career chosen to replace an initial means of livelihood.

Career Switch

the movement of a person from one job group to another.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts that guides a research process (Ary, Jacob & Razavieh, 1996). Several frameworks have been used to explain career change phenomenon and these include, theory of congruence (Holland, 1985), the expectancy valence theory (Vroom, 1963) and the self-concept theory (Super, 1990). Nonetheless, this study will adopt Rhodes and Doering's (1983) model of career change to

provide the theoretical framework. This is a preferred model because unlike other frameworks that have guided research in this area, it incorporates almost all the key factors as suggested by Sonnenfeld and Kotter (1982), as well as the process of career change. Thus, it allows a comprehensive examination of the phenomenon.

According to this model, individual and organisational factors influence perceived fit, which in turn influences job satisfaction. Thus, being dissatisfied leads to thinking about changing jobs or careers and subsequently intentions to search for new positions. A full examination of the model will not be possible for the purposes of space so the study will concentrate on selected determinants, processes and outcomes of career change. Specifically, the individual characteristics will be: traits (openness to experience, extraversion, and general efficacy), demographic factors (age, gender, marital status, and children), human capital (education level and occupational tenure), the immediate antecedents of job satisfaction (job search activity and intentions to leave), and the organisational factors (job security and salary).

Although there was increased research on career change during the 1970s and 1980s (Rhodes & Doerings, 1983; Armstrong, 1981; Hill & Miller, 1981; Holland, Magoon, & Spokane, 1981; Lawrence, 1980; Thomas, 1980; Neapolitan, 1980; Robbins, Thomas, Harvey, & Kandefer, 1978; Snyder, Howard, & Hammer, 1978; Gottfredson, 1977; Wiener & Vaitenas, 1977; Schneider, 1976; Biderman, 1973; Clopton, 1973), there still is little consistent understanding of the determinants of career change. Again, the very few systematic studies on the phenomenon have produced divergent results on the motivation for career change, and the total process of career change itself has not been adequately explored. These have been attributed in part to a lack of a comprehensive framework for

studying career change. It is against these shortfalls that Rhodes and Doering (1983) developed the model of career change.

The integrated model of career change, according to Rhodes and Doering (1983) is derived primarily from the Mobley, Horner, and Holingsworth's (1978) turnover model. In addition, the model draws on the works of Price (1977) and Steers and Mowday (1981) as well as the expectancy valence theory. Recent studies that have used the model to explain the career change phenomenon include Carless and Arnup (2011). Using this model as a framework for their study, Carless and Arnup identified an individual's motivation in undergoing career change and the processes he or she moves through to effect the career change. In the same vein, the present study adopts this model of career change to investigate the reasons career switchers assign to their behaviour, the processes they move through in effecting the change as well as the outcomes.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction to the study with key sections such as background to study, theoretical framework, problem statement, objectives of the study, the research questions, and definition of concepts.

Chapter two reviews the literature. Literature review involves the systematic identification, location, scrutiny and summary of written materials that contain information on a research problem (Polit & Hungler, 1999). Thus studies that have been conducted on the topic were reviewed in this chapter. Some of the areas reviewed include: global trend of career change, trends in the labour market in Ghana, reasons for career change, and career change outcomes.

Chapter three is the research methods. This chapter presents the methodological approaches which were used for the study. The issues that were discussed in this chapter include: justification for the use of the mixed methods design, the sample size and characteristics, the sampling techniques used, the setting of the research, procedures and materials used to collect the data and finally the data analysis method employed. Ethical issues considered during and after the field work were discussed under this chapter.

Chapter four is the analytical chapter and captioned: “Career Change into university teaching and the outcome on job satisfaction in Ghana.” The chapter presents the findings from the data generated through the open-ended and closed-ended questions. The main objective of the study is to explore the determining factors that influence the choice to switch career into university teaching and the outcome of career change on job satisfaction. In the pursuit of this, the study also explored the following specific issues: the reasons why individuals choose lecturing as a second career; the processes career switchers go through in order to effect a career change into lecturing; and the outcome of the career switch into lecturing on job satisfaction.

Chapter five discusses the findings in relation to the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and the specific objectives of the study.

Chapter six provides a summary of the findings, conclusions and some recommendations on how to manage career choices and aspirations and highlight the benefits of the change to the organisation.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Literature review involves the systematic identification, location, scrutiny and summary of written materials that contain information on a research problem (Polit and Hunger, 1999). Although a considerable number of studies have been conducted on the career change phenomenon, there is very little information pertaining to this specific topic globally. Therefore, the literature review for the study will mainly contain information on related topics and these shall be organised into sections. The areas to be reviewed are, the definition of career, the concept of career change, global trend of career change, previous studies on the phenomenon, motivation for becoming a teacher, individual and organisational characteristics that determines career change and career change outcomes.

2.1 The Definition of Career

Career is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as a person's "course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)". In this definition career is understood to relate to a range of aspects of an individual's life, learning and work. Career is also frequently understood as the working aspects of an individual's life e.g. as in career woman. The term is again used to describe an occupation or a profession that usually involves special training or formal education, and is considered to be a person's lifework. In this case "career" is seen as a sequence of related jobs usually pursued within a single industry or sector e.g. "a career in law" or "a career in the building trade".

The notion of what constitutes a career is therefore complex, and its precise definition is often debated. According to Higgins (2001), the study of careers is an interdisciplinary

subject comprising research from multiple areas including psychology (Betz, et al., 1989), sociology (Barley, 1989), and anthropology (Bateson, 1989) as well as labour economics (Becker, 1975) and organizational behaviour (Hackett et al., 1991). These perspectives according to the author, explain the existence of the several approaches to studying an individual's career. While some scholars have focused on an individual's occupation (e.g., Rhodes and Doering, 1993; Markey and Parks, 2014) or the work roles experienced during a person's lifetime (e.g., Hall, 1976), others have called for a more expansive perspective that encompasses both work and non-work role activities and behaviours (e.g. Bateson, 1989). Despite these different approaches to the study of careers, career theorists generally concur that a 'career' may be defined as 'the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time' (e.g., Higgins, 2001; Cochran, 1994; Arthur et al., 1989).

According to both organizational and sociological scholars, careers have both an objective as well as a subjective side to them (Higgins, 2001; Gunz et al., 2000; Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997; Stephens, 1994; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The objective aspect of an individual's career consists of the observable patterns of jobs an individual has held (Cesinger, 2011) and it is normally measured in terms of rapid promotion, salary progression and status increases (King, 2001). The subjective aspect, on the other hand, consists of an individual's own perspective on the set of experiences that make up one's 'career' (Evetts, 1992; Hughes, 1958; Van Maanen and Schein, 1977).and this focuses on a narrow range of behaviour intended to secure those outcomes. Of great significance to the present study is the subjective aspect of careers as it lays emphasis on the meanings career changers assign to such career decisions.

Nonetheless, it is important to consider both aspects of an individual's career when studying career transitions (Abele and Spurk, 2009; Abele-Brehm and Stief, 2004; Giddens, 1984; Louis, 1980; Bourdieu, 1977). For instance, Giddens (1984) used the terms “practical consciousness” and “discursive consciousness” to explain the objective and subjective elements of career decisions. He noted that both concepts are developed through schemata which serve as tools people use to understand their experiences. As new experiences are gained, the schemata are modified and as they change so does what is recognised in the surrounding world. This is consistent with Cesinger (2011) assertion that career decisions can only be understood in terms of the life histories of those who make them. Bourdieu (1977), on the other hand, used the concept “habitus” to summarize the ways in which a person's beliefs, ideas and preferences are individually subjective but also influenced by the objective social networks and cultural traditions in which that person lives.

2.2 The Concept of Career Change

From the above definitions of career, the concept of career change can be described as leaving established work experiences, in favour of beginning a new one. Lawrence (1980) defines a career change as “job move in which the second job does not belong in the normal career progression of the first.” He added that, individuals in this category do not only change jobs but actually change the entire occupational focus of their work.

According to Rhodes and Doering's (1983), the concept refers to movement to a new occupation or profession that is not part of a typical career progression. To Carless and Arnup (2011), career change is changing to a work position in a different occupation category or field, where previous skills and responsibilities are largely irrelevant. This

movement, according to the authors, typically involves the need to undertake training or education in order to meet the demands of the new career. Blau (2007) also noted that the career change phenomenon is normally associated with considerable cost for the individual due to the additional training and human investment required, and lost time and income.

There are, of course, many alternative descriptions of career change and so, there are many different types of career transitions that one could study (e.g., Breeden, 1993; Doering & Rhodes, 1996). For example, with a different conceptualization of career change, one might consider a change in job (e.g., from human resources to finance) within the same organization as a career change (Heppner et al., 1994). Or, one might consider a change in organization but not in job (e.g., from one academic institution to another) to be a career change (Sullivan, 1999; Rhodes and Doering, 1983, and Ornstein and Isabella, 1993). These notwithstanding, the present study adopts a more conservative definition, what Higgins (2001) calls a 'complex' form of career change. This involves changes in both employers and tasks or job functions, rather than a change in only one of these aspects (Carless and Arnup's, 2011; Parnes, 1954; Smart and Peterson, 1997).

2.3 Recent Trend of Career Change

The occurrence of widespread career switching is a relatively new phenomenon among working professionals. In the past, a career was likely to be characterized by an employee seeking to stay with one, perhaps two companies for the duration of one's working life. Careers therefore were closely linked to hierarchies in organisations (e.g. Cesinger, 2011; Wilensky, 1961; Whyte, 1956). People competed for promotions, and climbing up the ladder was the ultimate indicator of success. Leading theorists from the 1950s through the

1970s continued to support this traditional understanding of career ((Rosenbaum, 1979; Levinson, 1978; Townsend, 1970; Super, 1957). By contrast, recent trends indicate the prevalence of what is termed as “boundaryless career” (Lee & Lamport, 2011; Baruch, 2006; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Ashkenas et al., 1995; DeFillippi and Arthur, 1994), or “protean career” (Hall, 1976; 1996; 2004) where one may change jobs, or even professions, many times over the course of a working lifetime

Some have argued that the very nature of work has changed in modern society due to a number of factors, including technology, globalism, economics (Chope, 2001; Sullivan & Emerson, 2003) and increased competition (Baruch, 2006). Other factors such as the shift in the industrial profile, the changes in the labour profile, the growing need for health care, and the benefits for working women have been noted for affecting the future careers of workers globally (Sullivan, 1999). These trends may have had a major impact on the environment of individuals who switch careers into university teaching. Such factors, according to Carless and Arnup (2011) necessitate the emergence of the career-switching worker who has traded the “company man” mentality of the past for the free-agent approach of the present. Conversely, Valcour and Tolbert (2003) found that career change tended to work well for women, due to a number of factors including time off for child-bearing and raising, and moving due to a spouse’s career. The authors also found that these types of career decisions do not serve men well and that men are more likely to stay with one company, seeking promotions within an organization.

According to Mercora (2003), some of the current pool of career-changers is looking for work that may be more fulfilling and personally satisfying than their original choice of profession. This assertion has been confirmed by several career scholars (i.e. Baruch,

2006; Polach, 2004; Thomas, 1980; Jung, 1933) who also added that career change decisions occur mostly during mid-life. For example, Thomas (1980) noted that although economic motives (such as salary, prestige and job security) may drive some individuals to change their career, the domain of intrinsic work motivation defined by 'values' and "meaningful work" feature prominently as reasons for career change among middle-aged managerial and other professional workers. Such writers believe that a mid-life crossroads was common for the worker, and at this point one would choose to change careers toward a profession that mirrors one's belief systems and personal goals. Holland's (1985) ground-breaking work on the nature of careers also established that people gravitate toward types of work that are compatible with their personalities. These individuals tend to be more satisfied once they have settled in such a job, becoming far less likely to switch careers in the future. These theories, perhaps, provide explanations for those second-career university teachers who have given up what are often well-paying professions to seek a career more in line with personality traits and value systems.

Rather than treating all career changers as one group, studies focusing on career changers have identified patterns based on an individual's career decision-making style and choices. Terms such as "self-evaluative", "self-initiated", "strategic focused"; "aspirational" and 'opportunistic' attempt to capture the thinking of career changers (Bimrose et al 2008, p. 20). Certain typologies (based on motivations, identifiable characteristics and responses) such as 'drift outs', 'opt outs', 'bow outs', 'force outs', 'classic career changers', 'persisters' and 'desisters' have also been adopted to distinguish between different mid-life career changers (Thomas, 1980; Watt & Richardson, 2008).

Just as there are different reasons for career switching, there are also different results. Not all adults experience a seamless transition from one career to another, even if the second career is something that the career changer has always dreamed about doing. Lewis (1996) pointed out the obstacles faced by many older career changers in the quest to pursue a second career, including considerable investment of time and money as they prepare for a new profession. By contrast, younger career changers often suffer from negative self-images and a lack of information “not only on occupations, but also within their own interests and skills” (Lucas, 1999, p. 117). Nevertheless, people of all ages and backgrounds continue to make dramatic changes in their professional lives in spite of the obvious challenges and hardships.

2.4 Previous Studies

Several theories have been proposed as helping to explain the career change phenomenon. They include Trait and Factor theory, Holland’s (1987) personality theory, the Developmental theory, Vroom’s (1964) Expectancy-Valence theory and Social Network theory. These shall be reviewed in turn.

2.4.1 Trait and Factor Theory

The Trait and Factor Theory began with Parsons (1909), who proposes that a choice of a vocation depends upon three factors. The first factor is to have an accurate knowledge of one’s self which includes a clear understanding of one’s aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, and limitations. The second factor is to have a thorough knowledge of the world of work and the requirements for specific jobs. The final factor is the ability to make a proper match between the two, what Kidd (1984) calls 'a process involving a matching of self and occupation. In a study conducted by Thomas (1980), a near majority

of the respondents representing 53% indicated that “a better fit of values and work” was a very important motivation for change.

According to Williamson (1939), the basic purpose of the trait-and-factor approach to career counselling was to "match" the characteristics of an individual to jobs which required those characteristics, and in so doing identify the jobs which were, theoretically, the most appropriate for that client. Herr and Cramer (1984) identified 10 major types of "matching" information usually sought by professional counsellors. The matching types were abilities, needs and interests, stereotypes and expectations, significant others, values, residence, family, adjustment, risk-taking, and aspirations. The "trait" portion of the trait-and-factor approach referred to client characteristics. Therefore, vocational counsellors are encouraged by proponents of this theory to have extensive and valid information about their clients. The "factor" portion referred to characteristics of various jobs. In order to use this approach effectively, counsellors must also have extensive knowledge of the world of work and the requirements for specific jobs. Accordingly, trait-and-factor career counselling has been referred to colloquially as the "know the client, know the job" approach (Vacc & Loesch, 1987).

Previous studies (Sullivan, 1999; Tokar, Fischer & Subich, 1988; Chen, Gully & Eden, 2004; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Vacc & Loesch, 1987) that have used this theory to explain the phenomenon argue that, individuals who fail to make a proper match between their own goals and work values more often than not experience career change. Nonetheless, the theory has been criticised as being oversimplified (Kidd, 1984; Law, 1981; Roberts, 1975) because it does not incorporate other important variables such as social and economic factors that can also explain the phenomenon.

2.4.2 Holland Congruence Theory

Holland's (1983) theory of congruence has also been used by several career scholars (Parsons and Wigtil, 1974; Robbins et al., 1978; Thomas & Robbins, 1979; Wiener Valtenas, 1977) to explain the phenomenon under study. The theory posits that a person will leave an incongruent job for one that increases person-work environment congruence. This means that people gravitate towards types of work that are compatible with their personalities. Such individuals tend to be more satisfied once they have settled in such jobs becoming far less likely to switch careers in the future. This theory provides a plausible explanation for lecturers who have given up what are often well-paying professions to seek a career more in line with personality traits and values systems. However, findings reported in these studies, according to critics have been inconsistent.

2.4.3 Expectancy-Valence Theory

Another theory that has been used (Schneider, 1976; Snyder et al., 1978) to study career change is the expectancy-valence theory. The theory was propounded by Vroom (1964) and it assumes that behaviour results from conscious choices among alternatives. It suggests that the relationship between people's behaviour at work and their goals was not as simple as was first imagined by other scientists. Like the other theories, Vroom's theory has been faulted for lack of comprehensiveness. Moreover, Parker and Dyer (1976) and Jacobson and Eran (1980) found that non-expectancy factors contributed significantly to career change decisions.

2.4.4 Developmental Model

These approaches maintain that career decisions are a function of the total personality within a developmental framework and are viewed as a process instead of an act.

Occupational choice is not restricted to a certain period in life, but as a set of reoccurring events throughout the life cycle. Therefore, career development may be viewed as an evolutionary process which is flexible and in which individuals could adapt their occupational choices to the changing conditions in their lives. Theorists associated with this model include Ginzberg (1972), Tiedeman and O'Hara (1963), Hadley and Levy (1962), Super (1957) and Beilin (1955).

For example, the developmental model of Ginsberg et al. (1972) and Super (1953, 1957, 1981) argues that there are developmental stages to decision-making, and that 'good' career choice cannot be made until the young person has developed his/her abilities and personal maturity far enough. Perhaps this theory explains why most career change decisions happen after people come to the realisation that they are not cut out for what they do for a living. One problem with this position is that an external expert has to decide what makes a good decision. Furthermore, like trait theory, the developmental model is restrictedly psychological in its focus, treating each person as a discrete entity and minimising the impact of social and contextual factors as part of the decision-making process (Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997).

2.4.5 Social Learning Theory

This theory addresses the interaction of social and cultural factors on decision-making and acknowledges that they become enmeshed in an individual's identity, as life develops and experiences are accumulated. The proponents of this theory (Krumboltz, 1979; Taylor, 1992; Boreham & Arthur, 1993; Seda, 1996) assume that past experiences through both direct and observational stimulus can strengthen individual behaviour. According to them, people are assumed to be intelligent, problem-solving individuals who strive to understand

the positive and negative reinforcement that surrounds them and then attempt to control their environment to suit their own purposes and needs.

Krumboltz's (1979) framework, for example, addresses the question of why individuals enter particular occupations and why they may express various preferences for different occupational activities at selected points in their lives. However, like other social learning theorists, Krumboltz (1979) did not provide conclusive evidence of internal and external factors individuals perceive as having influenced an actual decision to enter into a specific occupation at selected points in his or her life (Brown & Brooks, 1990).

2.4.6 Social Network Theory

Social network theory is the study of how people, organizations or groups interact with others inside their network. The theory has been used by several career writers (Higgins, 2001; Pfeffer, 1997; Hall, 1996; Greenhaus and Callanan, 1994; Ibarra, 1993; Neapolitan, 1980) to investigate the relationship between network structure and career change. Higgins (2001), as an example, asserted that career decision-making is a social process and thus, the social context and, in particular, the people who provide the decision-maker with advice during the job search process can affect the likelihood of career change. She found that individuals with broad career networks were more likely to change careers than individuals with narrow career networks. Granovetter's (1973) seminal work on the strength of weak ties also demonstrates that connections between individuals served as conduits for career information, specifically, career opportunities. Thus the set of such relationships comprises a social network since it constitutes relationships between ego (the focal individual) and a set of alters or people to whom the individual is connected – what may be called 'advice networks (Brass, 1995).

The framework that guides this study emphasizes the importance of such networks. It therefore assumes that having a network of advisors who represent a broad array of relationship contexts (e.g. work, school, and family) will enhance the number and variety of career opportunities to which one has access, thereby increasing the likelihood of career change (Higgins, 2001; Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997; Ibarra, 1993). The theory has however been criticised on the grounds of being too subjective.

2.5 Individual Characteristics

According to the framework that guides this study, individual and organisational factors influence perceived fit, which in turn influences job satisfaction. The individual factors include traits, demographic, human capital and job satisfaction. The organisational factors, on the other hand, are job security and salary. These shall be looked at in details.

2.5.1 Traits

Traits are all the aspects of a person's behaviour and attitudes that make up the person's personality. They are often shown with descriptive adjectives such as patient, hardworking and innovative. Britannica (2002) describes it as a way of thinking, feeling and behaving. An individual's personality trait may embrace attitudes and opinions that affect the way we deal with issues and, in this case, the situation of changing a career. To Splaver (1977), personality trait plays an important role in the choosing of the right career. Splaver therefore stated, "It is important for you to have a good understanding of yourself, your personality, if you are to make intelligent career plans" (p.12). This assertion is consistent with the Trait and factor theory. Personality traits have been an integral aspect of understanding vocational choice, yet there have been few studies on personality and career change (Sullivan, 1999; Tokar, Fischer & Subich, 1998). This study aims at adding

on to the limited number of researches in this regard by looking at some personality traits and how they influence the phenomenon of interest. For the purposes of this study, the personality traits to be reviewed are Openness to Experience, Extraversion and general self-efficacy.

2.5.1.1 Openness to Experience

Openness refers to traits, such as how inclined someone is to conform to societal or cultural norms, how concretely or abstractly someone thinks about things, and how open or resistant someone is to change. Openness to experience is, therefore a personality dimension characterised by imagination, curiosity, creativity, intelligence and being open to a range of new experiences (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Carless & Arnup, 2011). In this study, the expectation is that individuals with this personality trait will be more likely to change careers than those who do not possess such traits.

According to Carless and Arnup (2011), making a career change is a risky activity and more likely to be undertaken by someone who is innovative, intelligently curious, and does not favour the status quo. Higher scores on Openness to Experience have been associated with employees' willingness to accept major internal job changes (Mignonac, 2008; John & Srivastava 1999), and a higher incidence of changing organisations (Vinson, Connelly & Ones, 2007). High scores on creativity and risk taking style have been associated with career change (Cesinger, 2011; Abele and Spurk, 2009; Donohue, 2007; Kanchier & Unruh, 1989).

2.5.1.2 Extraversion

Extraversion is a personality characteristic that describes things like how social a person is or how warm and loving they tend to be. Extraverts by nature enjoy the company of others, are gregarious, sociable, confident, optimistic and energetic. As a result, they are likely to have large work-related networks and high energy levels which assist them to obtain employment in a new career (Higgins, 2001). Kram (1985) also noted that the diversity of one's psychosocial advice relations will increase the probability of career change. According to the framework for the study, individuals with this personality trait are more likely to initiate and succeed in making a career change.

There have been several studies that provide support of the hypothesised relationship between extraversion and career change. A qualitative study by Lewis and Thomas (1987) reported that a majority of engineers and scientists who changed occupations relied on their networks to get a job. Similar findings were reported by Zippay (2001) with a sample of steelworkers. Doering and Rhodes (1989) qualitative study of teachers found that speaking with people in different occupations, as well as family and friends was an essential preliminary step to making a change. Many of the mid-career changers interviewed by Neapolitan (1980) reported they developed an attraction to their new occupation through information provided by their friends and acquaintances. These findings are consistent with the social network theory. Furthermore, participants with higher occupational self-efficacy at graduation were found to be more satisfied with their careers seven years later than those with lower occupational self-efficacy (Abele and Spurk, 2009b).

2.5.1.3 General Self-Efficacy

Another theme that is prevalent within the research literature on career change is the concept of general self-efficacy. General self-efficacy was theorized and introduced into career development literature by Betz and Hackett in 1981. Betz and Hackett (1981) apply Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory to the career development of women. Bandura (1977) states, "self-efficacy expectations refer to a person's beliefs concerning his or her ability to successfully perform a given task behaviour. It is the belief in ability to perform across a variety of situations (Chen, Gully & Eden, 2004). Abele and Spurk (2009) defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's capacity and motivation to successfully perform occupational tasks and challenges and to pursue one's occupational career irrespective of the particular field of occupation (p. 54).

Longitudinal studies from Higgins, Dobrow, and Chandler (2008) and Saks (1995) reveal an influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction or perceived career success. According to Heppner, Multon and Johnston (1994) a key attribute that facilitates career change is self-efficacy. The more confident an individual is in his or her abilities, the more psychologically ready he or she is to take on a challenging task, such as changing careers (Higgins, 2001; Bandura, 1997). Neapolitan (1980) reported that compared to a matched sample of non-changers, career changers expressed confidence in their ability to make a change successfully. Similar findings were reported by Kanchier and Unruh (1989).

Organizational scholars have suggested that an individual's confidence to overcome career obstacles should increase one's willingness to change careers and, hence, his or her probability of doing so (Lent et al., 1996). These scholars have suggested that the primary source of such confidence is one's self-esteem and one's sense of self-efficacy and

personal control during the job search process. For example, organizational scholars (e.g., Higgins, 2000) have found that individuals with higher self-efficacy engage in more job search behaviours (e.g., interviews) which can affect both one's opportunities as well as willingness to change careers. These findings confirm the framework that guides this study.

2.5.2 Demographics

2.5.2.1 Age

Research studies on age and career change have produced mixed findings. A meta-analysis by Ng et al. (2005) found age to be negatively related to career transition. As individuals age they become less likely to change careers (Blau, 2000; Blau & Lunz, 1998; Harper, 1995; Breeden, 1993). For instance, Breeden (1993) found that the group of workers who most often changed careers were less than 30 years of age. The explanation is that younger people have not accumulated general and, or specific human capital in their occupation in contrast to older people who are more likely to have substantial investments (Parrado et al., 2007). Younger people are also more likely to be more flexible in their living and working arrangements, compared to older individuals.

Similarly, Markey and Parks (1989) stated that “it has been deemed a ‘socioeconomic law’ that as the age of an individual increases, the likelihood of his or her experiencing occupational change decreases”. Using the same explanation as Breeden (1993) the authors mentioned that compared to older workers, younger workers have less of an investment in their occupations and their companies and often less attachment to their geographic residences or even their lifestyles. For these reasons, they have fewer constraints of all types than their older counterparts and they are more likely to shop for

occupations that will maximize lifetime earnings and satisfaction. Nonetheless, Parks and Markey (1989) concluded that there is no one age group that breaks the pattern of reduced mobility and that, the pattern holds among all groups irrespective of demographic or educational characteristics. A more recent study by Carless and Arnup (2011) on the determinants of career change indicated that compared to career changers, career stayers are older have more children and have worked longer in their career than those who changed careers.

Furthermore, older generations still view career success rather with objective criteria, such as advancement or vertical upward mobility in status, income, or authority (e.g. Gattiker and Larwood, 1986), compared to younger generations emphasizing the subjective meaning of success at work and in life (Judge et al., 1995; Nabi, 1999.; Poole and Bornholt, 1998). Results from Kim, Mone, and Kim (2008) show that individuals in their 20ies and 30ies develop expertise in areas that they truly enjoy and longed more for work-life balance compared to respondents in their 40ies. However, the several studies on what is termed as “midlife career change” have reported different results (Lee, 2011; Barclay, Stoltz & Chung, 2011; Bobek & Robbins, 2005; Serow & Forrest, 1994; Heppner et al., 1994; Lawrence, 1979). For instance, Barclay et al (2010) found that although career change may take place at any age across the life span; a critical time for this change is during middle adulthood (the period of a person’s life span between the age of 35 and 65). This study therefore attempts to establish whether age is a positive or negative predictor of career change.

2.5.2.2 Sex

Research on sex differences and career change has generated mixed findings. Some studies have reported that males change their career more frequently than females (Parrado et al., 2007) and are more likely to report their intentions to change careers (Blau, 2000; Blau & Lunz, 1998). In contrast, other studies have reported that women's career decision remains more complex than men's because of their multiple family and work related roles.

Findings from Hakim (2000; 2006) on women's careers in the UK and the US suggest that women mostly exhibit adaptive careers while men – according to Huang et al. (2007) and Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) – tend to have more linear, traditional career patterns placing more emphasis on monetary rewards and promotion. McGovern and Hart (1992) also found that prestige and salary were more important to men, and flexibility was more important to women. These findings comply with Igbaria and Parasuraman (1991), Kim (2004), and Watts (1993) who reported that most women valued balance between work and personal life higher than men.

Nonetheless, other studies have found no gender differences in intentions to change careers (Carless & Bernath 2007; Markey & Parks, 1989). For example, Miguel (1993) concludes that there are two competing perspectives about gender differences with respect to career decisions. One is that women and men are different in terms of career orientation, attitudes, and values, while the other holds that they are the same if mediating variables are controlled for. The latter perspective is supported by findings from Kim, Mone, and Kim (2008) revealing that males and females did not have substantially different career orientations when potentially mediating variables, such as age, employment level and education level, were held constant. In this regard, numerous

previous studies claiming that females place a higher value than males on work-family balance and thus are more likely to switch careers to have this flexibility (e.g. Igbaria and Parasuraman, 1991; Igbaria, Kassicieh and Silver, 1999; Kim, 2004) may have limitations. Thus, the present study will explore whether females or males are more likely to change careers.

2.5.2.3 Marital Status

The findings on the effect of marital status on career change have been mixed. Some studies have shown that married women switch to careers to have flexible hours to accommodate family, community, and career concerns. For instance, Martin and Hanson (1985) found that a large percentage of married women move into professions that allowed them time to fulfil their female role. Other studies have indicated that those who are single are more likely to change careers (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Cesinger, 2011; Parrado et al., 2007; Breeden, 1993; Markey & Parks, 1989). It is argued that married workers are less likely to change careers due to the risks and consequences associated with changing jobs. Conversely, single people change careers more often because they have fewer commitments, and it is therefore easier to relocate for a job change (Markey & Parks, 1989). On the other hand, a number of studies have found that marital status has no impact on intentions to change careers (Carless & Bernath, 2007; Blau, 2000; Blau & Lunz, 1998). Given these mixed results we will explore its effect on career change.

2.5.2.4 Children

According to Carless and Arnup (2011), individuals with dependent children are less likely to change occupations. Neapolitan (1980) reported that lack of dependents was an important factor that mid-career individuals nominated as a factor that influenced their

decision to change careers. Meta analyses have shown that the number of children is negatively related to job turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000).

2.5.3 Human Capital

There has been considerable debate about the relationship between human capital and job turnover; this has been dominated by labour economic researchers (Bartel, 2000). Many of the arguments advanced also apply to career change. Formal education is one form of human capital investment (Becker, 1962). Other investments an individual may make are on-the-job training and job migration. Occupational tenure can be considered a measure of on-the-job training; it is defined as the amount of time a worker has accumulated in a given field and reflects the amount of time and effort an individual has spent to increase his or her value in the marketplace. In this study, the effects of two forms of human capital (formal education and occupational tenure) on career change will be examined.

2.5.3.1 Education

There are two opposite effects of education on career change predicted. Some career writers argued that higher investments in education accrue in greater career stability (Parks & Markey, 1989). According to the human capital theory (Becker, 1962), higher levels of education increase the individual's opportunity cost of leaving his or her career and tend to keep him in the career longer than his less educated counterparts. More educated workers have a wider range of tasks they can perform and learn a greater repertoire of job skills via on-the-job training compared to less educated individuals. The findings of Parrado et al. (2007) support the argument of a positive relationship between education and tendency to stay in a career. The contrary argument is that those with higher levels of education accumulate skills and experience on the job, which increase the likelihood of changing

careers (Sicherman & Galor, 1990). Higher educated individuals are better equipped to acquire additional skills and therefore are more likely to change careers (Harper, 1995; Mincer, 1994). Less educated individuals have a narrower range of work-related skills which curbs their opportunities to change careers.

2.5.3.2 Occupation Tenure

Individuals learn important new work skills and perfect old skills by on-the-job training. Through informal instruction by their supervisors or co-workers, trial and error, and repetition individuals become increasingly proficient and productive. On the one hand, increased occupational tenure represents a significant human capital investment, therefore a reduced probability of changing occupations. There is limited evidence to support this proposition. Aryee and Tan (1992) reported that increased employee development was associated with lower intentions of changing occupations. On the other hand, it has been shown that participating in skill development leads to thoughts about changing careers (Donohue, 2007). Carless and Bernath (2007), in contrast, found that occupational tenure had no impact on intentions to change careers with a sample of Australian psychologists. In view of the conflicting theoretical propositions and evidence, the relationship between human capital (education and occupational tenure) and career change will be explored.

2.5.4 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is typically defined as the feelings a person has about her or his job (Carless & Arnup, 2011). Locke (1976) described job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Thus, it is an attitude developed by an individual towards his or her job and job conditions (Rastgar et al., 2012). Career writers have noted that work takes up such a significant

amount of a person's life, and that by increasing an individual's overall satisfaction with his or her work life, the total well-being of the individual, the organisation and the society is improved (Duong, 2014; Staples & Higgins, 1998). A central component of Rhodes and Doering's (1983) model of career change is that job dissatisfaction is likely to lead to thoughts about career change. However, research on the relationship between job satisfaction and career change has generated mixed findings.

A number of studies have reported that feeling dissatisfied at work leads to thoughts about changing careers (Cesinger, 2011; Carless & Bernath, 2007; Donohue, 2007; Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Blau, 2000; Blau & Lunz, 1998; Rhodes & Doerings, 1993). On the other hand, a longitudinal study of actual career changers found that job satisfaction was not an antecedent of change, although, post-change individuals were happier in their jobs (Smart & Peterson, 1997; Breeden, 1993). The differing findings may be due to whether intentions to change or actual change were assessed and the subsequent time lag between assessing job satisfaction and actual change. Smart and Peterson (1997) showed that level of job satisfaction drops when the individual contemplates making a career change and then picks up once the individual implements the change.

2.5.5 Job Search and Intentions to Leave Current Job

According to the theory (Rhodes & Doering, 1993) that guides this study and theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), the immediate antecedents of career change are thoughts of changing careers, actual job search and intention to change. Individuals who invest time in job search are likely to be aware of alternative careers. Kanchier and Unruh (1989) found that individuals who changed careers perceived greater availability of acceptable alternative positions. In the same vein,

when Neapolitan (1980) interviewed career changers and a matched group of stayers, he found that dissatisfaction with the current career was not enough to cause a career change, attractive alternatives were also required. Due to the lack of research on actual career change generally, no direct evidence in support of the proposed relationship could be located. On the other hand, there is strong evidence of the relationship between turnover and intentions to leave and job search behaviour (Griffeth et al., 2000). Thus, it is expected that job search behaviour and intentions to leave current job will be positively associated with career change.

2.6 Organisational Characteristics

2.6.1 Job Security

It is assumed that career development support and job security in organizations influence career decisions because they enhance the progressive development of skills and knowledge (Cesinger, 2011). Traditionally, organizations were characterized by rigid hierarchical structures and they operated within a stable environment (Cesinger, 2011), thereby providing a high degree of job security. Careers therefore were predictable, secure, and linear. Nowadays organizational and environmental systems are highly dynamic and fluid making careers more unpredictable, vulnerable, and multidirectional within (Baruch, 2006). Employees are therefore likely to experience a lack of long term job security.

Job insecurity is defined as “perceived powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation” (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984, p. 438). For various economic and social reasons the demand for some occupational groups has declined in recent years (Markey & Parks, 1989), leading to job insecurity. Schein (1978) identified job security

as one of the five anchors used by individuals to choose a career. Hence, it is reasonable to expect that if job security is threatened individuals will consider changing careers. There is consistent evidence that job insecurity is an antecedent of intentions to leave a job (Blau, Tatum, McCoy, Dobria & Ward-Cook, 2004; Staufienbiel & Konig, 2010). However, there is scant evidence to suggest that job security is an antecedent of career change. A qualitative study of graduate engineers and scientists found a small proportion of the sample mentioned job insecurity as reason for changing careers (Lewis & Thomas, 1987). Doering and Rhodes (1989) replicated these findings with a sample of teachers.

2.6.2 Salary

Findings on the relationship between career change and salary have been mixed. According to Kanchier and Unruh (1989), the possibility of earning a higher salary is likely to influence willingness to change careers. Lewis and Thomas (1987) qualitative study of professional engineers and scientists found that the prospect of more money was nominated by a majority of career changers as a reason for undertaking the change. Similar findings have been reported by others (Kid & Green, 2006; Breeden, 1993; Doering & Rhodes, 1989; Markey & Parks, 1989; Neapolitan, 1980; Clopton, 1973). These findings suggest that the prospect of a higher salary is a reason for career change. However, other studies have reported different results. In her study on the attractions of teaching, Slay (2006) analysis showed a great relevance of non-monetary factors in informing the decision to enter teaching.

2.7 Outcomes of Career Change

According to the framework that guides this study, a career change is typically undertaken because there is an expectation that various aspects of work life will improve. This notion

is consistent with the normative decision theory (Gati & Asher, 2001), which holds that an optimal choice is the one that maximizes the expected utility. The expected utility of an alternative is based on a combination of the value and probability of the outcomes that are anticipated from each alternative (Gati & Asher, 2001). It also confirms the rationality theory (Homans, 199). This study therefore anticipates that there would be an improvement in the changeable, instigating factors, namely, in job security, job satisfaction, and salary. The study also expects a reduction in the number of hours worked and intentions to leave as this has been identified as one of the reasons why people switch career into teaching in general. A number of studies have shown that individuals who change careers have higher job satisfaction after the change (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Breeden, 1993; Neapolitan, 1980; Smart & Peterson, 1997).

2.8 The Process of Career Change

There is substantial evidence from the literature of career development and related studies that self-initiated career change is neither sudden nor whimsical. For instance, King (2001) noted that the career change phenomenon is a dynamic process, not consisting simply of a one-off execution of discrete behaviour, but rather of continuing execution of a set of co-occurring behaviours. Patton (1978) reports that one-quarter of workers in America seriously consider leaving their first choice career permanently. Lawrence (1980) describes a process in this context as the sequence of events that characterize a career change. The process of career change, according to her, include a period of reassessment during which the career change decision is made, a transition period during which the new job and/or new qualifications are sought, and a final period of socialization into the new career. The process of career change in this study is defined as 'movement

across occupational boundaries' (Chinyamurindi, 2012, p.10; Hess, Jepsen & Dries, 2012, p. 280) and it includes the various activities associated with career transitions.

Career change decisions, therefore, do not occur overnight. For example, an art director does not sit up in bed one morning and decide to become an engineer. The phenomenon appears to be a process that occurs in a particular context over a period of time. In this sense, the context refers to the specific work, family, and cultural environments that affect individuals throughout the process of career change. These recall the three stages described in Lewin's (1947) theory of change: unfreezing, moving, and freezing. Herman et al. (1983) also reported that this process is characterised by a state of uncertainty. The authors asserted "in almost every case people felt tremendous ambivalence about their changes. Excitement and anticipation about the new situation dominated". A former historian communicated his delight with the new role: "I felt like a kid in a big sandbox." Along with the excitement came an anxiety about whether they would be able to do the job or adapt to the new culture.

According to the wide variety of research available, most theorists agreed that there were many factors that affect career change decisions. The choices a person makes, the values a person holds, the successes and failures a person experiences, the social class in which a person has developed, and the interests, strengths, and capacities of the person all enter into this decision. In other words, career change is a product of heredity and environment, and the person's self-concept was vitally important in that decision (Herr, 1970; Hewer, 1963; Super, 1957). The choice of a second career is, therefore, not merely a decision of a moment: it is a complex and difficult process that spans a number of years (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, & Herma, 1951), if not a lifetime.

Based on the framework that underpins this research, individuals that switch careers go through what is termed as the “withdrawal process” in order to effect the change. This process begins with the thoughts of changing jobs/careers, followed by actual search for alternatives and intentions to change, prior preparation for change and actual change (Rhodes & Doering, 1983). This parallels the stages of career decision making identified by Gati (1986). The process is also consistent with Locke's (1976) task goal model, which posits that the most immediate determinant of choice is an individual's goal or intention, with Fishbein's (1967) model of attitudes, intentions and behaviours and Slay's (2006) theory on career transitions.

The decision to change careers is thus seen as a more deliberate act than are other forms of voluntary separation and this explains the various processes associated with the phenomenon. For instance, Rhodes and Doering's (1989) process of career change is a modification of Mobley et al.'s (1978) withdrawal process. First, congruent with Mobley's (1977) model, actual search was included in the model after intention to search. Actual search includes the search behaviour to decide on an alternative as well as to find the means of reaching that goal (e.g., location of sources of education or training). Actual search also may produce clarification regarding the availability of alternatives plus additional alternatives. This corroborates Pitz and Harren (1980), four problems of career decision making and these include available alternatives, linking objectives to alternatives, outcomes associated with each decision and attributes of such outcomes.

The second stage in the model is preparation for change. The preparation phase includes such activities as taking courses and putting aside money for financial support. Although it is placed before actual change, this phase also may occur during the actual change

process. The actual change process begins with leaving the old job and is not completed until the new job/career is entered. It should also be mentioned that preparation for change will not always lead to actual change because at some point in the process the alternative opportunities may no longer be available due to, for example, a shift in financial status.

2.9 Motivation to Teach

As mentioned earlier, the review of literature in reference to university teaching and career change has been very limited in nature due to the fact that the majority of studies have focused mainly on primary and secondary education. Furthermore, those that have concentrated on career change into primary and secondary teaching have been conducted in the western world. Thus this section will draw largely on reasons why individuals choose teaching in general. Nonetheless, efforts shall be made to put these in context.

For years published research has included reports of studies attempting to determine reasons why people select teaching as a career. Most educators do agree that teaching is rewarding, although definitely not an easy work. Literature spanning the fifty years up to the early 1990s has typically classified the motivations influencing teachers' career choice in terms of intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic factors (Watt, 2012, p. 792). Published research suggests that the reasons for choosing teaching have not primarily changed since the 1990s, although different studies tend to emphasise one or other of the factors depending on the time period, methodology, country, context and purpose of the study. The intrinsic and altruistic factors weigh more heavily in studies conducted in developed countries, whereas in socio-cultural contexts such as in Africa extrinsic reasons of salary and job security tend to be more important (Watt et al., 2012).

Studies in several OECD countries revealed that individuals were drawn to teaching due to a desire to work with children and because teaching offered the potential for intellectual fulfilment and the means to make a social contribution, with a strong emphasis on intrinsic factors (OECD, 2005). Similarly, in a large survey study commissioned by the Australian Government for the report 'Staff in Australia's Schools' (2011), 'personal fulfilment', 'desire to work with young people', 'being passionate about education' and 'enjoyment of subject area' were the top reasons for choosing teaching among early career primary and secondary teachers in Australia (McKenzie et al., 2011, p. 76). In another earlier Australian study to understand the motivations of pre-service teacher education students, Manuel and Hughes (2006) found that a majority of the participants interviewed had personal aspirations to work with young people and mentioned the attainment of personal fulfilment and meaning among the reasons for choosing to teach.

Watt et al.'s (2012) study to assess pre-service teachers' motivations for choosing teaching was implemented with a large sample of teachers in the US, Australia, Germany and Norway and the primary motivations were assessed using what the authors describe as a "psychometrically sound" choice scale (p. 2). The study found the highest rated motivations were "intrinsic value, perceived teaching ability, desire to make a social contribution, to work with children/adolescents, and having had positive prior teaching and learning experiences ... while at the same time extrinsic factors such as job security were rated consistently lower across all countries" (p. 14). Manuel and Hughes (2006) also noted ten reasons as being among those most commonly listed by teachers across a variety of studies ranging in time from the 1920's through the 1980's. The reasons include fondness for children, opportunity for adequate income and/or job security, favourable working conditions (i.e. good hours, long vacation, desirable personal

relations), opportunity for service to mankind and opportunity for a creative or challenging career.

However, educational theorists bring to our attention that such things as poor salary, lack of opportunity for advancement, and perceived monotony of teacher's work serve as factors which detracted persons from becoming teachers (Spear, Gould & Lee, 2000; Kyriacou, Haltgreen, & Stephens, 1999) in the developing countries. In Ghana, the situation is not different as these factors among many others have been the reasons why the teaching profession is not considered attractive. When a young man expresses interest in the field of teaching, more often than not the response is negative, as dictated by society (Mercora, 2003).

2.10 Motivation of Career Switchers to Teaching

Coincidentally, second-career teachers share some of the motivating factors that lead traditional-age students to choose education as a future career, as well as different and unique factors that set them apart. For instance, Snyder (1995) surveyed 3,000 pre-service teachers, including significant numbers of career switchers, and found that most were interested in the profession because of an interest in and a love for young people. Concerning older students seeking teaching as a second career, most had the benefit of children of their own and saw "teaching as an end in itself, rather than as a means to some other professional end" (p. 9). A common thread running through the majority of these teachers is the desire to work with young people. Although there are many characteristics of second-career teachers that make them unique, this desire to work with young people is shared with traditional-aged teachers.

According to one recent study, the reasons that people are changing careers in order to become teachers can be reduced to three influencing factors, including the opportunity to do something personally satisfying, make a contribution to society, and have a career that allows time for family responsibilities (The Pool of Potential Second-Career Teachers, 2008). Chambers (2002) interviewed 10 pre-service and in-service secondary teachers working in suburban settings outside Chicago. Her study focused on finding out more about the reasons that draw career changers into teaching and the effects of a previous successful career on their development as teachers. She found that second career teachers were motivated by altruism, and the perceived personal benefits of teaching. Others speak of a sense of calling which is deep and meaningful, and sometimes religious. This calling is stronger than the general perception that teaching is a difficult and demanding profession that holds a lowly status in modern society (Richardson & Watt, 2005).

2.11 Influential Factors for Second-Careers Teachers toward Teaching

Second-career teachers differ from traditional age entrants in the area of influential factors leading to teaching. For example, traditional age pre-service teachers are often strongly influenced by a former teacher or by those in the family who are teachers. By contrast, second career teachers are more likely to be influenced by value systems and other intrinsic motivators, as well as by prior work experiences. Powell (1992) asserted that:

Non-traditional preservice teachers were an older group of students, had encountered many life experiences, and most were deeply committed to becoming teachers, especially those who had chosen teaching over lucrative careers that they had been in for a number of years. (p. 235).

In addition, many of these teachers had extensive experience with children, most of them having raised children of their own. Other studies show additional factors also contribute to the decisions of career-switchers that choose to become teachers. For instance, in their study “I’ve decided to become a teacher: Influences on career change” Richardson and Watt (2005), found that a desire for security, more time with family, and a sense of calling were significant reasons why non-traditional teachers were leaving their jobs and steady incomes in order to prepare to become a teacher. They went on to indicate that these teachers were realistic and prepared for the demands of the job and were not dissuaded by the perceived lowly status of the profession. Chope (2001) also identified factors such a desire for fulfilment, more family and leisure time, and opportunities to serve the community as influential in the samples decision to switch career. Similar findings (Ramsey, 2000; Shaw, 1996; Chui Seng Yong, 1995; Young, 1995; Brown, 1992) have been reported.

Among the ranks of second-career teachers are people who are leaving often lucrative and high profile jobs to enter teaching, as well as those who come from blue-collar backgrounds. According to Yankelovich (1981) and Howard (1978), such individuals define success in their own terms. They want to derive more meaning from their work and are therefore reluctant to sacrifice personal and family satisfaction for the sake of their careers. Lovett (2007), for instance, found that despite having a job in banking that paid more than they could expect from teaching, some career changers opted to drop salary to satisfy their quest for making a difference to students and their learning. Similar studies that examine the reasons behind individuals taking up teaching later in life show consistent outcomes over the years. For instance, various studies have found that factors relating to salary and job prestige are not rated highly or are not a high priority for someone choosing

to become a teacher later in life (Crow, Levine, & Nager, 1990; Mayotte, 2003; Powers, 2002; Priyardharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003; Williams & Forgasz, 2009). In a study across three Australian universities, Williams and Forgasz (2009) found that career change teacher candidates viewed pay and the social status of teachers as far less important as other factors and the authors concluded that “career changers were not entering teaching for these reasons” (p. 103). In the same study, intrinsic and altruistic reasons were ranked higher than extrinsic rewards by the candidates. Earlier studies on career change teachers came to similar conclusions (Crow, Levine & Nager, 1990; Serow & Forrest, 1994).

2.12 University Teaching and Career Change

University faculty teaching is one of the most stressful occupations, requiring in-depth knowledge, and with pressure to teach and research, and to continually improve educational attainment and experience (Chen 2006). Despite these challenges, most individuals tend to choose university teaching over other more lucrative professions in recent times. Among these individuals are those who have had prior professions but have switched career into university teaching. However, literature in this area has focused on the reasons why people change career into teaching in general. The present study attempts to establish whether these reasons reviewed above parallel those for which people switch career into university teaching.

2.13 Career Change and Organizational Benefits

According to Hamill (2014), career changers are people with the most interesting professional paths which tend to benefit organisations that hire these individuals. Research had shown that such people have peculiar intrinsic determinants such that they are goal-driven, passionate, and inquisitive (Hamil, 2014; Mercora, 2003; Lawrence,

1979). These career changers could often easily identify their most transferrable skills, and articulate exactly how they proposed to use those skills in new ways. A significant observation from practice and experience confirmed that companies or institutions which employ career-changers benefit enormously from their varied attributes such as risk taking, transfer of valuable experiences and skills, open mindedness and predisposition to learning new things. Some of these attributes are highlighted below.

2.13.1 Ability to Take Risks

Hamil (2014) noted that career-changers are disposed to think outside of the restrictive, growth-inhibiting box. Changing one's career path, especially later in life, or after making a dent in another profession, demands sheer will and commitment. Career-changers tend to be focused, driven, passionate people who take risk to start over or try something new; these attributes are valuable to any organization. This supports Rhodes and Doering's (1983) hypothesized notion of openness to experience.

2.13.2 Transfer of Valuable Perspective

The historical perspective of the role career changers play in their new organisation is related to the phenomenon of polymath. A polymath is a person whose expertise spans many different areas (Harper, 2001). Career-changers are therefore regarded as polymaths who bring a wide variety of skills from their "previous lives" to any organization—skills that single-career-track professionals are less likely to have explored. For instance, according to Priyadharshini and Robinson-Pant (2010), individuals that switch careers into the teaching profession, are not only instrumental in changing the profile of newly qualified teachers (usually presumed to consist of fresh graduates), but they also bring with them a variety of skills, including management or organisational expertise.

Consequently, this translates to innovative thinking and a more holistic, well-rounded approach to challenges. Hamil (2014) stated that career-changers add skills to their tool kit, instead of subtracting because of the wide variety of experiences they have acquired, which obviously benefits their new organisations.

2.13.3 Open-mindedness and learning characteristics

Generally, people who take up jobs in new fields cannot afford to be rigid as a result they are automatically more open to learning, thinking creatively, and collaborating. Hamil (2014) opined that career changers are independent enough to have changed paths and are also flexible enough to adapt new habits. These rare traits make them more likely to be able to lead (or work within) a team effectively. It can be argued that hiring a career-changer unconsciously makes organizations to hire a “smarter” employee since learning new skills has been proven to sharpen the brain. The records showed that career-changers often thrive in new environments with great benefits to their employers. Hamil (2014) concludes that the old, one-track-career days are fading fast. The need to adapt the recruiting policies of an organization to welcome candidates with diverse backgrounds is the best way of tapping the best talents on the job market.

2.14 Significance of the Benefits to the Profession of Education

Career changers who choose teaching as a second career have a great deal to offer the profession and provide much that is worthy of scholarly investigation. Second-career teachers are different from most new college graduates. As Resta, Huling, and Rainwater (2001) pointed out, “midcareer individuals bring many strengths to teaching, including maturity, life experience, and good work habits” (p. 61). The retention rate for these teachers is also much better than that of their counterparts. Rather than gain these

attributes, as most traditional teachers do in the first difficult year of teaching in their first job, these career changers are ready for the task (Lee & Lamport, 2011).

2.15 Summary

There are a number of limitations to previous studies which this study would address. First, there is very little information on the phenomenon of career change in Ghana, since the large amount of research on the topic has been conducted elsewhere. Second, theories that have guided career change research have suffered from lack of comprehensiveness (Rhodes & Doering, 1983). Using two or more sociological theories would not be the more appropriate means of addressing this gap. This then calls for an integrated model like the one adopted in this study. Third, the majority of research on career change has assessed intentions to change (e.g., Blau, 2000; Carless & Bernath, 2007; Donohue, 2007; Higgins, 2001; Rhodes & Doering, 1993) rather than actual behaviour. Additionally, these studies have focused on a few demographic variables such as age, marital status, salary and job satisfaction. Fourth, although there is a large body of literature on career change into teaching, a greater number of them have focused on primary and secondary education. There is need for research that investigates why individuals enter into teaching at the tertiary level, having had prior professional backgrounds. Fifth, the growing number of studies has concentrated on factors that motivated and demotivated both prospective as well as practising teachers to change careers (Spear *et al.*, 2000). However, studies that examined the processes individuals go through to effect career change are very limited (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Mercora, 2001).

This study therefore seeks to address the aforementioned limitations. A concurrent embedded research design will be used with a small sample size of full time lecturers at

the University of Ghana. The research design is unique because although it is a mixed-method design, it will allow the nesting of the quantitative strand within the primary qualitative paradigm.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to describe the methodology used in this study. Rhodes and Doering's (1983) model of career change provided a framework for the study and this formed the basis upon which the study's objectives were achieved. The model was best supported by Carless and Arnup's (2011) research on determinants of career change.

University teachers who have had prior professional backgrounds were the ideal population to study career change due to their actual change of career. Studying this population helped eliminate from the study potential confounds due to the different reasons for leaving one's career, different status levels for the new career, other variables that could mask the relationship being considered. Therefore, the specific research objectives guiding this study were:

1. to identify the individual and organisational factors which influence career change;
2. to examine the reasons why individuals choose lecturing as a second career and the extent to which these are gendered;
3. to understand the processes career switchers go through in order to effect a career change into university teaching;
4. to describe the outcome of career switch into university teaching on job satisfaction; and
5. to make recommendations on how to manage career choices and aspirations and highlight the benefits of the change to the organisation.

3.1 Study Setting

This study was conducted on the campus of University of Ghana (UG), Legon in Accra. There were several reasons for selecting this study site. Key among these related to the main objective of the study, attractiveness of study site in terms of job security, their profile, and convenience.

The main objective of the study was to investigate the contributing factors that influence the choice to switch career into lecturing and the outcome of the career change on job satisfaction among career switchers in Accra. In terms of attractiveness, job security and profile, the candidate selected the University of Ghana because it is located in Accra. Accra is the capital city, highly urbanized, and also cosmopolitan with varied socio-demographics (GSS, 2012). The primacy of the Accra Metropolitan Area as an administrative, educational, industrial and commercial centre in attracting people from all over Ghana, continues to be the major force for rapid population growth, with migration contributing to over 35% of the population increase (GSS, 2012). Urban centres are the most ethnically mixed because of migration to towns and cities by those in search of employment (Anderson & Rathbone, 2000).

The University of Ghana (UG) was founded by an Ordinance on August 11, 1948 for the purpose of providing and promoting university education, learning and research. Currently, the University has three campuses under its four Colleges (Agbodeka, 1998). In addition, being the premier University, UG encompasses a number of research institutes and centres, libraries, administrative offices, and other support services for persons whose interest lie in the field of teaching and research. The University has an enrolment of over

40,000 students including undergraduate, graduate, and international students (UG, 2014a).

In terms of convenience, the University is located in the capital city Accra, where the researcher lives. Due to family and financial challenges and appropriateness of the selected study site, it was more expedient for the study to be conducted in Accra using this tertiary institution without compromising on quality of the research.

3.2 Research Design

Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009). There are three main types of research designs and these include Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed methods (combining quantitative and qualitative methods). Any of these three can be used in a research depending on the nature of the research problem being investigated. This study adopted the mixed research design making use of both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches. According to Creswell (2009), the basis for employing these designs can be generally described as methods to expand the scope or breadth of research, to offset the weaknesses of either approach alone. In a bid to identify factors that influenced career change as well as examined why individuals, in this case those that have had prior professional background, switch career into lecturing, the researcher understood the complex nature of the study thereby choosing to work with both the qualitative and quantitative methods.

Specifically the study employed the concurrent embedded design (Ivankova, Creswell and Stick, 2009). In this sense, the assumptions of the embedded design are established by the

primary approach, and its data set is subservient within that methodology (Ivankova et al., 2009). This study adopted a case study approach; therefore the inquirer conducted the research from a constructivist perspective which means although the structured interview consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions, the open-ended questions dominated the interview. This allowed the researcher to examine participants' reasons for choosing teaching over established career, the processes they moved through to effect the change, and the outcomes of their career change behaviour.

Several advantages have been given in support of the concurrent embedded design and these have informed the researcher's decision to adopt the approach for this study. For instance, according to Creswell (2009), the model allows researchers to collect both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously, during a single data collection phase. Thus unlike the other designs, the embedded model is considered less time consuming as the two forms of data are collected at the same time and in the same visit to the field. Given the busy schedules of participants, the candidate deemed it more appropriate adopting this strategy although it would have been more appropriate using a purely qualitative design.

Additionally, although the collection of data from the two methods is often to integrate the information and compare one data source with the other, the data may also not be compared but reside side by side as two different pictures that provide an overall composite assessment of the problem. Morse (1991) also noted that a primarily qualitative design could embed some quantitative data to enrich the description of a phenomenon. Similarly, she described how qualitative data could be used to describe an aspect of a quantitative study that cannot be quantified.

3.3 Target Population

Target population is the entire aggregate of cases about which the researcher would like to make a generalization (Polite & Hunger, 1985). According to Burns and Grove (2003) it includes all elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in a study. For this study, the target population included all higher degree holders of the University of Ghana, Legon.

3.4 Study Population

The study population therefore consisted of all higher degree holders of the University of Ghana who have had prior profession but have changed careers to teaching in the university.

3.5 Sampling Frame

A sampling frame defines the members of the *population* who are eligible to be included in a given *sample and it aims at* drawing a boundary or frame around those cases that are acceptable for inclusion in the sample (Morgan, 2008). For this study, the sampling frame included all university teachers with ranks ranging from lecturers to professors; they were staff who chose teaching in preference to a career in which they were already established and are currently teaching at the University of Ghana, Legon.

3.6 Sampling Design

It is the scheme for selecting the sampling units from the study population. According to research theorists such as Patton (1990), there is no one best sampling strategy because how best a sampling design is, depends on the context in which researchers work and the nature of their research objectives. Based on the eligibility criteria for this study, the purposive technique was used in selecting qualified participants. By purposive sampling,

the researcher searched for participants that have experienced the phenomenon under investigation and were willing to participate in the study.

Further, individuals were selected through snowball sampling (Visser et al., 2000). In snowball sampling, initial respondents are asked to identify individuals that would also qualify for the study. Therefore, the candidate asked the respondents if they knew of other people who per the criteria for inclusion qualified for this study, and these were located and interviewed. Although these two sampling designs did not ensure a random sample of respondents, they were excellent methods used to gather study subjects when the sampling characteristic was somewhat uncommon.

3.7 Sample Size

A sample size consists of a subset of the entities that comprise the population (Hunger 1985). According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), the specific sample size for mixed method research studies depends on several factors which include the design and evolution of the study in terms of the dominance of the quantitative and qualitative components, the trade-off between the breadth and depth of the required information, and what is practical. Since the qualitative design dominated this study, the selection of the sampling units was guided by the general guidelines in qualitative research. With respect to the trade-off between the breadth and depth of the information required, the study primarily aimed at examining the experiences of career changers and the processes they go through in order to effect the change. Such research objectives are best handled through information rich cases (Patton, 1990; Greene, 2007; Creswell, 2009). Again, in terms of practicability, it was very difficult to have a large sample size given the nature and focus of this study.

According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), the most useful way to look at sample size in qualitative-dominant mixed methods research involves what is termed as “Saturation of Information”, which occurs when the addition of more units does not result in new information that can be used in theme development. Thus the sample size for this study was defined by the principle of saturation of data. Research theorists have expressed varied opinions on the adequacy of sample size in obtaining saturation. While some are of the view that the principle does not require a specific number of participant (Streubert et al., 2003), others believe otherwise. For instance, Patton (2002) noted that although it is not possible to define the number of participants in advance, a range of 20 to 30 interviews may achieve saturation in a mixed methods research. Luck et al (2006), also maintain that the qualitative idea is not to generalize from the sample as in quantitative research, thus a qualitative-dominant design normally requires a few cases to allow an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Preliminary field studies by the researcher showed that those who per the eligibility criteria qualified for this study were in the minority as most of the lecturers had entered the profession right after their tertiary education. As a result, the candidate selected 25 as the sample size for the study.

In all 30 participants took part in the study but five of them did not fully qualify for the study. Of great importance to this study is the process that individuals go through to effect a career change. This process, as noted earlier, requires that the individual undertakes training or education to enable him/her acquire the necessary qualification for the new job/career. However, there were five participants who although had changed career and are currently teaching at the study setting, did not undertake any training or education to enable them move switch to teaching at the University. They stated clearly that at the time

they thought of changing their career they had the qualification and therefore there was no need for any training or education.

3.7.1 Sampling Considerations

One of the problems encountered in selecting the sample for the present study was in deciding when a job change was truly a career change. To address this, the researcher adopted Bell's (1975) notion of what constitutes actual career change. This notion emphasizes on the importance of whether training or education for the former career was necessary and sufficient for the new career. Thus a change to a career for which previous training was unnecessary, and for which more training was needed, would seem to qualify for what Bell considers as career change. The present study therefore included participants who undertook training or education in order to move into teaching at the University, and rejected those whose previous career training was not necessary and/or adequate at the time they first thought of changing careers.

3.8 Methods of Data Collection

Methods of data collection or strategies of inquiry are types of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods designs or models that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design. Others have called them approaches to inquiry (Creswell, 2007), instrumentation (Kumekpor, 2002), or research methodologies (Mertens, 1998). In mixed methods research, the methods of data collection include sequential, concurrent and transformative approaches (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Of importance to this study was the concurrent mixed method approach.

The concurrent mixed methods procedures are those in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design the researcher collects both forms of data at the same time and integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results (Creswell, 2009). Like the other mixed methods designs, there are models or strategies to the concurrent mixed method approach (Creswell, 2009; Piano Clark, 2007; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). These are the Concurrent Triangulation Strategy, the Concurrent Embedded Strategy and the Concurrent Transformative Strategy. As mentioned earlier, the study used the concurrent embedded strategy in its data collection procedures.

The concurrent embedded design occurs when the researcher collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data within a traditional quantitative or qualitative design. Thus, although the study adopted a mixed-method approach during the data collection period, the quantitative strand was embedded within the qualitative to enable the researcher assess and analyse the different research questions or objectives of the study. The embedded approach, therefore, was a preferred design because although the study required the convergence of both qualitative and quantitative strands, it did not call for a purely mixed methods design whereby both methods should have been given equal priority.

3.9 Procedure for Data Collection

The candidate identified qualified participants who were willing to take part in the study. All the participants agreed to be interviewed in their respective Departments. Given the method of data collection adopted in this study (the concurrent mixed method), both quantitative and qualitative data were collected with greater priority given to the latter. A

concurrent mixed methods design which allowed some few close-ended questions and open-ended questions was employed. Quantitative information was collected using the closed-ended questions, which asked participants to select from a list of options that truly reflects their decisions. The open-ended questions dominated the survey instrument which, allowed participants to share their experiences on the phenomenon. Although, the concurrent data collection designs are said to preclude follow-up on interesting and confusing responses, the candidate relied entirely on participants to augment their responses by following up on pertinent issues. Majority of the participants responded to the follow-up questions thus affirming for the qualitative aspect of the data.

3.9.1 Sources of Data

The study was based on data collected from both primary and secondary sources.

3.9.2 Primary and Secondary Sources of Data

The primary data consisted mainly of qualitative information collected on the field using structured interviews. The interview included open-ended and closed-ended questions. Creswell (2007) described closed and open ended questions as methods for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Since the study adopted a concurrent mixed methods design, the researcher deemed it more appropriate using these techniques to enable her collect both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. Thus, the closed-ended questions addressed participants' demographic information as well as the trait factors of career change. The open-ended questions, on the other hand, were used to solicit information on the reasons, outcomes and processes participants went through in order to effect the change.

The section of the interview on demographic characteristics was used to collect information on the sex, marital status and number of children, age, job title and levels of education of the participants. Questions were included in the interview to ascertain the processes career switchers went through in order to effect the change in their careers. To identify individual and organisational factors that influence career change, questions on individual characteristics such as personality traits (openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness and general self-efficacy), demographic factors, human capital (education level and occupational tenure), job satisfaction, job search activity and intentions to leave; and organisational factors (job security and salary) were included the structured interview framework.

Another key aspect of the study was to examine reasons underlying switch in careers to university teaching. Pertinent questions in the structured interview centred on gathering on information on the following: current occupation of participants; other career pursued; reasons for change into university teaching; comparison of present and previous jobs with respect to remuneration, social commitments and level of and reasons for satisfaction; and factors underpinning the decision to choose university teaching.

Series of questions were also included in the interview to assess the outcomes of the career switch into university teaching. These were (i) whether the change of career into university teaching was worthwhile and the underlying reasons, expectations for choosing university teaching had been met and there would be any reason to abandon university teaching, (ii) opinion on career as a university teacher, and (iii) consideration of career change as successful, and reasons for the success. Assessment of job performance of the participants and benefits to the university was an important objective of the study.

Information on this objective was gathered by asking participants to state any valuable skills they brought from their previous career, how these skills had affected their new job and whether their skills had been recognised and rewarded by the University.

The secondary data, on the other hand, included publications such as books and articles that have addressed issues relating to the phenomenon globally. The study also used documents such as the Annual Report of the University of Ghana (UG, 2014a) and University of Ghana Strategic Plan (UG, 2014b).

3.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organising data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher (Burns & Grove 2003:479). Since the study adopted the concurrent embedded approach which requires the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, the information generated through the quantitative approach was coded for easy analysis. With respect to the qualitative information collected using the open-ended questions, the researcher looked out for common themes based on the stated objectives and these were analysed and interpreted.

3.11 Field Experience

Although the researcher intended using the survey which comprised both closed-ended and open-ended questions as the main instrument, some participants requested for an interview after responding to the survey questions. These interviews were recorded and used to elaborate those provided in the structured interviews. Furthermore, the participants displayed a great sense of interest and cooperation during the information

gathering stage. This in no small measure provided the necessary impetus and motivation which facilitated the successful conduct of the thesis research project.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical measures are as important in qualitative research as in quantitative research and include ethical conduct towards participant's information as well as honest reporting of the results. Thus, in every scientific research, ethical norms and values must be adhered to. First and foremost, permission was sought from the ethical review board of the Office for Research, Innovation and Development (ORID), College of Humanities and the School of Social Sciences, University of Ghana, Legon. The ethical measures the researcher applied for in this study included consent, confidentiality and anonymity, privacy, dissemination of results and the right to withdraw from the study.

Informed consent implies that participants be given as much information for them to make an informed decision whether they want to be part of the study or not (Bryman, 2008). In this regard, participants were given full description of the nature and purpose of the study. The form stated the research topic, the purpose of the study, a brief description of the researcher emphasizing the confidentiality of participants (Gilbert, 2001). In this connection, the participants were asked to give their consent by signing since they were all literates. The detailed questions of the structured interview are presented in the Appendix.

According to Polit and Hungler (1999:143) confidentiality means that no information that the participant divulges is made public or available to others. The anonymity of a person or an institution is protected by making it impossible to link aspects of data to a specific person or institution. Participants were made aware that the responses would be used to

write the thesis and after which the data would be destroyed. They were also told that the data would bear no names on them and that their responses would be kept confidential. Furthermore, it would be impossible for someone to take any of collected data and know who gave that response. Confidentiality and *anonymity* were therefore guaranteed by ensuring that data obtained were used in such a way that no other person than the researcher knew the source (LoBiondo-Wood & Harber 2002). In this study codes rather than names were attached to the information obtained.

Privacy, according to Gilbert (2001), is protected by how one keeps control of the information he or she receives and decides on what information to release and what not to. De Vos et. al. (2008), refers to privacy as agreements between persons that limit the access of others to private information. In this study, the researcher ensured that any information given by the participants were not divulged. Privacy also refers to the freedom an individual has to determine the time, extent and general circumstances under which private information will be shared with or withheld from others (Polit & Hungler, 1999); this was also considered in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

The main findings from the analysis were based on the stated objectives and presented as follows: (1) Determinants of career change, (2) Process of career change, (3) Reasons for career change, (4) Outcomes of career change, and (5) Benefits to the organization and their policy implications. Participants' stories and comments are used to illustrate these. However, for the purposes of time and length restrictions, the most salient stories and quotes were given focus.

4.1 Determinants of Career Change: *Demographics*

The various aspects of the demographics were sex of the respondents, ages, marital status, number of children (if any), job title, levels of education and duration of education from High School through first degrees and post graduate degrees.

Out of the 25 participants, 15 (60 percent) were males and 10 (40 percent) females (Table 4.1). Their ages ranged from 31 (for those who had just changed their careers into university teaching) to 62 (for those who have been on the new career and had attained various levels of progression from senior lecturer to professorial ranking). All the participants who were of professorial ranking were above sixty (60) years. Although in Ghana the mandatory retiring age is sixty, in the universities (especially the public universities) the teaching staff are engaged on contract up to the age of 65 or more with conditions of service similar to the other faculty members who have not yet retired. Therefore, information obtained from these participants post-retirement faculty is valid for the purpose of this study.

Table 4.1: Biodata of participants (sex).

Category	No. of Participants	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	15	60
Female	10	40
Total	25	100

With respect to the marital status of the participants, 18 out of the 25 representing 72 percent were married whereas 3 (12 percent) were single, 3 (12 percent) were widowed and one had separated from the spouse (Table 4.2). Apart from the 3 single participants, all the rest had children ranging from 1 to 6.

Table 4.2: Biodata of Participants (marital status).

Category	No. of Participants	Percentage (%)
Marital status		
Single	3	12
Married	18	72
Separated	1	4
Widowed	3	12
Total	25	100

Majority of the participants are of the status of Lecturer (14 out of 25 or 56 percent). Seven out of the 25 or 28% are senior lecturers and 4 (16%) are of Professorial ranking (Table 4.3). This job title profile appears to fit into the pyramidal structural norm for faculty in tertiary education. It is worth noting that this was not preconceived since participants were selected on the basis of the criteria for inclusion and their willingness to partake in the study.

Table 4.3: Biodata of Participants (job title).

Category	No. of Participants	Percentage (%)
Job title		
Lecturer	14	56
Senior Lecturer	7	28
Professorial	4	16
Total	25	100

On the level of education, 4 participants had MPhil degrees. The remaining 21 had PhD degrees or terminal degrees in their respective disciplines (Table 4.4). All the females who participated in this study have PhD degrees.

Table 4.4: Biodata of Participants (level of education).

Category	No. of Participants	Percentage (%)
Level of Education (Qualification)		
Mphil	4	16
PhD	21	84
Total	25	100

4.2 Individual and Organisational Factors

According to the framework that underpinned this study, the major determinants of career change included individual and organisational characteristics. The individual characteristics were: traits (Openness to Experience, Extraversion, Conscientiousness and general self-efficacy), demographic factors (age, gender, marital status, and children), human capital (education level and occupational tenure), job satisfaction, job search activity and intentions to leave; and organisational factors (job security and salary). The data gathered from the survey are presented in the following subsections.

The key personality traits used in the study were openness to experience, extraversion and general self-efficacy. Majority of the respondents (56 percent) indicated that openness to experience was the key personality trait that facilitated their decision to change career. Twenty percent of respondents identified Extraversion while 24 percent felt General self-efficacy were the key determinants which influenced their decision (Table 4.5).

When the respondents were asked whether their possession of the above-stated traits influenced the decision to switch career into university, 76 percent answered in the affirmative. The preponderance of Openness to experience and Extraversion traits were associated more with lecturers than other ranks of faculty; 72 percent and 56 percent of lecturers who participated in the study opted for the two traits, respectively. On the other hand, 80 percent of senior lecturers considered General self-efficacy as the key personality trait that influenced the shift to their present teaching position in the University.

Table 4.5: Personality Traits of Respondents.

Traits	Sex of respondent					
	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Openness to experience	9	60.0	5	50.0	14	56.0
Extraversion	2	13.0	3	30.0	5	20.0
General self-efficacy	4	27.0	2	20.0	6	24.0
Total	15	100	10	100.0	25	100

It is worthy of special note that all (100 percent) of the Professorial-ranked participants indicated openness to experience as the only factor that underpinned their decision to take

up teaching appointment in the University. These underpinning traits appeared to be consistent with the marital status of the respondents. The participant who had separated from the spouse and the single (unmarried) respondents were those who exclusively identified openness to experience as the key trait that influenced their decision making. Information gathered showed that the level of education or qualification (MPhil or PhD) did not have any bearing on the personality trait.

With respect to age, it was expected that younger employees were more likely to change careers compared to older employees. However, this was not supported in this study. The age groupings within which the participants changed into their present careers as university teachers were as follows: <30 years; 31-40 years; 41-50 years and > 50 years (Fig. 4.1). Seventy-six percent of the participants switched to their present career within the 31-40 year bracket. In terms of sex, the expectation was that males will be more likely to change careers compared to females; the data supported this expectation as 15 out of the 25 respondents were males.

On the account of human capital factors, higher level of education was considered by 80 percent of respondents as a more important determinant that influence their choice of present career. Of the organisational factors, job security and better salary were of equal significance in the decision making. The scale of priorities of these factors was, however, skewed with respect to gender. Fifty percent of the female respondents selected time for children as the most important factor that underpinned the change in career. Thirty percent of the women indicated marital status, salary and job security as the preferred factors; the rest opted for occupational tenure. For the males, 70% indicated higher

educational level, job security and salary as the most significant determinants. Interestingly, consideration for children was not indicated by any of the male participants.

Respondents were asked to state whether they were satisfied with their career and the reason for their decision. Sixty-two percent indicated that they were not satisfied while thirty-eight percent indicated that they were satisfied with their previous career. Low remuneration and low inspiration were the main reasons for the lack of satisfaction by those whose selected job dissatisfaction. The minority who indicated that they were satisfied cited good working environment as the reason.

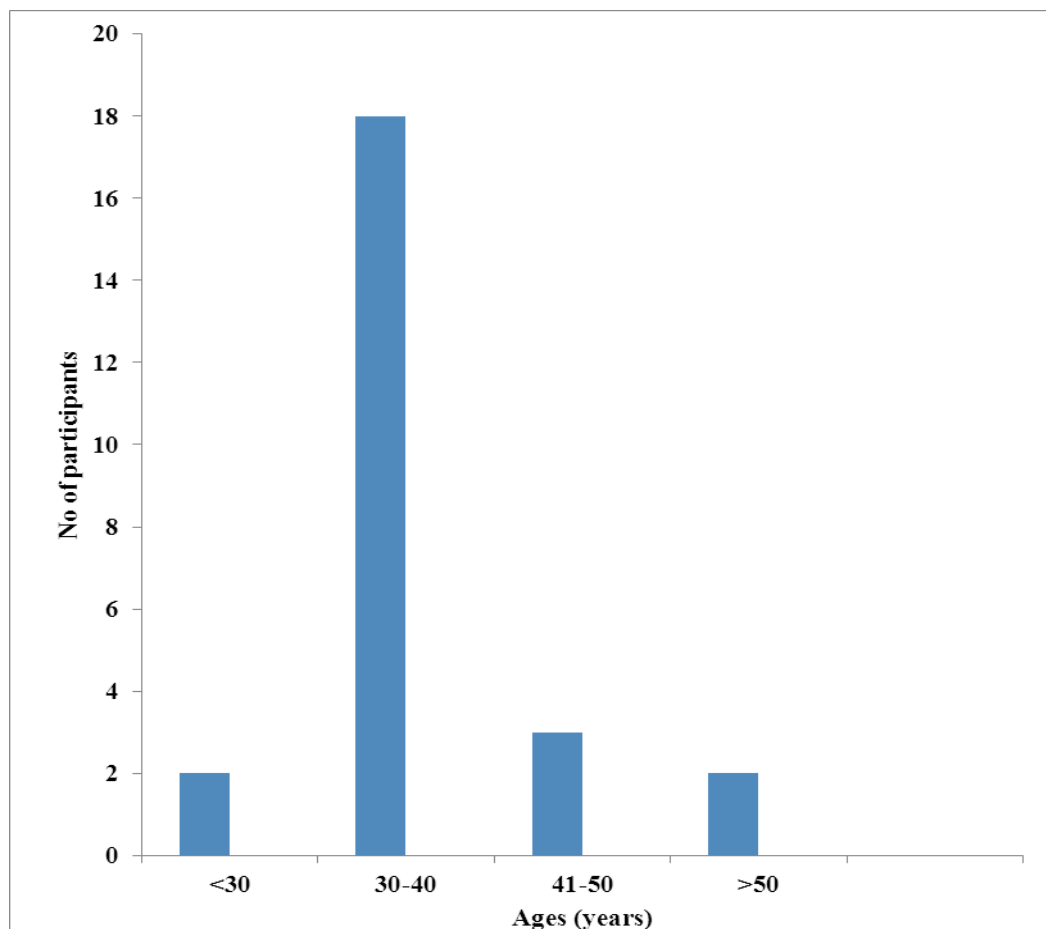


Figure 4.1: Distribution of Ages of Participants.

4.3 Processes Career-Switches Go Through to Effect a Career Change

To understand the processes individuals go through in order to effect a career change into university teaching the study set out some key parameters namely, when they first thought of changing career, reasons which influenced the thought for change, search for alternative opportunities, dependence on formal or informal contacts, activities undertaken in order to prepare for the new career, challenges faced during the preparation period and duration of the transition into new career.

In response to when they first thought of changing career, all the participants reported a greater intention to leave their previous job several months prior to actual career change. The selected issues under reasons which influenced this thought for change, among others, were inspiration from family, desire to impart knowledge, enhanced job opportunities, opportunity to have time for the family. Distribution of participants according to priority options for these reasons is given in Table 4.6. It is obvious that enhanced job opportunity and the desire to impart knowledge were key reasons that accounted for the change in career among the male participants.

An illustration of how the quest for enhanced job opportunity influences career transitions from my data is that of a male participant, who went through a period of unemployed for “over five years” with temporal work opportunities described as “piece job” that helped him survive. The participant bemoaned of how he acquired these “piece jobs” using his Advanced Level Certificate. He managed to get a job as a sales officer. It is during the period of being unemployed and through various piece jobs that the decision was made to change from being a sales officer to a university teacher. This was motivated by the

perception of “stability of income” and “abundant opportunities” in the teaching profession.

Table 4.6: Reasons Which Influenced the Thought for Change in Relation to Sex.

Reasons that influenced thought	Sex					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	No	%	No	%
Inspiration from Family	1	7.0	0	0.0	1	4.0
To impart others	2	13.0	1	10.0	3	12.0
Enhance job opportunity	8	53.0	1	10.0	9	36.0
Enough Family time	1	7.0	8	80.0	9	36.0
Others	3	20.0	0	0.0	3	12.0
Total	15	100.0	10	100.0	25	100.0

For the female participants, 8 out of the 10 (representing 80 percent) cited time for family as the single most important reason. One (10 percent) out of the 8 participants explained her reason. “My husband felt I was too busy with my work at the Food and Drugs Board, and traffic to and from the Ministries area make me get home late. So I decided to pursue a PhD programme to enable me enter the same profession as my husband to have time for my family”.

Another female participant expressed similar reason “I was working in a bank and the frustrations was just too much for me to bear. More importantly, my husband was always complaining about my tight schedules which made it difficult for me to have time for him

and my children. One of such complaints almost led to the break-up of my marriage, there and then I decided to go into a profession that will accommodate my family responsibilities, and this made lecturing appealing to me.

Some of the participants selected inspiration from family members as a reason that influenced the thought for the change in career. “My father was a lecturer and he made me aware that if he has a university degree, then with all the necessary support he is providing me I have to get something more. So I knew right from primary school, that higher degree was my goal. I must say that it was his influenced and the desire to attain higher degree that influenced me to change from a banker into this profession”.

Generally, majority of the married participants, irrespective of sex, identified impartation of knowledge, better job opportunity and time for the family as more important reason for the change in career. Furthermore, all categories of staff placed enhanced job opportunity as one of the most important reasons why they switched into teaching.

On the search for alternative opportunities, majority of the participants said that their thought to change career was informed by a search for alternative opportunities whereas the minority were divided in their opinion. This decision did not have any clear relationship with marital status of the respondents, level of education or qualification and job title or rank.

All the 10 female respondents (100 percent) indicated that they relied on formal or informal contacts in making the decision to change their previous carriers to the present teaching positions in the University. For the males, 70 percent relied on these contacts for

the change. Marital status and level of education did not play any significant role in this case. It was obvious that majority of the Lecturers and Senior Lecturers relied on these contacts more than participants with Professorial status.

Of great importance to this study were the courses or programs participants undertook to enable them prepare for the new career. To ascertain this, participants were asked whether there was the need for them to undertake any activity in order to qualify for the university teaching. All the respondents (100 percent) responded in the affirmative. In furtherance to this, they were asked to indicate the programs or courses they had to undertake. Majority of the participants reported they had to undertake a PhD program. The few ones had Bachelor's degree and needed to have an MPhil degree to qualify for university teaching. A participant with a bachelor's degree at the time he considered changing his career stated that "I had to take an MPhil programme which lasted for 2 years and a 4 year PhD programme"

With respect to the challenges they faced during the preparation period, the participants raised several issues and these include the following: (i) differences in culture, (ii) distance (iii) lack of funds, (iv) family balance, and (v) combining education with work. In this regard, majority of participants identified lack of funds, combining education with work and ensuring balance between their studies and family commitments and the main challenges that confronted them. For the females, the issue of combining work, family and school was their main challenge whereas, lack of funds was of greater concern for the males. Some of the comments are as follows:

"I encountered many challenges but key among them was balancing work, school and family life. All attempt to secure a study leave from my employer proved

futile and I had to do all these at the same time. It was not easy (a female participant)”. “My main challenge during the MPhil was purely financial. During the PhD studies my challenge related to settling in a new environment or culture in the USA” (male participant).

Marital status, level of education and rank did not alter the responses provided by the participants. The duration of the transition from the previous job into new career ranged from three (3) to ten (10) years suggesting that for some participants the decision was taken without much delay while others had to take time for sober reflection before making up their minds. “I had my PhD programme abroad and I was faced with a language problem and difference in culture”.

4.4 Reasons Why Individuals Switch Career Into University Teaching

According to Rhodes and Doering’s (1983) model, people choose to change career for specific reasons. To examine the reasons why participants chose lecturing as a second career, some pertinent issues were identified to elicit relevant information. These issues were structured as follows:

- current occupation of participants;
- other career pursued;
- reasons for change into university teaching;
- comparison of present and previous jobs with respect to remuneration, social commitments and level of and reasons for satisfaction; and
- factors underpinning the decision to choose university teaching.

Information gathered showed that the current occupation of all participants was teaching at the University of Ghana. Prior to their present position as lecturers, majority of the participants stated that they held non-teaching jobs in different areas of work namely, research institutes, the public service and the private sector. Only three (12 percent) participants were teaching in other non-tertiary educational institutions. It is apparent that the number of respondents (15 or 60 percent) who were previously in teaching (non-tertiary), research and the public service were males and married. The level of education and job title (rank in the University) did not show any clear relationship with the type of previous jobs.

To ascertain the underlying reasons for change of career into university teaching, the participants were asked, among other issues to state the reasons that influenced this decision. The main reasons given were (a) desire to impart knowledge, (b) desire to undertake research, (c) enhanced job opportunities (d) inspiration derived from significant others (e) personal growth. In this regard, a greater number (20) of the participants identified one or more of these characteristics but in equal proportions. The rest (5) considered reasons, other than the three factors, as basis for the change of career. The preference for the three reasons was equally distributed among the married participants. Generally, the desire to impart knowledge and personal growth were cited by a relatively large number of participants, irrespective of the ranks (e.g. Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Senior Lecturer or Professors).

One illustration of how the desire to impart knowledge influenced career change is the story of one male participant who expressed the fact that he had always wanted to teach at the university level to enable him make impact in the lives of students, but started with his

previous career in fashion designing while pursuing his MPhil (2 years) and PhD (4 years) programmes. Consequently, it took him 6 years to make the transition into teaching at the University of Ghana. A similar comment was made by another male participant. “I have always wanted to teach at the tertiary level but life got in my way and now I am doing what I dreamed of all those years ago.”

Personal growth and passion for teaching also served as salient themes for necessitating individual career change. Some participants cited the need to develop further and the only way to do this was through a career change. Others had described themselves as “square pegs in round holes” in their first career and said it took them years to realise that their “hearts and passions” belong with young adults rather than in the world of accounting.

Twenty out of the 25 (80 percent) respondents considered their present job at the University of Ghana as more lucrative. This response was not exclusive to sex, qualification or rank. Majority of the male respondents indicated that their previous jobs accommodated social commitments including time for the family. On the other hand, the females stated that they did not have enough time during the tenure of their respective previous jobs. These observations may relate to the key determinants that cause change of careers by females.

According to all the females, non-availability of time for social commitment on the previous job strongly influenced their decision to change their career. All the married respondents also stated this as one of the main reasons for the change. Job title and qualification were irrelevant in the responses. Quite significantly, all respondents were

emphatic that they were more satisfied with their present job in the university than their respective previous jobs.

The reasons given by respondents for being satisfied with teaching in the University were varied. Eight out of the 10 female participants (72 percent) and 3 out of the 15 males (about 12 percent) stated that flexible time was the main reason for the job satisfaction. Financial reward and the challenging nature of teaching were of greater interest to a large number of the male respondents. All the married respondents (72 percent) including the one who had separated from the spouse (4 percent) also cited flexible time as the basis for being satisfied with the present job. There were no preferences of the stated reasons with respect to job title (or rank) and level of qualification (MPhil or PhD degrees).

To identify the key influential factors in the decision to choose teaching as a second career, the participants were asked to select from a range of factors namely, social status, career fit, prior considerations, financial reward, time for family and job security. The scale of priority for the factors based on the number of participants (males) followed a decreasing order of job security > social status > career fit > financial reward and time for family. “Prior consideration” as a factor was not selected by any male participant. For the female participants, however, time for the family was selected as the most important factor followed by “prior consideration”; social status, career fit, financial reward and job security were ranked equal. The observed scale of priority tends to fit the order of preference by the married participants.

4.5 Outcomes of Career Switch and Job Satisfaction

To describe the outcomes of career switch into university teaching on job satisfaction, the participants were asked a series of questions. These were as follows: (i) Is change of career into university teaching worthwhile? (ii) Are the reasons for the change of career into university worthwhile? (iii) Have expectations for choosing university teaching been met? (iv) Are there reasons underlying expectations for choosing university teaching? (v) Have you any reason to abandon university teaching? (vi) Do you have any opinion on career as a university teacher? (vii) Would you consider career change as successful? and (viii) Do you have any reason for considering career change as successful. Responses to these questions are stated below.

All the respondents (100 percent) stated that the shift of jobs into University teaching had been worthwhile. They also stated that their expectations had been met. Various reasons were assigned to this assertion. The desire to impart knowledge to students, social recognition and job security were the prominent reasons for finding the switch worthwhile. Incidentally, similar reasons in addition to quest for personal development were ascribed for their expectations being met. In all cases, the desire to impart knowledge was accorded top priority by many participants (Table. 4.7). However, for the females (10 or 40 percent) and MPhil holders (4 or 16 percent), personal development was a matter of great interest.

Table 4.7: Reasons why the switch into University has been Worthwhile.

	Sex of respondent			
	Male		Female	
	No	%	No	%
Job Security	1	6.7	1	10
Social recognition	2	13.3	1	10
Imparting knowledge	8	53.3	5	50
Personal development/ Other reasons	4	26.7	3	30
Total	15	100.0	10	100.0

Responses to the question on whether one would abandon university teaching were emphatic among the female participants. All the 10 females indicated that they would not abandon their present job. Even though a majority of the male respondents (12 or 48 percent) indicated they would not quit their present job, 3 out of the 15 (12 percent) indicated that they might quit. This view appears to be expressed by Lecturers who hold MPhil degrees.

The participants were asked to express their opinions on the following important issues: job security, fulfillment and the stressful nature of their career, among other considerations. Majority of the respondents (88 percent) found their present career fulfilling and less stressful compared to their previous careers. In his bid to explain the reasons for his satisfaction, a male participated commented:

“Compared to my previous career, teaching at the tertiary level affords me greater challenge as it demands continuous search for knowledge as well as the opportunity to impart knowledge and training of skilled personnel”.

Another participant who expressed the same sentiment added that “it is a pride to see my students contributing to national development”

This expression was not influenced by marital status, job title or level of qualification. All participants indicated that the change into university teaching has been very successful and worthwhile. These positions were attributed to the satisfying and rewarding nature of the new job coupled with the fact that their expectations had been met. The males placed greater emphasis on the fulfilling aspect, while the females felt that the success was related more to the rewarding character of the new career.

In response to the question “*How would you describe your career as a university teacher?*” One male participant commented follows:

“I describe my current profession as very fulfilling, a highly motivated teacher because of the performance of students I have trained over the years”. A female participant who described her career as extremely successful and very rewarding explained her description

“My colleagues at my former place of work do not have terminal degrees, and have not directly impacted people like I have. Now I walk to so many places and past students give me preferential treatment”.

This indicates that despite the challenges participants encountered to make their career change successful, they all feel this journey has been worthwhile.

4.6 Assessment of Job Performance and Organizational Benefits

This objective aims at assessing job performance and benefits for the organisation. To achieve this, respondents were asked among other questions to state any valuable skills they brought from their previous career and how these skills affect their new job. They were also asked whether they feel appreciated for these skills. Pertinently, the views of participants were sought on the following with aim of assessing the performance of career changers and the benefits derived by their new employers: (i) did your experience or skill in your previous career assist your performance in the new career; (ii) state some of these experiences; (iii) has there been any assessment of your performance in your new career?; (iv) how will you describe the assessment?; (v) have you received any special recognition or award in your new career?; (vi) state the type of recognition and/or award.

All the respondents indicated that they acquired some experiences and skills on their previous careers, apart from the higher degree studies. Some of the experiences acquired involved practical application of findings of their respective thesis research. Participants (5 or 20 percent) from research institutions indicated that on-field experiments, especially in the natural and social sciences afforded them the opportunity to adapt conventional methodologies to generate relevant data in the natural setting. Those from the teaching at the non-tertiary level public service and the private sector (20 or 80 percent) also cited the interactive nature of their respective work with stakeholders and clients.

On assessment of performance in university teaching, majority of the participants (20 or 80 percent) cited the annual students' appraisal of teaching and assessment of general performance by Heads of Department as the main forms of evaluation. Many of the participants (18 out of 25 or 72%) stated that students had given an overall satisfactory

assessment of their teaching. The remaining respondents (28 percent) indicated that they were not privy to the assessment reports. Twelve participants (48 percent) said they had received special recognition and awards since changing career into University teaching. Three of the respondents (12%) with teaching background, had at one time or the other received the Best Teacher Awards in their Faculties. Other forms of recognition identified were fellowship of professional bodies and intellectual societies and membership of international committees in academia.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Based on the framework that guided this study, it was expected that a number of individual and organisational characteristics will influence career change; this was supported thereby providing a general support for the model of career change proposed by Rhodes and Doering (1983). As shown in the results, employees who reported high levels of Openness to Experience, Extraversion and General self-efficacy were more likely to change careers than those who do not have these traits. Thus, individuals who are curious, enjoy new experiences and have well developed social skills are more likely to change careers than those who are cautious, quiet, non-sociable individuals. These traits appear to reflect the factors which influenced the decision of participants used in this study to switch career into university teaching.

Unlike previous studies (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Mignonac, 2008; Khapova, Arthur, Wilderom, & Svensson, 2007), the present research found stronger support for general self-efficacy than extraversion. Employees with this trait have a strong belief in their ability to perform across variety of situations and thus have a high probability to switch careers. Although there has been a considerable body of research on personality and turnover, little is known about the relationship between personality and career change (Sullivan, 1999; Tokar et al., 1998). Practically, these findings highlight the importance of taking into account personality traits when working with individuals who are considering a career change. Also, such findings parallel the trait-and-factor theory which proposes a perfect match between an individual's life values and career goals.

Of the five important factors that influence career change into teaching identified in their study, Richardson and Watts (2005) reported that respondents elected “career fit” as most influential factor. The importance of this ‘personality fit’ factor is further supported in other research in the vocational literature, where Holland (1997) initially defined the notion of ‘congruence’ as the match between the individual and his/her work environment, and others have since demonstrated this congruence to be associated with career satisfaction (Elton & Smart, 1998; Fricko & Beehr, 1992; Smart, Elton, McLaughlin, 1986).

Over recent years the teaching profession has witnessed a significant increase in the number of mature age individuals switching careers to become teachers (McKenzie et al., 2011; Australian Education Union, 2008). A sizeable proportion of early career teachers are now in their thirties and forties and many of them have been in other occupations before commencing teaching (McKenzie et al., 2011). This age bracket has been characterised as ‘midlife’ by several developmental researchers. For instance, Levinson (1978) identified the major transitional periods as “early adult,” “age 30,” “mid-life,” “age 50” and “late adult.”

In the present study, majority of the participants fell between the ages of 30 and 40 years, confirming the above-mentioned studies which suggest that most individuals that change careers do so in their midlife. In their study, Barclay et al. (2010) asserted that although career change may take place at any age across the life span; a critical time for this change is during middle adulthood (the period of a person’s life span between the age of 35 and 55). According to Lee and Lamport (2011) and Valcour and Tolbert (2003), mid-life career changers are part of a global trend of professionals changing careers.

These theorists have noted that midlife is a period of reflection and resurgence for many; a stage in life where a person begins to question and re-evaluate their life choices. Developmental theorists like Levinson (1978/1996), Gilligan (1982), and Borysenko (1996), profess that midlife is an age within the life cycle that one begins to question, who am I? Where am I going? And what is the purpose and meaning of my life thus far? These questions are often times instigated by a crisis or transition that allows one to re-evaluate life to determine where one has been and where one is going. Considering the reasons participants gave as influencing the thought for career change, it is obvious that their decision was influenced by this “mid-life crisis”. The finding is also consistent with several previous studies (Baruch, 2006; Polach, 2004; Mercora, 2003; Thomas, 1980; Jung, 1933), but contrary to some others (Carless & Arnup, 2001; Breeden, 1993; Parks & Markey, 1989) that found younger individuals to be more likely to change careers. For instance, Breeden (1993) concluded that the group of workers who most often change careers were less than 30 years of age. The explanation is that, these workers have not accumulated general and specific human capital in their occupation compared to older employees.

According to the framework that guided this study, males change their career more frequently than females. This was supported in the present study. The finding is also consistent with other studies (Parrado, et al., 2007; Blau, 2000; Blau & lunz, 1998) but contrary to other studies that have reported no sex differences in intentions to change careers (Carless & Bernath, 2007; Miguel, 1993; Markey & Parks, 1989). This is evident in the varied reasons male participants assigned to their career change behaviour and thus suggests that males are more flexible in their work arrangements than females.

The report, therefore, does not support the literature (Valcour and Tolbert, 2003) that holds that career change tends to work well for women, due to a number of factors including time off for child-bearing and raising, and moving due to a spouse's career. Because although the female participants gave these reasons as why they switched career, the male participants outnumbered the females in this study, leading to the conclusion that more men change career than women. Nonetheless, this conclusion can be explained in terms of the gender imbalance that characterise almost every institution in Ghana, and University of Ghana is not an exception. According to Statistics of the University of Ghana, females constitute less than 25% of the total number of teaching faculty. This proportion has been the case over the last few decades (UG, Basic Statistics, 2014).

Concerning marital status, although 18 out of the 25 (72%) participants were married, they did not associate their status with the decision to change career. Thus, similar to other studies elsewhere (Carless & Bernath, 2007; Blau, 2000; Blau & Lunz, 2000; Blau & Lunz, 1998; Markey & Parks, 1989), this research found no clear linkage between marital status and career change. This may imply that other factors other than marital status were of greater consideration in the decision to change careers.

With respect to human capital, the participants were emphatic that their attainment of higher education greatly influenced their decision to make the transition. However, only a few of them selected occupational tenure as influential in their decision. This suggests that higher educated employees regardless of the number of years they have been with their previous occupation were more likely to change careers than those with little education and substantial occupational tenure. The finding corroborates other studies such as Carless and Arnup's (2011) who explained that employees with higher levels of formal

education are more able to learn the knowledge and skills required in a new career. It is also feasible that employees participated in higher education to facilitate transition to a new career (Donohue, 2007; Benson, Finegold, & Mohrman, 2004; Kanchier, 1988). This finding is also consistent with the protean or boundaryless career approach to careers (Hall & Moss, 1998; Arthur, 1994; Yankelovich, 1981; Howard, 1978) which posits that career change rather than stability is a characteristic of contemporary careers.

As indicated in the results of this study, both salary and job security were of equal importance in the decision making to switch career. This finding mirrors a recent study that found that individuals in the developed world consider intrinsic factors in their decision to change careers while those in the developing world like Ghana emphasize on extrinsic determinants. It is therefore not surprising that Carless and Arnup (2011) study which was conducted in the developed world indicated that the prospect of a higher salary was not related to career change nor did it improve as expected post-change. Perhaps this inconsistency can be explained in terms of the socio-economic conditions of the two worlds.

Further, the scale of priorities of these factors was skewed with respect to gender as female participants were more concerned with factors such as time for children and marital status as the most important factors that underpinned the change in career. For the males, 70% indicated higher educational level, job security and salary as the most significant determinants. Interestingly, consideration for children was not indicated by any of the male participant. Again, this can be explained given the socio-economic environment of the participants. This difference adds weight to studies that have reported that men tend to

measure career success using objective indicators (salary and promotions) while women use subjective measures such as quality time for family.

In a study conducted by Neapolitan (1980), the researcher found that career changers were dissatisfied in their first occupations because of incongruence between wants and expectations and occupational rewards. In this study, majority of the participants indicated they were not satisfied with their previous work and gave reasons such as low remuneration and low inspiration. The minority who indicated that they were satisfied cited good working environment as the reason for their dissatisfaction. This goes to confirm studies that identified environmental factors as solely responsible for career decisions. It also coincides, for instance, with the hypothesis that self-actualization, a career growth outcome, is one of the principal factors affecting job satisfaction (Sagal & DeBlassie, 1981). It further adds weight to previous studies (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Breeden, 1993) that assessed actual career change. These authors reported that job satisfaction was a non-significant predictor of career change.

5.2 Process of Career Change

The decision to change career is seen as a more deliberate act than are other forms of voluntary separation (Rhodes & Doering, 1983). Like any major event, from birth to death, the actual moment of career change declares to the world that a process has been at work. While careers, like other life events, are normally measured on external factors (tenure, promotion, etc.), an internal life known only to the individual or close friends often provides a fuller perspective (Herman et al., 2014). In order to examine the processes associated with career change into university teaching, the study set out some key parameters namely, when they first thought of changing career, reasons which

influenced the thought for change, search for alternative opportunities, dependence on formal or informal contacts, activities undertaken in order to prepare for the new career, challenges faced during the preparation period and duration of the transition into new career.

In response to when they first thought of changing their career, all the 25 participants reported a greater intention to leave their previous job several months prior to the actual career change. The selected issues under reasons which influenced this thought for change, among others, were inspiration from family, desire to impart knowledge, enhanced job opportunities and opportunity to have time for the family. It is obvious that enhanced job opportunity and the desire to impart knowledge were key reasons that accounted for the change in career among the male participants. This analysis shows the great relevance of non-monetary factors in informing the decision to change careers.

For the female participants, 8 out of the 10 (72%) cited time for family as the single most important reason that influenced the thought to change career. But the question remains whether the male participants have no need for flexible hours to allow them time for their families. This is not surprising given the kind of socialization process we have in Ghana which defines and shapes the role of women in economic activity along biological and cultural lines (Amu, 2006). On the whole, all categories of staff placed the desire to impart knowledge as one of the most important reasons why they switched into teaching at the tertiary level. Probable explanation is the given by Dalaba (1975) and Berg (1974) who found that many well-educated adults have high career expectations and insist upon opportunities to express themselves and to make meaningful contributions to society.

According to the model that guided this study, actual search includes the search behaviour to decide on an alternative as well as to find the means of reaching that goal (e.g. location of sources of education or training). Actual search also may produce clarification regarding the availability of alternatives plus additional alternatives. The finding in this study provided a strong support for the career change model (Rhodes & Doering, 1983), as majority of the participants indicated that the thought to change career was followed by a search for alternative opportunities. The results are also consistent with Locke's (1976) task goal model and with Fishben's (1967) model of attitudes, intentions and behaviours. Nevertheless, the minority were divided in their opinion.

In response to whether they relied on formal or informal contacts in making the decision to change to university teaching, a greater number of the respondents said they relied mainly on friends (informal contacts). This is in agreement with the social network theory which suggests that the set of career opportunities an individual has may be enhanced or constrained by the structural characteristics of the individual's network of relations (Higgins, 2001; Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997; Ibarra, 1993) which in this study includes friends. It further adds weight to Higgins (2001) assumption that career change decision-making is a social process; thus the social context and, in particular, the people who provide the decision-maker with the information during the job search process can affect the likelihood of career change. Those in the minority relied on advertisement (formal contacts) a job outlet that has been enhanced over the years thanks to increased technology.

According to career change theorists (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Markay & Parks, 1980; Blau, 2000), the process associated with the phenomenon comes with considerable

challenges for the changers. For the participants in this study, the main challenges included lack of funds, combining education with work and ensuring balance between their studies and family commitments. All the females reported that the issue of combining work, family and school was their main challenge whereas, lack of funds was of greater concern for the males. The contextual explanation is that our society is largely patriarchal where the resources for providing for the needs of the family are borne by men. Thus the issue of lack of funds cited by the male participants finds truth in this sociocultural background of Africa and in this case Ghana.

The duration of the transition from the previous job into new career ranged from three (3) to ten (10) years and this confirms the notion of prior consideration reported by Richardson and Watt (2005). It also affirms the notion that the actual change process begins with leaving the old job and it is not completed until the new job/career is entered (Rhodes & Doering, 1983).

5.3 Reasons Reported as Influential in Entering University Teaching

Sociologists are interested in knowing why people behave the way they do or reasons individuals assign to their everyday activities. Likewise, the researcher set out to understand why individuals construct particular identities of themselves and in later years decide to switch into teaching. Influenced by her personal experience, the researcher desired to know the pull factors that attracted the participants into teaching at the university level. To achieve this, she solicited information on both the past and present occupation of participants, reasons for entering university teaching, issues concerning flexibility of schedule, job satisfaction, reasons for satisfaction and others.

All the participants are lecturers of the University of Ghana, Legon who have entered the profession from other careers or jobs. The areas included teaching (non-tertiary), research, public and private work (ICT, media, industry administration and marketing, commerce and banking). This observation fits the required background of the participants. Again, the professional background other than teaching at the university level of participants affirms the basis of the study, that is, career change and not job change. This is underpinned by the definitions of Rhodes and Doering (1983) on “career change” and “job change”. Career change refers to “movement to a new occupation or profession that is not part of a typical career progression”, whereas job change is considered as movement to a similar job or a job that is part of a normal career path.

Research elsewhere have noted that a large population of career changers have come from non-teaching background (Lee and Lamport, 2011; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). However, studies on career change from non-teaching to teaching at the tertiary levels are rare (Richardson & Watt, 2005). Majority of the research have concentrated on non-teaching to teaching at the primary and secondary levels (Shaw, 1996; Young, 1995; Brown, 1992; Chui Seng Yong, 1992) and also from faculty teaching to non-teaching (Herman et al., 1983).

Reasons for changing from these careers to lecturing varied from the desire to impart knowledge, fulfilment, the opportunity for research and inspiration derived from significant others, challenging, financial reward and job security. These underpinning reasons have roots in theory and practice. Schein (1978) identified job security as one of the five anchors used by individuals to change a career. For this reason, it is reasonable to expect that if job security is threatened individuals will consider changing careers.

Kanchier and Unruh (1989) noted that the possibility of earning a higher salary likely influences willingness to change careers. In a related qualitative study of professional engineers and scientists, it was observed that the prospect of better remuneration was nominated by a majority of career changers as a reason for undertaking the change (Lewis and Thomas, 1987). However, reasons such as fulfilment and desire to impart knowledge by participants support the appeal of teaching in general. This result affirms the notion that non-monetary motives are more relevant in informing the decision to enter teaching than monetary factors (Hof, Strupler & Wolter, 2011).

5.4 Outcomes of University Teaching on Job Satisfaction

This section aimed at establishing whether the career change decision has resulted in the expected outcome. As noted by Rhodes and Doering (1983), individuals undertake career change with the expectation of improving various aspects of work. In this study, the improvement was identified as job satisfaction, job security, and fulfilment in respect of imparting knowledge with attendant recognition by students, research opportunities to acquire more knowledge, and better work-life balance.

Studies elsewhere have indicated that reduction in hours worked was a major factor of job satisfaction that described the outcomes of career change (Breedon, 1993; Smart & Peterson, 1987; Neapolitan, 1980). In this study, time with family was a key element of job satisfaction especially among the female participants. This observation is in accord with the findings of Lee and Lamport (2011) and Richardson and Watt (2005). More importantly, it supports the Ghanaian culture whereby women are perceived to be homemakers and therefore they are raised to care for the home and children.

5.5 Job Performance and Organizational Benefits

The findings on the performance of the new career changers may serve as an indication of improvement in quality delivery of academic work (teaching, research and extension). This improvement may, in part be attributed to the experiences and skills that the new employees bring from their previous work endeavours. The implications of this performance enhancing characteristics to the overall service delivery of the University cannot be under estimated.

The Strategic Plan of the University of Ghana for the period 2014-2024 (UG, 2014b) states that 63% of all lecturers currently on staff role have PhD compared to target of 100%. The need for greater effort in staff development to bridge this gap has been emphasized. Towards this end, the stated major pillars of the Plan include growth of the numbers of graduate students, especially at the PhD level, to ensure a ratio of 50:50 (undergraduate/graduate). It is also to expand significantly the number of faculty members to ensure a decent teacher: student ratio in conformity with national norms and standards by the end of the plan period.

Under the Plan the two top priorities are Research and Teaching and Learning with key priority initiatives such (a) ensuring that 85% of the faculty in all departments should have PhDs by 2018; (b) Departments should achieve at least 75% of teaching performance targets; and (c) at least 60% of eligible mid-career academics should have access to competitive UG research and training support and access to external support. Decreasing funding sources with the attendant minimal budgetary allocation for staff training during the past few decades have brought severe challenges to management of tertiary institutions. It is apparent that attainment of the stated goals would come with enormous

setbacks. It is against this backdrop that the role of career changers as noted in this study becomes important.

Majority of the participants have terminal degrees (PhD) before changing their careers to teaching. This educational background fits into the minimum qualification requirement for teaching in the University. The cost implications apart from the high calibre personnel are beneficial to the University in terms of faculty development. Career changes also bring fresh contemporary ideas and knowledge to their new institutions, especially in the current state of limited resources that cannot support sabbaticals, an element so vital in the working lives of academics. As noted in this study, all the participants have had different experiences and skills from their previous jobs before joining the university. These diverse backgrounds (Fig. 5.1) have become invaluable asset to the new organization in respect performance output.

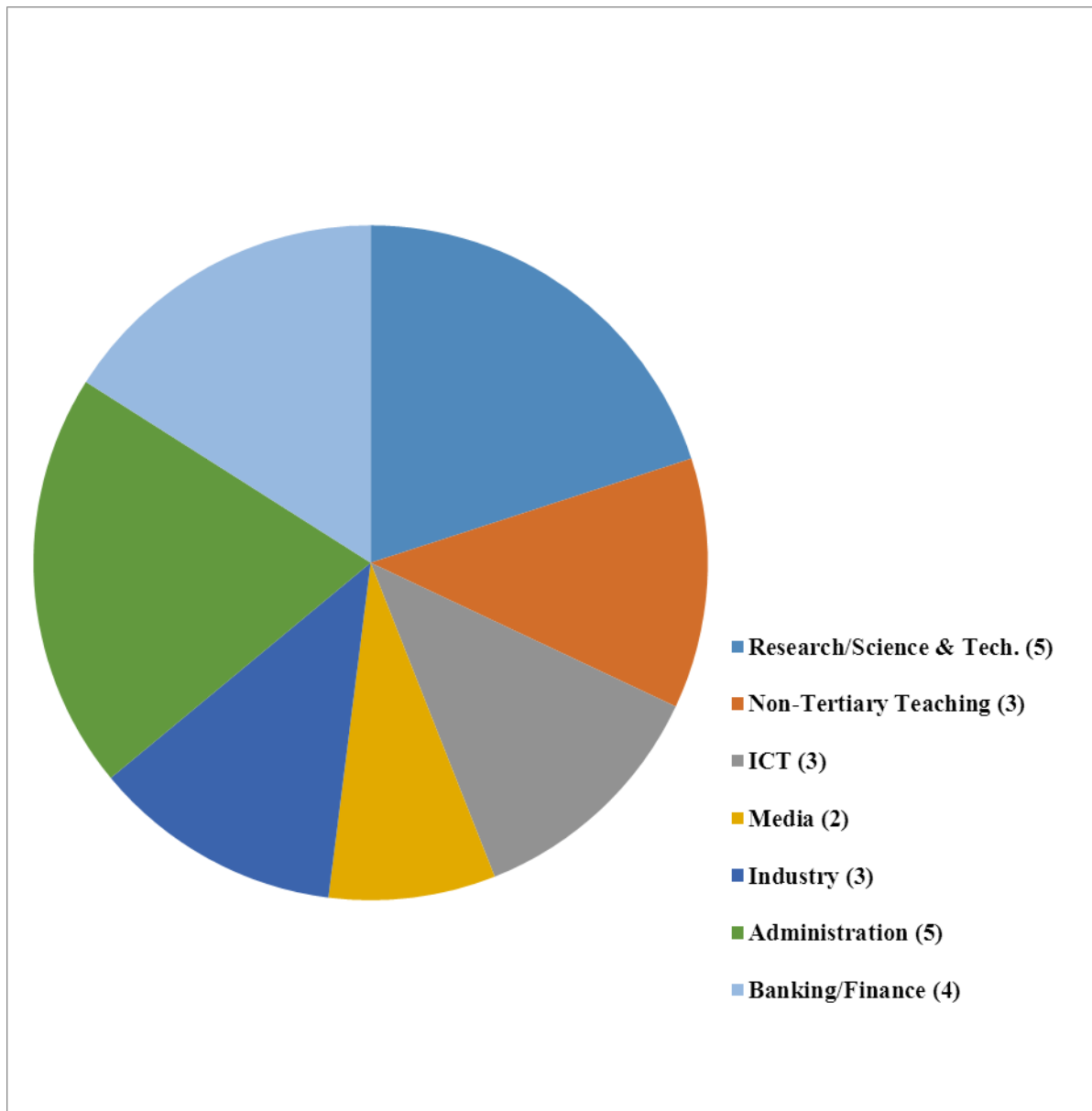


Figure 5.1: Professional Background of Participants before Changing Career.

Studies elsewhere provide proven evidence on the benefits institutions derive from career changers. It has been noted by career change theorist that companies or institutions which employ career-changers benefit enormously from their varied attributes such as risk taking, transfer of valuable experiences and skills, open mindedness and predisposition to learning new things. Empirical evidence showed that career-changers often thrive in new environments with great benefits to their employers. The old, one-track-career days are fading fast (Hamil, 2014) for which reason institutions need to adapt their recruiting policies to welcome candidates with diverse backgrounds; this is a more beneficial way of tapping the best talents on the job market.

For the few participants with previous teaching experience, though non-tertiary, the intrinsic qualities they bring to the new career is worth noting. According to Powell (1992) second career teachers are more likely to be influenced by value systems and other intrinsic motivators, as well as by prior work experiences. He asserted that non-traditional pre-service teachers were an older group of students, had encountered many life experiences, and most were deeply committed to becoming teachers, especially those who had chosen teaching over lucrative careers that they had been in for a number of years. This observation ties in well with reasons assigned to the decision of the mid-life and older generation of participants in this study, who indicated that desire to impart knowledge and quality time for the family were overriding determinants rather than job security as salary for the switch. In addition, many of these teachers had extensive experience with children, most of them having raised children of their own. Other studies show additional factors also contribute to the decisions of career-switchers that choose to become second-career teachers.

According to Herman et al. (1983), Ostroff et al. (2001), Chui Seng Yong (1992) and Austin and Hanish (1990), mid-career changes go through an intense period of soul searching before taking decisions on a life-long endeavour. Once they do so they remain on the job till they retire. These findings are also consistent with the trait and factor theory, which posits that once individuals are able to make a perfect match between their values and career goals, they tend to remain in such professions. A greater number (more than 90 percent) of participants indicated in this study they will not quit their present university teaching career if given other options. It can therefore be argued that participants, including the majority in the mid-career group, would remain on their new university teaching job until they retire. This is significant for the University in terms of staff retention, judging from available statistics which shows that in the past two decades, a greater number of people have joined the teaching staff with very few (less than one percent) leaving the service before the statutory retiring age of 60 years (UG, 2014b).

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of this study, state conclusions derived from the findings and make some pertinent recommendations. The study focused on five main objectives namely, (1) determinants of career change, (2) process of career change, (3) reasons of career change, (4) outcomes of career change, and (5) benefits to the organization and their policy implications using structured interviews and references to documents and literature as primary and secondary sources of data, respectively.

6.1 Summary

A summary of the key findings from the study on the basis of the objectives are stated in the following subsections.

6.1.1 Determinants of Career Change

The determinants of career change focused on the demographics of respondents, namely, ages, marital status, number of children (if any), job title and educational background or qualification. The 25 participants comprised 60 percent males and 40 percent females with age range between 31 and 62 years. Majority of the participants (72 percent) were married with children (1 to six per family). The job title categories were 56 percent lecturers, 28 percent senior lecturers and 16 percent professors with 84 percent of the all the teaching staff holding PhD degrees.

6.1.2 Individual and Organisational Factors

Individual and organisational characteristics consistent with the framework of this study, were identified as important determinants of career change. The study revealed that the

key individual traits were age, openness to experience, extraversion, general self-efficacy human capital (education level and occupational tenure) and job satisfaction. The organisational factors were job security and salary.

Fifty six percent of the participants stated that their decision to change career was due to openness to experience. Extraversion and general self-efficacy were the main traits that influenced 20 percent and 24 percent of the participants, respectively, to switch careers. Openness to experience and extraversion traits were associated more with Lecturers than other ranks of faculty. A large number of senior lecturers (80 percent) identified general self-efficacy as the key personality trait for the change in career to the present teaching job at the University of Ghana. Openness to experience was the most important trait for taking up teaching appointment in the University by all the professors. With respect to age, 31-40 year bracket constituted 76 percent of the participants who switched to their present career within with males being the majority. Higher education was the more important human capital factor in the decision by 80 percent of respondents to change career. Job satisfaction was a common determinant chosen by majority of participants.

On the account of the organisational factors, job security and better salary were of equal consideration in the decision making. Gender or sex appeared to have influenced the scale of priorities of these factors because time for children was selected by 56 percent of the female respondents as the most important factor that informed the decision to change careers. On the other hand, majority of the males (70 percent) indicated higher educational level, job security and salary as the most significant career change determinants.

6.1.3 Processes Career-Switches go Through to Effect a Career Change

Specific issues used to identify the processes participants went through to change their careers included when they first thought of changing career, reasons which influenced the thought for change, search for alternative opportunities, dependence on formal or informal contacts, activities undertaken in order to prepare for the new career, challenges faced during the preparation period and duration of the transition into new career.

The period between when participants first thought of leaving their job and when they actually changed their careers took several months. The reasons which influenced this thought were inspiration from family, desire to impart knowledge, enhanced job opportunities, opportunity to have time for the family; enhanced job opportunity and the desire to impart knowledge were key reasons, especially for the males with time for the family as the most important reason for the females.

Inspiration from family members was an important reason that influenced the thought for the change in career for participants whose parents were once lecturers. Impartation of knowledge, better job opportunity and time for the family influenced majority of the married participants for the change in career. All the participants placed enhanced job opportunity, a search for alternative opportunities, reliance on formal or informal contacts as the most important reasons why they changed their jobs into teaching.

Pursuit of higher degree qualifications (MPhil PhD) was the most important academic preparation that enabled all participants to change their careers. Participants were confronted with some major challenges during the preparation period, key among which were associated such as lack of funds, combining education with work and ensuring

balance between their studies and family commitments. Generally, the transition period from the previous job into new career ranged from 3 to 10 years.

6.1.4 Reasons for Change of Career into University Teaching

The specific reasons why participants chose lecturing as a second career were examined. Prior to their present position as lecturers, majority of the participants had non-teaching or non-tertiary teaching backgrounds (research institutes, the public service and the private sector and senior high school). The desire to impart knowledge and personal growth were identified by large number of participants as the underlying reasons for change of career into university teaching. Eighty percent of respondents considered their present job at the University of Ghana as more lucrative while all of them found the new job self-satisfying. Consistent with the major determinant for the career switch by females, non-availability of time for social commitment on the previous job strongly influenced their decision to change their career. Social status, career fit, financial reward and job security were of minor significance. For the male participants, the scale of priority for selected factors that influenced the change in career followed a decreasing order of job security > social status > career fit > financial reward and time for family.

6.1.5 Outcomes of Career Switch and Job Satisfaction

The outcomes of career switch into university teaching on job satisfaction were assessed. The study provided responses to pertinent issues related to whether career change to university teaching had been worthwhile and successful, reasons for the decision, meeting of expectations and desire to maintain job. According to all the respondents the job change had been worthwhile, successful and their expectations had been met as a result. Consequently, the participants had not contemplated leaving their present job at the

University. The overriding reasons were the desire to impart knowledge to students, personal development, social recognition and job security. Furthermore, in the opinion of majority of the respondents the present teaching job was career-fulfilling and less stressful in nature compared to their former jobs.

6.1.6 Skills, Job Performance and Organizational Benefits

The study noted some important skills acquired by participants from their previous jobs, job performance indicators and the benefits that the University had derived from them. The skills were derived from knowledge acquired from pursuit of higher degree and skills from previous jobs. Participants from research institutions brought along skills research experiences which adapted conventional methodologies to generate relevant data in the natural setting. The other participants from the public service and the private sector also cited skills acquired from the interactive nature of their respective work with stakeholders and clients.

6.2 Conclusions

Based on the summary of the analysis of the findings the following conclusions were made relative to the relationship between the determinants of career change and the individual and organisation characteristics.

The demographics indicated more males than females among the participants of the study, which reflected the gender imbalance in the population of University teachers in Ghana. The job title categories perfectly described the pyramidal structure which was consistent with the norm for the Universities in Ghana. Majority of the participants had terminal

degrees which conformed to the minimum qualification required for teaching in the University and was a key determinant in the decision to switch career.

The 31-40 year bracket, which was the largest group of career changers, was described as the mid-life group in this study, contrary to the age class in studies elsewhere. It may be concluded that the retiring age of 60 years in Ghana may make the description of this group as mid-life careers plausible.

The job security and enhanced job opportunities were the key individual factors that accounted for the change in career among the male participants. Time for family was the most important factor for changing career into university teaching among females participants used in the study underscoring the role of women in economic activity along biological and cultural lines. Combining income earning activities with higher degree studies was the greatest challenge identified by male participants arising out of the largely patriarchal socio-cultural Ghanaian context.

Majority of the individuals used in the study had non-teaching background; the minority with previous teaching experience did so at pre-tertiary levels. The reasons for changing from these careers to lecturing varied from the desire to impart knowledge, fulfilment, the opportunity for research and inspiration derived from significant others, challenging, financial reward and job security. Value systems and other intrinsic motivators such as desire to impart knowledge and openness to experience were key factors that influenced participants with previous teaching background. The duration of the decision for the change ranged from three to ten years suggesting that for some participants the decision was taken without much delay while others had to take time for sober reflection.

It is obvious from this study that career change to university teaching had been worthwhile and successful outcomes with expectations such social recognition, job security and better salaries for the new careers being met. In this regard, the participants did not contemplate leaving their present job at the University creating a positive impact on retention of highly qualified staff.

Majority of participants had acquired their terminal degrees in addition to years of working experience before making the career switch to teaching at the University. This study has shown that experiences and skills gained by participants from their previous careers translated into greater performance and recognition in the University. The contributions of the career-changers in quality academic output, staff development and attainment of the strategic goals of the University may be significant as noted in studies elsewhere.

6.3 Recommendations

The findings established that more individuals in their midlife (in this study it the 31-40 year group) switch career than other age groupings. This suggests a need to understand why this group switch careers. Several studies have been conducted on midlife career change, but majority of them have focused on women in this transitional period. More importantly, these studies have been done elsewhere. Given the paucity of information on career change within our socio-cultural setting, it is recommended that future research should focus on this subject in Ghana with emphasis on the reasons assigned by individuals, especially those at mid-life age.

A recommendation for future research would be a longitudinal study that tracks individuals throughout the career change process. Such longitudinal studies will enable researchers link causes of career change with subsequent actual behaviour. Again, since individuals change careers because they believe it will accrue positive outcomes, there is the need for a research that can assess these improvements. This is possible through the use of a longitudinal design to track individuals following a career change. Similarly, a longitudinal study, examining the motives and job satisfaction of the second career university teachers after three-year period would serve as an important tool in future recruitment or requirements of persons choosing teaching as a career.

The majority of research including the current study, has focused on individual characteristics, thus little is known about contextual and organisational issues that influence decision to change careers. For instance, the present study found that contextual issues such as pressures from family and influence of significant others are associated with career change. Majority of the female respondents valued time for the family a major factor in the decision to change careers. This requires research that examines a more comprehensive array of these antecedents and their outcomes of career change.

Qualitative studies have made an important contribution to our understanding of career change. This technique needs to be complemented with studies with large samples and data collected multiple times. Although, the present study adopted a mixed-method design, the emphasis was on the qualitative strand, thus it is recommended would be that future studies related to the topic be undertaken with a greater quantitative design to allow for a large sample.

Assessment of the process associated with this phenomenon revealed that these individuals bring on board valuable skills and experiences from their previous career which help them in the performance of the new jobs. The potential benefits that they bring to their new organisation need to be appraised quantitatively.

In respect of policy on human resource management, it is important that the University recognises the impact of career changers in the overall service delivery. The University ought to adapt their recruiting policies to attract individuals who would like to change their careers into teaching. This may well facilitate attainment of the stated goals especially in the two top priority areas of research and teaching in the University of Ghana.

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<u>Education:</u>	No. of Yrs.	Qualifications /Degrees
	Completed (duration)	Received /Dates /Field of Study

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 8. Sec / High Schools |
..... |
..... |
| 9. University/College |
..... |
..... |

10. Could you please state some of the reasons that inspired you to attain higher education?

.....

SECTION B

Exploring the processes career switchers go through in order to effect career change?

11. When was the first time you thought of changing your career?

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12. What were the reasons that influenced this thought?

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13. How would you describe the search for alternative opportunities?

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14. How would you describe your relationship with those you relied on during the search process?

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15. What activity or activities (training or education) did you undertake in order to prepare for your new career?

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16. How would you describe the training or education period?

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17. What were some of the challenges during the training or education period?..... ..

.....

18. How long did it take you to make the transition into your new career?

.....

SECTION C**Identifying individual and organisational factors that influence career change**

19. Which of these personality traits best describes you or who you are?

- ☐ Openness to Experience (imagination, curiosity, creativity, intelligence and being open to a range of new experiences)
- ☐ Extraversion (sociable, confident, optimistic and energetic)
- ☐ General Self-Efficacy (a belief in ability to perform across a variety of situations)

20. Do you think your possession of this/these trait (s) contributed to the reasons why you changed your career? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21. Which of these factors would you say was/were influential in your decision to switch career?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Sex | ☐ Children |
| ☐ Marital Status | ☐ Higher education level |
| ☐ Salary | ☐ Occupational tenure |
| ☐ Job security | |

22. Were you satisfied with your previous career? ☐ Yes ☐ No

23. Please give reason (s) for your answer to Question 22.

.....

.....

24. How old were you when you entered your first career?

25. How old were you when you switched to your new career?.....

SECTION D

To examine why individuals choose university teaching (lecturing) as a second career.

26. Can you please give me an overview of your previous carrier?

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27. Why did you make the change into university teaching?

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28. What conditions in your previous career influenced your decision to switch into University teaching?

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29. Between your previous and present careers, which would you consider more lucrative in terms of salary and other benefits?

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30. In terms of flexibility of schedule, how would you describe your previous employment?

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31. How would you describe your previous career in terms of job satisfaction?

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32. Can you share with me some of the reasons why you feel more satisfied with your present career than you were with the previous one?.

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33. What are the specific pull factors that influenced your choice of university teaching as a second career?

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34. Which of these factors would you say were influential in your decision to choose university teaching as a second career?

☐ Social status

☐ Career fit

☐ Prior considerations

☐ Financial reward

☐ Time for family

☐ Job security

SECTION E

To find out the outcome of the career switch into university teaching.

35. How do you describe your decision to switch career into university teaching (worthwhile or are there regrets)

.....

.....

.....

36. Have your expectations for choosing university teaching been met?

☐ Yes

☐ No

37. If yes, could you please mention some of the expectations.

.....

38. What are the reason(s) that might cause you to abandon university teaching as a career?

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39. How would you describe your career as a university teacher?

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40. Looking back, would you consider your career change successful?

.....

.....

SECTION F

To develop recommendations on how to improve job satisfaction among career changers and highlight the benefits of the change to the University.

41. Did your experience or skill in your previous career assist your performance in the new career?

42. State some of these experiences

43. Has there been any assessment of your performance in your new career?

44. How will you describe the assessment?

45. Have you received any special recognition or award in your new career?

46. State the type of recognition and/or award. (END).