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UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ENGAGED  
SCHOLARSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGISTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF  
CAPE COAST, GHANA

BY

REBECCA MAAME AHIMA TACHIE

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

Master of Science

Major in Sociology

South Dakota State University

2016

UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ENGAGED  
SCHOLARSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGISTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF  
CAPE COAST, GHANA.

This thesis is approved as a credible and independent investigation by a candidate for the Master of Science degree in Sociology and is acceptable for meeting the thesis requirements for this degree. Acceptance of this does not imply that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

Merédith Redlin, PhD  
Thesis Advisor

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## ACRONYMS

AASCU- American Association of State Colleges and Universities

BES- Behavior Episode Schemata

CE- Community Engagement

CEGRAD- Center for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation

CHESP- Community Higher Education Service Partnerships

DANIDA- Danish International Development Agency

DFID- Department of International Development

DSA- Department of Sociology and Anthropology

ERWACA- Educational Research Network for West Africa and Central Africa

IHEs- Institutions of Higher Education

MESTI- Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation

MOE- Ministry of Education

MST- Motivational Systems Theory

NCTE- National Council on Tertiary Education

NSTI – National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy

PABS- Personal Agency Beliefs

PE- Public Engagement

PPAG- Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana

RSL- “Research Service Learning”

SOE- Scholarship of Engagement

UCC- University of Cape Coast

UG- University of Ghana

UNCTAD- United Nations Conference for Trade and Development

USAID- United States Agency for International Development

WACAM- Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining



ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ENGAGED  
SCHOLARSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGISTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF  
CAPE COAST, GHANA

REBECCA TACHIE

2016

Although initially established for the purpose of training teachers and management staff for the formal education sector, one of the major objectives of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) is to establish partnerships with both local and international communities and organizations in ways that simultaneously enhance academic scholarship and socio-economic development. For this reason, this study examined the significance of university policies on community engagement and the practice of public sociology. Specifically, the influence of epistemological dispositions and perceptions concerning disciplinary, institutional and social demands on engaged scholarship are addressed. The challenges associated with the practice of engaged scholarship and “public sociology” are discussed by identifying the ironies presented by the laws and decrees of UCC and two other national policies for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs). Data was also collected from fifteen (n=15) academic faculty (sociologists) from DSA and the CEGRAD using a questionnaire with mostly open-ended questions. The responses of participants of this research elucidated some of the major factors associated with the feasibility of the practice of public sociology. Also outlined are some of the community engagement practices pursued in the midst of all the challenges presented in the UCC and Ghanaian context.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Due to the global advancement of the knowledge economy and the irreversible nature of globalization, both the academy and governments in developing countries are compelled to revamp their capacities to generate and make use of knowledge and expertise which directs social change (Tagoe 2014; Bourke 2013; Norris-Tirrell, Lambert Pennington and Hyland 2010). In Ghana, the development of science and technology together with a vibrant education system that has the capacity to equip the citizenry with the critical thinking capacities and relevant skills have become known as the guaranteed route to socio-economic development (Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation. 2010; Tettey 2006; Manuh, Gariba and Budu 2006; Otieno et al. 2013; United Nations Conference for Trade and Development [UNCTAD] 2011; O'Brien 2009).

As organizations in charge of knowledge production and dissemination, universities in Ghana are expected to participate in national development through the provision of quality teaching and the conduct of research that yields applicable solutions to the problems of the nation (Tagoe 2014; Government of Ghana 2010, National Science Technology and Innovation [NSTI]). As well, collaborations with both public and private organizations for policy generation, product development, outreach and knowledge generation are ways through which the university is expected to influence the direction of development (Graham 2014; United States Agency for International Development [USAID] 2014, UCC 2014; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Boyer 1996; Manuh et al. 2006; Uys 2006).

Unfortunately, some scholars have lamented that universities in Africa are generally dissociated from indigenous knowledge systems, local communities and industries (Tagoe 2014; Otieno et al 2013; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; de Lange 2012; Douglas 2012; Manuh et al 2006). However, investigations on the impact of the academy in postcolonial African countries have named the adoption of neoliberal policies and standards, the quest to publish in northern journals, inadequate resources and the absence of a strong leadership that promotes university-community partnerships as the cause of the academy's visible absence in non-academic discourses and processes related to policy and socio-economic development (Bourke 2013; Otieno et al. 2013; de Lange 2012; Wright 2008; Blee, Horan, Manuel, Tochtermann, Urban, and Weiskopf. 2008; Tettey 2006; Manuh 2006).

So far, studies that are geared towards the impact of universities in Ghana have focused on the effectiveness of faculty's research and teaching, faculty retention, impact of singular or multiple extension projects and the challenges of higher education institutions (Oketch, McCowan and Schendel 2014; Otieno et al. 2013; UNCTAD 2011; Tettey 2006). While these studies provide insights on issues associated with the work of faculty and the higher education system in general, they do not provide in-depth analyses of the extent of university-community relationships and their impact on socio-economic development. In the same way, they do not provide a comprehensive depiction of how the university (or academic department and its faculty and students) itself benefits from such community engagement endeavors. Meanwhile, there is a growing consensus within the academy concerning the benefits of community engagement for both the academy and the

communities involved (Tagoe 2014; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Noriss-Tirell et al. 2010; Manuh et al. 2006).

When incorporated within the curricula, community engagement provides students with a deeper sense of civic responsibility, practical knowledge or experience in understanding community dynamics and opportunities to participate in community development processes (Berman and Allen 2012; de Lange 2012; Maistry and Thakar 2012). Opportunities to gather the requisite human, social and physical capital that enhances teaching and learning as well as research efforts are increased when universities partner with local communities (Mulroy 2004). With the creation of a space where academics and community stakeholders exchange knowledge and expertise, public engagement yields the production of context-relevant knowledge and practical solutions to social problems (Simpson and Seibold 2008).

In spite of the numerous calls on universities to intensify their involvement with communities, many institutions (and academics) are not able to vigorously pursue community engagement (Kruss 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008; Burawoy 2007). Most institutions operationalize community engagement only through the provision of services to communities (Tagoe 2014; Graham 2014). Tagoe (2014) argues that the University of Ghana's (UG) engagement with communities has mostly been through outreach, the involvement of its staff in both private and public committees (usually for policy generation) and contract research. Faculty member's involvement with communities has been informal and disconnected from UG's organizational structure while formal community engagement programs for students are almost nonexistent.

Yet, public engagement thrives when it entails mutually beneficial relationships that are embedded in the operations of universities in a manner that organically links them to local communities (Tagoe 2014; Manuh et al. 2006). First, a public engaged scholarship is fostered where institutions create the conditions that enhances the integration of community engagement into teaching and learning, research and service (Sandman et al. 2000). Furthermore, incorporating community engagement into the criteria for tenure and promotion and creating systems that support, evaluate and reward public engagement create a conducive environment for a publicly engaged scholarship to thrive (Miller 2011; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Simpson and Seibold 2008; Colbeck and Wharton Michael 2006; Sandman et al. 2000; Boyer 1996).

Despite the enthusiasm associated with the benefits of engaged scholarship (de Lange 2012; Inglis 2005; Appadurai 2000; Boyer 1996), a boost in its practice is dependent on the institutional climate within which academics are expected to operate (Bourke 2013; Barge and Shockely-Zalabak 2008; Wright 2008; Tettey 2006). Public universities in Ghana are confronted with inadequate resources (physical, human and financial capital) and their academics are burdened with heavy teaching loads (Tettey 2006). However, regardless of the challenges associated with engaged scholarship, public universities are increasingly becoming aware of the opportunities associated with the provision of extension services and engagement with local communities in policy building, community decision-making processes and participatory research (Graham 2014; Tagoe 2014; USAID 2014; Otieno et al. 2013; Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Lazarus et al. 2012). In an article highlighting University of Cape Coast's (UCC) community engagement activities, Graham

(2014) focuses on the presentation of the plethora of projects with which the various academic departments are occupied. These activities mostly involved the academic departments in endeavors that were geared towards the provision of solutions to community needs. For some of the schools and departments, public engagement activities were guided by a research agenda and connected to the provision of experiential learning to its students and faculty. Others solely focused on the provision of vital services to the community. Graham concluded that UCC is making its impact in the development process through productive collaborations with local communities.

Just like the rest of the academy, sociologists have been accused of being confined to their academic disciplines and professional sociological associations (Weibke 2011; Noy 2009; McNall 2008; Downey et al. 2008; Inglis 2005, Brewer 2005). Yet, pioneers of the discipline of sociology (e.g. Jane Adams, Karl Marx, or Emile Durkheim) set out with the intention to using the scientific method to understand social processes and to further prescribe solutions and engage in public discourse that has the potential to induce change (Burawoy 2007; Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 1997). This study is particularly inspired by Burawoy's call for sociologists to adopt the tenets of his proposed "Public sociology": to make their work and presence more relevant in the socio-political sphere (Burawoy 2009, 2008, 2007, 2005; Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001). Given that UCC is a public teaching and research institution that has academic departments with heavy teaching loads and limited resources (Otieno et al 2013; Tettey 2006), the researcher was intrigued to know how sociologists in UCC are able to keep up with the task of public engagement.

This study shines light on the contribution of sociologists to social development processes and general public discourse. Focus is not only on the identification of community engagement projects in which faculty members are involved, but also the provision of an understanding of the factors associated with its incorporation into academic scholarship. In the light of heavy teaching loads and inadequate resources, this study presents a picture of the position of community engagement within the academic department by identifying how it is connected to the teaching, research and service functions of individual academics. It moves beyond a desktop review of reports on community engagement projects (as is the case in Graham's work [2014]) to pinpoint the peculiar issues that affect individual faculty's disposition to adopt a publicly engaged scholarship. The individual perspectives of staff in the field of sociology in two departments in the University of Cape Coast (i.e. the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Center for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation [CEGRAD] on engaged scholarship) were gathered using a questionnaire with mostly open-ended questions. Given that the study population in itself was a small one (only nineteen faculty members at the time), the researcher decided to use the entire population. However, fifteen out of the nineteen respondents were able to participate in the study (a sample of 15 out of 19).

Three staff members from CEGRAD were included in the study because of their "area of specialization" --research and advocacy on gender-related issues are usually within the domain of sociological studies and are of interest to sociologists (McNall 2008). Manuh et al. (2006) found that the location of the Center for Social Policy Studies (CSPS), a center in charge of research and advocacy on social policy, on the UG campus facilitated the

teaching and research directions of related academic departments. Therefore, the inclusion of CEGRAD in this study was able to help unearth the special issues associated with community engagement even for a department charged specifically with the mandate of community engagement. As a department in the field of social sciences (and especially dealing with issues of great interest to sociologists), this study also identifies whether CEGRAD has built any synergies with traditional academic departments (especially the sociology department).

Using Motivational Systems Theory (MST), factors that serve to motivate faculty to undertake engaged scholarship are explored. With MST, behavior is considered the result of a combination of subjective beliefs concerning personal capabilities and the nature of the environment (whether it enhances or restricts the attainment of a specific goal). In addition, the influence of personal circumstances, goals and values (including epistemological dispositions) and emotional states in motivating individual faculty to undertake engaged scholarship are examined. Guided by general issues discovered in the literature on engaged scholarship and a review of institutional statutes and pronouncements (i.e. Government of Ghana 2010), this study answers the questions:

- What are some of the personal factors that influence the decision to undertake engaged scholarship?
- How do perceptions concerning social, institutional and disciplinary demands impact the ability of academics to practice engaged scholarship?
  - How do institutional conditions influence the ability of individual sociologists to undertake engaged scholarship?



- What are the epistemological dispositions that influence the pursuit of engaged scholarship?

Ultimately, this study answers the question: how do institutional and contextual issues affect the practice of engaged scholarship?

*Organization of thesis:*

Chapter one is a brief introduction of the research topic, objectives and methodology. In Chapter Two, the literature on the definition, forms, challenges and general issues associated with the practice of engaged scholarship is examined. Then, the theoretical perspective underlying this research is examined in Chapter Three. Next, the research methods are carefully explicated in Chapter Four. Chapter Five, which is the first part of the research findings is a general overview of the national and institutional context within which participants of this study are expected to undertake public engagement. The results of the survey (actual responses) of respondents on the issues associated with public engagement are presented in Chapter Six. Finally, the findings of the study together with recommendations for further research are discussed in Chapter Seven.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to an increasing emphasis on the documentation of their contribution towards national and regional development, universities the world over are persistently developing mechanisms to effectively maximize opportunities to be of relevance to their respective nations and the world at large (Schalkwyk 2014; Bourke 2013; Lazarus et al. 2008). Apart from working as centers of technological innovation, partaking in policy development and preparing students to fit into different sectors of their societies, universities are increasingly engaging in community capacity-building activities (Norris-Tirrell, Lambert Pennington and Hyland 2010). Particularly, partnerships with local communities for the purposes of outreach, service provision and scientific research have been widely recognized by both scholars and extra-academic groups as a highly effective method of producing context-relevant and applicable knowledge that has the capacity to engineer social change and development (Elwood, Thorpe and Coleman 2013; Douglas 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008).

For scholars within academia, while it is vital for the academy to be actively involved with the rest of society in working towards socio-economic development, community engagement activities must not be divorced from the performance of traditional academic duties such as research, teaching and service provision (de Lange 2012; Boyer 1996). To this end, engagement with communities is shifting from mere outreach activities and service provision, to include an emphasis on the use of scholarly approaches that have the potential of producing information and other products of innovation profitable for

research and publication as well as teaching and learning (Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Sandman and Weerts 2008).

While there are persistent calls for community engagement endeavors to translate into community development and usable academic knowledge, the success of community engagement is dependent on several factors. The discipline involved, personal epistemological leanings, as well as general departmental and institutional conditions pertaining to the conduct and reward of engagement efforts serve to motivate or discourage the pursuit of community engagement (Huyser 2004). For this study, emphasis is laid on understanding the factors involved in motivating individual academics to pursue a community-engaged scholarship. Specifically, Burawoy's advocacy for public sociology motivated this inquiry into the work of sociologists as it pertains to engagement with communities outside the academic department. Therefore, this literature review focuses first on establishing the link between community engagement and scholarship by defining the nature of the scholarship of engagement (SOE). Next, forms of SOE, as represented in the literature, are examined. Then, factors associated with the successful implementation of the scholarship of engagement are briefly discussed. Next, the link between SOE and Michael Burawoy's "Public sociology" is established while addressing a few issues within the discipline of sociology that have an influence on the practice of SOE and public sociology.

### *Conceptualizing the Scholarship of Engagement*

Institutions of higher education (IHEs) are constantly engaged in establishing both formal and informal relationships with businesses, government agencies, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations (Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010). Involvement with extra-academic organizations is viewed as a means of attracting opportunities for the fulfillment of civic responsibilities (de Lange 2012) and the institution of networks that facilitate the exchange of resources between universities and actors outside the academy. On one hand, corporate and governmental agencies provide funding for research and developmental projects being undertaken by universities. Together with community development agencies, they also serve as outlets for the implementation of service learning and internship programs initiated by universities to equip their students with experiential knowledge (Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Kruss 2012). On the other hand, staff from universities work with external organizations for research on technological innovation, policy formulation and project development and evaluation (de Lange 2012; Douglas 2012; Kruss 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008; Wright 2008). For many institutions, partnerships with local community groups and agencies present varying opportunities for the fulfillment of their service mandates through community capacity-building, outreach and the provision of data sources that facilitate resource acquisition and development (Schweitzer 2010; Barker 2004).

As centers of innovation and intellectual development, universities undergo scrutiny for their service and contribution to the development of the communities of which they are a part (Bourke 2013; Douglas 2012; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Boyer 1996). Besides teaching and research, they are also expected to be in tune with regional

development processes by functioning as ‘think tanks’ which have a recognizable presence in deliberative processes for social change (Kruss 2012; Grant 2007; Miller 2011, Allison and Eversole 2008). Unfortunately, they are known for mostly adopting a nonchalant posture towards direct involvement in public discourses arena of their surrounding regions by engaging in debates only among themselves (Sandy 2013; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Douglas 2012; Burawoy, Allison and Eversole 2008; Grant 2007; Appadurai 2000). In cases where they have been involved with extra-academic groups, it has basically been centered on the establishment of relations with industries and larger agencies. Even when faculty are involved in policy debates on issues that affect the average citizen or any marginalized group of people, they do so in limited platforms, such as academic journals and at conferences for elite groups. Consequently, the academy engages in research and social debate in a space separated from the majority of the population (Sandy 2013; Kruss 2012; Appadurai 2000; Burawoy 2009)

To avoid the appearance of the ‘ivory tower’, universities are compelled to demonstrate their public service efforts and integration into their regional contexts by setting up specialized departments, specifically extension/outreach and research offices, to initiate and regulate projects that are targeted at establishing community partnerships and increasing direct participation in community development projects (Lazarus et al.2008; Huyser 2008; Sandman and Weerts 2008). Usually, service to local communities through outreach, advocacy and educational programs, research coalitions for technological and social development, policy development and academy-industry relationships through consultancies constitute the service mandate for universities (de Lange 2012, Schweitzer 2010; AASCU 2002). However, over the course of time, the academic community has

come to understand that engagement with communities must not only be characterized by a one-way flow of information and resources from the university to the community, but must be built on mutually beneficial relationships that can be connected to their traditional functions of teaching, learning and research (Simpson and Seibold 2008; Boyer 1996). Accordingly, community engagement is now being understood not as academic charity or service to communities outside the university (Schweitzer 2010; Barker 2004), but as public engagement that involve scholarly practices and fulfill traditional academic purposes (Kruss 2012; Barker 2004)

Schalkwyk (2014) opined that the scholarship of engagement has no universal definition because its characterization is dependent on the university in question and as a result is highly dependent on contextual properties. In addition, the mission and purpose of the university determines its approach towards community engagement (Harkavy 2005; de Lange 2012). But, a review of literature produces an idea of a number of key features of engaged scholarship. To begin with, SOE requires a shift from methodological and theoretical perspectives rooted strongly in positivism to the adoption of participatory/collaborative methods of knowledge production that emanates from a more democratic and problem-driven epistemology (Kruss 2012; Douglas 2012; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Barker 2004). Alan Bourke (2013) views community-engaged scholarship as a methodological orientation that embraces action research, interpretivism and critical theoretical perspectives which emphasize the attainment of social justice goals. The engaged scholar seeks to connect with varied publics and audiences including the subjects of research (Sandy 2013; Miller 2011; Simpson and Seibold 2008). While it may not be simply equated to action and participatory research (Simpson and Seibold 2008), it

requires the elimination of the unidirectional, top-down approach which characterizes most university-community relations (Harkavy 2005).

SOE demands recognition of communities and organizations as partners in the generation of knowledge and also the valorization of local meanings in comparison to the use of a priori standards (Sandy 2013; Barker 2004; Appadurai 2000). According to Boyer, the “scholarship of engagement means creating a special climate in which the academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other” (1996:20). It entails a persistent expansion of boundaries for the identification of new publics and the use of interdisciplinary perspectives for explaining social problems while prescribing and advocating for the implementation of feasible solutions (Sandy 2013; Kruss 2012; Douglas 2012; Miller 2011; Sandman and Weerts 2008). Basically, it is an approach to scholarship that values the cultivation of partnerships for the purposes of deepening the civic and democratic welfare of local and regional contexts (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Miller 2011; Grant 2007; Appadurai 2000). Sandman and Weerts (2008) are of the view that engaged scholarship implies a commitment to partnerships with communities and other external constituencies for the “development, exchange and application of knowledge, information and expertise for mutual benefit” (p.182).

Interestingly, some projects or activities involving extra-academic groups or stakeholders within local communities may not have a scholarship component (Kruss 2012; Stanton 2007; Barker 2004). The use of the word scholarship suggests the integration of academic procedures and standards into programs that involve communities and extra-academic groups (de Lange 2012; Sandman and Weerts 2008; Barker 2004). Community engagement takes on a scholarly countenance when it is integral to the other aspects of

scholarly practice such as teaching, learning and knowledge discovery or research as well as the integration and application of existing knowledge (Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Sandman et al. 2000; Boyer 1996). Specifically, SOE involves university (or faculty) community interactions pursued with the aim of enriching research, building a commitment for civic responsibility among students, deepening opportunities for experiential learning and scholarship in general (Bourke 2013; de Lange 2012; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Barge 2008; Harkavy 2005). The difference between either research or service and engaged scholarship is the employment of reflexive practices and theory in a manner that bridges the gap between the needs of the academy and other social groups (Barge and Shockley Zalabak 2008; Simpson and Seibold 2008):

When we ethically undertake research that is grounded in theory and motivated by practical questions and concerns, and involve practitioners or stakeholders in the process, we are able to test theoretical assumptions more richly, inspire students in more interesting and important ways, and provide a valuable service, all at once (Simpson and Seibold 2008:270).

In this light, the scholarship of engagement involves mutually beneficial partnerships between universities and community actors through the conduct of activities that are built on clearly defined goals, adequate preparation, the use of appropriate methods, the pursuit and acquisition of significant results, effective presentation, reflective critique, rigor and peer review (Nilson et al. 2014; de Lange 2012; Sandman and Weerts 2008; Stanton 2007; Harkavy 2005; Barker 2004; AASU 2002; Boyer 1997).

Miller (2011) is of the view that although the engaged scholar is connected to his subjects of study, he makes sure to produce books, articles and other products useful for the academic community. In other words, the scholarship of engagement entails mutually-beneficial partnerships with communities in ways that expand the learning and discovery



functions of institutions while enhancing the capacity of communities to address and resolve the socio-economic and political issues with which they are confronted (Douglas 2012; de Lange 2012; Stanton 2007; Barker 2004; Appadurai 2000; Boyer 1996). With SOE, scholars are not only interested in working as experts in community development processes, their interaction with members of the community is intended to generate new knowledge and understanding that is also beneficial to scholarship in general (Sandman et al. 2000).

With campaigns for scholars to be visible in the public sphere, Barker believes SOE is a form of application scholarship just like that practiced by extension and outreach offices (2004). Miller (2011) stresses that engaged scholarship implies discipline focused yet not dispassionate science. In particular, it is founded on the quest for social justice and leans towards activism. Most importantly, it is purpose-driven, methodologically rigorous and discipline focused (Sandy 2013; Douglas 2012; Appadurai 2000). Miller explains this argument in the following paragraph:

Critical community engagement work is a form of advocacy work in the pursuit of social justice when it takes on a grassroots approach to understand and improve circumstances for the least powerful....The engaged scholar must be prepared to articulate in a clear and simple language the accurate description that will provide understanding of any social phenomenon within any relevant spheres....The engaged scholar's work does not end with the completion of an analytical report....The scholar does not work for community leaders but with them in their struggle for social justice (2011:4, 7).

In line with Miller's argument, Robinson et al. (2014) also admit that the scientific domain must not be divorced from policy and social (or community) decision making processes. However, while Speer and Christens (2013) agree that the purpose of engaged and applied research is to impact social policy, they are of the opinion that most social

policy decisions cannot be traced to the findings of any academic research. To them, social policy decisions are usually based on the political conditions within which policy makers find themselves. For the findings of engaged and applied research to make any impact on social policy and decision-making, they recommend the acquisition of an appreciable amount of social influence that can be put to good use in the formulation and implementation of social policies:

In those instances, when rational arguments do have an impact on policy, it is seldom because of the rigor of the underlying research or the conclusiveness of the evidence. More often, it is because powerful actors in the sociopolitical domain are the ones making the rational arguments. These mechanisms—for how and why policy decisions are made—reflect the role of social power. We argue that current models for connecting social scientific research with public policy and impact on social issues often lack an appreciation of, and engagement with, social power (Speer and Christens 2013:735).

Contrary to the various calls for a more constructivist approach in social research, there seems to be some form of antagonism between positivist social scientists and those actively involved in civic engagement ventures (Sandy 2013). According to Colbeck and Wharton-Michael (2006), individuals with a positivistic outlook towards knowledge inquiry are more likely to downplay the rationality of knowledge acquired with an epistemology founded on solidarity (positivists more likely to view interpretists and engaged scholars as employing wishy-washy methods and normative/liberatory perspectives). However, advocates for engaged scholarship contend that engaged scholarship is not a novel form of scholarship meant to replace methods of traditional scholarship but a scholarship that has the motive of unearthing subjugated meanings and knowledge in order to highlight the concerns of the studied groups within both academic and non-academic circles (Brown-Luthango 2013, Elwood, Thorpe and Coleman 2013;

Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Simpson and Seibold 2008; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006). Allison and Eversole's summarize of engaged scholarship as:

...A new approach to knowledge and learning, characterized by interaction, participation and inclusivity; capable of mobilizing both formal and informal knowledge together across traditional boundaries; capable of being user-generated and demand driven (Allison and Eversole 2008:107).

### *Forms of Engaged Scholarship*

This research seeks to identify the pervasiveness of community engagement in the work of sociologists within the faculty of social sciences in UCC. As a result, the different forms of engagement seen in the reviewed literature were used as a guide in framing questions that were meant to elicit information on the various community engagement activities pursued by faculty. In a study of the different forms of community engagement pursued in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), de Lange (2012) outlined four broad categories of engagement. Like Barker (2004), de Lange (2012) admits that these different forms of community engagement overlap, are interdependent and synergistic, and are categorized solely for analytical purposes. According to Stanton (2007), the scholarship of engagement can be trans-disciplinary and may simultaneously embrace multiple forms of scholarship. Service learning (SL), for instance, may be designed to incorporate the scholarship of teaching, discovery and application (Sandy 2013; Schweitzer 2010). Schweitzer (2010) mentions the concept of "Research Service Learning (RSL)" as a pedagogical style that integrates meaningful community service with the research mission of institutions. Here, community-based participatory research approaches are incorporated into instruction in a manner that enhances students' and

faculty's learning experience while imparting and/or strengthening institutional (and personal) research agenda at the same time.

For research based on community engagement, Stanton (2007) suggests three key features qualifying it for SOE. First, the research must be based on the objective of public education, assessment and evaluation, community problem-solving, policy analysis and democratic practice. In addition, the research process must be characterized by an acceptable level of collaboration between the scholar and the community involved. Lastly, both parties involved in the research must have clear expectations of the final product/impact of the research collaboration. Nilson et al. (2014) also hold that engaged research must be based on a democratic process, with all parties knowing that not all outcomes (which they call "deliverables and their intended uses" [p. 272] are immediately realizable or tangible).

As a guide to work on community engagement, Barker (2014) created a taxonomy of five different practices constituting engaged scholarship. These practices include: "public scholarship" which involves participation in discussions or fora meant to enrich scholarship and address public issues; the frequent use of participatory research methods; the development of community partnerships geared towards facilitating social transformations; involvement with public information networks that help communities identify resources by providing comprehensive data bases necessary for activism, advocacy and so on, and; lastly outreach that involve public education and skill development activities.

This study adopts de Lange's (2012) taxonomy of engaged scholarship (delineated below) as a guide for describing the different forms of engagement practiced by the faculty who participated in the study. This is because de Lange's scheme condenses the various forms of community engagement found in the literature reviewed. These different forms of engagement may be individual pursuits, departmental or inter-departmental project (s) or an institutional level endeavor (de Lange 2012)

- a)* Engagement through service and outreach- programs and services identified by the university/department/faculty to educate local communities or to improve the quality of life of the marginalized or an underserved group. This may not involve reciprocal partnerships as communities are usually passive recipients. Examples include: community outreach/service and development projects, volunteer services, serving on academic and non-academic committees, and information provision.
- b)* Engagement through professional/discipline based service provision or service to internal and external communities related to the discipline. Examples include: relationships meant to foster inter-departmental learning, partnerships with local and national agencies, contributing to public debates and lectures, provision of technical and consultancy assistance, expert testimony, and exhibitions.
- c)* Engagement through teaching and learning, where teaching and learning is done collaboratively with the community in a mutually beneficial and respectful relationship. Interaction with the community in this case addresses community identified needs and is meant to deepen student civic and academic learning while enhancing the well-being of communities. Knowledge gained through this process is context based and community engagement is made part of the curriculum.

Examples include: service-learning, short learning programs/customized programs, clinical practice, internships, and skills development partnerships.

- d) Engagement through research and scholarship, which includes contract, applied and participatory action research, evaluation and impact assessment studies, policy analysis, and demonstration projects. It is characterized by collaborations with local communities in research design and focus on research utility is prioritized.

The activities outlined in de Lange's (2012) scheme are features of community engagement that are characteristic of engaged scholarship. Outreach and service such as information provision (as outlined in the first category of engagement by de Lange) may in themselves not constitute SOE (Stanton 2007). However, they could be the basis for the development of community-based research and service learning programs that constitute engaged scholarship (Nilson et al. 2014; Kruss 2012; Stanton 2007). Often times, outreach and collaborations offer opportunities for thinking and writing (and further publishing) on procedures and outcomes associated with outreach work (Sandman et al. 2000) However, most academics do not make use of these opportunities for integrating outreach into their teaching and discovery functions (Miller 2011; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006; Sandman et al. 2000). The relationships established with community stakeholders expand opportunities for data collection, for collaborations for research design and effective implementation, and support the acceptability and usability of the research which has been generated in a democratized context or process (Nilson et al. 2014; Robinson et al. 2014; Simpson and Seibold 2008). Sandman et al. (2000) believe that academics involved in outreach must make their results available not only to communities but to the academic community for annual faculty review, promotion and other tenure deliberations.

*Considerations associated with the practice of the engaged scholarship*

Generally, discussions on the uncertainties pertaining to the definition of the scholarship of engagement (SOE)--its successful practice, evaluation and sustenance--still persist within the academy (Douglas 2012; Simpson and Seibold 2008). Yet, there is a growing enthusiasm for civic engagement which has stimulated the widespread establishment of separate centers, institutes and funded programs dedicated to outreach, advocacy and the establishment of partnerships with extra-academic groups (Barker 2004; AASCU 2002). With these specialized centers focusing on civic renewal efforts and increasing the university's presence in the public sphere, the question on how their activities can be connected to other aspects of academic scholarship still remain.

a) Institutional commitment and outlook on scholarship:

Advocates for SOE recommend that for public engagement to be reflected in all aspects of scholarship, it has to be built into the general culture of the institution and must also be considered in the development of university policies, resource acquisition, evaluation and rewards structure, curricula development, and hiring processes (Kruss 2012; de Lange 2012; Stanton 2007; AASCU 2002; Boyer 1996). As such, any campaign for the widespread adoption of public engagement within academia should take into consideration the traditions and values, as well as the constraints and opportunities, offered by the institutional and social contexts within which engaged scholarship is to be practiced (Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008).

Douglas (2012) argues that community engagement will only become central in academic scholarship when both faculty and community members change their disposition from viewing it as philanthropy to conceiving it as a scholarly activity. That is, community engagement (CE) has to be conceived and operationalized through the curriculum, research agenda, publication and other scholarly activities (AASCU 2002, Sandman et al. 2000). de Lange (2012) contends that an engaged institution is that which values multiple forms and sources of knowledge, an institution that works with curricula that are constantly being revised to capture elements of ongoing multifaceted engagement activities geared towards meeting community needs. Thus, the scholarship of engagement thrives where faculty members are encouraged to approach all three missions from a scholarly standpoint and their public engagement endeavors are celebrated both within and outside their institutions (de Lange 2012; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Stanton 2007).

Popularly recommended as one of the fundamental steps towards the advancement of public engagement in academia is the proclamation of support for public engagement throughout official institutional mission and vision statements, statutes and policies (de Lange 2012; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006; Sandman et al. 2000). Yet, while the mention of public engagement in institutional mission and vision statements is crucial, it does not always translate into a commitment to public engagement (Kruss 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008). The question remains whether there are actual systems, networks and processes instituted to make the university responsive to embrace more engaged scholarship pursuits. It is important to enact governance and support systems (such as quality assurance and peer review mechanisms), sponsorship



opportunities for engagement activities and to have leadership that is able to ensure the development of institutional and contextual frameworks that recognize the different variations of community engaged scholarship (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; de Lange 2012; Norris-Tirrell 2010; Lazarus et al. 2008; Mulroy 2004; Votruba 1978). Institutions that have clearly spelt out strategic plans to incorporate community engagement into core activities and demonstrate an appreciation for interdisciplinary work through the establishment of units and centers that support community engagement are most likely to encourage faculty to take up community engagement endeavors (Bourke 2013).

b) Faculty Rewards and Promotion criteria:

One of the most effective ways of engendering an academic culture that values public engagement is when the institution integrates community engagement within faculty evaluation and reward arrangements and institutional policies (Douglas (2012). Barge and Shockley-Zalabak (2004), in their study of faculty reward systems, concluded that although most universities proclaim support for public engagement, most of them have not made significant impacts in generating indices for evaluating the strides made in public engagement efforts. Mostly, community engagement activities are evaluated on a separate scale and considered together with general public service (Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006). The promotion of faculty is largely based on the ability of faculty members to publish a required number of articles in highly ranked academic journals (Noy 2009; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Colbeck and Wharton Michael 2006; Boyer 1996). Considering that there is a limited amount of time within which faculty

have to produce a number of publications to qualify for tenure/promotion, community engagement which is time consuming (i.e. it requires exploring innovative research topics and methodologies communicating with varied groups of people, and redesigning curricula to capture public engagement activities) constitutes a risk which most faculty cannot afford to take (Miller 2011; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Simpson and Seibold 2008; Colbeck and Wharton Michael 2006; Sandman et al. 2000).

With emphasis on research, which is expected to be later translated into publications, new faculty especially direct their research, service and writing towards specific academic audiences rather than a broader readership (Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006). Reviewers, editors and tenure review committees serve as gatekeepers who protect academic protocols that discourage faculty from getting involved in community-based work (Sandman and Weerts 2008; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006, Huyser 2004). As a result, new faculty, especially, are stuck in a dilemma of selecting between publication in academic journals in order to maintain their jobs despite a desire to write for practitioners and other lay audiences as well (Noy 2009; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006). Huyser (2004) found that faculty who had worked for a quite a number of years and were of higher academic ranks were more likely to be involved in service to their institutions and outside communities.

c) *National/social conditions*

- i. *National policy Climate and Presence of CE support networks*: In a study conducted on the involvement of IHEs in community engagement in South Africa, Kruss (2012) discovered that the enactment of a national policy, together with the presence of national networks focused on the coordination and regulation of processes associated with the institutionalization of public engagement, stimulated the widespread development of policies and structures geared towards the promotion of engaged scholarship. Similarly, Lazarus et al. (2008) note that the Community Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP) instituted to implement, monitor and evaluate community engagement initiatives in Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) in South Africa, led to the widespread reconceptualization and incorporation of community engagement into the traditional functions of the academy. CHESP also engaged in research, advocacy and capacity building for higher education policy makers while generating grants and resources for community engagement projects in institutions. They concluded that universities that instituted practical policies and strategies for community engagement made considerably more progress than universities that failed to do so. In addition, a national policy framework that challenges institutions to pursue public engagement has the capacity to steer the direction of the scholarship of engagement (Kruss 2012; Lazarus et al. 2008).
- ii. *Expectations and receptiveness of the general public*: Inasmuch as it is essential for the institution as a whole to have interest in pursuing civic engagement

projects, it is essential for communities on the other hand to view universities as partners in finding solutions to their needs (Allison and Eversole 2008). A general sense of receptivity built on trust, a mutual understanding (on the part of both communities and actors from IHEs) of their respective roles in the process of socio-economic development, an understanding of the benefits of associating with IHEs, coupled with reasonable expectations of the outcomes of engagement makes faculty comfortable to venture into the establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships with extra-academic audiences (de Lange 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008). Norris-Tirrell et al. (2010) mentioned that increasing demands from extra-academic actors (general society) for engagement has the capacity to drive institutions to revamp their civic engagement efforts.

- iii. Sponsorship and Funding: Allison and Eversole (2008) strongly believe that the regional contexts within which the IHE is located determines the kind of expectations the public has of them. Socio-economic conditions for example, have the potential to dictate the outlook of faculty and academic departments towards engaged scholarship (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008; Wright 2008). Mainly, engaged projects require funding which most faculty and academic departments struggle to pull together (Simpson and Seibold 2008). Advocacy research and participatory research approaches rely heavily on sponsorship from donor agencies (Bourke 2013; Miller 2011; Wright 2008). This situation is more pronounced in Africa where most academic departments are poorly resourced and research capacities are generally low (Wright 2008).

The outcome of overreliance on external funding is that some research and public engagement agenda are restricted and the individual faculty involved becomes a “data collection and report writing agent” (Bourke 2012; Kruss 2012; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Wiebke 2011; Wright 2008). For the most part, academics become engrossed in consultancy work which competes with time for other academic endeavors. In addition, their consultancy work is less often subjected to peer review (Wright 2008) and, as such, even though they may have incorporated public engagement into their work, other aspects of their scholarly work may not necessarily benefit from these consultancies (Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006).

d) Individual epistemological inclinations

Engaged scholarship thrives on interdisciplinary (and interdepartmental) collaborations, an extensive range of partnerships, linkages, strategic alliances and networks between the university's key stakeholders in politics, industry, business, the professions, the media and the community in general (de Lange 2012). Colbeck and Wharton-Michael (2006) maintain that the likelihood of adopting an engaged scholarship approach is largely based on one's epistemological leanings. As a personal approach to academic work, academics who believe knowledge is absolute and valorize the principles of objectivity, the use of a priori concepts, theories and frameworks are less likely to appreciate the appropriateness of the multiple sources of knowledge that come through public engagement (Burawoy 2009; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006; Appadurai 2000). Such faculty are also likely to participate mostly in academic debates which, according to Appadurai (2000), occur in a world

far from local vernacular debates. Similarly, Colbeck and Wharton-Michael summarize the influence of epistemology:

We conjecture that faculty members with solidarity epistemic approaches to academic work are more likely than those with objectivity epistemic approaches to have personal goals that involve students in their research and service in the community. Moreover, faculty members with solidarity epistemic approaches to academic work are more likely than those with objectivity approaches to feel confident they have the skills to engage in public scholarship (2006:22).

Some scholars have argued that the discipline in question determines the kinds of and extent of involvement in CE (de Lange 2012; Noy 2009); applied disciplines differ in their level of involvement with extra-academic audiences compared to theoretical disciplines (de Lange 2012). For example, faculty in the fields of ethnic studies, social work, education and the health sciences are easily associated with CE work (Antonio, Astin and Cress 2000). However, Huyser (2004) showed that the academic discipline involved did not have any influence on faculty involvement in community engagement. Sandy (2013) concludes that although research on CE in the humanities is generally inadequate, the physical sciences are more privileged than the humanities in terms of resources and expectations.

Since epistemic approaches vary both within and across disciplines, concerns have been raised about the importance of maintaining a balance between academic standards and social expectations associated with public engagement (de Lange 2012; Boyer 1996; Votruba 1978). While being detached from practitioners and community members signifies being stuck in an ivory tower, becoming too attached to the community one works with raises concerns about one's level of

objectivity and level of scientific rigor used in his work (Elwood et al. 2013). It is important for staff involved in outreach, advocacy, action research and public engagement in general to maintain their objectivity and autonomy and ensure that they do not develop adversarial relationships with other groups either within or outside the university community (de Lange 2012; Colbeck 2000; Boyer 1996; Votruba 1978).

### *SOE and the Emerging Public Sociology*

In recent times, the practice of engaged scholarship is becoming a pressing concern to sociologists. This movement for the closure of the gap between the work of the sociologist and civil society (corporations, community groups etc.) is especially being championed by many sociologists including Michael Burawoy. Burawoy's main argument is that the work of the professional sociologist (those within academia) has become confined to members of the academic society. To him, although most sociological inquiries may emanate from pressing social issues, they often result in theoretical and jargon-packed essays that are inaccessible to the majority of concerned publics because top sociological journals (which have become gatekeepers of the discipline) require theoretical and abstract writing (Wiebke 2011; Warren 2009; Noy 2009; Burawoy 2007). Work that may be relevant to involved social groups may not necessarily be appealing to professional sociological associations or journals (Allison and Eversole 2008; Noy 2009). Over the course of time, constant interaction with one another in professional associations and partnerships coupled with the adoption of universal standards and language, has been

responsible for streamlining the discipline of sociology in a manner that insulates it from the rest of the public (Wiebke 2011).

Downey et al. (2008) argue that the entire discipline of sociology has a low status (due to its visible absence in the arena of scientific (and academic) innovation and its struggle for resources and legitimacy (Noy 2009; Downey et al. 2008; McNall 2008). McNall (2008) seems to lament that the breaking down of parts of sociology into distinctive departments, such as women's studies, criminology, or social work departments, dilutes the accomplishments of sociologists within the institution (these departments are usually run by sociologists but are counted separately from work of the sociology department). Hence, in a bid to make sociologists more visible in the public sphere, Burawoy (2005, 2009) proposes a kind of sociology which he calls "public sociology." This kind of sociology is especially important to the cause of this study because it has significant parallels with the scholarship of engagement. Likewise, the issues widely discussed as affecting the practice of community engagement are similar to the issues surrounding the adoption of public sociology. Public sociology is expected to be "a sociology oriented towards the major problems of the day: one that attempts to address the issues of civic society with tools of social science in a manner informed by historical and comparative perspectives" Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001:17). It is a sociology that goes beyond description and public discussion to social engineering. It entails co-creating knowledge with individuals and organizations at the grassroots and fellow social scientists, partaking in public dialogue, cultivating audiences and partners outside the academic community and adopting an epistemology that values civic engagement while upholding the



methodological rigor of a critical and professional sociologist ((Burawoy 2009; Burawoy 2005).

To the public sociologist, the division of sociology into subfields (e.g. crime and deviance, sex and gender) presents opportunities to identify specific publics (e.g. people living with HIV/AIDS, immigrants, marginalized women and social movements) with which sociologists can work (Burawoy 2005). To Burawoy, the sociologist will be more effective in educating, facilitating, raising consciousness and turning what is deemed private problems into public issues. Public sociology is an extension of the educative role of sociologists as it entails the creation and dissemination of knowledge in a language that is accessible to indigenous and affected publics (Burawoy 2009, 2007, 2005). In essence, public sociology concerns itself with the conflation of sociological theory, “political” dialogue and values (Burawoy 2005b).

First, Burawoy breaks down the discipline of sociology into four main categories: professional sociology, critical sociology, policy sociology and public sociology. To him, the classification of the practice of sociology and the quest for sociological knowledge in general, should be based on two major considerations: 1) intended usefulness or impact, and 2) the possible beneficiaries of the outcomes of the inquiry, whether academic or non-academic groups (Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001). Professional sociology involves empirical studies grounded in theoretical frameworks where the sociologist takes on an outsider (and objective) perspective in the study of social phenomena. The knowledge and expertise of the professional sociologist is mostly shared with academic audiences at lecture halls, conferences and symposiums. Burawoy (2005) argues that professional sociology restricts engagement with civil society and overshadows the moral commitments

of sociology because it concerns itself so much with upholding the standards of the discipline, aligning with theoretical frameworks and communicating mostly with other sociologists. As a result, professional sociology has become highly correlated with the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake (Sandy 2013).

Critical sociology, on the other hand, is largely involved in the critical examination of discourses in the discipline of sociology. However, it is also engrossed in the same circles as professional sociology because it basically focuses on discourses and disciplinary practices (Brewer 2005; Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001). Policy sociology on the other hand, entails sponsored or advocacy research, usually undertaken to draw attention to issues of public interest. Sponsored policy sociology can become the vehicle for accessing new domains of sociological research. It also has the capacity to turn sociology into an instrument of power as sociologists become involved in the formulation of policies that are of social significance (Burawoy 2009). Still, McNall (2008) contends that to effect any change in social policy and decision-making, sociologists have to understand that a political and interpretive language (usually stemming from a normative commitment as envisaged by Burawoy [2005b]) should back the findings and facts that their research produces. Burawoy (2005) argues that so far, the structure and messages of the discipline restrict the amount of influence sociologists can have in policy formulation.

Granting the concerns pertaining to the absence of the sociologist in the public sphere are legitimate, a consideration of the nature and dynamics of the academic institutions they work in provides some explanations as to why this situation persists. Wiebke (2011) argues that the individual evaluation system, which has come to be reduced to the popular clause “publish or perish”, presents sociologists with no option but to turn

their backs on non-academic actors and their own local scholarly communities and look to publishing in highly ranked international journals. The criteria for tenure in most institutions values publications restricted to higher education scholars rather than those directed towards a wider readership. As such, public engagement which usually involves time-consuming research processes, involvement with diverse publics and writing to a wider readership constitutes a career risk for most junior faculty especially, as it becomes prudent to wait until after tenure to do so (Colbeck 2000). Equally, most sociologists hope to play a transformative role in their societies through research and teaching. As a result, they have been known for teaching a broad base of students from many departments within their institutions (McNall 2008). However, an overemphasis on teaching may in addition to the acquisition of publications imply a reduction in the amount of resources (e.g. time, expertise) needed for community engagement which is of less value in most faculty evaluation systems. All the same, compared to their colleagues from English, Economics and Geography departments, sociologists rank high when it comes to levels of community contact (McNall 2008).

The work of the sociologist is not only dictated by the formal university structure within which she conducts her work (Elwood et al. 2013). The sociological division of labor is a product of a country's history and socio-political dynamics as well as global dynamics of the discipline (Burawoy 2007; Ally et al. 2003). With general budget deficits and the majority of their research being by funded international development agencies and non-governmental organizations, social scientists are mostly unable to afford the costs associated with public scholarship (Wright 2008). Burawoy (2008) contends that public scholarship is difficult to sustain when consultancy and policy sociology become an arena

difficult to resist, especially in Africa where consultancy fees are used to supplement income (Wright 2008). Unfortunately, project deadlines and politics associated with the use of data from such consultancies reduces the margin of public engagement endeavors that can be undertaken (Wright 2008).

Apart from inadequate funding, the conscious dissociation from civic engagement and public debates can be traced to epistemological differences (and debates) within the discipline (McNall 2008; Appadurai 2007). Disagreements within the discipline concerning the place of the sociologist (i.e. whether she is supposed to be an objective researcher detached from her subjects of study and whether it is appropriate to associate with liberatory paradigms) places the individual sociologist in a dilemma that may deter her from pursuing civic engagement opportunities and instead to focus mainly on teaching and traditional research. Though there is widespread acceptance of the fact that there are multiple ways of knowing, only a narrow range of approaches are widely recognized within the scientific community (Brewer 2005). The multiplicity of perspectives over each individual phenomena and the emphasis on relativity, together with debates within the discipline and the academy in general as to whether sociology is a science or just a set of ideologies, reduces the legitimacy of the work of sociologists and negatively impacts the reputation of sociologists in the eyes of the other sciences and even the public (Noy 2009; McNall 2008; Downey et al. 2008).

Sociologists face the risk of being called unscientific and losing institutional support; they are likely to be seen as ideologues if they constantly engage in the tenets of public sociology (Noy 2009; Warren 2009; Burawoy 2009). Warren (2009) argues that public sociology has been misconstrued as that which undermines objectivity and

challenges the status of sociology as a true science. However, public sociology embodies some of the methods of professional sociology. Also, policy sociologists believe that public sociology involves the politicization of sociology, which may put them in a compromising/uncomfortable situation with clients. Burawoy and VanAntwerpen (2001) admit that all four sociologies are ideal types because in actuality they are not mutually exclusive. It is difficult to locate an individual sociologist in any one category because the activities associated with each category overlaps with that of another category (Burawoy 2008, 2005a; Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001).

The literature also reveals, however, the search for common ground. In order to acquire more funding for research projects and boost the image of the discipline (as well as their departments), sociologists have to move away from producing critiques and descriptive reports only for their own peers within the discipline and prove to the donors that their monies can be translated into research for viable solutions to existing social problems (Downey et al. 2008). As social scientists with unique understanding of the dynamics of social structures and processes, sociologists can use their research and knowledge to shape social thinking by igniting public debate and engaging policy makers (Elwood et al. 2013). Community engagement projects undertaken by sociologists can be translated into tangible outputs that are recognizable in both academic and public circles (Downey et al. 2008). Inglis (2005) suggests that professional sociology should be involved in contextual analyses of the society in which it operates and the clarification of local concepts and theories which will further become the foundation upon which the sociologist can become engaged in public sociology and hence policy oriented sociology (p. 385).

Interestingly, while the campaign for sociologists within academia to be actively involved with communities creates the picture that sociologists are completely insulated from public discourse and social engineering processes, Burawoy admits that is not necessarily the case. He argues that all sociological inquiries have policy relevance and entail public knowledge, however, public sociology is the aspect of the discipline that has the capacity to convert general sociological knowledge into public knowledge and policy and critical sociology into desired social interventions. Therefore, he believes the division of “sociological labor” is expected to boost the recognition of the peculiar issues associated with the practice of public sociology (most especially challenges and issues associated with rewarding public sociology). Nevertheless, professional sociology provides legitimacy and expertise to the other three sociologies (Burawoy 2005b). Burawoy and VanAntwerpen conclude that:

...[Not] only is the mapping of sociological work and sociologists onto this space complex; the inter-relations among the 4 types of sociology are equally complicated. The first point we would like to underline is that professional sociology is at the heart of this configuration. There can be no critical sociology without professional sociology to criticize, there can be no policy sociology without the findings and legitimacy of professional sociology, and there can be no public sociology without the techniques, methods, findings, traditions and legitimacy of professional sociology. But the relations of interdependence also go the other way. The standing of professional sociology within the academy depends upon its success in the civic realm (Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001: 19).

Weibke (2011) and Noy (2009) believe that the drive for public engagement could only be a matter of differentiation and labelling of the various facets of the discipline. Some intellectuals may be involved in direct engagement with specific publics but may not label that as public sociology (Collins 2013; Noy 2009; Burawoy 2007; Burawoy 2005b). They could either be engaged with the public as an institutional or departmental requirement

serving as representatives of their institutions to address some of the problems of their societies, but these may not be consultancies either. Sociologists involved in such community projects may be doing so as volunteer work and may not necessarily envisage it as “public engagement” (Collins 2013; Colbeck and Wharton- Michael 2006; Burawoy 2005). This means that not all interactions and projects involving extra-academic groups may be connected to scholarship or recognized as public sociology. However, these activities are equally important and constitute an aspect of the sociologist’s contribution of labor and expertise to the growth of these communities. As shown in de Lange’s scheme (category a: Engagement through service and outreach) these should be acknowledged as a kind of community engagement (requiring some sort of recognition).

Downey et al. (2008) admonish sociology departments to make the conscious effort to highlight the work of sociologists within the academy itself. They also propose the institution of a community engagement agenda characterized by community-based research, interaction with varying publics in and outside the university, dissemination of research summaries on platforms accessible to local communities, improvement in service learning programs and opportunities and, lastly, the identification of the strengths of the department and the cultivation of synergies among such strengths. In all, the public sociologist is one whose scholarship is built on public engagement; one whose epistemology and outlook towards research, teaching and service are guided by a sense of civic responsibility with the intention to bridge the gap between the academy and the community.

### *Conclusion*

Owing to the numerous arguments present in the literature, there seems to be resemblance between “public sociology” and the many conceptions of SOE. Just like SOE, public sociology requires the kind of public engagement which is characterized by the incorporation of knowledge from experts and local community partners and the quest to address community defined needs and aspirations for social justice while upholding scientific methods and disciplinary standards. Based on his notion that the four sociologies overlap, it is logical to argue that Burawoy’s calls (Burawoy 2009, 2008, 2007, 2005; Burawoy and VanAntwerpen 2001) for “a more public sociology” are just calls for sociologists to embrace engaged scholarship.

Public scholarship requires faculty to integrate their teaching, research and service into an indivisible whole (Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006) rather than breaking it down into distinct categories. Mostly, faculty focus on teaching and research which are valued as the key determinants for institutional ranking and personal promotion. To a large extent, the institutional and national climate within which an academic works could enhance or inhibit public engagement activities (Kruss 2012; Lazarus et al. 2008). To Burawoy and VanAntwerpen (2001), the trajectory of the sociology department and the work of the sociologist can be understood by conducting a thorough examination of their working contexts. Colbeck and Wharton-Michael (2006) suggest that interests in public scholarship develop when faculty believe that the context within which they function is supportive. A supportive institutional system is where university missions, resource allocation strategies, and faculty evaluation schemes recognize and credit community



engagement efforts (Kruss 2012; de Lange 2012; Douglas 2012; Warren 2009; Lazarus et al. 2008; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006).

This research builds on these understandings through examination of the experiences of social scientists at one institution in Ghana. To encompass institutional constraints and contexts, as raised in the literature, the theoretical approach of this study is motivational systems theory. In the next chapter, motivational systems theory is presented for use in addressing how individual characteristics, goals and interests, context and capability beliefs are influential in dictating action (in this case engaged scholarship).

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The objective of this study is to acquire an understanding of the impact of the institutional context and personal values and beliefs of individual sociologists at the University of Cape Coast on the allocation of time and resources required for the practice of a publicly engaged scholarship. Given that public engagement in academia has been recognized as very challenging and time consuming (Bourke 2013; Douglas 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008), yet usually less rewarding in its contribution towards tenure or professional advancement (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Noy 2009; Boyer 1996), it is expected that a commitment to its incorporation into scholarship must be borne out of a strong drive towards its pursuit. To this end, the theoretical foundation of this study has been built around the concept of motivation.

Compared to most contemporary theories of motivation, which view motivation as a function of expectations for rewards and the fulfillment of personal and social needs, Ford's Motivational Systems Theory (MST) (1992) goes beyond the intrinsic and extrinsic dichotomy characteristic of most motivational theories by differentiating personal characteristics from those of the socio-cultural and socio-economic milieu and highlighting the impact of individual characteristics on motivational efforts. With intrinsic and extrinsic theories of motivation, individuals are usually seen as being motivated by internal and external factors beyond their control (Ford 1992). MST, on the other hand, emphasizes the significance of an individual's ability to initiate and execute a set of goals and therefore views motivation as a result of the interaction between personal goals, personal agency

beliefs and the emotional arousal processes. With MST, the object of focus is the individual in relation to his social and organizational environment. Thus, personal agency and contextual influences are addressed simultaneously within MST. Being that one of the major objectives of this study is to investigate the effect individual characteristics, values and beliefs (which has been assumed to have an influence on epistemological attachments and nature of scholarship) have on the disposition to make use of public engagement (PE) in academia, MST has the capacity to draw insights on how the motivation to pursue actions targeted at PE are determined by both individual characteristics and the enabling conditions of an individual's socio-cultural and socio-economic environment.

This chapter first provides a brief summary of the components of MST in addition to the general principles relevant to this research. Then the implications of MST for this research are specified followed by a diagrammatic outline that summarizes the conception of MST as it pertains to this study

#### *A Brief overview of Motivational Systems Theory (MST)*

Drawn from D. Ford's Living System's Framework (LSF) (1987), MST, as postulated by M. Ford (1992), is based on the premise that an individual is a unit within a social-environmental system and his or her activities are conducted in coordination with other units within his environment. That is, human action is influenced by components of the environment within which he or she functions. At the same time, the nature and outcomes of the environment are also shaped by the activities of the individuals occupying it. Consequently, the interdependence between individuals and their environment produces

outcomes that either facilitate or constrain the development and implementation of specific individual goals.

According to Ford (1992), the behavior of individuals is undergirded by specific goals which are carefully crafted with considerations to contextual conditions. Goals and actions are persistently modified and reconstructed in the light of knowledge concerning ongoing transformations of the natural, designed and the sociocultural environment in which individuals operate (Ford 1992:21, 81, 84, 86). Based on the information about the opportunities or constraints provided by the environment, the goal of a particular action or behavior activates an organized pattern of cognitive, emotional, biological and perceptual motor activities needed to achieve a set goal (Ford 1992:84). Also, emotions responsible for the energization of behavior are successively activated when new goals, intentions and experiences coincide with an engrained schema of the processes and outcomes associated with the accomplishment of similar events/activities (cultivated through similar from past experiences and known as “Behavior Episode Schemata” (BES)).

Beginning with a schema of the methods and processes associated with goal accomplishment (BES) as the basic element involved in the selective direction of behavior, MST focuses on how individuals prioritize among multiple goals given contextual conditions by examining the role of personal agency beliefs, emotional arousal processes and goals in motivating behavior. Usually, behavior episodes involve the simultaneous pursuit of multiple goals (Ford 1992:86, 100). Goals underlying behavior episodes are arranged in inter-related hierarchies so that the attainment of a sub-goal leads to the achievement of other broader goals (ibid:84, 89, 97, 100). Thus, MST regards the

motivation to pursue an action as the result of the organized patterning of an individual's goals, emotions (emotional energy) and personal agency beliefs.

Without one of the components, the motivation to pursue a behavior will diminish and the goal is likely to be aborted or not attempted at all (ibid:79). Emotional and cognitive evaluations are highly instrumental in the development and modification of personal goals and perceptions concerning one's abilities or capacities. At the same time, opinions about personal capacities and contextual conditions are also responsible for the selection and design of goals and the level of emotional energy that is expended towards the pursuit of a goal. On the other hand, emotions such as interest, curiosity, satisfaction, joy, or disdain and boredom have the capacity to determine the adoption of specific lines of action and goals while goals in themselves are responsible for defining the content and direction of behavior. For this reason, motivation is seen as a personal attribute taken on as a result of subjective evaluations of contextual conditions, capabilities and interests (ibid:72). The following section outlines the components of motivation as theorized in MST.

### *Key Concepts of Motivational Systems Theory (MST)*

#### *A. Goals:*

“As cognitive representations of desired/ undesired outcomes or state” (Ford 1992:58), goals are defined by the peculiar needs of individuals and the requirements of the contexts within which they find themselves. In adapting Ford and Nichol's (1992) taxonomy of human goals, Ford (1992) differentiates between within-person goals and person-environment goals. Within-person goals involve the subjective organization of

desirable emotions and mental representations (ibid:87, 88). Person-environment goals include the quest for belongingness and acceptance and the desire to influence society positively by abiding by social standards and contributing towards the attainment of social goals (ibid:89). Although the taxonomy of human goals makes a distinction between personal and social goals, in actuality, individuals organize their activities around multiple goals that involve both within-person and person-environment goals.

Goals and aspirations go through several cognitive evaluation processes that determine how each one of them is to be prioritized in relation to others (Ford 1992:97). Factors such as the suitability of a goal in one's working context, the possibility of its attainment, the actions and consequences associated with a goal as well as the significance of the goal to the individual's personal aspirations are crucial in establishing the importance of a goal (ibid: 116). According to Ford, in order to pursue socially valued outcomes or goals, individuals first internalize or adopt such goals as personal goals. The most motivating activities and experiences are those that simultaneously serve different purposes and fulfill both intrinsic and extrinsic needs (ibid:100). Goals that are most likely to guide behavior are those ranked as highly rewarding in-terms of their capacity to produce personally valued outcomes. Similarly, progress towards higher levels of achievement and competence is facilitated when achievement of ambitions is associated with the fulfillment of socially and personally rewarding outcomes and benefits. And so, when it comes to community engagement, it must be perceived as contributing towards the fulfilment of personal goals (such as contributing towards one's teaching, research and professional advancement) as well as a valued need of the institution, the academy and the society within which an academic performs his duties.

Usually, an individual's strategies and perceptions concerning goal accomplishment (BES) comprises sequences of activities targeted at achieving sub-goals or short-term goals that will ultimately lead to the attainment of a broader goal (long-term goal) (Ford 1992:109). However, some goals, which are considered top priority, may be dropped or sacrificed given current capabilities and environmental opportunities. It may also become necessary for old routines to be discarded while goals are adapted to current contexts or trends and emerging challenges. In situations where tasks are challenging and laborious, MST emphasizes the importance of maintaining focus on short-term goals that are attainable (ibid:97, 98). In spite of the benefits that come with community engaged scholarship, Colbeck (2000) believes that junior faculty, especially, focus on short-term goals such as publishing and getting tenured. Public engagement becomes a priority after faculty have gained career stability.

Most often, what exactly a person is trying to achieve (goal content) as well as the constitution of his goal hierarchies is context specific and highly idiosyncratic at the same time (Ford 1992: 96, 106). To adequately represent the peculiar features of an individual's goals, Ford (1992) recommends an assessment of a person's core goals, current concerns, personal strivings or projects and life tasks using idiographic approaches of research (ibid:96, 102). He also goes further to argue that although some goals may influence behavior outside consciousness, goals that effectively influence behavior are those that are available to a person's consciousness (ibid:84). In this case, progress towards the integration of community engagement in academic scholarship is likely to be expedited when an institution and its faculty are aware of its benefits and put in conscious efforts at establishing a commitment towards its practice (de Lange 2012; Colbeck and Wharton-

Michael 2006; Sandman et al. 2000). For this reason, MST's concept of "*goal hierarchies*" draws attention to the need to first identify whether community engagement (as a goal) is one of the important objectives and activities on the to-do lists of faculty.

Although this study does not focus on measuring degrees of prioritization of the various roles of faculty, the position of community engagement within academic scholarship is underlined. Participants were asked to point out what the most important aspect of their job is. The mention of activities, interests and goals that centered on community engagement gave indications of the levels of interest and prioritization of public engagement (PE). Engaged scholarship is reflected in the goals of the individual academic, when subjective reasons that direct individual research, service and teaching interests include efforts towards the closure of the gap between communities and the academy. Furthermore, an epistemological approach to research, that involves community engagement and is carefully planned to produce meaningful knowledge and solutions to the wider populace other than academic audiences alone is an indication of a preference for engaged scholarship (Nilson et al. 2014; Stanton 2007; Burawoy 2005; Boyer 1996). Most importantly, an open support for community engagement plus actual participation in public policy formulation processes, provision of expertise to public and private agencies outreach and advocacy are indicators of a commitment towards the goal of increasing the relevance of academics within society (Speer and Christens 2014; de Lange 2012; Manuh et al. 2006; Sandman et al. 2000). Also, faculty who value community engagement participate in community development processes that may or may not be connected to their academic scholarship (Tagoe 2014; Jowi et al. 2013; de Lange 2012; Manuh et al. 2006; Barker 2004).



MST's position that actions are motivated by their ability to satisfy multiple goals aligns with a key requirement of engaged scholarship. That is, community engagement is most attractive to faculty when it is connected to the teaching, research, and service functions of their job. When involvement with community engagement does not enhance the scholarship, academic rank and social status of the academic, he/she is left in a dilemma as to whether to venture into community engagement endeavors or not (Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Colbeck 2000). Therefore, participants in this study had to demonstrate how community engagement impacts other aspects of their work, what they expect to be the usefulness of their community engagement endeavors research and service. Basically, goals and rewards have the capacity to induce action. However, those that serve multiple purposes, especially consequences that are gratifying to both the individual's innate interests and social interests, are those more likely to influence behavior. However, not all goals can be achieved at the same time. Therefore, individuals evaluate the purpose and attainability of goals in the light of opportunities offered by their environment and their own personal conditions. In essence, goals that have the capacity to motivate behavior should be those that have both intrinsic and extrinsic properties (Ford 1992: 104). MST emphasizes the importance of aligning multiple, personal and social needs or goals in mutually facilitative or conflictive ways.

#### *B. Personal Agency Beliefs (PABs)*

Personal agency beliefs (PABs) consist of two major components: cognitive appraisals of personal skills and capabilities and perceptions concerning the presence of enabling factors and resources in their environment. They include beliefs about whether

the socio-economic and sociocultural conditions provide facilitating or supportive elements needed for effective functioning and goal accomplishment (Ford 1992:124). PABs also involve appraisals of personal capabilities and skills needed to effectively undertake a goal-directed activity. While the presence of specific goals is necessary in regulating and motivating behavior, positive beliefs about personal capabilities and opportunities needed to achieve set goals must also be present. However, the presence of positive capability beliefs depends on the task in question. Where a person possesses the skill and experience to pursue a specific goal, he or she is likely to have positive beliefs concerning his capabilities. Confidence in one's capabilities enhances goal setting procedures and activates the desire to seek for opportunities and avenues needed to facilitate goal attainment. Colbeck and Wharton-Michael (2008) found that most faculty believed they had the passion and the skills to undertake engaged scholarship. Therefore, even though they received little reward for their PE efforts, they still made efforts to include it in their scholarship.

This formulation makes it clear that it is not enough to have a goal in mind and the objective skills and circumstances needed to attain it. People must also believe that they have the capabilities and opportunities needed to achieve their goal. Indeed such beliefs are often more fundamental than the actual skills and circumstances they represent in the sense that they can motivate people to create opportunities and acquire capabilities they do not yet possess (Ford 1992:124).

Apart from beliefs in one's own capabilities, the environment must afford individuals opportunities and resources to achieve personally valued goals. According to MST, a social setting is supportive when it possesses features that are congruent with an individual's biological, transactional and cognitive capabilities. Although goals are peculiar to the individuals pursuing them, they are evaluated with considerations for socio-

historical, economic and cultural dynamics, needs and the availability and accessibility of resources.

To start with, personal goals and aspirations that correspond to the goals of the socio-cultural context in which a person operates have the greater tendency to motivate behavior. Where the outcomes of goals would not be useful or appropriate within the context in which they are to be pursued, the motivation to undertake an action is likely to be reduced. This is exceptionally evident in situations where standards and procedures for goal accomplishment are not clearly specified in a meaningful and consistent manner. Additionally, the presence of an appropriate physical infrastructure, an effective monitoring system that specifies standards and processes of goal attainment and the needed informational resources are necessary elements that boosts an individual's perception concerning his/her ability to effectively achieve a goal.

Given that engaged scholarship requires the deliberate infusion of community engagement processes into research endeavors, curricula development, teaching and service interests, an academic has to view it as attainable given the conditions of his working context. A demonstration of an institutional commitment towards the growth of community engagement through the creation of mechanisms that facilitate, evaluate, reward and publicize community engagement efforts provides faculty with positive impressions about the attainability and necessity of their community engagement endeavors (de Lange 2012; Maistry and Tharkar 2012; Kruss 2012; de Lange 2012; Douglas 2012; Downey et al. 2008; Lazarus et al. 2008; Allison and Eversole 2008; Uys 2006; Inglis 2005; Huyser 2004; Sandman et al. 2000). In addition, a general support for community engagement across the educational system, the presence of national and

institutional policies and networks that advocate and support community engagement affords faculty the motivation to design their teaching methods, research and service interests around projects that involve and are of use to extra-academic groups (Kruss 2012; Lazarus et al 2008; Boyer 1996). Furthermore, community engagement becomes attractive to faculty when institutions recognize its contribution in academic scholarship and include it in the criteria for tenure (Huyser 2004; Boyer 1996). To be exact, in order for faculty to develop a passion for engaged scholarship (adopt community engagement as a personal goal/scholarship approach), community engagement endeavors must be viewed as attainable, socially relevant, and crucial in the production of personally rewarding outcomes such as an increase in social capital, social recognition and most especially the attainment of tenure (Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Kruss 2012; Burawoy 2009).

Ford (1992) maintains that it is important for institutions and social groups to provide specifications on standards and procedures for goal attainment. However, motivation diminishes when such social regulations on goal accomplishment become overly controlling. Contexts that make unreasonable requirements for goal attainment given time, effort and the difficulties associated with task performance possess a demotivating character that hinders the drive to pursue particular goals (Ford 1992:120, 121). On the contrary, where there is emotional and social support for a goal directed activity that is underway, where there is trust in the capabilities of those pursuing particular goals, individuals are likely to be motivated to pursue that activity. Essentially, MST postulates that the competence required to effectively accomplish goals should be seen as a consequence of positive capability and context beliefs.

*C. Emotional arousal processes:*

Emotions serve an arousal function when it comes to motivation. They provide the ingredients needed for consciousness arousal and the direction of attention. To understand the content and organization of motivational patterns, it is necessary to interrogate the role of emotions in the establishment of goal hierarchies (current concerns and intentions for example) and PABs. MST is based on the principle that where emotions have been activated, interests pertaining to peculiar goals are heightened and the motivation to pursue those goals would be generated. Emotions like interest, anticipation, discouragement, joy, boredom, fear and anger are very instrumental in regulating behavior. They are involved in the initiation, continuation or termination of behavior and are greatly involved in promoting investigatory and explorative behavior. Colbeck and Wharton-Michael (2008) examined the emotions associated with community engagement in two ways. The direct words of faculty concerning the descriptions of their work and their working context as well as their demeanors during interviews gave an indication of the level of emotional attachment to community engagement. Faculty whose research and teaching were positively impacted found community engagement to be interesting. They also expressed satisfaction and contentment with the various degrees of community engagement which they had been involved in. In contrast, faculty who believed that their working contexts did not provide enough support for the growth of engaged scholarship were disinterested and resentful (Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2008:22).

Emotions are also associated with the development of personal agency beliefs. The different emotional states that individuals are confronted with during the process of goal design and implementation has an influence on the level of motivation that they hold. Our

beliefs concerning whether the consequences of goal directed activities will be well appreciated and supported by others, and whether we have the capacity to undertake certain activities are based on our interests which are determined by our aspirations and emotions. However, inasmuch as emotions are key to the development and elaboration of new goals, there is no simple relationship between emotions and personal agency beliefs. Emotions may diminish motivation even if the influence of the goal remains strong. However, they are greatly involved in the formation of PABs. Ford briefly summarizes the role of emotions as follows:

Although emotions do not provide direct information about what a person is trying to accomplish/ avoid they point to the presence of some concern by influencing selective attention, recall, event interpretation, learning, decision making and problem solving in predictable ways (Ford 1992:141)

### *Conclusion*

MST stresses that motivation is an inherent characteristic of the individual. Individuals are motivated by their positive perceptions (or evaluations) of the context within which they exist. (Ford 1992). Elwood et al (2013) opines that universities can only do their best to encourage the pursuit of community engagement among faculty. Individual academics are the ones who decide whether they are going to be teachers, researchers or public intellectuals. Factors such as epistemological affiliations, interests and personal goals are responsible for the pursuit of engaged scholarship depends on (Robinson et al. 2014; Sandy 2013; Speer and Christens 2013; Brewer 2005).

Ford believes that although motivation is a result of personal thoughts, values and beliefs, motivational processes can be influenced by altering elements within the environment.

Motivation can be facilitated or constrained but not imposed- no one can directly be forced to care about something, to be optimistic or pessimistic about something or to feel a particular emotion. On the other hand, it is usually possible to alter the probability that a person will adopt or learn a particular pattern of personal goals, emotions and personal agency beliefs (Ford 1992:76)

Although MST advocates for motivational studies to interrogate the effect of social conditions on motivational patterns, it also stresses the significant role individual characteristics such as age, gender, socio-economic status, values, educational background, individual aspirations and wishes etc. play in arousing interest and motivating the selective direction of behavior. As such, research on the impact of contextual elements on behavior should also interrogate the role of personal beliefs, interests, goals and aspirations, the presence of skills, values and emotional connections. Under MST, motivation is considered an essential element in the achievement function because in order to even begin to gather the resources needed to pursue a goal, people must first be driven or inspired (by some factors whether personal or social) to engage in activities that will result in those goals. Hence, motivation is seen as the psychological foundation for the development of human competence which is needed for achievement (Ford 1992:22)

While motivation is a crucial ingredient required for the pursuit and the successful achievement of an action, Ford warns that the actual achievement of a goal is dependent not only on the presence of the motivation needed to initiate and sustain goal directed activities. Other important factors include the possession of the requisite skills for the planning and execution of activities, supportive social structures that facilitate progress

toward achievement of a goal, and a supportive biological structure that assists the use of skills (or expertise) and sustains a sufficient level of motivation.

...effective functioning requires motivated, skillful person whose biological and behavioral capabilities support relevant interactions with an environment that has the informational and material properties and resources needed to facilitate (or at least permit) goal attainment. If any of these components is missing or inadequate, achievements will be limited and competence development will be thwarted (Ford, 1992:69).

Also of major significance is the correlation between the hierarchical arrangement of goals and factors such as the demands of the institution, personal goals and aspirations and current professional and socio-economic status (Elwood et al. 2013; Colbeck 2000). Personal knowledge on what constitutes the scholarship of engagement, the different forms of public engagement, the required skills and resources as well as its benefits and uses are key. MST postulates that although the social conditions may seem to be inhibiting, people's interests and confidence in their capabilities can lead them to seek avenues to make engagement possible.

Hence, it is necessary to find out if this group of academics in question has any interest in the scholarship of engagement or confidence in its attainability. Similarly, the general interests and the specific areas of focus (whether teaching, service provision, research) which direct their professional activities need to be identified. It also matters whether individual faculty rate their own actions, and that of the department as a whole, as embracing a more publicly engaged scholarship. That is, whether faculty view public engagement as either a wish, current concern or are constantly guided by the intention to incorporate community engagement in their scholarship given their current circumstances (at the personal and the departmental levels). Consequently, the outlook of faculty towards



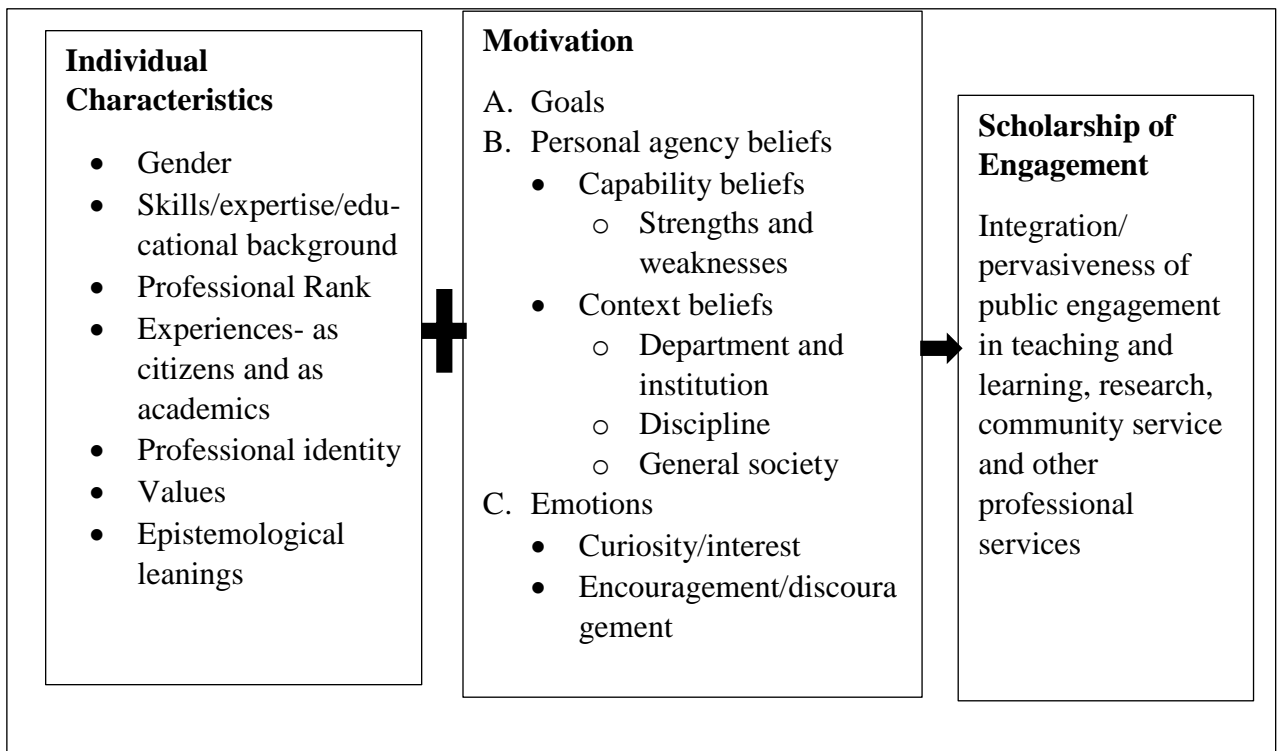
public engagement (their goal orientation) can be deduced from their list of short-term attainable goals and their general commitments

*Implications of MST for research on the practice of engaged scholarship*

So far, there is consensus within the academy that the Scholarship of Engagement (SOE) entails the scholarly generation and application of knowledge in collaboration with community stakeholders (de Lange 2012; Kruss 2012; Mulroy 2004; Boyer 1996). SOE has come to be conceptualized as the establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships between universities and community actors through the conduct of activities that have clearly defined goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods (scientific), significant results and peer review (de Lange 2012; Sandman and Weerts 2008; Stanton 2007; Harkavy 2005; Barker 2004; AASU 2002; Boyer 1996). That is, involvement with communities is no longer restricted to the domains of community outreach or service learning which is usually characterized by a one-way flow of benefits from the university to the community or vice versa. Interest is now shifting towards the careful utilization of scholarly methods and expertise in a way that does not only provide benefits to the involved publics but in ways that generate knowledge and other products of innovation which can be incorporated into teaching, learning, research and service (Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008). Therefore, a common theme in the literature on engaged scholarship is an advocacy for academics to ensure that their traditional academic functions are pervaded by community engagement. Again, emphasis is being laid on the benefits of ensuring a connection between teaching, learning, research and service.

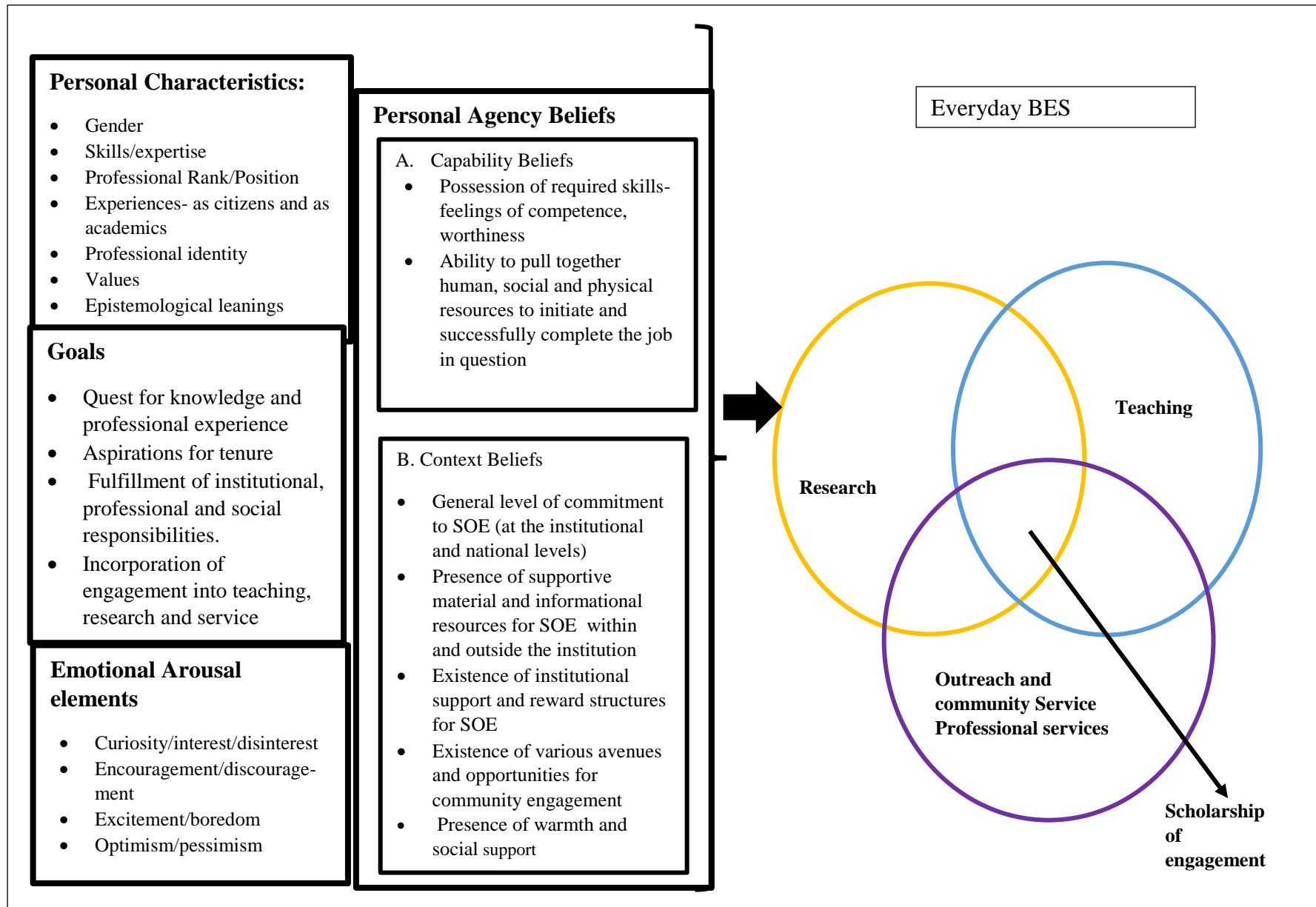
With attention turning towards the numerous benefits of public engagement, the essence of establishing a connection between all three of the functions of the academy with public engagement at the core of their functions has become apparent. In this light, focus is placed on the identification of public engagement as manifested in their teaching, research and service (Douglas 2012; Kruss 2012; de Lange 2012; Barker 2004). Based on MST, Colbeck (2008) argued that achievement of publicly engaged scholarship should be measured by highlighting the level of “role integration” pervading the BES of individual faculty members. That is, whether faculty members are able to synthesize their roles of research, teaching and service with public engagement. This idea is captured in conceptual model below:

Figure 3.1. Basic Conceptual Model



Using MST, this study adopts Colbeck and Wharton-Michael's method to examine the position of public engagement within academic practice. The decision to examine the role of personal characteristics in public engagement is based on: 1. Colbeck and Wharton-Michael's (2006) argument that individual faculty's goals and capability beliefs concerning public engagement are based on their personal characteristics (example sex, race, experience, epistemological leanings, discipline involved); 2. MST's principle that motivation is a personal attribute, a result of evaluations of the personal conditions (which include information about one's own ideas, knowledge etc. and then information about their context). Therefore, the thoughts, feelings, experiences and perceptions concerning context specific patterns of behavior as it pertains to the performance of their duties are made the starting point of this study. In addition, the connection between community engagement and the traditional functions of the academic and community engagement are described. Figure 3.2 elaborates on Figure 3.1 by outlining the roadmap for this research. The concepts explored in this study and the connections involved in the teaching, research, service and community engagement are summarized in Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2. Elaborated Conceptual Model**



### *Theoretical Framework*

The following are the theoretical generalizations which shaped the conceptualization of constructs used in this study.

1. Individuals operate with a BES (Behavior Episode Schemata- integrated representations of thoughts and perceptions concerning the social, historical, cultural and economic dynamics of the setting within which they work) that is pervaded by the subjective organization of a multiplicity of goals.
2. The decision to pursue a set of goals is determined by an individual's evaluation of his personal capabilities, goals and aspirations his/her emotional states and particularly the presence of resources and social systems that are favorable for the successful accomplishment of a set of goals.
3. Social responsibilities or goals that are in alignment with personal goals and aspirations are those most likely to influence behavior.
4. The provision of material and informational resources, social support, warmth and acceptance by one's context is crucial for the generation of motivation.
5. Emotional states (anger, discouragement/encouragement, fear, curiosity, joy, boredom, optimism, etc.) are responsible for the generation of interest arousal.

In relation to the general objectives of this study, the key arguments and concepts of MST raise a few concerns which lead the researcher to make a few assumptions. Everyday activities are guided by the subjective arrangement of goals which are built on beliefs concerning the likelihood of their achievement given personal circumstances and capabilities as well as contextual conditions. Likewise, every action is built on a set of pre-

existing thoughts, feelings and perceptions concerning past and impending experiences (BES). The concepts of BES and goal hierarchies raise the following set of questions: How do faculty arrange their activities and functions in order to accomplish all the different tasks given the limited time and available resources? What are the general specified roles of academics in UCC? Which of their roles do they esteem highly and what are the explanatory factors concerning the prioritization of some roles in relation to others. With intersection of roles being the focus of MST, how the roles of faculty are connected and the efficiency in the organization of activities to accomplish various goals simultaneously is a matter of concern.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research paradigm and the methods of data collection used in the study. In addition, the research population, the limitations of the research design as well as the ethical concerns associated with the methods employed in data collection and analysis are reviewed. With the ultimate aim of understanding the influence of institutional and contextual factors along with the personal experiences and interests on the ability of individual sociologists to undertake a community engaged scholarship, this research is based on the views and perspectives of teaching and research staff at the University of Cape Coast's Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Center for Gender Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD). Essentially, the study addresses the extent to which epistemological dispositions and perceptions about disciplinary, institutional and social demands influence the practice of engaged scholarship.

#### *Research Paradigm*

With research questions that center on identifying the epistemological and ontological stances of individual academics, the interests, goals, values and beliefs of academics pertaining to their scholarship and the predisposition to accept a community engaged scholarship approach, a qualitative research outlook lends itself to the production of in-depth understanding of the plethora of subjective meanings and the contextual variables associated with the work of intellectuals working within the boundaries of a university's organizational arrangements. Compared to quantitative studies, qualitative

research approaches take on the ontological position where social reality is seen as constantly reconstructed through interaction (Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy 2011; Creswell and Clark 2007). Detailed subjective and contextualized meanings of texts, events and experiences are produced where qualitative research methods are used in gathering information and making sense of social phenomena (Bamberger, Rugh and Mabry 2012; Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy 2011). By using open-ended questions and minimizing the use of close-ended questions and categories, the researcher is able to generate knowledge inductively as patterns that develop from the views of respondents determine the formulation of hypotheses (where possible) and the establishment of conclusions (Wolfer 2007). Eventually, conclusions drawn and arguments made are largely based on the actual perspectives of the subjects studied.

For the most part, emphasis is laid on understanding the subjective views of faculty on factors peculiar to their institutional and social context which either serve to enhance or inhibit the practice of engaged scholarship. With an interpretive approach, the researcher makes meaning of the social realities of respondents by contrasting the views of respondents concerning particular issues with organizational statutes and general policy documents that have a connection with the performance of their work. As well, the acquisition of varying views on any particular topic was of immense importance as quotes to illustrate different perspectives were coded in the discussion of emergent patterns. Outliers that contradict general patterns are considered essential to the complete representation of reality (Bamberger et al. 2012). The small population used for this study afforded the researcher the opportunity to capture detailed meanings of small-scale interactions and to seek in-depth preliminary information and understanding on an under-



researched topic which would then inform future research (Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy 2011).

### *Research Design*

Based on the fact that this study is a preliminary investigation into the feasibility of the practice of public sociology and engaged scholarship among sociologists in Ghana, this study can be considered as an instrumental case study that seeks to describe and understand the practice of engaged scholarship using only sociology departments in one university. According to Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy (2011), instrumental case studies are those studies that make use of relatively small numbers of subjects or cases and are intended to generalize or provide insight into a broader topic. With instrumental case studies, quantification of data is not a priority but the description of the nature and nuances involved in patterned interactions is what characterizes the methods used in data collection and analysis.

Typically, the researcher should have selected only the sociology department to use for the study. However, the Center for Gender Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD) which is also a subunit of the Faculty of Social Sciences was added to the population that was studied. As a division for gender research and advocacy, CEGRAD is an outlet that conducts research on issues pertaining to a subdivision and pertinent area of the discipline of sociology. Moreover, the sociology degree program offers a concentration on Gender Studies with courses on gender research methods and gender-related issues. Although CEGRAD is not a teaching department and its staff members are considered

research fellows, they work hand-in-hand with personnel from the department of Sociology to undertake training of university staff on gender research methodologies. CEGRAD is also involved in the review of curricular for Gender Studies related courses, which ironically are taught and coordinated by personnel from the sociology department. As a result of the relationship between CEGRAD and the sociology department, as well as the similarities in the subjects of interests between the two units, the researcher conceived of CEGRAD as, to some extent, being the advocacy and research wing for Gender Studies which is a facet of the sociology department. Hence, the staff members of CEGRAD were preconceived as sociologists who are using sociological inquiry as a tool for outreach and advocacy. Also, the researcher sought to compare the level of community engagement pursued by the two divisions to ascertain whether a clear mandate for advocacy versus a mandate that requires the combination of teaching, research and outreach have any effects on the tendency to pursue engaged scholarship.

### *Research Population*

In the first semester of the 2014-2015 academic year, information available on the website of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (DSA) showed that there were sixteen (16) academic staff at the department. The Center for Gender Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD) which had begun operation only a year prior to the beginning of this study had only three (3) research and outreach personnel at the time. The unit of analysis is the individual faculty from the two departments: CEGRAD and DSA. Together, the study population comprised nineteen (19) people: seven females and twelve

(12) males. Out of the nineteen personnel who were contacted to participate in the study, fifteen (15) of them returned the filled out questionnaires. Of these, three were senior lecturers/professors and eleven were junior lecturers. One person declined to provide information on their academic/professional rank. Also, five of the respondents were PhD holders whilst the remaining ten had only Master's degrees.

#### *Sources of Data and Response rate*

Given the small research population, all nineteen workers of the two departments were included in the study. Where the number of subjects to be sampled is very small, it is deemed inappropriate and unnecessary to employ any sampling technique (Salant and Dillman 1994; Bamberger et al. 2012). Typically, “small random samples increase the risk of arriving at skewed and distorted data set as well as the findings based on it” (Bamberger et al. 2012:357). Therefore, letters requesting the participation in the survey were sent to all members of the population.

The research procedures received approval from the South Dakota State University Institutional Review Board (SDSU IRB). An email was sent to the Head of the Sociology Department informing her about the nature and purpose of the study. The same kind of letter was delivered to the office of the head coordinator of CEGRAD. Letters of consent informing respondents of the background of the researcher, the nature and purpose of study, the duration of the interviews and other ethical concerns associated with the study were sent to the respondents by a volunteer in Ghana assisting the principal researcher. According to Salant and Dillman (1994), communicating the importance of a survey to

respondents in person increases the chances of gaining higher response rates. Upon consultation with some of the respondents, the researcher deduced that translating the interview guide into a survey would be tremendously beneficial in boosting the interest and participation of participants.

To increase the response rate of the survey, the questionnaire created from the interview guide was sent to the individual participants by the volunteer who was helping the researcher. As a result of the numerous open-ended questions contained in the survey, the questionnaire was bulky and required dedication and interest in the issues raised in order to complete it. Respondents were encouraged by the volunteer in face-to-face conversations on the importance of filling out the questionnaire. The surveys were dropped off at the offices of the respondents by the volunteer. To further motivate respondents to participate in the study, cards designed to show appreciation were sent together with a token of one \$10 bill to each respondent. Follow-ups were made several times until 15 respondents handed in their completed questionnaires. Overall it took slightly more than two months for respondents to return their survey, a situation that delayed the timeline for the study. However, the motivation provided by the volunteer was of tremendous help in increasing the response rate. In all, 15 out of the 19 subjects in the study population returned completed surveys: a response rate of 78.94%). All three personnel at CEGRAD returned the survey while twelve (12) out of the sixteen (16) respondents from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology completed and returned the questionnaire.

In order to conceal the identity of the respondents and ensure the confidentiality of information, respondents were not required to indicate their names on the questionnaires. After the questionnaires were returned, the researcher only identified respondents with

codes. Although the questionnaires were picked up by in person by the researcher's aide, respondents were asked to seal and address the envelope to the principal researcher who was the only person in charge of data reduction and analysis. The envelopes were sent via a credible courier service and delivered in perfect condition. The data was used purely for academic purposes to contribute to knowledge on the performance of engaged scholarship.

Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy (2012) argue that, for case studies, the decision to choose a particular source and method of data collection should be based on their effectiveness to provide information on key dimensions of the case. For instance, unobtrusive methods such as content analyses of statutory documents, and news reports, participant and non-participant observations can be employed as a means of gathering more background information about the context and dynamics of a social issue. These sources also serve as a backdrop upon which the views of respondents and the observations of the researcher can be validated (or otherwise refuted). Therefore, in addition to using a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection, the researcher also sought to understand the precepts surrounding the work of respondents by reviewing institutional documents such as the UCC Statutes drafted in 2012 and checking the university's website to go through newsletters and activities of the departments of concern.

As well, the Ghana National Science Technology and Innovation Policy, the Education Strategic plan of Ghana for the period of 2010-2020 drafted by the Ministry of Education, the 2013 report from the National Council on Tertiary Education (NCTE) and NCTE's website provided the researcher with information on the expected roles of universities and their link with other public research institutions and industries, the governance system for higher education institutions in Ghana and the and structure for

allocation of funds to public universities. These sources were expected to provide in-depth understanding to the researcher on some of the issues peculiar to tertiary institutions and the work of the academics who are employed by these institutions. Basically both primary and secondary sources of data were used in the study; the questionnaire was the source of primary data and policy documents and website information served as sources of secondary data.

### *Key Concepts and Operationalization*

The fundamental concepts that pertain to this study include the Scholarship of engagement (SOE)/engaged scholarship, public/community/civic engagement, epistemology and motivation. To identify the features of engaged scholarship, it was necessary to first pinpoint any community engagement activities pursued by participants. Public/community engagement is measured by seeking responses on the involvement of faculty (and their departments) in the following: policy formulation processes (whether policy research, consultancy, service on any board/committee involved in social policy formulation), provision of consultancy services, advocacy and community outreach, community-based research, institution of service learning opportunities, engaged scholarly teaching and learning, participation in public fora, partnerships in community projects and decision making processes and so on. These measures are based on the summary of engagement activities provided by George de Lange (2012) (as outlined in Chapter Two). Based on the numerous conceptions of SOE outlined in the literature reviewed, for this research the scholarship of engagement is conceptualized as scholarship that possesses the following characteristics:

- Integrates service, teaching and learning with community engagement
- Cultivates diverse publics outside the university community
- Favors epistemologies of collaboration with communities for knowledge acquisition, interpretive and liberatory paradigms, use of community-based approaches, dissemination of knowledge on platforms both within and outside the academy and social justice oriented research, teaching, and service.
- Indicates cross-disciplinary research and outreach
- Demonstrates a pedagogical style infused with community engagement

To understand the level of integration of the three facets of scholarship, participants were asked to explain how their work is connected to public engagement and to demonstrate the impact of public engagement on their teaching, research and service. In addition, connections between research interests, teaching specializations and preferred partnerships were ascertained by asking respondents to, first, list their area of specialization, and, second, list which publics they are interested in working with and provide reasons for their interest in such publics. This step helped in identifying whether these groups have any connection with their research interests, teaching specializations and service. Burawoy's (2005, 2008) proposal for the need to cultivate specific publics to establish partnerships with implies that faculty involved in community engagement had to focus on the identification of specific groups/communities with whom they will establish mutually beneficial partnerships. The researcher worked with the assumption that where an individual faculty seeks to engage with publics that are in the domain of his research interests, area of teaching specialization and service, then it will be logical to conclude that

his engagement with communities is connected with his research, teaching and service (a characteristic of SOE). Furthermore, they had to state how their teaching presented them with opportunities to be engaged with communities in mutually beneficial partnerships. Essentially, the researcher wanted to identify whether public engagement was seen as a separate endeavor outside academic work or not (thus measure the level of integration of public engagement in their work)

It was also important to devise questions that generated information on the epistemological affiliations of participants. Inspired by Colbeck and Wharton-Michael's (2006) "solidarity" epistemic approach, several questions sought to ascertain whether they were predisposed to adopt engaged scholarship. These included:

- whether their research is social justice oriented;
- whether they mainly adopt a positivistic outlook or whether they favored participatory research methods;
- if they felt obligated to follow up on research findings
- Whether faculty felt compelled to highlight the voices of marginalized groups through their research and in both academic and public circles.

In addition to these questions on their approach to knowledge generation and its usage, a general illustration of what they expected the usefulness of their research to be was required in order to inductively deduce whether their research is meant to inspire social change and has any traces of public engagement.

Another major theme pervading this research is the concept of "motivation". This study was based on the assumption that, given the numerous challenges restricting the



practice of public engagement within academia, individual faculty need to be motivated by some external factors and intrinsic goals and values in order to overcome these challenges and pursue a publicly engaged scholarship. Based on Ford's (1992) motivational systems theory, "motivation" is seen as a culmination of personal and departmental goals and values supportive of public engagement, of positive beliefs about one's own capabilities and of the nature of working context and emotional states concerning the practice of engaged scholarship. As depicted in figure 3.2, the academic operates with a conceptual schema (BES) that aligns with engaged scholarship when personal characteristics, goals and emotions coincide with opportunities within the surroundings that make engagement a feasible and rewarding endeavor.

To identify values and beliefs supportive of public engagement, respondents were first asked to define the ideal role of the sociologist, state whether their required roles matched with their definition of the ideal role of the sociologist and indicate if they believed they are sociologists. These questions served as a means to identify whether their personal definition of the sociological practice captures any ideas that favor public engagement. Given that social goals (in this case roles defined by the institution and other functions expected of them by the society in which they work) must become internalized as personal goals and made part and parcel of an individual's daily conceptual framework (Colbeck 2008; Ford 1992), a professional identity (self-concept) that entails an acceptance for public engagement has the capacity to influence the likelihood to adopt a scholarship that values community engagement. Therefore, to ascertain whether public engagement is a personal goal, respondents listed personal goals they had outlined for themselves for the next five years. The presence of goals that required community engagement provided an

indication of whether they had interest in and valued community engagement. Although there was no specific question on why community engagement is a personal goal or need, respondents listed what they expect to be the usefulness of their research, involvement with community groups and organizations. In addition, their answer to the question of whether they felt comfortable with public engagement in their current positions.

Concerning the place of the institution and/or the department in public engagement, participants had to illustrate ways through which they felt the academic department provided formal support for community engagement. Questions pertaining to the presence of formal structures involved in rewarding, evaluating and generally supporting community engagement were raised. While institutional support is important, positive perceptions about the existence of social support and receptivity as well as the availability of grants all add up to constitute context beliefs that have the capacity to motivate faculty for public engagement endeavors.

Regarding the emotions of participants concerning community engagement, their responses on the following issues showed whether they were very interested in public engagement, discouraged, indifferent, enthusiastic or doubtful, about the feasibility of its practice and the attainment of its associated benefits. One measure, faculty's perceptions about the expectations and the response of the general public, i.e. whether their expertise and interaction is highly valued or welcome and whether the public is forthcoming in establishing working relationships with them, provided a hint as to whether faculty saw a potential in community engagement and were encouraged/optimistic about its pursuit or were discouraged. In addition, the views of participants as to whether it is appropriate for sociologists to be directly involved with civil society groups by following up on the utility

of their research findings, sharing their expertise on various platforms outside the academy (especially the media) plus their willingness to adopt community-based approaches in teaching and research was used as an indication of their true reactions (or sentiments concerning) to the idea of community engagement. Participants were also asked to explain whether or not they were comfortable with community engagement. Not only does their comfortability with public engagement give an idea of confidence in their capability, it also shows whether they are at ease with its practice, happy, anxious or hesitant

#### *Ensuring validity and reliability*

For a qualitative case study that centers on a small number of respondents, it is important to ensure that the findings and conclusions made by the study are logical and acceptable. Validity of findings are dependent on whether the researcher uses measurement indicators that capture exactly what the researcher intends to measure and whether the researcher gathers information from the right population associated with the research objectives (Wolfer 2007). The effectiveness of the indicators used in adequately measuring concepts is also important in determining the validity of findings (Bamberger et al. 2012: Wolfer 2007; Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy 2011). Bamberger et al. (2012) emphasize that the research design and implementation could influence the credibility of research findings.

With the major objective of understanding the practice of engaged scholarship (and the minor objective of predicting the feasibility of public sociology) the survey was answered solely by respondents considered as sociologists, who are also academics

actively working in a university. Secondly, to ensure that the constructs and indicators used in the data collection instrument adequately capture the essential aspects of the what the researcher intends to measure, literature on the topics of the scholarship of engagement and public sociology was extensively reviewed in order to understand the various dimensions on the topic and to derive the various indicators used in developing the data collection instrument. The literature reviewed also resulted in the decision of the researcher to review documents that throw more light on the context within which respondents function in their capacity as academics. Several of the studies examined insinuated that engaged scholarship only thrives in environments where there are formal support structures for it. Hence, the researcher solicited information on the formal frameworks surrounding the work of respondents, not only from the respondents but also from documents of agencies that have influence on how they conduct their work as academics. This is because researchers can validate their findings and draw stronger and more credible conclusions by using the method of triangulation (Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy 2011; Creswell and Clark 2007).

In addition, to safeguard the validity of interpretations, it was important to first ensure that the researcher and the respondents had similar interpretations of the constructs used in the questionnaire (Bamberger et al. 2012). For instance, concerning how the three facets of academic scholarship are related to community engagement and the prioritization of goals and tasks, the use of multiple questions provided clarity and credence to information being provided by participants. In addition, the content analysis of documents generated a great deal of information that was used in verifying the information provided by respondents.

### *Data Analysis*

Due to the numerous open-ended questions, the responses in the individual questionnaires were typed out in separate Microsoft word documents. No qualitative data analysis or reduction software was employed in coding the data. Rather, an excel spreadsheet was used with the intention of acquiring a pictorial view of all the responses pertaining to each individual question. The surveys that were sent out had questions already categorized under major subject areas. Therefore, responses pertaining to each major category were transferred into separate tables in Microsoft word which provided a quick view of the differing themes pertaining to each question. Thematic coding was easy at this stage because the major themes could easily be identified within the tables. An initial write-up of the research findings was generated and questions serving similar purposes (pertaining to singular issues) were grouped together. Findings were then discussed in relation to information deduced from the content analysis of documents and contrasted with information from the literature that was reviewed. Demographic data is presented in charts and tables. A few diagrams were used in presenting the organizational structure of the institution and demonstrating the position of engaged scholarship within the functioning of the academic department. For qualitative research, Hesse-Biber, Nagy and Leavy (2012) are of the view that subjecting one's research conclusions to competing claims and interpretations and providing one's audience with strong arguments for one's conclusions is the way in which validity of research findings are ensured. Therefore, in the discussion of research findings, the researcher contrasts her findings with literature and the theoretical framework that shaped the study to draw arguments on the influence of contextual variables

and personal beliefs on the practice of engaged scholarship in a country where the discipline of sociology is relatively young.

### *Delimitations*

Although this study was intended to provide an in-depth understanding of factors associated with engaged scholarship, it is limited in its ability to do so based on the following reasons:

*a.* To provide a comprehensive view, administrators and extension officers in charge of funding and supporting research and outreach on UCC campus could have been interviewed to find out if there were any measures put in place to encourage university-community partnerships. This could have helped provide a broader view of all the stakeholders involved in determining the disposition of faculty towards public engagement. However, this step was not included because of time and financial constraints. Also, this research only provides preliminary information about the general issues associated with the practice of engaged scholarship.

*b.* Although participants were asked how public engagement benefits their scholarship and the communities involved, they should have been specifically asked whether their engagement with the communities translates into peer review articles and other products that benefit the rest of the academic community and count towards tenure. Participants mentioned that public engagement impacted their teaching and research but it is difficult to ascertain whether their involvement

with communities had the dual purpose of enriching their scholarship while inspiring some sort of social change.

*c.* The instrument for data collection (questionnaire) may have limited the ability of faculty to provide the in-depth information that was initially intended. A face-to face interview would have provided opportunities for probing the responses of respondents and helped to elicit more information on the peculiar conditions of individual respondents. Again, the numerous open-ended questions may have made filling out the questionnaire a daunting task. As such respondents mostly provided only brief responses to each question.

*d.* This study considers the practice of engaged scholarship only among sociologists within UCC. Although faculty in the physical sciences (and other disciplines) may be affected by similar conditions/challenges confronting the sociologists who participated in this study, the generalizability of the findings of this research must be limited to only sociologists. This limitation is because the acquisition of grants and resources for public engagement is dependent on the purpose of the project and the drive of the individual faculty and/or department to create awareness on its importance among other factors. In addition, the review of the STI policy showed that little attention is paid to social science research compared to the physical sciences.

In the next two chapters, findings from the research are presented. Chapter Five presents findings on constraints and contexts of institutional and national policy for the faculty in this study. Chapter Six presents findings from individual faculty through analysis of survey content.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS I: ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORKING CONTEXT OF PARTICIPANTS

Given that engaged scholarship requires institutions to operate with an outlook (research agendas, policies and programs) that is directly in-line with national and continental socio-economic development goals (Boyer 1996), the enactment of national policies, institutions and networks that enhance university community partnerships is critical (Kruss 2012; AU 2005). According to Lazarus et al. (2008), the 1997 South Africa White Paper on the development of IHES motivated the establishment of networks such as CHESP; a platform that encouraged many higher education institutions to enact institutional policies and guidelines for public community engagement. Douglas (2012) also mentions organizations in Australia involved in advancing efforts towards the development of standards for the evaluation of public engagement efforts within academia. Based on the arguments presented by Douglas (2012) and Lazarus et al. (2008), research on faculty community engagement must also take into consideration the impact of national policies that guide the manner within which an institution (in this case UCC) is expected to expand its boundaries to accommodate community engagement practices (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008).

This chapter is dedicated to the examination of the national and institutional context within which the sociologists who participated in this study work. Specifically, its main objective is to identify the level of national and institutional support geared towards the growth of engaged scholarship. Since universities in Ghana are overseen by the Ministry



of Education (MOE) and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), the MOE and NCTE websites were searched for policy documents on university-community engagement. Unfortunately, these searches did not produce any specific policy document dedicated exclusively to research and community engagement in the higher education sector. However, the MOE's strategic plan for the years 2010-2020 had portions dedicated to the development of universities and tertiary institutions.

In addition, the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (NSTI policy) which was stipulated by the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) was reviewed. Both MOE and MESTI consider universities as key players in scientific research, innovation and knowledge development. Given that (MESTI) was initially part of MOE, the NSTI was reviewed because its policies were directed towards the encouragement of scientific research across all sectors of the economy (and/or disciplines). The NSTI policy also seeks to encourage university-community/industry partnerships for socio-economic progress stemming from scientific research. As such, both the MOE strategic plan for 2010-2020 and the NSTI policy touched on measures that have the potential to boost research and community engagement in universities.

On the institutional front, the 2012 UCC statutes are also reviewed in this section because academics are motivated to pursue engaged scholarship when community engagement is recognized and rewarded or included in the criteria towards tenure or promotion (Miller 2011; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Simpson and Seibold 2008; Colbeck and Wharton Michael 2006; Sandman et al. 2000). This statutory document stipulates the official job description of faculty at UCC. It also specifies the requirements for employment, tenure and promotion

as well as the institution's mission, vision and corporate objectives. In order to identify the institution's stance on community engagement and the level of emphasis laid on its pursuit in UCC, this review looks at how community engagement efforts are positioned in the criteria for employment and promotion, i.e., whether it is recognized and rewarded in the institution. Also, the institution's vision and mission statements are examined to identify whether the institution has declared a strong determination towards increasing their relevance in the Ghanaian society (and beyond) through public engagement. The UCC Statutes enacted in the year 2012 also helped to identify whether public engagement is part of the conditions for promotion and tenure and is a stipulated function for the employment of new faculty. Questions this review seeks to answer include:

- How is social research emphasized in the NSTI and MOE Strategic Plan?
- How is community engagement (and engaged scholarship) addressed within these two policy documents?

*The National Context:*

*Issues Associated with Research Funding and Growth of the Academy in Ghana*

To meet the demands of the growing knowledge economy, and the changing needs of Ghanaian society, universities in Ghana are increasingly turning their attention towards boosting research productivity, which has become one of the most important measures of their relevance (UNCTAD 2011; Manuh et al. 2006). However, efforts to equip universities with world-class facilities and to create an effective working environment for both students and faculty have been impeded by several factors. These include:

inadequately qualified staff and/or faculty; heavy reliance on government and external donors for funding; deteriorating infrastructure; weak leadership and governance; and an inefficient coordination among stakeholders within the higher education sector and auxiliary sectors of the economy (UNCTAD 2011; Jowi et al. 2013).

Manuh et al. (2006) argue that the existing shortage of research and academic staff in public universities in Ghana has led to large student to teacher ratios and heavy teaching loads that further restrict the time available to pursue other facets of scholarship. Also, the National Council for Tertiary Education reports that the ratio of researchers to citizens is 17 researchers per million inhabitants (NCTE 2013). This shortage of academics and researchers in public universities has been attributed to the phenomenon of “brain drain” (Manuh et al. Tettey 2006). Earlier, in the 1980s and early 1990’s, the government provided scholarships for outstanding students to pursue graduate studies in developed countries. The students were to return and take up teaching and research positions within Ghanaian universities and public research institutions. However, many of these students did not return and as a result, the gap between the needed academic staff and the existing number of staff widened even further as existing staff retired. Similarly, the absence of facilities and less attractive remuneration packages leaves many Ghanaian professionals (and academics) with no choice but to turn to other countries to pursue their careers, enrollments and retention of students in postgraduate programs (especially at the Ph.D. level) is lowered due to the shortage of highly skilled and experienced academic staff to train the next generation of experts (Manuh et al. 2006; Tettey 2006).

In reviewing Ghana’s Research and Development (R&D) system, UNCTAD (2011) suggests that the national budgetary allocation for research and technological

innovation is woefully inadequate (UNCTAD 2011). Meanwhile, given that public universities in Ghana cannot charge nationals tuition fees, the majority of the monetary resources needed by universities are provided by government). Staff in universities are mainly dependent on the “Book and Research Allowance” paid annually by government from the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) (Tettey 2006). However, these funds are inadequate and not paid promptly (Jowi et al. 2013; UNCTAD 2011; Manuh et al. 2006; NCTE, 2001). Additional funding for research is acquired from local and international agencies through the efforts of individual faculty. Partnerships with colleagues both within and outside Ghana also bring with them opportunities for the acquisition of sponsorships for research (Jowi et al. 2013; UNCTAD2011; Tettey 2006).

### *Policy*

A quick perusal of the MOE’s policies (which spells out strategies, objectives and financial plans) for the education sector and the National STI policy suggests a commitment towards the expansion of infrastructure and resources needed to increase research productivity within the nation. MOE’s policies are geared towards strengthening the systems of accountability in the tertiary education sector, supporting programs and research activities which are relevant to national development plans and processes by promoting the growth of stronger relationships and networks between universities and the various sectors of the economy. Another major concern to the MOE is to encourage initiatives that will make research information (outcomes especially) and knowledge accessible to the populace who need it (Government of Ghana, Education Strategic Plan

2010-2020). The main thrusts of the Ministry of Education's strategic plan for the development of research and engagement in the tertiary education sector are as follows:

- i.* Support collaboration between tertiary education institutions, business and commerce, and international and local educational institutions
- ii.* Facilitate research and postgraduate education
- iii.* Facilitate quality and excellence in tertiary education
- iv.* Build capacity in tertiary level governance, planning and management
- v.* Procure additional funding for tertiary education by increasing private sector involvement in the tertiary sub sector
- vi.* Promote science and technology education
- vii.* Support national development priority areas in tertiary education (Government of Ghana Education Strategic Plan 2010: 19)

Basically, the MOE hopes that its strategies will yield a tertiary education sector that is strongly in tune with national (and community) development issues. The MOE does not use the terms public/community engagement. Yet, its stipulations support the practice of engaged scholarship because:

- It encourages universities to get involved in research that is in tune with the developmental goals of communities
- It urges universities to build meaningful partnerships with both private and public, local and international agencies and societies
- It advocates for the dissemination of research knowledge on platforms that are accessible to a wider section of the public.

Similarly, the NSTI policy mentions the importance of partnerships in research development. Collaborations with stakeholders both within and outside Ghana are listed as a method of boosting research productivity and usability. Specifically highlighted are the interrelationships between the various disciplines and how these relationships, when translated into interdisciplinary research, can produce outcomes that will be meaningful to

social actors at different levels and sectors of the economy. The NSTI policy demonstrates intentions to encourage the growth of spaces where researchers from various disciplines interact for increased research productivity:

- a) Synergy: Science, technology and innovation development and application must be holistic; there must be a multi-disciplinary and cross-sectorial approach to problem-solving for synergy; and Partnerships: There must be conscious efforts for collaboration and interaction with all local and foreign stakeholders as partners (NSTI: 18).
- b) New approaches to education and training shall be developed to equip researchers to work more effectively in an innovative manner. This will require new curricula and training programmes that are comprehensive, holistic and flexible rather than being narrowly discipline-based. Education and training in an innovative and competitive society should not trap people within constraining specializations, but enable them to participate and adopt a problem-solving approach to social and economic issues within and across disciplinary boundaries.” (ibid.: 35)

The STI Policy aims at promoting a culture of science, technology and innovation through public and private awareness campaigns and the development of an information system that enhances the scientific thinking of Ghanaians in their everyday lives. It advocates for the dissemination of research information and scientific knowledge on media platforms that are accessible to the wider public (NSTI 2010). By bringing scientific knowledge to the doorsteps of the population, it is expected that the citizenry will be equipped with scientific knowledge that will deepen their critical thinking skills:

It would promote and support STI literacy programmes to facilitate the adoption and application of science and technology (NSTI 2010:25).

Ghana intends to migrate from the low science and technology-poor practices and worldview associated with tradition-bound society to an STI and knowledge-based society with an economy based on high levels of production, processing, industrialization and manufacturing (NSTI 2010:16).

Principally, the policy advocates for all research to be based on the ultimate objective of advancing the developmental goals of Ghana. A look through the document shows the emphasis on the use of scientific knowledge and innovation for the development of health, energy, agriculture, trade, and industry and information technology sectors. Key statements of the STI Policy demonstrating a focus on the use of science to boost economic productivity include:

Develop capacities to create jobs and wealth.

Investments in STI capacities to be both demand and market-driven (NSTI: 18)

Promote the research and application of new technologies including safe biotechnology, which hold potential for increasing productivity; Strengthen the production of non-traditional export commodities to enhance the diversification of the economy; Strengthen the linkage between research and agricultural extension (NSTI 2010:21).

Facilitate efforts to acquire and adapt sustainable safe and economical energy technologies for national development (Ibid:23).

Integrate environmental concerns in all development policies and ensure public understanding of the scientific basis of their actions on the environment (Ibid:26).

While emphasis is laid on boosting productivity and consequently raising the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the NSTI stresses the importance of the adoption of research objectives that are attainable given the socio-economic conditions of the Ghanaian society. As a guiding principle, the NSTI admonishes all funding agencies (research endeavors in general) to take into consideration the cultural norms and the social, political and economic conditions of the Ghanaian society. Essentially, NSTI hopes to encourage the culture of research that is rooted in indigenous knowledge systems (an actual representation of local issues and concerns) and aims at providing applicable solutions within the Ghanaian context, that is, the use of science, technology and innovation to

provide information and products that can be easily integrated or adopted by the concerned publics:

Thus the sound application of scientific and technological know-how to effect positive changes have to take into consideration cultural norms and the total world view of the people who would be the users of the new technologies. Innovation therefore connotes these sometimes complex interactions of science, technology and the socio-cultural milieu whose definition and characterization require more than the skills of scientists, engineers and technologists and the advances which come from their insights (National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy [NSTI Policy]:11).

Implications of MOE (2010-2020) policy and NSTI policy on engaged scholarship:

With regards to engaged scholarship, the two policy documents reviewed did not explicitly declare any measures for boosting its growth. However, the guidelines for improving research in universities are in line with the basic characteristics of engaged scholarship. Universities are encouraged to undertake research that is founded on the objective of producing useful solutions to existing social, technological and economic difficulties. The NSTI specifically mentions the importance of research that takes into consideration the cultural norms and contextual elements of the Ghanaian society. Collaborations with communities, interdisciplinary groups, local/international groups organizations which is a feature of engaged scholarship, are also encouraged. Furthermore, an increased accessibility of scientific knowledge and research is a major priority area touched on by the NSTI and the MOE strategic plan. Essentially, the NSTI policy and the MOE strategic plan support engaged scholarship by advocating for the selection of context-relevant research priorities and the involvement of relevant (concerned) stakeholders in the process of research development and dissemination. Above all, the growth of the



knowledge economy (the increased production of knowledge based on scientific methods and the growth of a public that is informed by scientific knowledge) is the goal of the STI policy.

Inasmuch as the policy outlines strategies for boosting research productivity, a follow-up on the processes involved in the implementation of the outlined goals will be more useful in establishing its impact on scholarship. The NSTI policy seems to equate research with technological innovation produced through physical science research (for instance the transformation of raw agricultural products into biofuels or the invention of machines by engineers). Priority is given to the expansion of funds available for research in the physical sciences especially regarding the development of marketable technologies. Additionally, there is an appreciable number of strategies to increase the human resource capacity available for science and technological innovation. Hence, the Science Technology and Research Endowment Fund (STREFund) was specifically created to finance the development of science and technology. Consequently, the allocation of funds to the universities reflects this trend. In 2013, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) received 30% of the national budget allocated for the promotion of research; the University of Ghana and the University of Professional Studies, which are not mainly focused on technological research, were each allocated 10% of the budget for research (Jowi et al 2013). Statements from the MOE's strategic plan for the period of 2010-2020 and the 2010 NSTI confirm the belief that the physical sciences are privileged over other disciplines:

Ensure that by 2020, 60% of all students in the Universities and 80% in the Polytechnics and Vocational institutions are registered in science and technology-related disciplines. e. Provide special incentives for students and graduates of

Science and Technology (Government of Ghana, Education Strategic Plan 2010-2020: 16).

Allocation of 2% of the GETFund for bursaries and/or scholarships for needy tertiary students in pure and applied mathematics, science and technology (NSTI 2010:20).

Promote post-graduate education in scientific disciplines targeting 10% of the student population in tertiary educational institutions enrolling at the post-graduate level;

Create special incentives for students and graduates of science and technology;

Improve science education at all levels and in all aspects of the educational system, especially at the basic and secondary levels (NSTI 2010:22).

Even though the NSTI policy set up by MESTI considers universities as key stakeholders in the development of the nation's research capacity, state research institutions such as the Center for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and its affiliated research subunits and the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (which are state divisions directly monitored by MEST) are widely viewed as the outlets in charge of research development (NSTI 2010; Manuh et al. 2006). Ironically, the CSIR is the agency in charge of coordinating the operations of the STREFund which was set up as an independent funding mechanism. This situation creates an unequal playing field for academics in the universities who have to compete with state research institutions as competitors in terms of accessing research funding and opportunities. Academics in the social sciences are particularly at a disadvantage as MESTI's policies make little to no room for social research. Social scientists are only mentioned in relation to the conduct of studies pertaining to social dynamics concerning the development, use and impacts of scientific technologies. Although a cross section of social scientists were directly involved in the processes of drafting Ghana's NSTI policy (which is a major policy document on

research), little is said in the document concerning the improvement of research in the social sciences (NSTI 2011: 11).

It is in the context of the above that this Draft National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy was crafted for adoption. It has benefited from earlier documents and was reviewed by a cross section of the science and technology community including social scientists. Unlike previous documents the concept of innovation is strongly welded into the new framework of actions, policies and programmes to apply science and technology to achieve social and economic objectives (Ghana NSTI 2010:5).

In spite of the little attention given the social sciences in the NSTI policy, universities are increasingly establishing specific units dedicated to social science research and community engagement (Cloete et al. 2011). In a bid to be relevant and active in the social sphere, these subunits/ institutions are expected to engage in social research that is directly related to social policy interrogation. The University of Ghana established the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), which provides annual reports on the state of the Ghanaian economy, and the Center for Social Policy Studies (CPS). The University of Education-Winneba established the Center for Education Policy Analysis and Studies, and the University of Cape Coast also relies on its outlets such as the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and Center for Gender Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD) for policy engagement activities which are informed by scientific research. In addition, staff members from the universities work with state policy development agencies (Jowi et al. 2013; Cloete et al. 2011). However, Manuh et al. (2006) argue that most of the research and the policy engagement activities performed by the state policy agencies do not have any bearing on the teaching and research work of the academic. On the other hand, policy engagement units on the university campuses are able to establish

working relationships with academic departments in a manner that makes their work influential in teaching, learning and research (Manuh et al. 2006:71).

Despite the biases in the two national policy documents on research as outlined above, avenues such as the GETFund, the STREFund and the Book and Research allowance have been made available to all universities and academics to fund research that aligns with national development goals (Jowi et al. 2013; UNCTAD 2011; Tettey 2006). Individual universities are also persistently looking for additional sources of funds to finance and boost research and extension services (Cloete et al. 2011). However, dependence on external funding may forward national and donor research priorities over those of individual academic departments and the academics that work in them; this situation has both positive and adverse effects especially in relation to the attainment of a balanced development of knowledge and research in all academic spheres (Wright 2008).

#### *Sum of National Policy Context*

Improving the profitability of universities when it comes to teaching, research and public engagement has been discovered by stakeholders in the Ghanaian society as the sure way in which universities contribute towards development (NSTI 2010; Jowi et al. 2013; Tettey 2006). To ensure that universities operate efficiently and contribute their quota to development, efforts are being made by the state, the Ministry of Education (MOE), donor agencies and the universities themselves to boost research productivity, attract and sustain skilled personnel and enhance teaching and learning. However, although enhancing research productivity is a national priority, it is not equally applied to all disciplines and sectors of the economy. The MOE strategic plan and the NSTI policy are particularly

directed at the financial, human and physical capital available for physical science research and technological innovation.

In a review of the Ministry of Education (MOE)'s 2001 Strategic plan, Manuh et al. (2006) concluded that the policy is only a set of intentions because it does not take into consideration other conflicting policies that limit budgetary allocations directed at funding research in universities. Similarly, Jowi et al (2013) argue that the NCTE's criteria for disbursing funds for covering research expenditure is largely based on levels of student enrollment. The meagre resources obtained from the GETFund are thinly spread across all the research institutions and universities without careful considerations for the research agenda of those universities (and their academic departments) (UNCTAD 2011).

The next section summarizes the UCC working context. It identifies factors associated with the commitment of the institution towards engaged scholarship by reviewing the institution's mission and vision statements, stated objectives and functions. Here, the position of public engagement within the criteria for employment and promotion is identified. In addition, the characteristics of the two departments that were used for this study are described to provide the picture of the nature of their functioning.

## *Context of University of Cape Coast*

### *Mission and Functions of the University*

As part of efforts to produce the skilled labor force needed for the development of the nation after it had attained independence, the University of Cape Coast (UCC) was established in 1962 with the specific mandate to produce skilled personnel to work in the formal education sector (school system). One of its major objective functions is to train teachers for the many second cycle institutions which were being established across Ghana. Initially, the institution was a college affiliated to the University of Ghana. However, in 1971, UCC was upgraded to the status of a full independent university owing to the authorization of the University of Cape Coast Act 390 legislated by parliament. Despite its original mandate, the changing needs of the Ghanaian society and the educational sector as a whole have compelled UCC to progressively add other academic programs. Currently, the university provides degrees in the medical, agricultural, physical, and actuarial sciences as well as the business and law fields (University of Cape Coast 2014).

UCC's mission is to become a globally acclaimed institution that is strategically positioned to provide comprehensive, liberal and professional programs. The institution aims to provide an educational experience that will challenge its students to develop critical and independent thinking capabilities. One of its organizational goals is to create a conducive environment that will motivate its academic and administrative staff to work towards the strategic positioning of the university to effectively respond to the changing needs of the Ghanaian society and the world at large (University of Cape Coast 2014). To accomplish its mission, and to be able to remain vibrant within an expanding higher

education system in Ghana, the functions, objectives, and statutes are regularly reviewed and revised. So far, the functions and aims of the University of Cape Coast as outlined in its 2012 statutory document suggest that teaching and research are its main goals. The institution aims at creating the platform for the effective generation and dissemination of knowledge with particular emphasis on the conduct of research which concerns the pertinent needs and problems of the society- research that is situated within the Ghanaian and African context:

**STATUTE 2.1:** The aims of the University include:

- a) To train students in methods of critical and independent thought; making them aware of their responsibility to use their education for the general good of Ghanaian society; and
- b) To provide facilities for and engage in teaching and research for the purpose of promoting the advancement and dissemination of learning and knowledge with particular reference to the needs and aspirations of the people of Ghana and the furtherance of co-operation between African States (University of Cape Coast, Statutes 2012) \*emphasis is mine.

Not only does the institution encourage the conduct of research that enhances teaching and learning and contributes to knowledge within specific academic fields but it also prioritizes research that may particularly be of use to external entities, agencies or organizations. As such, individual academics or institutes and centers within the university are encouraged to undertake consultancy and outreach services. Outreach, which involves engagement with communities, local and international private or public agencies, is categorically stated as an institutional goal.

**Statute 5.4:** Consultancy services may be rendered by a Senior Member provided that:

- (a) Such projects are related to the research and teaching programmes of the various Faculties and Departments and regulated and controlled to ensure that there is no conflict between the private interests of a Senior Member and his or her official duties (University of Cape Coast, Statutes 2012).

**Statute 1:** Definition of terms-

“Centre” means an establishment headed by a Director which provides specialised services relating to or including the following: teaching for extension purposes or for the award of University degrees, diplomas or certificates; multi-disciplinary research; **advocacy or consultancy** (University of Cape Coast, Statutes 2012).

\*emphasis is mine.

**Statute 7.1:** The following shall be accepted as evidence of publications:

**iii.** Research/consultancy/technical reports.

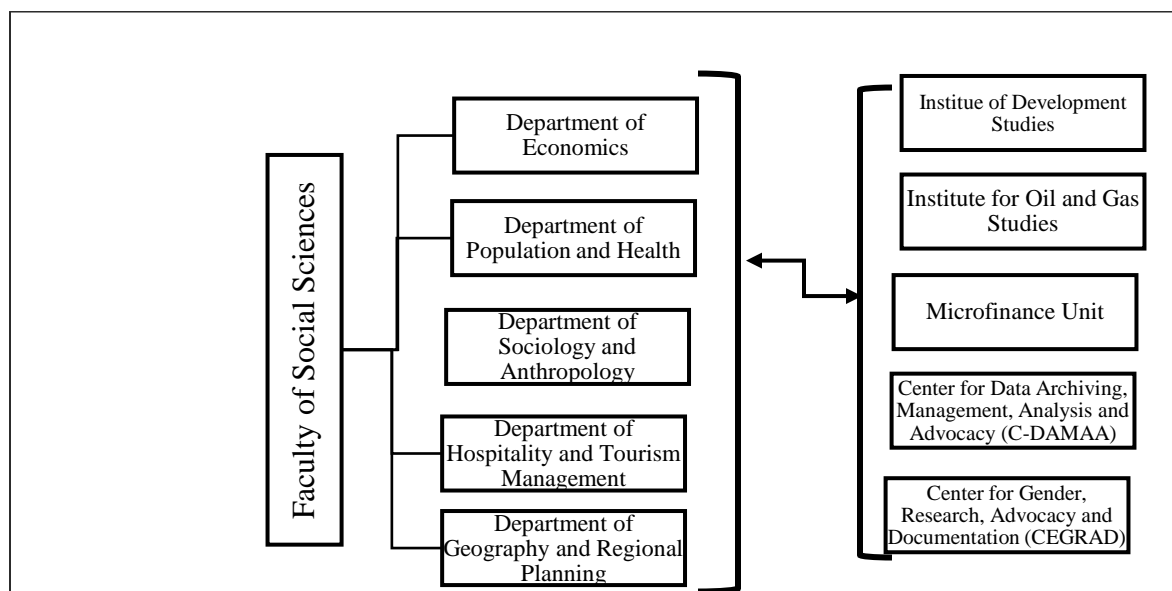
To this end, it can be concluded that the institution looks to have its faculty integrate research with teaching and learning and outreach activities (liaising with external entities and making research knowledge available) in meaningful ways that are beneficial to both the academic community and the general society. Statute 2.1 also spells out the importance of ensuring that the activities of the institution are in line with the contextual properties and needs of the local societies at large--a stipulation that can only be achieved when university actors liaise with stakeholders in the communities. Statute 5.4 emphasizes one of the major principles of engaged scholarship-which is that consultancy work must have a connection with academic scholarship (teaching and research within a specific discipline). Statute 1 (as quoted above) demonstrates the university’s interest in advocacy, inter-disciplinary research and consultancy work which are all activities characteristic of engaged scholarship. Furthermore, Statute 7.1 is an indication that engagement with extra academic groups when presented in consultancy reports and publications, qualifies to be considered in the criteria for tenure/promotion. Although the term “public engagement” is not used, the university’s goals suggest that its activities are to be conducted with considerations of the needs, culture and vision of the Ghanaian and African society at large.



### *Structure of the Academic System*

In the light of increasing demands for universities to participate in research and innovation, the university continues to establish specialized research centers and institutes to support the work of traditional academic departments. Although these institutes act as research and outreach units, they take on the added role of teaching, sometimes offering degrees and diplomas just like the traditional academic department. Yet, research, the provision of consultancy services, data archiving, outreach and advocacy are the expected functions of these emerging institutes. These specialized divisions, are usually directly affiliated to academic departments or a faculty. For the purposes of this study, the composition of Faculty of Social Sciences is examined with specific reference to the two departments used for this study: CEGRAD and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Figure 5.1. The Faculty of Social Sciences and its constituent departments/Units



As shown in Figure 5.1, the faculty of Social Sciences, which comprises academic departments such as the Department of Economics, Sociology and Anthropology,

Geography and Regional Planning, also houses specialized units such as the Center for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD), the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Institute for Oil and Gas Studies, the Microfinance Unit and the Center for Data Archiving, Management, Analysis and Advocacy (C-DAMAA). The addition of these “specialized units,” such as CEGRAD, comes in the wake of increased demands for social research in areas pertaining to emerging needs of the Ghanaian society as well as the academy itself. The urgent need to establish centers that conduct research, policy analysis and archive data on pertinent social developmental issues have necessitated the establishment of avenues such as CEGRAD which do not only contribute to the research functions of the academy but also engage in outreach and the provision of intellectual services (consultancy, policy analysis, documentation of relevant data, etc.).

Although these specialized centers are autonomous entities which concern themselves mainly with research and its documentation, advocacy and other outreach services, they work closely with the traditional academic departments in conducting workshops, seminars and research projects, developing courses and exchanging teaching and administrative staff and sharing data where necessary. A search on the websites of CEGRAD, C-DAMAA and IDS indicate that these units liaise with the academic departments in order to procure audiences and resource persons when it comes to the organization of seminars and workshops. Academic staff members from the sociology department were sometimes speakers (co-organizers) at the seminars organized by CEGRAD. CEGRAD and C-DAMAA separately organized workshops to train graduate students, research fellows and the entire academic community on gender-related issues and techniques of data procurement and analysis.

Based on their stipulated mandates, these centers and institutes are expected to also support the traditional academic departments by providing them with guidance in the development and review of curricular for academic programs and courses which concern their area of expertise. For instance, in as much as CEGRAD is expected to be a center for policy, research and advocacy on issues pertaining to gender policy in the Ghanaian society, it also focuses on ensuring that UCC uses gender sensitive policies in matters relating to teaching and learning, research, and the administration of its encompassing units. Its mission statement demonstrates its objective to influence gender practices both within and outside the academy: “To engage in theory and practice to position UCC as a leader for the attainment of gender equality and women’s rights within the academy and beyond” (CEGRAD 2014)

Also one of its research priorities is to: Conduct periodic gender audit of University programmes and activities with a critical gender perspective Generate and disseminate information on gender dynamics at UCC to key stakeholders. (CEGRAD 2014)

As its official mandate, CEGRAD is expected to:

- Operate as a research, advocacy and documentation focal point on Gender and Women Studies
- Provide assistance for the development of a gender policy and ensure adherence to gender sensitivity in the university wide policy and programme.
- Support faculties, schools and Institutes to engender their taught programmes and teaching approaches
- Offer a framework for monitoring adherence to gender sensitivity in policy-making and for feedback on effort at promoting gender equality at UCC (CEGRAD 2014)

The establishment of research institutes which may be conceived as the wing of the academic department, faculty or university that is directly involved in performing the

research and service function of the academy does not imply that the traditional academic is relieved of his roles of engaging in research and service to the community. An evaluation of the performance of the traditional academic remains grounded in all three areas (Statute 6.3.2. UCC Statute 2012). Apart from teaching and engaging in academic research projects for publication, academic staff are also allowed to engage in the provision of consultancy services to external organizations and agencies. In cases where staff take on consultancy services (and other subcontracting jobs), they are required to obtain approval from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and also report the nature, outcomes and monetary benefits of such projects, in addition to providing evidence that such work does not disrupt the performance of their stipulated duties. Furthermore, lecturers have to pay commissions to the university in order to undertake such projects. Most importantly, research conducted for any entity outside the academy is required to be in direct relation to the established research and teaching agenda of the faculty, center or the individual academic engaging in such activities.

In essence the changing demands of the academy in Ghana and the quest to contribute to the socio-economic development of the Ghanaian society have necessitated the expansion and diversification of academic programs and departments within the University of Cape Coast. In UCC, the agglomeration of academically related departments and the establishment of complementary units constitute efforts aimed at effectively accomplishing the research, teaching and outreach functions of the academy. That is, the establishment of centers, such as CEGRAD, is an indication of the operationalization of the outreach component of UCC's mission.

**Statute 1:** Definition of terms-

“Centre” means an establishment headed by a Director which provides specialized services relating to or including the following: teaching for extension purposes or for the award of University degrees, diplomas or certificates; multi-disciplinary research; **advocacy or consultancy** (University of Cape Coast, Statutes 2012).  
\*emphasis is mine

Increased recognition and expansion of operations to include engagement activities such as outreach, advocacy, dissemination of research information and the provision of consultancies are processes geared towards engraining community engagement in the universities activities. For academic faculty, the requirement that paid consultancies must be in direct relation to one’s academic discipline/ research and teaching specialization is an indication of the value placed on engaged scholarship, given that engaged scholarship involves interrelationships between all research endeavors, community engagement activities and teaching and learning.

*Modalities for Promotion and Ranking of Academic and Non-Academic Staff*

In applying for a position in the academic department or research institute; a candidate may qualify to occupy any of the five major ranks depending mainly on his/her work experience and the number of published works. The candidate could apply for the position of a professor (which is the highest rank), associate professor, Senior lecturer or Research Fellow, Lecturer or Research Fellow or Assistant Lecturer/ Assistant Research Fellow. An applicant who is seeking to be employed at the rank of a Lecturer or any position higher than that is expected to fulfill the following requirements:

- i. Possess a PhD in the relevant field/specialization
- i. Have teaching/research experience preferably from a tertiary institution
- ii. Provide evidence of publications (UCC Statute 2012:2.2-2.4)

The number of publications required for employment increases or decreases based on the rank which the applicant seeks to occupy. A candidate seeking to be employed as a Senior Lecturer needs four (4) years teaching/research experience from an institution of higher learning and at least five refereed publications in his area of specialization. On the other hand, evidence of publication is only an added advantage for an applicant seeking to occupy the position of a Lecturer. Candidates without PhDs (and with/ without publications) may only apply to be placed in the rank of Assistant Lecturer/Assistant Research Fellow. Interestingly, employment as a full time lecturer/instructor or professor requires that the individual academic may not engage in any other meaningful employment outside the university except with an approval from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor (Statute 5.3, UCC Statute 2012).

A percentage score is allocated to the performance of applicants on three key indicators: the quality of their publications, teaching and service to the community (which entails involvement in activities within and outside the community).

Service to the Community shall include: Contributions to the University community; the Local, National and International communities other than one's Schedule of Duties. (Statute 13.6.4 [P. 115]; Statute 13.5.4[P.113], UCC Statute 2012)

The grade associated to the key performance indicators are as follows:

- i.* Teaching in the academic department (Graded on a scale from “excellent” to “Poor”)- 35%
- ii.* Service to the community (Graded on a scale from “Very active” to “less active”) - 15%
- iii.* Publications (grade scaled down to 50% after external assessors have assigned a percentage grade)- 50% (Statute 6, UCC Statute 2012)

In all, applicants are expected to score at least a B on their total percentage score in order to be promoted. For the publications submitted for consideration, a group of external

assessors nominated by the Dean of the Faculty and the Head of Department and approved by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor are contracted to evaluate the academic standing and relevance of the publications submitted. Again, the number of publications required for promotion increases as one climbs the hierarchical system. In order for a Lecturer to be promoted to the position of a Senior Lecturer, he or she should have at least five publications. To become an Associate Professor, an academic is supposed to have at least seven publications after his last promotion to the rank of a Senior Lecturer. In the same vein, an Associate Professor must have at least twenty publications to his credit to become a Professor, at least eight of which were acquired after becoming an Associate Professor. For staff in research departments and institutes, the minimum number of publications required for publication is one and half (1.5) times that required for teaching staff (Statute 6.6).

As per the definition provided by the 2012 UCC Statutes, publications include:

- i.* Books and parts of books published or evidence of acceptance for publications.
- ii.* Articles in scholarly/refereed journals.
- iii.* Research/consultancy/technical reports. (Statute 7.1-7.4, UCC Statute 2012)

However, the statutes categorically emphasize that in the assessment of publications, preference is to be given to refereed publications (Statute 7.1.1). Non-refereed publications, such as peer- reviewed technical reports and commissioned reports from institutes, centers, multilateral agencies (e.g. UN System), bilateral agencies (e.g. DFID, USAID, DANIDA) and other local and international organizations (e.g. PPAG, Care, Plan Ghana), are awarded only two out of the three points allotted to publications. Also, papers published as conference proceedings are awarded only one point if not refereed (UCC Statute 7.1.2).

One conclusion that can be drawn from a careful study of the 2012 UCC statutes is the emphasis laid on the definition, categorization and value of publications which are seen as products of research (whether academic or applied research). Without an acceptable number of publications, the application for promotion is not likely to be processed. Furthermore, publications carry fifty percent (50%) of the total score for promotion. Teaching, which is also one of the major roles assigned the traditional academic, is the second valued item on the criteria for promotion. With a quality assurance unit which engages in the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of teaching staff, teaching seems to be another area of importance to the university as it constitutes 35% of the total score for promotion. Lastly, service to the community which involves participation in activities within and outside the university community constitutes 15% of the total marks for promotion. Compared to the numerous expositions on the criteria for grading publications, less emphasis is laid on defining which activities qualify to be counted as “community service” and which activities do not.

#### *Summary of University Policies*

This review of UCC’s mission statements and statutes suggests that excellence in teaching and research are the major goals of the institution. In the UCC context, teaching and research are expected to be in line with the promotion of national development. UCC’s teaching and research staff are to be involved in research that is focused on providing answers to issues of national relevance. The university hopes to be at the forefront of the production and dissemination of knowledge to not only students and the academic community but to extra-academic audiences who may need such knowledge. By constantly restructuring its operations in order to accomplish its goals and keep up with the dynamic



knowledge economy, the institution has opened up specialized research, data archiving and outreach units. As institutes in charge of research, consultancies and outreach, CEGRAD and the other centers have been involved in collaborations with the traditional academic departments for the organization of seminars, the development of curricula and teaching and research. Overall, this analysis shows that the institution makes room for engaged scholarship through the following means:

- By requiring faculty to be engaged in service to the community (and consultancies) (UCC Statute 6.3.2 [P. 89]) that are related to their teaching and research areas (and associated disciplines) (Statute 5.4 iii [P.113])
- including community service/engagement in the criteria for tenure (Statute 6.7.1, UCC Statute 2012)
- setting up units that are required to connect research with outreach, advocacy, policy building and other community engagement endeavors (Statute 7.1, UCC Statute 2012)
- encouraging collaborations between staff of traditional academic departments and those in the research units for curricula development, research, community engagement, data exchange and so on (Statute 5.4, UCC Statute 2012).

To the casual observer, the aforementioned factors are enough evidence that UCC encourages engaged scholarship and therefore its faculty should be able to pursue community engagement without much hindrance. On one hand, the institutional statutes suggest that its faculty must connect the three facets of their work (eg. by requiring that consultancies and contract research must specifically be aligned with one's research

specialization). But UCC's aims as shown in Statute 2 and 3 (below) indicate that teaching and research are its main functions. Furthermore, the criteria for promotion and contract renewal split the three traditional functions into separate components and places emphasis on two of them. Teaching and research cover 85% of the score for promotion. In addition, emphasis is particularly laid on the production of evidence of publications at every stage of the evaluation criteria for career advancement.

- Statute 3: The University shall provide instruction and undertake research for the advancement of knowledge in such branches of learning and study for persons whether members of the University or not and in such manner as it shall determine; except that the University shall give emphasis to the preparation of teachers both graduates and non-graduates for secondary schools, teacher training colleges, polytechnics and technical institutions as well as the training and retraining of such specialized personnel as may be required for the effective provision of education service in the country (Statute 3, UCC Statute 2012)

Although service to the community is a requirement for promotion of academic faculty, it is mentioned as a distinct endeavor (from research and teaching) and not given enough weight in the evaluation scheme. Whilst engaged scholarship cannot be equated to service to the community (Kruss 2012; Stanton 2007; Barker 2004), it requires the use of community-based participatory approaches, a social-justice epistemology and a research design that has the dual purpose of producing measurable benefits or service (whether enlightenment on issues, skill or physical product) to communities and also translates into valuable knowledge for both the academy and the involved community (Nilson et al. 2014).

Undeniably, research could take in community engagement and service. But research can still be carried out with minimal or no participation from communities. By separating research from community service and making research and publication the major criteria for promotion and contract renewal, the academic is more likely to focus

his/her efforts towards research and publication. Activities that are supposed to be of direct benefit to the community are more likely to be placed in the “service” category. Consequently, given that “service” only takes on a smaller percentage (15%) of the score for promotion, academics are less likely to be motivated towards its pursuit. All in all, UCC places premium on the quality of teaching and research and the number of publications its academic staff are able to produce. Therefore, teaching, research and publication are the major means to professional advancement for its faculty. Clearly, this situation supports Colbeck and Wharton-Michael (2006) argument that service to the community is usually not an important consideration for the attainment of tenure. Consequently, to meet UCC’s organizational goals (social goal) and to advance in one’s academic career (as a personal goal), faculty are more likely to be left with no choice but to focus on research and publication and teaching.

UCC’s objectives and criteria for evaluating academic staff favors the professional sociology model as it confines the academic to the classroom, requires the academic to focus on teaching, research and publication. Although participants in this study are from two different departments, they are concerned about similar issues (issues of sociological significance) and are affected by the same institutional requirements. In fact, staff members of CEGRAD, a unit that is designated to community engagement activities such as outreach, advocacy, policy review, consultancy and research, are referred to as “research fellows” (as stated in the 2012 Statutes), and are also under immense pressure to publish in peer-reviewed journals. They are required to provide 50% more publications than the traditional academic (or sociologists). Hence, there is the possibility that staff of a unit that is expected to be largely focused on engagement projects such as outreach, advocacy,

collaborative research, etc. are likely to turn towards research projects where communities only provide data that is immediately translatable into publications.

*Conclusion:*

This review of institutional and national policies presents a picture of the context within which participants of this study work and its implications for the pursuit of engaged scholarship. Drawing from Motivational Systems Theory (MST), the motivation to pursue community engagement endeavors and adopt an engaged scholarship approach to work is a result of an individual's beliefs concerning his own abilities, emotions, goals and the nature of his working environment (whether it provides the needed resources and support or not). Apart from possessing the necessary knowledge and skills, the zeal to pursue public engagement is an outcome of the perception that the needed resources for goal accomplishment can be afforded by the social organization within which they work (Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Ford 1992). Specifically, academics are much likely to undertake engaged scholarship when there is a supportive policy framework in place, avenues to access funding and social support and most importantly when the institution they work for recognizes and rewards community engagement (Kruss 2012; de Lange 2012; Lazarus et al. 2008; Colbeck and Weaver 2008; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006; Simpson and Seibold 2008; Boyer 1996). However, participants of this study are faced with the following conditions that have the potential to hinder the integration of community engagement in academic scholarship.

First, the governing bodies for the higher education sector and UCC itself have not instituted any detailed policy for university-community partnerships. Although, the need

for increased partnerships between the university and extra-academic communities can be inferred from the MOE and the NSTI Policy as well as the UCC statutes and mission statement, measures to specifically boost the incorporation of community engagement into academic scholarship are not adequately outlined. So far, the NSTI policy and the MOE strategic plan seem to view research as the means through which academics can establish mutually-beneficial relationships with communities. The development of research particularly in the physical sciences is the main focus of these documents as they outline initiatives to boost research productivity. Meanwhile, the nation generally has a low research capacity (low human, physical and financial capital) and funding for research (and its associated public engagement activities) is generally inadequate.

According to Harkavy (2005), the mission (and objectives) of an institution determines its approach to community engagement. UCC specifies that teaching and research are its main functions. Therefore, increasing research productivity and especially publications are key objectives in the institutions functioning. Consequently, the conditions for attaining tenure and promotion are largely based on academic's teaching accomplishments and most importantly his/her research activities and their resultant publications. Interactions with communities in the manner that yields direct benefits to the community is categorized as community service and given little significance in the evaluation scheme for promotion. Given that career advancement is the sure way of survival in academia, the UCC faculty promotion scheme which venerates teaching, research and publication discourages faculty from community engagement activities. Faculty are more likely to prioritize the tasks that are more valued and rewarded by the institution in comparison to community engagement (which is very time consuming and

resource draining). Research, publication and teaching are most likely to be on the top of faculty's goal hierarchy. However, when engagement is connected to community service, teaching and research, the individual academic can accomplish other equally important tasks that count towards career advancement (which is both a personal and an institutional goal). That is, when community engagement activities are infused with the appropriate research methods that can be translated into knowledge which can also be beneficial to the academy (through publications and in teaching) the academic is able to meet both institutional, social and personal goals can be accomplished simultaneously (Colbeck and Wharton-Michael, Sandman et al. 2000). Based on Ford's (1992) emphasis of goal interconnectivity, it is expected that faculty will be motivated to undertake community engagement endeavors when an institution and its faculty begin to view community service, teaching, research, publication and community engagement as an integrated whole.

In the chapter that follows the actual responses of participants are presented. Next, a discussion of the implications of the findings in relation to existing literature and the information presented in this chapter are contrasted to create an overview of the practice of public engagement in the two departments used in this study.

## CHAPTER SIX

### FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

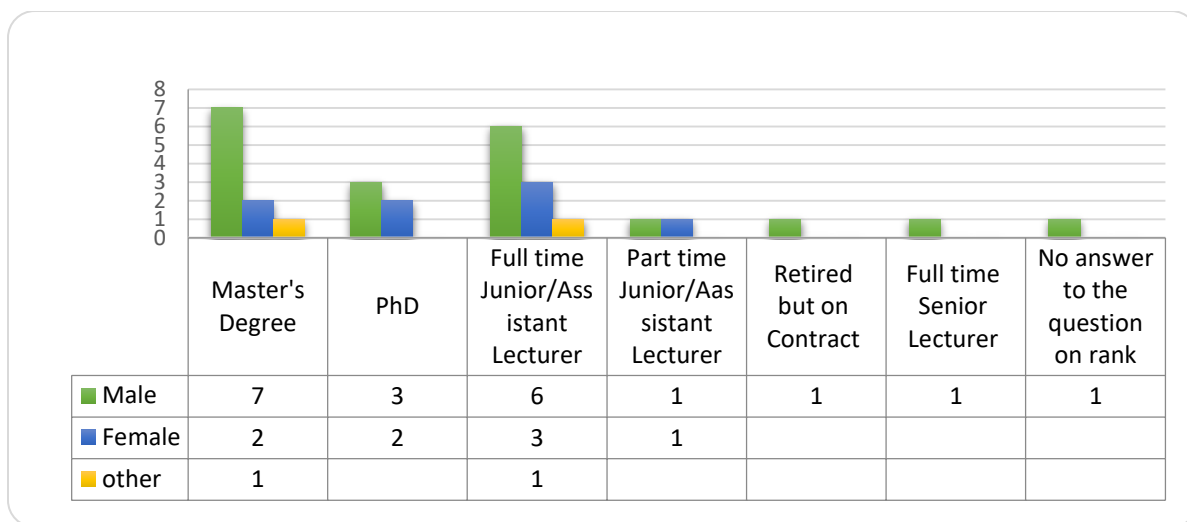
With the primary aim of acquiring a holistic view of factors influencing engaged scholarship, this chapter presents the findings of the study under four major themes. First, the characteristics of the individual academic or respondent are identified in order to interrogate the effects of factors, such as personal experiences, occupational status, professional identity, professional goals and interests on the ability of individual academics to develop an interest in engaged scholarship. Second, epistemological influences, ranging from the academic's research approach, perceptions about disciplinary, institutional and societal demands, are examined as a major theme in relation to their influence on the academic's ability to adopt a community-engaged approach to scholarship. Third, the different forms of community engagement manifested in the teaching, research and community service endeavors undertaken by the academics who participated in the study are described. Finally, the perceptions of respondents concerning the institutional environment within which they work as academics is assessed.

#### *Connections between individual attributes and engaged scholarship*

As noted in Chapter 4, out of the 19 respondents who were contacted to participate in the study, fifteen returned the questionnaire. With a response rate of 78.94%, the findings can be seen as representative of the two departments especially with all three staff from CEGRAD participating in the study. Ten out of the fifteen respondents were males and four of the participants were females. One person did not indicate his/her gender. Also, ten of the respondents indicated that they were full time junior/assistant lecturers, two were

part time junior/assistant lecturers, and only one person was a full time senior lecturer/professor. An additional respondent was retired, but was on contract to work with the university. One person declined to provide an answer to the question on his position in the department. Five of the respondents had Doctoral degrees while the remaining ten had Master’s degrees (see Fig. 4).

Figure 6.1. Demographic characteristics of respondents.



Apart from their general ranks within academia (either as junior or senior lecturers), respondents were asked to indicate the roles they play in the respective departments. All three personnel from CEGRAD indicated that they are a research team and are recognized by the faculty as research fellows. Four people from DSA indicated that they were members of research teams within the department. Five of the respondents were academic counselors, while another person is the DSA registration officer. One respondent was in charge of coordinating seminars and student internship programs and another was the coordinator of sandwich programs offered in the department. Three of the respondents



played several of these roles simultaneously. For instance, a respondent could be an academic counselor and a member of the research team at the same time.

To ascertain what their specific functions are, respondents were asked to indicate their roles as outlined in their contracts. Two of the junior lecturers indicated that they are mandated to engage in teaching and research only. Three junior lecturers indicated that their contract suggests that teaching, research and service to the university are their specified roles. Meanwhile, a mix of seven junior, senior and part-time lecturers suggested that, in addition to teaching, research and service to the university community, they are also expected as academics to provide professional services to other extra academic groups especially as it relates to their teaching and research. Staff of CEGRAD indicated that their mandate is to engage in research, as such all three of them selected only the research option reflecting their position as research fellows within their department.

*Influence of personal interests and work experiences on approach towards scholarship*

According to Ford's MST, human behavior is not only dictated by a person's context. It is also the outcome of personal interests and aspirations and is therefore highly idiosyncratic. Hence, an assessment of a person's core goals, interests, current concerns and wishes is very useful in understanding the constitution of a person's goals and actions (Ford 1992). For this reason, in order to understand the subjective factors that influence how an individual scholar prioritizes the different components of academic scholarship, it was necessary to first identify the research interests and specializations of respondents, their previous involvements in research, outreach and teaching, and their personal

experiences, goals and priorities. With MST, it is expected that personal interests, goals, experiences endeavors have a bearing on the possibility of pursuing engaged scholarship.

*Research interests and fields of specialization*

To begin with, respondents were asked to list their specific fields of specialization and research interests. Even though three people mentioned that they were interested in teaching and conducting research on general sociological issues, all respondents mentioned varied specialties such as Rural and Community Development, Gender Studies, Women and Politics, Gender and Labor Relations, Gender Anthropology, Political Economy, Sociology of Law, Medical Sociology, Sociology of Family, Work and Occupations, Socio-cultural Anthropology, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Family Violence, Medical Anthropology and Gender and Sexuality. For CEGRAD, its mandate as a center for Gender Studies implies that its staff members have to focus on research and outreach pertaining to gender-related issues. As a result, its staff mentioned research interests and projects that pertained to the subject areas of Gender and Development, Gender and Sexuality and Gender and Labor Relations. Past and current research projects undertaken by respondents were in line with their research interests and fields of specialization. Most respondents mentioned varied research interests and specializations. However, some of the respondents shared similar research interests and specializations. The four females who participated in the study specialized in gender-related studies such as Gender and Sexuality, Gender and Development, Gender and Labor Relations, Work and Occupations and Sociology of the Family. However, three of the men who participated in the study also identified Gender and Development Studies and Development Studies (see Table 1).

Table 1. Area of Specialization by gender

Area of Specialization	Male	Female
Political economy	1	0
Gender and sexuality	0	3
Gender and development- gender and labor relations, women in politics, gender and rural development etc	3	3
Sociology of law	1	0
Development studies- Poverty, social protection, migration and development, Community development- community participation, rural development	3	0
Medical Sociology	2	0
Criminology and criminal justice	1	0
Work and Occupations	0	1
Demography	1	0
General Sociology	2	1
Sociology of education	1	0
Sociology of the family	1	1
Socio-cultural anthropology	1	0

*Involvement in consultancy service provision, advocacy and policy building processes*

To understand the different aspects of their work, respondents were asked to indicate whether they had been involved in the provision of consultancy/professional /specialist services and to list some of the projects they had previously or are currently engaged in. Five male junior lecturers from DSA stated that they have not been involved in the provision of consultancy services. The remaining seven had provided consultancy services for both local and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and multinational organizations such as USAID, DFID, ERWACA and WACAM. The two female lecturers in DSA (who are also junior lecturers) had provided consultancy services for both state agencies and international organizations. Overall, the projects mentioned by respondents were in direct association with the individual academic's field of specialization

and were usually in the form of policy reviews, applied research and commissioned research conducted in association with development agencies. Even though CEGRAD is expected to be an outlet that also concerns itself with advocacy and provides quality research knowledge on gender-related issues (even through consultancy services), all three respondents from CEGRAD suggested that they have not been involved in the provision of any Professional/specialist consultancy services. This situation could be a result of the fact that CEGRAD had been in operation only one year prior to the conduct of this study.

Respondents were asked whether they had partnered with any state, non-governmental organization or civil society groups for any social policy formulation projects, whether policy analysis, reviews or drafting. A total of nine respondents, including the five junior lecturers from DSA who had also not been involved in the provision of consultancy services, claimed they had not been engaged in any policy building processes. Six of the respondents, two male senior lecturers, a male junior lecturer and three female junior lecturers indicated they had been involved in some policy formulation processes both nationally and continentally. A couple of statements from respondents suggest involvements in several research projects directed towards social policy formulation deliberations:

Also, I was involved in ASKAIDS project a multi-sector project involving five African Countries on young people's sources of sexual knowledge from both the formal and informal sectors for curriculum review in basic schools. (Female Lecturer, DSA)

We worked for widening participation in higher education in Ghana and Tanzania. Comparison was done between the natures of the policies in the two countries which aim at making education at the university level available to as many people in the two countries. (Male lecturer, DSA)

Although all three staff at CEGRAD stated they had not engaged in the provision of consultancy services, two of them indicated that they were involved in projects that were geared towards policy building. In regards to involvement in activities that are geared toward advocacy, half of the respondents (six out of twelve, all males) from DSA had not been involved in any advocacy efforts in their capacities as sociologists or academics. The other six respondents mentioned instances where they had participated in educational campaigns and public lectures. In the following statement, one male lecturer mentioned his collaboration with an NGO to provide education on major environmental issues in Ghana:

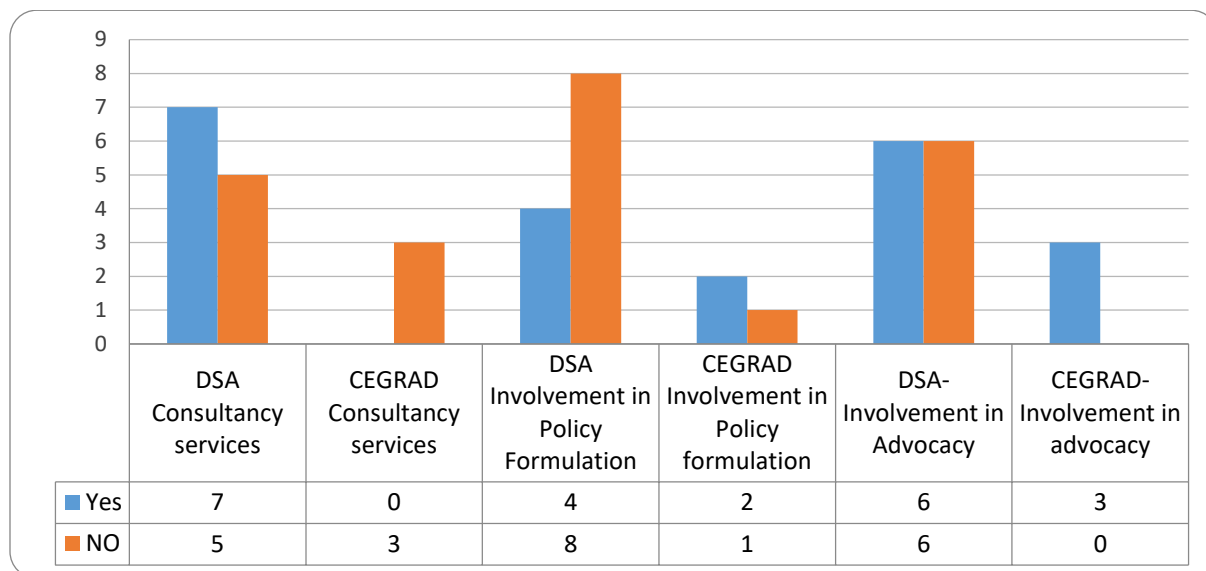
The negative effects of mining, especially surface mining on livelihoods in the Western Region of Ghana...[I] collaborated with WACAM a local NGO to educate the public and government to address the problems of surface mining. (Male lecturer DSA).

All three personnel from CEGRAD listed involvement in gender mainstreaming awareness programs and workshops, and seminars on women's land and economic rights and sexual harassment. In addition, CEGRAD's workers stated that they had been involved in training other university staff in gender research and methodology. They had also organized sexual harassment awareness programs for counselors and other stakeholders within the university.

In all, the majority of the respondents (8) from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology had not been involved in any policy formulation processes (see Fig. 6.2). In relation to involvement in advocacy and the provision of consultancy services, slightly a little more than half of the respondents have been involved in such projects. Respondents from CEGRAD had not been involved in the provision of any consultancy services yet they

had been involved in advocacy on gender issues and research projects geared towards policy development.

Figure 6.2. Involvement in consultancy, advocacy and policy formulation projects



#### *Populations of interest to the academic*

In relation to the identification of the interests and work experiences of scholars, respondents had to provide descriptions of the different publics that they have worked with in their capacity as academics. Participants mentioned that when it came to research and outreach, they worked with local government officials, NGOs both within and outside Ghana, women and the rural poor, persons living with HIV/AIDS, sandwich students (intensive summer program organized for usually for workers in civil service sector), and international students. Participants indicated that they worked with NGOs that were also interested in the social groups they worked with in their areas of specialization. Outreach conducted in collaboration with such groups is said to provide the opportunity for the academic to interact with groups of interests at the grassroots level.

I have collaborated with colleagues in public health, community medicine and population. I have also worked with medical practitioners and health planners and administrators at the MOH and GHS. (Male Lecturer, DSA)

Respondents also mentioned working with individuals and groups within the faculty and also having interest in interdisciplinary research. One of them, who had also studied in the UK, noted that her affiliation with particular fellowships and academic networks present her with opportunities for collaborations with different bodies and institutions. Another, respondent pointed out that the nature of a project determines the group he works with. However, he preferred working with NGOs instead of fellow academics:

All the groups depending on the nature of the project and the sponsors. I enjoy working with all of them. For example, the NGOs are more practical and assertive whilst the academics are sometimes boring and bureaucratic. (Male Lecturer DSA)

Given that participants are open to working with groups both within and outside academia, it is logical to conclude that they are interested in cultivating different publics outside academia which is a major requirement for the pursuit of public sociology. Engaged scholarship entails working with diverse sections of the public; both organized and unorganized community groups and stakeholders as well as fellow social scientists in projects that do not only advance one's professional agenda but promotes the positive development of communities in general (Burawoy's 2005, 2008). Burawoy argues that public sociology and professional sociology are not mutually-exclusive facets of the discipline of sociology. In the case of participants of this study, their expertise and status as professional sociologists as well as their ability to work with organizations and groups outside academia, has the capacity to pave way for them to engage in activities that are not only beneficial to their scholarship and professional advancement but those that are in direct connection with community change. Essentially, the demonstration of interest and

experience working with extra-academic groups such as non-governmental organizations, state agencies and populations related to their research interests is indicative of the possibility of the growth of public sociology and engaged scholarship among participants.

*Factors that direct research, teaching and service interests*

One of the major objectives of this study is to identify factors that influence the allocation of resources such as time, energy and expertise to the different aspects of scholarship (teaching, research and service to society). For that reason, it is also important to first grasp an understanding of the subjective priorities of academics when it comes to the performance of their work. Respondents were asked to mention the factors that generally inspire or motivate their research, teaching and service functions as expected of them as academics. Five general themes were deduced from their answers:

- a) *Socio-economic climate*: For nine respondents, the problems of the third world country in which they are located present them with several research opportunities and avenues to contribute their quota and achieve meaningful impact. These respondents suggested that the social problems directly related to their areas of specialization influenced their research interests. For example, one respondent noted:

I have always been concerned about Women's subordination, poverty and deprivation among Ghanaians. (Male Lecturer, DSA)

- b) *Desire to contribute to knowledge creation and dissemination*: Apart from contributing knowledge to the field of sociology (especially their fields of specialization), twelve of the participants noted that they were exceptionally interested in conducting research that had the potential to effect the development



of social policy. In essence, participants are driven by the desire to address systemic problems peculiar to Ghana and Africa while providing a Ghanaian perspective on issues which may be of broad disciplinary concern. One respondent noted:

Another element that directs my research is the inability of the developed world to understand that Africa finds itself in a peculiar position and so what works for them doesn't and cannot necessarily work in Africa; the quest to find African solutions to African problems. (Male Assistant Lecturer, DSA)

Others also find a sense of fulfillment when they are able to pass on knowledge to others through the classes that they teach and the supervision of student research projects. In mentioning one of the many factors which directs his work, one respondent indicated:

The quest to know more and also to add up to existing knowledge-to fill a research gap in my field of research by contributing to existing opinions .... One factor that directs my service interest is the fulfillment and true satisfaction I gain from contributing to society through teaching and research which I deem a good course. (Male, Full time junior/assistant lecturer, DSA)

- c) *Research subjects, area of specialization and research gaps:* Two people indicated that in working with the subjects peculiar to their area of specializations, they developed additional research interests pertaining to the issues associated with these groups:

The subjects of study in my educational journey, my work experiences, engagement with communities bring to bear certain topical issues worth addressing. This and many others such as gaps identified from the research in other places and personal experiences. (Female Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

- d) *Educational training and background:* A female respondent noted that the essence and culture of research which was inculcated in her during her postgraduate training abroad, as well as her active participation in conferences especially outside Ghana,

are her source of motivation. This disposition is in line with Inglis' (2005) argument that interacting with other professional sociologists on international platforms (especially American professional sociological associations) through research opportunities and participation in conferences has the tendency to motivate young sociologists to conform to the professional sociology model. The continued zeal to participate in the activities of these professional associations could mean the adoption of methods and practices that are characteristic of such groups.

I trained outside Ghana for both my masters and PhD and the emphasis on research in my training moves or inspires me to continue involving myself in research. My interest in international conferences and networks outside Ghana is another source of Motivation (Female Lecturer, DSA).

- e) *Financial interests and sponsor objectives:* According to a male lecturer from DSA, the monetary rewards associated with research projects, teaching, and the provision of consultancy services have an influence on the kinds of activities he undertakes as an academic. For him, financial interests played a major role in his service to the university and the Ghanaian society in general. Another respondent noted that the interests and objectives of sponsoring agencies also shaped the execution of his work.

Participants of this study are interested in being relevant in extra-academic circles by participating in social policy formulation processes through the recommendations and the rational arguments they make in their research. However, rational arguments based on research alone may not necessarily translate into any policy action or social change. Unfortunately, the practice of using research as the means to effect policy and engage with local communities signals a passive approach to public sociology and direct community engagement activities (such as advocacy research, policy research and social engineering)

and is characteristic of a professional sociology approach. Although most sociological studies are usually based on pertinent social issues in which the sociologist works, they end up as abstract essays that may not be accessible to stakeholders who need such valuable knowledge (Robinson et al. 2014; Speer and Christens 2013; Miller 2011; McNall 2008). This is because sociologists are not able to garner the social power needed to interpret and lobby for the consideration of their research implications in social policy formulation. Ending research with policy recommendations has the capacity to set the tone for public engagement such as advocacy, outreach, policy construction and the implementation of change. Even so, an interpretive language that comes along with community engagement is required to actually make the work of the sociologist accessible and relevant to a wider populace (Robinson et al. 2014; Speer and Christens 2013).

Burawoy (2005) concurs that the structure of the discipline of sociology is to be blamed for the indirect approach adopted by most sociologists towards civic engagement and social engineering. Constant interaction in professional sociological associations has the tendency to confine sociologists to academic circles (Wiebke 2011, Warren 2009; McNall 2008; Noy 2009; Burawoy 2007). As long as teaching, interacting with fellow sociologists (and academics) on both local and international platforms and research are some of the reasons motivating their preferred scholarship, respondents seem to demonstrate a liking with activities that are characteristic of professional sociology. What's more, interests in personal financial gains in addition to an overreliance on funding agencies can obstruct any attempts to pursue public sociology (and engaged scholarship) (Burawoy 2008; Wright 2008). The academic can become restricted to producing scientific reports (or strictly adhering to the guidelines of these agencies) in ways that limits his

ability to be involved in any public engagement endeavors that may be useful to both his scholarship and the involved publics (Wright 2008).

*Objective for engaging in research*

According to Ford (1992), expected outcomes serve as a major source of motivation for the pursuit of action. Mostly, actions that lead to the accomplishment of broader goals have the capacity to motivate behavior. Apart from the general reasons which direct the scholarship of academics, this study sought to also identify what respondents expect to be the social impact of their research. This question was targeted at throwing more light on factors that influence the decision to undertake specific research projects and whether community engagement is at the core of decision making when it comes to research; that is, whether research is expected to come along with or lead to the pursuit of public engagement. Four primary outcomes were identified as the purpose for engaging research.

- a) *Knowledge creation and dissemination:* Twelve of the respondents expect their research to enrich their knowledge about specific subject matter within the discipline and change the orientation of readers. They also intend that their research serves as a guide to other research works. Meanwhile, they expect that the knowledge and experiences acquired through extensive research informs their teaching.
- b) *Social change:* In total, twelve of the respondents noted that although they wanted to contribute knowledge to the scientific community, they expect their research to provide policy directions on pertinent social issues that affect the

social realities of the different groups within the Ghanaian society. One respondent stated that the research process itself can be a form of advocacy, while its product (findings and recommendations) can be used for public education and advocacy geared towards social change. As seen in the following statements, respondents are interested in research that provides answers to the problems pertaining to the Ghanaian society and leads to an improvement in the living conditions of people:

To provide useful information to academics, policy makers and other relevant agencies who would then use this to formulate policy which will bring about changes in society. (Male, Full time Junior Lecturer, DSA)

To change attitude and ideologies on gender roles and expectations and further inform policy on health and resource allocation. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Another respondent who specializes in medical sociology noted:

I expect that through my research Ghana can fight stigmatization and discrimination against persons living with HIV and AIDS and thereby reduce the impact of the disease on Ghana. (Male, Full time senior lecturer/Professor, DSA)

Particularly, all the participants from CEGRAD claimed their research had to be strictly policy engaging and also spark awareness on gender-related issues. Only one person from CEGRAD mentioned that her research on gender-related issues was also useful in informing teaching/pedagogy.

c) *Professional advancement and publication:* For most of the participants involved in the study, the major purpose of engaging in research is to be able to use the data and information to produce a publishable paper. Respondents indicated that as academic staff, they have to produce numerous publications in order to qualify for promotion from one rank of the professional hierarchy to

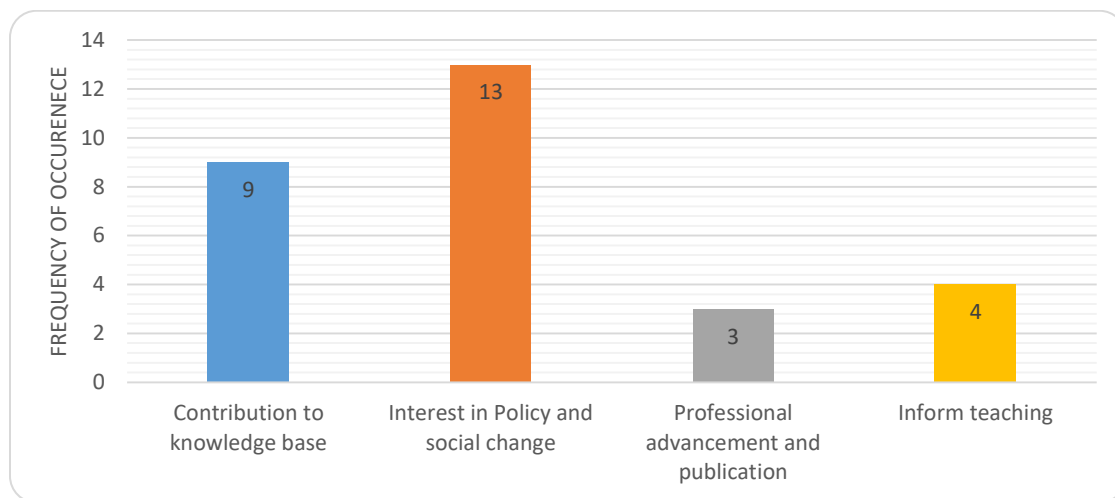
another. To participants, not only will research enrich their knowledge and expertise in specific fields of specialization and their work experiences in general, they have to continually conduct research (both basic and applied/commissioned research) and publish its findings in academic journals in order to be able to meet the requirements for promotion. Unfortunately, overemphasis on the acquisition of publications, plus the indirect manner in which participants expect their research to impact social policy implies that participants may not be especially enthused about policy sociology and direct involvement in community engagement activities such as outreach, advocacy, social project engineering etc. that is characteristic of engaged scholarship.

In all, participants expect their research to accomplish the following goals simultaneously: one, produce practical policy implications because they believe that policy which is founded on scientific research has the capacity to positively impact social progress. Two, expand knowledge within their respective fields and inform their teaching and three, use the research information to produce publications that will in turn lead to career advancement.

To provide useful information to academics, policy makers and other relevant agencies who would then use this to formulate policy which will bring about changes in society. (Male, Full time Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Figure 6.3 demonstrates the frequency of the four major purposes of conducting research in the responses of participants.

Figure 6.3: Expectations of the usefulness of research pursuits.



#### *Subjective ranking of the different facets of academic scholarship*

In addition to identifying the major reasons behind research pursuits, the survey sought to uncover what participants deemed to be the most important aspect of their work as academics. As per MST, individuals are guided by goals which must be ordered in a manner such that those that are most rewarding and attainable given current contextual and individual circumstances can be accomplished. Whilst goals may be dictated by one's context (in this case the university's job description for academics), it is also affected by subjective evaluations and preferences of the individuals involved in their accomplishment (Ford 1992). Therefore, it is expected that the functions and duties that the individual prioritizes or perceives as the most important aspect of their job or goal set determines the amount of time, energy and effort dedicated to it.

First, respondents had to define their roles in their respective academic departments. Responses ranged from the performance of roles, such as teaching sociology courses, and conducting research, which does not only contribute to ongoing decisions in the discipline

but includes research that sheds light on pressing national issues. For ten (10) of the respondents of DSA, teaching and research are the most important aspects of their job. Other roles listed include counselling and mentoring students, publishing articles and books. As seen in the following statement, respondents are interested in research that answers questions pertaining to the Ghanaian society while making sure that the answers and experience they gain in research impacts their teaching as well:

My role is to lecture students in my area of specialization, carry out research and publish papers and books, engage in outreach activities in the community which will help the development of the community, open up communities so others would understand them through research, and use the findings to improve my teaching. I also counsel students so that they are able to make progress in their studies. (Male, Senior Lecturer, DSA)

While one person from CEGRAD had the added responsibility of teaching, they all mentioned advocacy and involvement in policy examination and formulation as their major roles.

In addition to the general roles they perform as staff of their respective departments, respondents were asked to describe the most important aspect of their work. Most participants from DSA indicated that teaching and research are the most important aspects of their job. Generally, teaching was the first response mentioned by the majority of the participants of DSA; almost all of them indicated that teaching was a potent channel through which the academic can impact society, by training students who would eventually be the ones to effect change in the Ghanaian society:

... Impacting knowledge in students to produce competent and effective individuals to aid society's development ... To discover creative ways of addressing social issues and being innovative to meet current changes in society. (Male, Full time Junior Lecturer, DSA)



According to McNall (2008) most professional sociologists are restricted to teaching and basic research. In this case, by rating teaching and research as their topmost priorities, participants of DSA are admitting that they are first and foremost professional sociologists. Although professional sociology gives legitimacy to the other three sociologies and particularly public engagement, when the knowledge and expertise of the sociologist is confined to his lecture hall, and shared within academic circles, then the professional sociology approach will dominate any moral commitment towards community engagement. Interestingly, although most people from DSA stated that they valued teaching and research, they also concluded that there is only a limited time available for research because their teaching responsibilities are somewhat burdensome. A female full time lecturer lamented:

Teaching and research. The University of Cape Coast is very much teaching oriented, which sometimes even affects time for research – a person is therefore pushed to create time on his /her own tight schedule for research purposes. Though we are expected to conduct research as stipulated in our appointment letter, the research environment is not encouraging. (Female, Lecturer, DSA)

For CEGRAD, outreach and advocacy are the most important functions of their office. To them outreach provided them with the opportunity to interact with different groups both within and outside the university and to acquire the feedback necessary to direct their research. Their responses also demonstrated that advocacy and community engagement presents opportunities to gather insights and build partnerships that will advance their research agenda. Subsequently, they hoped that such research (which is also built on community engagement), could be translated into publications and contribute towards the requirements for promotion. In essence, participants from CEGRAD view outreach and advocacy as both a means and an end in itself. While outreach is a means of

acquiring information necessary in shaping the outcomes and objectives of research, it is also a product of research where the decision to pursue activities pertaining to advocacy are informed by the findings and recommendations of research. One of the respondents from CEGRAD had this to say about outreach:

Advocacy and outreach programs gives us the opportunity to bring to bear and inform the reading communities' findings of our research and to also teach them. This outreach helps us get feedback and also confirm whether what we gather are necessarily what plays out with the wider society. It has mostly proven to be so as interactions after presentations shows that audiences involved can relate with the issues raised (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Given that professional sociologists are mostly concerned with teaching and research (McNall 2008), it is evident that participants of DSA seem to have mostly adopted an approach to scholarship that aligns closely with professional sociology. So far, their responses show that community engagement is an ancillary function that can only be a later effect of their research. This is evidenced in their responses on their anticipations of the social impact of their research. They mostly focus on teaching and basic research as their main contributions to social development processes. However, their assigned teaching loads are explained as the causes of the little focus on community engagement. CEGRAD participants on the other hand are directly involved in community engagement and public sociology. According to them, outreach projects draws their attention to gaps in existing knowledge which further inspires research. Then again, their outreach activities are also inspired by the findings of their research. As a center in charge of conducting and archiving research on issues associated with gender, gender policy formulation, review and advocacy, they ensure that community engagement and research feed into each other and are intricately related. Their involvement in outreach programs (which is one of the practices peculiar to public sociology and engaged scholarship) signifies their alignment

with a more publicly engaged scholarship paradigm. Ultimately, it can be implied that compared to their counterparts from DSA, participants from CEGRAD are more in tune with the tenets of public sociology and community engagement.

### *Professional goals and interests*

With MST, the motivation to undertake tasks is a personal psychological process that is dependent on personal goals (Ford 1992). Hence, to further explain the goals and pursuits of their scholarship, respondents had to provide a brief description of the professional goals they had outlined to achieve in the next five years. Still, the finding that participants prioritize professional sociology before public (and even policy sociology) sociology is emphasized in their future plans to engage in research for publication goals. Nine of the respondents indicated that they hope to engage in research and produce publications which will enable them to acquire promotions and professional advancement. In addition to building a vibrant research portfolio, respondents hoped to acquire the necessary knowledge and experience to mentor students and other scholars. Almost all the respondents want to remain in academia and appeared to target opportunities and activities that would enable them climb the university's academic hierarchy. For junior lecturers without PhDs, the acquisition of their PhDs is their number one priority.

Nevertheless, six of the respondents of DSA (half of those from DSA) indicated that in addition to research, publication and career advancement, they hope to increase the levels of engagement incorporated in their work, acquire grants for projects that involve community engagement and development, explore more platforms for disseminating their

research findings and mentor people in the field of social research. Four of the participants wanted to be able to either set up agencies that would work directly with communities or increase their involvement and presence in communities. One junior lecturer wants to become a policy analyst. The following comments reflect the desire of respondents to pursue a vibrant academic career bordered on involvement in research, mentoring and community development engagements:

To have at least 3 publications on topical and disciplinary related issues; to have the opportunity of disseminating the findings of my studies for the development of the communities involved. (Male, Full time Junior Assistant Lecturer, DSA).

Attain my PhD degree in the next year. Set up a volunteer group for community outreach with students interested in gender issues. Advocate for higher awareness on the development issues in gender inequality. Work hard to fetch grants for projects and to help in developing the communities. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD).

Continue with research which would highlight and benefit the general society. Give back to society through research results and expertise engagement on topical and community issues. Encourage and mentor others in research and community engagement. (Female, Full time Junior Assistant Lecturer, DSA)

*Professional Rank and propensity to pursue community engagement*

The data gathered also points to the notion that the professional rank of an academic is a determining factor in the arrangement of professional goals that are in line with community engagement. Junior Lecturers were interested in the fulfillment of the requirements of tenure or the attainment of job security. Hence, their focus was on the conduct of research that can also be translated into academic publications. For those who did not have PhDs, the acquisition of their doctorates was the immediate goal. Although

they entertained plans to be involved with communities these were to come after they had attained some level of job security within the university.

With regards to actual involvement with community groups in outreach programs, advocacy, social policy interrogation or the provision of any professional or consultancy services, these junior lecturers had only little experience. Their engagement with communities were usually restricted to data collection and other activities that were not connected to their scholarship. When they were asked whether they had been involved with interdisciplinary research, the provision of professional services, outreach, advocacy or policy work, only two of them indicated that they had been involved in all of these activities. Senior Lecturers on the other hand, mentioned that they had partnered with state and Non-Governmental Organizations, both local and international on various projects. While this discovery establishes a pattern that senior academic staff are more likely to be involved in extra-academic activities than those in the junior ranks, it is not clear whether their status as senior lecturers is what qualifies them to be able to take up such opportunities or whether they mostly engaged in these projects after they had acquired tenure or promotion. Even as senior lecturers, their goals also included publishing in academic journals as well as mentoring younger faculty in the department. Nevertheless, their responses showed their interest in partnerships with communities and organizations.

It is logical to conclude that participants view professional sociology as their number one task and the means to pursue other endeavors such as public sociology (and engaged scholarship). This explains why the basic requirements for sustaining their positions (such as acquiring PhDs undertaking research and acquiring publications) as academic staff within the university is the most prominent on their list of goals to be

achieved in the next five years. For junior staff especially, the attainment of their status as professional sociologists comes before the pursuit of any projects that heavily involves the establishment of community partnerships.

According to Ford (1992), goals that are most salient to individuals are determined by the standards associated with the performance of the job. The quest to acquire PhDs, conduct research and publish in academic journals is a result of the requirements that come with their job as academic staff of UCC (UCC Statutes, 2012). However, the sole concentration on these basic job requirements confines the sociologist in question to the category of professional sociology. Burawoy (2005) argues that professional sociology has the tendency to restrict the development of community engagement and overshadows the moral commitments of the sociologist. In the case of participants in this study, heavy teaching loads and a focus on career advancement especially through the acquisition of publications (a job standard that is very characteristic of professional sociology), constrains the time, energy and particularly the zeal needed to pursue a scholarship built on community engagement.

#### *Summary of relevant individual characteristics and their impacts*

Given that an individual's behavior is based on his outlined list of goals or objectives which are also influenced by previous personal experiences (Ford 1992), an identification of the sources of inspiration for their work is useful in understanding whether participants harbor any moral commitments that favor community engagement (Kruss 2012; Burawoy 2007; Inglis 2005). Kruss (2012) argues that developing countries offer the

academic opportunities to identify diverse social groups and partners to work on human and social development. To most participants of this study, the socio-economic conditions of the Ghanaian society especially the social conditions of the different publics associated with their areas of specialization, inspire their research interests, outreach, consultancy and their teaching. The desire to contribute meaningful information to their respective academic disciplines motivates them to undertake research not only for publication but for social policy formulation. As shown in Figure 6.2, one-third of the participants of DSA have been involved in activities related to social policy formulation. Six of them have engaged in activities involving advocacy. In addition, seven of them admitted to have provided professional services to groups outside the university. For participants from CEGRAD on the other hand, none of them has been engaged in the provision of professional services to any external entity. However, all of them have been involved in advocacy whilst two-thirds of them have been directly involved with NGOs and state agencies in research and policy making processes, towards community development.

Interestingly, even with their interests in collaborating with diverse groups in policy building processes, research and advocacy, the data gathered shows that Junior Lecturers in particular were most likely to have stated no involvement in any of the three activities-policy formulation, advocacy or outreach. In contrast, Senior Lecturers indicated their involvement with NGOs, state agencies and various community groups in their outreach activities. The two females from CEGRAD had not been involved in the provision of consultancy services but had engaged in advocacy and social policy building processes. Meanwhile, the two females from DSA had been involved in all three of these community engagement activities.

Generally, participants from the traditional academic department (DSA) implied that teaching and the conduct of research are the major and most important functions of their job. As expected, the plans of most of the respondents of DSA for the next five years largely centered on boosting their research capacities, mentoring students and producing publications, attaining PhDs (for those who did not have it) and promotion. Accessing opportunities to become involved in mentoring others in the field of research and disseminating research findings and their expertise with diverse groups is also a priority to some of the respondents. For participants working with CEGRAD, apart from engaging in gender research and its documentation, their focus is on outreach and advocacy. Research and particularly involvement with communities through awareness creation (both in and outside UCC campus) is their main focus. To them, research informs their outreach strategies and is also a result (in addition to policy building processes) of their outreach and advocacy engagements. A total of nine of the respondents intend to increase the level of community engagement involved in their work. Nonetheless, in all their endeavors, participants of both departments hope to produce several publications in order to progress in the university's academic hierarchy.

In view of the junior status (lower rank) of most of the respondents, it is understandable that majority of them prioritize goals that match with professional sociology (Colbeck 2000). Before any moral commitments associated with the public sociology (Burawoy 2005) are pursued, it is important to respondents to first secure their jobs as academics within UCC. However, securing one's position and even advancing one's academic career is dependent on one's ability to pursue activities that are directly resonant of professional sociology. Respondents of DSA especially believe that their



specified roles are teaching and research. Therefore, they expect to be evaluated based on their performance on these two items. Consequently, it is logical to conclude that the perceived mission of the institution (teaching and research base) is responsible for fixing the attention of faculty to focus solely on teaching and research.

Although research could bring with it opportunities for community engagement (de Lange 2012), the academic is likely to dedicate only little time to its pursuit. Respondents seem to value and participate in some forms of community engagement. Yet, the pressure presented by the many classes they have to teach in an academic year plus UCC's system of job evaluation which values research and publication and teaching leaves them with no option but to focus on basic research- the generation of knowledge for its sake. This is because, while respondents believe that their research can impact social policy, the majority of them have not been able to participate in any activities such as outreach, advocacy and so on, that involves engagement with extra-academic groups to actually set in motion any of the intended policies.

Clearly, personal experiences (like educational background, familiarities with the socio-economic context of Ghana) interests and goals of an individual academic alone does not provide a comprehensive overview of the factors that affect the prioritization of the different aspects of scholarship and hence motivate academics towards the pursuit of engaged scholarship. Observations concerning what tasks deemed relevant in the organization within which respondents work plays a major role in their disposition towards community engagement. Also, the rank of the involved academic as well as the mandate of the unit he/she works (whether it is a traditional teaching and research department or an outreach and research unit like CEGRAD) determines whether engaged scholarship and

public sociology will seem profitable to the academic or not. In the sections that follow, the epistemological conditions that shape scholarship as well as the organizational atmosphere in which an individual faculty works needs to be examined. The next section describes the values of participants in relation to their approach towards research, teaching and scholarship in general.

*Epistemological leanings and engaged scholarship*

With the intention of describing the factors that affect the outlook and actual allocation of resources towards the different facets of scholarship, this section outlines the social position of the academic both as a key player within academia and as a social agent by identifying the perceptions of participants concerning their expected functions as academics. Using the assumption that academics/sociologists are public servants (given that the UCC is a public university), it is expected that the epistemological standpoint of the sociologist will also be dictated by the engrained schema of what the public and the institution deems as their role (or set of roles). Also, the values, beliefs and disposition of academics towards teaching, research, advocacy and service in general is examined. Particularly, the willingness of academics to pursue engaged scholarship is interrogated by attempting to pinpoint their inclinations towards the different methods of inquiry employed in the process of conducting social research. Furthermore, the willingness to work with extra academic audiences and hence incorporate public engagement in their teaching and research is examined.

### *Perceived Role Expectations*

A full awareness of the stipulated standards and tasks associated with a job is very vital in shaping how the individual organizes their activities to accomplish such goals (Ford 1992). For that reason, a cognizance of the expectations of the Ghanaian public and the university as an organization as well as disciplinary demands concerning the appropriate practices, functions and contributions of academics (or sociologists for this matter) is pivotal in determining the subjective organization of goals and general outlook on scholarship. Also, the professional identity of the academic as perceived by the academic himself has the ability to impact his disposition in the execution of his roles. Hence, respondents were asked to define the ideal role of a sociologist, determine whether they view themselves as sociologists and then go further to describe any discrepancies between the ideal role of sociologists and the actual roles they perform within their respective departments.

As a result of the involvement of the majority (12) of the respondents in teaching sociology and identifying with the discipline of sociology, participants were required to describe the functions of a sociologist. Respondents reported similar responses on the roles and characteristics of the sociologist. All the respondents believed that a sociologist is a social scientist, one who employs scientific methods in the study of social phenomena both at the local/national and global levels. Basically, the objective of the sociologist is to be able to produce logical explanations to the causes and consequences of social phenomena from various perspectives in order to prescribe solutions to them. One respondent indicated that a sociologist should at least have Bachelor's degree training in sociology. In addition, respondents believed that the sociologist through his research and logical understanding of

social phenomena should be able to perform educative roles and advocate for social change.

However, a male respondent from DSA pointed out that the sociologist's quest to contribute to the understanding of social processes and to social change in general should be done through subtle ways, such as research and knowledge advancement. Ironically, he mentioned that he had collaborated with some NGOs on outreach projects in some remote areas. However, his emphasis on participation in community development in "subtle" ways suggests that some kinds of outreach can be uncomfortable for some sociologists. It also suggests a belief in basic research, and research as the means of public engagement. Furthermore, it is an indication of the dilemmas associated with the educative, advocacy and political engagement roles inherent in Burawoy's "Public sociology". Interestingly, Burawoy contends that the structure of the discipline is responsible for confining sociologists to keeping their views in academic circles (sharing research outcomes, recommendations in academic platforms only)

In their comments, respondents note that a sociologist is:

A social scientist who studies social interactions at all levels (local, national, global) using sociological methods, concepts and theories to challenge existing phenomena or shed new light (Male, Full time Junior Lecturer, DSA)

A sociologist must understand human behavior from different perspectives in diverse ways and find meaning to whatever happens in the society. He/she must educate, counsel and research social issues in society (Male, Full time Junior Lecturer, DSA)

The role of the sociologist is to identify social problems and help solve them; to help in ensuring that all the social institutions are functional and society is moving on in the right direction irrespective of conflicts and other things that will interrupt. (Female, Full time Junior Lecturer, DSA)

The responses of the participants from CEGRAD showed that they expect the sociologist to pursue more community-based partnerships and become more active in the public sphere by being actively involved with communities in capacity-building, awareness creation on pertinent social phenomena which the sociologist has studied. The role of community engagement in the work of the sociologist is reflected in their responses.

A sociologist in my perspective is one that strives to correct and educate on the... (\*\*not clear) of society, the good thereof and find alternatives where applicable (Male, Research Fellow, CEGRAD) –\*emphasis is that of the researcher

A person who understudies social institutions, relations and other issues to bring order, develop the community and cause change (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

An individual interested in the well-being of his or her society and helping in eradicating the ills of his/her society. A sociologist studies the life of the people in the community in which she or he identifies themselves, to solve issues and protect the history and culture of the people (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD) –\*emphasis is that of the researcher

Based on their own description of who a sociologist is, respondents had to ascertain whether they consider themselves sociologists. 13 out of the 15 respondents believed that they are sociologists. All three CEGRAD staff seemed to argue that so long as their research and mandate pertains to the study of social phenomena/processes, and they are involved in the education of the populace on social practices, then they are justified in referring to themselves as sociologists. One of the personnel at CEGRAD retorted:

Yes because my area of study seeks to raise awareness and sensitization on the need for social protection for a neglected group. (Male, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

One respondent stated that he is still a student of sociology (a Junior Lecturer who had a Master's degree in sociology) and so cannot consider himself a sociologist. The retired lecturer also indicated that he is only a sociologist to some extent. However, he did not provide any explanation as to why he does not fully consider himself a sociologist.

In relation to the ideal roles of a sociologist and the actual functions performed by respondents as sociologists, nine of the fifteen respondents believe that there is no difference between what the university requires of them as academics and the actual functions of a sociologist. The roles that the university expects them to play match with what they consider to be the fundamental roles of sociologists. Two of the respondents were exceptions. A Junior Lecturer believed that the workload associated with teaching and the emphasis on publication served to limit the amount of time and resources left for them to pursue the other roles of the sociologist.

There is a great difference because the university expects me to teach and research as well as publish, the department requires me to teach as many courses as possible with little emphasis on research but as a sociologist, interacting with people and helping find solutions to problems is of great concern. (Male, full time Junior Assistant Lecturer, DSA)

Apart from teaching and research, he believes the sociologist must be involved in productive community partnerships. However, when the academic department mandates them to teach many courses in a year, it becomes difficult for the sociologist to pursue any projects that entails establishing community partnerships. Ultimately, although the university declares a support for engaged scholarship, the motivation to pursue public sociology is negatively impacted.

Individual academics also harbor perceptions of what the Ghanaian public generally expects of them as sociologists. One of the respondents stated that sociologists do not have the recognition they deserve because most Ghanaians do not have an understanding of what their role is and what their job entails. He remarked:

In Ghana people have not come to terms with sociologists. They recognize the physical scientists- doctors, engineers etc. and business related fields--so sociologists are not given much attention. If you mention to the ordinary person

you are a sociologist, he or she would not know what role such an intellectual play in society. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

On the other hand, all the responses seemed to indicate that generally, Ghanaians expect intellectuals, lecturers on university campuses and sociologists to be agents of change, to participate in discussions that will lead to the discovery of practical solutions to social problems. One respondent added that the public expects the sociologist to be someone who displays objective and sound judgments in the interpretation of issues. The following remarks demonstrate this assertion:

The Ghanaian public expects the intellectual to be an agent of change whose suggestions when implemented will help them live better lives. (Male, Retired but on contract, DSA)

They expect sociologists to be highly visible in public places where issues of national importance such as policy formulation are discussed. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Ghanaians especially the ordinary people expect intellectuals to assist in resolving the numerous problems confronting society. (Gender unknown, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Despite these expectations, two participants pointed out that over the course of time, communities have become tired of participating in social research because they cannot pinpoint any associated changes in their living conditions as a result of their participation or involvement in research projects with intellectuals from the universities. The public seem to view the academy (and sociologists) as the group that should hold government and politicians in check. However, they believe the academy has not been able to make any meaningful/ visible impacts in overseeing their course. Therefore, the eagerness of the public to participate in social research is dwindling. A participant from CEGRAD had this to say about the attitude of the Ghanaian public towards intellectuals:

My observed expectation based on my experience has been that intellectuals should be upright and moral in their dealings as many have had had more education and presumably know better. They should work to affect policy and ensure implementation of these policies by politicians. Most grievances in seemingly highly researched communities have been that people always come to them to ask questions (collect data) but they hardly see anything being done about the situation. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD).

As a follow up on what they think the Ghanaian public expects of them, respondents were asked to narrate how they are actually received by the groups they work with (e.g., institutions, civil society, the media, etc.). Quite a number of respondents were of the view that because the general society regards academics as people who are knowledgeable and should be valued, they are receptive, eager and enthusiastic when it comes to working with people from the university departments. A respondent shared his thoughts on how he is viewed by the groups he works with:

I am well treated and seen as a member of the group that has something to offer in the department. They are always ready to welcome my ideas and opinions. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

According to one of the respondents from CEGRAD, civil society groups, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), NGOs and trade unions are more open to collaborations with academics where they envisage similar interests with the academic. On the other hand, three respondents stated that they do not always receive a warm reception from the groups with which they work. The reception provided respondents usually depends on the topic and the culture of the group. Also, social actors, whether state institutions, NGOs or individuals, may be hostile towards an academic or be reluctant in cooperating with an academic where the interests of the academic seem to border on sensitive issues, especially those political in nature:



Gender research is a political issue. It challenges the status quo thus, in my observation, whether academic or nonacademic groups there are a high level of opposition or resistance which is expected. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

As a result of their experiences engaging varied social groups in research, advocacy and outreach, which is a requirement of the university and the departments they work for, respondents are mostly of the view that they are justified to be called sociologists. For personnel from CEGRAD, so long as they are involved in research on social issues, are involved in social policy building processes and advocacy, then they are qualified to be sociologists. Their definition of the work of a sociologist tilted more towards work that based on public engagement than their counterparts from DSA.

Basically, respondents expect the sociologist to engage in the prescription of solutions to social problems and the discovery of facts that enhance the understanding of social processes. According to MST, goals that are likely to motivate behavior are those that are available to one's consciousness (Ford 1992). At first glance, their definitions signal a fixation on basic research. However, remarks indicating the significance of the use of research and sociological perspectives in impacting social thinking and change through activities such as public education are indications of an awareness of the public engagement component of their work. The descriptions of the role of the sociologist provided by most respondents in this survey also suggest that there is a cognizance of the essence of a connection between research and public engagement. The perception that research findings can be made useful through outreach and public education is an indication that they view research as the basis for public engagement. This outlook is favorable for the practice of engaged scholarship because public engagement becomes particularly useful to academic scholarship when it is imbued with research goals and the quest to produce knowledge that

can also be appreciated by colleagues in academic circles. Nonetheless, encounters with communities that are separated from one's research goals and teaching and learning remain in the realm of community service.

Apart from personal goals such as professional advancement, individuals strive to attain goals that they deem valuable to the society or the organization within which they work. These social goals are likely to motivate behavior when they are identical to an individual's goals, are connected to the attainment of personal goals such as the attainment of recognition and prestige and can be easily incorporated into an individual's goal set (Ford 1992). To a large extent, respondents believe the general public expects them to be very active in the socio-political arena through social policy interrogation, outreach, and so on. Therefore, their acknowledgement of the community engagement role (goals) of the sociologist coincides with their awareness of the general public's expectations of them.

Although the general public expects sociologists to be present in social debates and policy transformations, a couple of respondents believe the average Ghanaian does not know who a sociologist is and therefore cannot expect much from her. But, the motivation to pursue an action (in this case engaged scholarship) will not be triggered when individuals perceive that the expectations of the public concerning partnerships with sociologists are vague or undefined. The acceptance of intellectuals as partners on any project (be it basic or action research, outreach, advocacy, decision making processes) depends on the ability of local communities and social groups to anticipate positive outcomes from their association with an intellectual group. That is, personal agency beliefs (the belief that community engagement projects will be successful and community partners will embrace the idea of working with academics) weakens when faculty perceive that community

partners are skeptical about the potency of university-community partners to effect any social change. Nonetheless, participants believe that the reception they receive from communities depends on the nature and purpose of a project, the particular group involved and how they perceive the partnership benefits them. Consequently, the enthusiasm to undertake certain kinds of public engagement activities (especially those that may have political undertones) or the level of incorporation of community engagement in their work cannot be ascertained at this point. Two of the respondents from DSA complained that the workload assigned them by the academic department hampers their capacity to fully pursue the different functions of sociologists as their time and efforts are mostly directed towards teaching.

*Influence of professional values and beliefs on the ability to pursue engaged scholarship*

To identify the values and beliefs undergirding the work of respondents and whether these predispose them towards the pursuit of engaged scholarship, questions such as the ability of respondents to align with both participatory and traditional positivistic methods and their willingness to engage extra-academic audiences need to be addressed. Respondents were asked what their disposition towards research has been so far in their careers. Three of the respondents stated that they mainly adopt a traditional research approach that usually involves the use of positivistic quantitative methods and are interested in basic research and the generation of knowledge for its own sake. All staff at CEGRAD indicated that of research they selected participatory approaches, such as action and community-based research methods in the implementation of their research. The rest of the participants indicated that in addition to the traditional approach where academics

are known to be involved in basic research and engage in research using positivistic methods, they are also interested in the adoption of participatory, action and community-based research approaches. In addition to the adoption of creative yet logical and malleable methods in the conduct of research, a female lecturer from DSA hinted that she preferred interpretive methods.

To further confirm the research methods that respondents mostly aligned with, an additional question sought to find out the level of participation of community actors in their research. This approach is intended to throw more light on whether respondents are inclined towards the adoption of participatory and interpretive research methods (and the level of inclusivity in their work) or are mostly reliant on objective, positivistic methods which is mostly uncharacteristic of an engaged research approach. Therefore, respondents were asked whether they relied on community actors from the start to the finish of their research projects.

Six respondents answered in the negative, indicating that they did not involve community actors in the design and implementation of their research projects. The response of one the respondents who answered in the affirmative shows that the nature and purpose of a research project determined the level of community participation incorporated in any research endeavor or study.

Yes at least every effort is made to contact respondents or community members in every project I undertake. (Male, Lecturer, DSA)

In addition, five other respondents indicated that they involved community members, at least at some point in the implementation of projects. Three participants stated emphatically that the nature of the study and the topic are the major factors that determine

the level of inclusivity and participation of community actors. Therefore, more than half of the participants (8) are of the view that the nature and purpose of a study determines the level of involvement of community actors in research:

Not always, it depends on where I may need their input...gender issues call for belonging and your audience understanding that their experiences can be related to the researcher. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

To add to information on their general outlook towards scholarship, respondents were further asked whether their work is inspired by a moral commitment towards addressing social issues or whether they generally took a neutral, value-free outsider disposition, especially when it comes to the conduct of research. Three of the respondents claim that, although they adopt a value-free outsider disposition, they also have a moral commitment towards addressing social issues using their expertise. Meanwhile the same number of respondents (3) stated that they mainly take on a value-free outsider disposition. Yet, five people argued that the issue at stake is what determines the sort of perspective and epistemological disposition to be adopted; the nature of the research dictates whether to allow a person's subjective interests, and in this case moral commitments, to influence his perspective:

I am more of the value-free outsider position. But you know that in reality, the researcher does fluctuate between an insider-outsider position depending on the issue at hand or the type of gathering. (Female, Lecturer, DSA)

Two people from DSA implied that although they have a moral commitment towards addressing relevant social issues in their research, their training in sociology predisposes them to mostly align with the objective/value free disposition. The staff of CEGRAD indicated that the nature of the issues they deal with require that they liaise with social actors to understand issues from the perspectives of the studied group. Most

importantly, their outlook in research, outreach and advocacy is to ensure that their subjects are able to recognize that they (as researchers) identify with the issues:

The subjects we advocate are practical and it is very difficult to take an outsider position. You also have to make them know you have similar experience that the issues cut across. (Female Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Similar to establishing a moral commitment towards the tackling of social issues using their expertise as academics, a follow-up question addressed whether the scholarship of respondents entails a commitment towards ensuring social justice. Nine (9) of the participants believed that their scholarship incorporates a commitment towards social justice. Two mentioned that their research always centers on identifying instances of inequality, while their recommendations also provided alternatives for ensuring social justice.

Yes in my teaching and research I am always committed to ensuring equal opportunities are given to all. When I get a chance to deliver lectures I always incorporate these issues. My research recommendations provide alternatives for bridging the inequality gap. (Male, Lecturer, DSA)

Two respondents were of the view that the interest and utilization of community participation in the work of the academic alone is a mark of a belief in social justice and equity. One of them indicated that a researcher is committed to ensuring social justice where all social groups involved in research are given equal opportunities and their rights are respected by the researcher/academic. To them, “community engagement” in research and teaching alone is an incorporation of social justice in scholarship. Others were of the view that the issues that are unearthed during the research process and the nature of the study undertaken are able to spark a sense of commitment towards social justice in the researcher:

Yes sometimes in terms of giving back to society. Imagine a research on marginalized group for example. The issue is how I can help the situation. Is it through advocacy by highlighting the issue or what? (Female, Lecturer, DSA)

For staff at CEGRAD, gender studies in itself concerns the creation of awareness on social justice and inequities. As such, scholarship in gender studies requires a full commitment towards exposing human rights issues and social practices that do not favor a particular gender:

Gender is a human rights issue and any scholarship on it requires a re-look at the practices at play which calls for a social concern and restructuring of unfair practices. Gender Studies is a call for social change in unequal relations. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Basically, all the respondents seemed to place premium on the importance of social justice and equality in all facets of social life and, hence, in their work:

Yes as gender is a social issue and especially gender violence is a common phenomenon which needs to be made known. Further the main purpose of gender studies is to raise consciousness and awareness thus making known the lived experiences draws attention to the depth of the issues under discussion. (Female Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

#### *Influence of basic research, topical research and advocacy on engaged scholarship*

All of the participants indicated that in selecting research topics, they are mostly concerned about addressing topical social issues pertaining specifically to Ghanaian society. However, three female participants, (with two of them coming from CEGRAD) and five males who are all Junior staff; a total of eight of them mentioned that sociologists must endeavor to situate their research within the disciplinary context, by making sure such research contributes to existing sociological debates and discussions while answering pertinent social questions relating to change and development:

.... because in dealing with a topical issue, it should be done in the disciplinary context. Also disciplinary related issues should gear towards solving a particular societal problem. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Therefore, inasmuch as they focus on studying issues that are relevant in the Ghanaian social sphere, they do not operate outside the disciplinary structure. A lecturer from DSA made a statement that suggests he is able to compartmentalize his research focus on issues that are purely disciplinary related and those that are of direct relation to pressing local social issues:

I actually do both some issues demand proper attention and urgency and actually address conventional issues in society. Some other issues are purely on the basis of the discipline. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Generally, research focus may either lean towards or away from engaged scholarship. However, participatory and action approaches require direct involvement with community groups and their issues (and even acting as representative of the community's views). Four junior lecturers from DSA claimed they do not feel obliged to represent the groups with which they engage because they are either not expected to do so by the groups they work with or they are not under any compulsion to do so. Two people did not have a firm stance on the topic of representation, yet they admitted that working with diverse social groups allows them to understand the realities and social situations of the groups they study and to devise strategies which may be useful in mitigating the challenges confronting such groups. Participants who felt compelled to draw attention to the conditions of groups they worked with in their research noted that they believed their voices could influence policy makers and agencies to intervene where necessary. A male lecturer from DSA noted that qualitative research, for instance, had a greater potential to unveil the real experiences and conditions of social groups. Another participant mentioned



that he personally has intentions of engaging in the creation of awareness on topical issues. In contrast, CEGRAD staff members noted that, so long as gender studies require advocacy and outreach and its subject matter concerns exposing inequalities and structural inequities within the social system, they feel obligated to reach several publics in their outreach activities.

Yes because gender issues eat deep into the core of society and calls for consciousness raising of all. It is very easy to naturalize even the unequal relations thus the need to broaden your reach and scope of advocacy as much as possible. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Faculty members who participated in the study were also asked whether they believe that sociologists should operate as advocates mediating between civil society and the state. Generally, more than half of the participants believed that if the academy adopts this approach, marginalized groups would become endowed with the critical view they need in order to achieve social justice. One of the respondents advocated for sociologists to take on a flexible disposition that enables them to make use of their theoretical and disciplinary knowledge and training, while ensuring that their research directly interrogates the dynamics of pressing social issues:

We should not take any rigid position. We should use our theoretical knowledge as the need may be. But we should be ready to contribute through research and advocacy to improve the lots of our people. (Male, Position not known, DSA)

On the other hand, seven participants were of the view that directly engaging in the affairs of social groups and seeking to represent them distracts sociologists from sustaining an objective outlook in the conduct of their research. In becoming advocates, sociologists may lose their sense of objectivity and focus as academics. A male respondent from DSA suggested that the creation of awareness and close association with marginalized groups in

society should be done by social workers and not sociologists. In contrast, Research Fellows at CEGRAD indicated that advocacy, outreach and association with civil society groups presents the intellectual with opportunities to provide marginalized groups with the critical perspectives they need to be aware of their social situations and devise practical methods to overcome the challenges confronting them.

If not entirely supportive of advocacy in their work, respondents did express a need for implementation of their research findings. With the exception of two of the participants, all the respondents stated that they are sometimes compelled to follow up on the utility of their research, although one respondent stated that the opportunities to do so are mostly unavailable. Another stated that policy makers are not interested in research conducted in academic departments. The following statement sums up the dilemmas the academic goes through when it comes to tracking the impact of their research:

We do research to identify social problems and make recommendations as to how the problems should be tackled. It is therefore necessary for the researcher to follow up to find out if the findings are dealt with. Otherwise, a lot of research may be done but social problems will remain unsolved. In this country most of the researches that we conduct end up on the shelves of university and departmental libraries. Policy makers are not interested in such researches. I feel obliged but cannot follow up when the avenues and resources are just not there. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Yet, following-up on the utility of research findings as indicated by three respondents is one of the ways in which the academic can determine whether his/her work has been useful:

Yes, the aim of every researcher and the passion that drives our writing is to make known to the wider society what they know and to cause the necessary change. Thus it becomes pertinent to know whether your research is being used and the areas it is making impact. It further directs your future writings and target group. (Female Research Fellow CEGRAD)

Another respondent noted that follow ups on the research findings are particularly feasible where the research project was requested by a sponsor and was meant to serve an immediate purpose. However, in most instances the researcher cannot trace the utility of the research without the cooperation of the sponsoring team:

I would want to see if the expected effect has been achieved and to know if there is the need for further research, but sponsored work goes to the sponsors. (Male, Junior Lecturer)

One junior lecturer from DSA argued that follow ups on the utility of research findings are usually important where the researcher/academic wants to conduct an evaluation of his own work to identify the effects of his research as well as areas necessary for further research. Interestingly, in the context of this question, one faculty member stated that he is interested in finding out, after he has published his work, whether others have cited or referred to his work in their research. A citation of his work in other publications to him is an indication that his work is useful and is making impact. Two respondents argued that they conduct research with the primary aim of contributing to knowledge. One of them indicated that policy formulation and change is not in his realm of work and should be left to policy makers. Another lecturer was of the view that although she was passionate about the issues and topics she conducts research about, she concerns herself only with highlighting the policy implications of her work during conferences and in her publications.

To ascertain whether one's position in her career and her level in the university hierarchy affects her decision to adopt a publicly engaged scholarship (which is time consuming) approach, the views of respondents on whether they felt comfortable to pursue engaged scholarship at the present level of their career were gathered. Four junior lecturers from DSA who were generally not comfortable with public engagement as academics

seemed to be in despair as to its practicality. Reasons cited for their inability to incorporate public engagement in their work include: the lack of recognition of their professional expertise among most groups; the underestimation of their research findings and recommendations by local government officials, community members and concerned groups, and; the proliferation of amateurish and uneducated views which impair the blossoming of platforms for healthy, educated discussions of social issues. In showing pessimism in the possibility of adopting an engaged scholarship outlook, a junior lecturer lamented:

There is much that I can do.

A senior lecturer on the other hand noted:

I am okay with public engagement when my research findings are being implemented by the beneficiaries and the results are benefiting those who are concerned. (Male, Retired but on Contract)

Another full time senior lecturer from DSA mentioned that although an academic could engage in public debates on the radio, he is discouraged when he is misquoted or implicated in politics and political talk. Respondents who were comfortable with involvement in community engagement activities stated that it is a channel through which they could get recognized within society. It also served as a method of receiving criticisms and peer review on one's approach and understanding of social issues. Those from CEGRAD noted that they are very comfortable with public engagement because they are specifically mandated to do so:

Very much comfortable to the extent that most of my work has been around dealing with people and taking part in policy engaging networks. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

*Summary of epistemological influences on engaged scholarship choice*

Altogether, participants suggest that their work is influenced by their commitment towards addressing the social problems of Ghana. However, respondents from DSA are divided over whether they should take the role of representing particular social groups that they are usually interested in studying. Their views concerning the place of the sociologist in the public sphere, the boundaries associated with interaction with extra-academic actors and their perceptions of what the public expects of them shows their level of inclination towards public sociology and increased community engagement. So far, there exists some disparities in the views of respondents especially those of DSA concerning the suitability of appropriateness of public sociology both within the disciplinary context and the institutional setting. This finding is directly in line with the general argument that sociologists are mostly concerned about maintaining a balance between adherence to academic standard and their moral commitments towards social groups and social change (de Lange 2012; Boyer 1996; Votruba 1978).

Half of the respondents from the traditional academic department (DSA) believe that taking on the disposition of a representative of social groups outside the academy or acting as the mediating agency between social groups and government or state agencies is a distraction to the critical sense of objectivity required of scientists. Thus, some of the standards (and goals) associated with “public sociology” conflict with personal beliefs about the position of the sociologist as an intellectual involved in social inquiry. Community engagement ventures (such as advocacy, outreach etc.) that involve a moral commitment over issues that may have political connotations sometimes conflict with the

professional values of those respondents who are concerned about maintaining their independence from any social politics.

Once again, the subjective beliefs of respondents with regards to what their roles are is derived from their individual experiences within the context that they work and is also key in determining their disposition towards engaged scholarship. Respondents complained that the training they received as sociologists does not permit them to be representatives of social groups but to maintain their objectivity and value neutrality. To them, working with community groups is intended to serve the primary purpose of enriching their understanding of social processes. One person argued that social workers are the ones who can directly meddle in the day-day affairs of community members. Clearly, the approach to scholarship a person was introduced to (his/her educational and social experiences/background); the kind of scholarship prevalent in the context in which a person was trained shapes his approach to social inquiry and scholarship in general.

Likewise, the responses of respondents also demonstrate that public sociology or engaged scholarship becomes attractive to faculty when they believe that the public they engage with expect them to go beyond basic research to participate in educating, raising awareness, engaging in collaborations to conduct applied research or establish partnerships with industries, communities or civil organizations. Participants who felt that most social groups within the Ghanaian society including policy makers did not value their views and the research they conducted were less enthusiastic about their capacity to engage in and sustain the practice of public sociology. They felt they were not under any compulsion (especially by any of the groups they work with) to act as advocates (a stance which is slightly a contradiction to their own belief as to what the Ghanaian public expects of them).

In this case, the effect of negative beliefs regarding the capacity of one's context to enhance the engaged scholarship is seen in the responses of participants.

Conversely, half of the respondents believe that being a representative of marginalized social groups provides the academic with the opportunity to assist the marginalized groups in developing a consciousness about their social conditions while assisting them to devise solutions to their problems (i.e., the academic is able to play an educative role). They demonstrated awareness that the Ghanaian public expect them to not only study and understand social processes but to prescribe solutions to social problems and actively oversee its implementation by the government and/or associated agencies. For most of the respondents, the recommendation of solutions through scientific research and engagement in any policy development projects are the means through which they can represent the plights of the social groups with which they work. A couple of respondents showed that they were not content with their inability to be active in the public sphere. They believed engaged scholarship offered them opportunities to gain recognition in the public sphere and gain increased understanding of social issues through the acquisition of feedback and even peer review on their scholarship particularly their research and community engagement endeavors. One of them lamented:

We should not take any rigid position. We should use our theoretical knowledge as the need may be. But we should be ready to contribute through research and advocacy to improve the lots of our people. (Gender, Position, Department)

For the staff of CEGRAD, their mandate as a center for research advocacy and policy analysis on gender related issues basically implies that their research is not only meant to produce knowledge for the academy but to expose issues pertaining to human rights abuses and inequality. They felt mandated by the stipulated mission of their

department and most especially the purpose of Gender Studies which they saw as a discipline that was embedded with the objective of exposing structural inequalities to represent the groups they worked with (studied) in the public sphere not only through their academic research but also on platforms for policy interrogation and advocacy. As such, they preferred to mostly align with participatory methods and to uphold a commitment to ensuring social justice is achieved. In sum, the responses of participants suggest that the staff of CEGRAD view public sociology and engaged scholarship as dictated by the purpose and mandate of their department. Advocacy, outreach, policy interrogation, interdisciplinary collaborations that rely mostly on participatory methods come along with their job design and therefore they are more likely to embrace the practice of engaged scholarship more easily. Participants of DSA on the other hand, are divided over their capacity to take up public sociology because of contextual and personal factors such as the politics over its feasibility and appropriateness and whether it will be welcomed.

Despite the disagreements between DSA staff over the place of the sociologist in the public sphere, majority (9 out of 12) believed that when it comes to research, the method employed is mostly determined by the nature of the issue under study and the long term goal of ensuring that social research is translated into improved social conditions. To them, social research ought to be founded on the use of both participatory, and interpretive methods as well as positivist methods. Yet, a considerable number of respondents (6) indicated that as at the time they were been consulted, they had not conducted research that is highly reliant on community participation in its design and implementation.



*Expressions of public engagement projects and practices within academic practice*

This section outlines the complexities of the scholarship of respondents by providing a description of how engaged scholarship is currently perpetuated in their work. In addition, the different situations under which the academics who participated in the study interact with members of the public in their capacities as academics are identified. The aim of this section is to identify the situation of public engagement in the scholarship of academics; to identify whether it permeates all facets of scholarship or whether it is a separate endeavor pursued only occasionally and is disconnected from teaching and research.

*Demonstration of public engagement in teaching and learning*

To a great degree, participants noted that community engagement provides students and the academic with the opportunity to reflect on the utility of sociological theories and perspectives under real life circumstances. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology operates a curriculum that provides opportunities for community engagement to thrive as it moves teaching of the discipline from a largely theoretical stance to that which embraces a more practical/hands on pedagogy. DSA has gone further to select a rural community (outside the university) which it uses as its social lab for research, teaching and learning. The community selected by DSA to be used for the social laboratory is Enyan Abasa community- a rural township located in the same region as the University of Cape Coast. Members of the department have established a partnership with the community for teaching, research and outreach purposes. The community (Enyan Abasa) on one hand, serves as a laboratory for data collection on social issues, teaching and learning. DSA on the other hand, helps the community by helping community members

understand the implications of their research, and going further to help them implement any solutions to some of the widely accepted concerns discovered in the research. Thus, it's a two-way partnership. The community is the field for learning and research on one end. On another it serves as a platform for outreach and the implementation of programs that are beneficial to the community itself.

Customarily, as part of requirements for completion of courses such as rural sociology, research methods and sociology of development which entail practicum, students go to communities to interact with community members through outreach and research projects using the communities as social laboratories. They then present technical reports not only concerning their experiences but on the dynamics of social phenomena which they have observed in the communities. Class assignments that involve community-based research and community projects give the student hands-on experience with research, and enable students, faculty and community members to deliberate on issues of social concern together. In explaining how community engagement is incorporated with the courses she teaches a respondent stated:

Yes, to some extent. Especially group work and group presentations which sometimes require students to engage the public to inform their work and discussions. Students are given topics or made to identify topics of interest in the subject area and undertake fieldwork which in the process gives them the opportunity to engage the communities around. (Female, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

There is formal practicum for some of the courses, courses like rural sociology and research methods incorporate community participation (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Sometimes, stakeholders within communities are brought into the classrooms as resource persons to provide information on specific topics. One lecturer mentioned educational trips to industrial sites and communities as an indication of public engagement in teaching. In

all, respondents believe that community engagement is the practical essence of teaching and learning:

Community engagement espouses the practical rather than theoretical aspect of teaching, learning and research- It is the practical wing of scholarship. Students are able to acquire first hand experiences of social problems and learn how to overcome them. (Male, Retired but on contract, DSA)

A female research fellow from CEGRAD suggested that their Center also provides tutoring on gender-related issues and, as such, public engagement is imbued in the projects undertaken by students. In responding to the same question, a male research fellow stated categorically, that CEGRAD is not a teaching *department*.

*Materialization of public engagement in the conduct of research*

Participants also believed that public engagement is being actively pursued insofar as members of communities are participate in the research process and are viewed as partners by the academic (a disposition that could imply public engagement is being likened to participation in research). To them, the integration of public views gathered during data collection into research and teaching is a mark of engaged scholarship. The following statements demonstrate this assertion:

Students come from communities and give insights of what happens during teaching. Examples are used from communities to enhance teaching to make it real. Community participation is core to all research communities. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

All social issues and problems are located within our communities so in order for us as sociologists to really understand society and social interactions, we must constantly engage with the community. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Although, the level of participation has not been indicated in their statements, it can be deduced that respondents believe that insofar as community actors are contacted during the research process and are the ones who provide data (whether primary or secondary), then they can argue that the community has been recognized and represented in their research work. Unfortunately, this disposition does not adequately measure up to the standards of “Public Sociology” and engaged scholarship prescribed in the literature.

While the perspectives of communities will be represented in the research reports or articles that the academic will produce, the practice of going into communities with the sole purpose of retrieving data puts the community in a passive position and limits the inputs and direct benefit that community members can acquire from the project (which the new engaged scholarship/public sociology school is trying to discourage). Meanwhile, engaged scholarship requires an approach to research where interactions with communities are based on partnerships that have clearly defined goals as to how the research projects benefit both parties (Douglas 2012; de Lange 2012; Stanton 2007; Barker 2004; Appadurai 2000; Boyer 1996). In this case, where community members cannot perceive themselves as active partners in a research project that they can derive measurable benefits from, they are likely take on an unsupportive or hostile disposition towards any work with academics:

The public generally expects to see some improvement in their lives from these researches. However, that has not happened yet so there is general reluctance of members of communities to participate in researches. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

My observed expectations based on my experience has been that intellectuals: should be upright and moral in their dealings as may have had had more education and presumably know better. Should inform policy and ensure implementation of these policies by politicians. Most grievances in seemingly highly researched communities have been that people always come to them to ask questions (Collect data) but they hardly see anything being done about the situation (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

When it comes to the involvement of communities in the dissemination of their research, only four of the respondents indicated that they shared research findings with students, media houses and also presented their research findings to local government and community leaders where necessary. Mostly, participation in workshops, presentation at conferences and to colleagues in the department, publication in academic journals and participation in media discussions are the major platforms on which individual faculty disseminate their research findings and knowledge. In the same vein, respondents were asked to name the platforms upon which their expertise (as academics) are presented, six of them stated that their research work and expertise is shared mainly within academic circles such as in academic journals, during conferences/symposiums, workshops and lectures. The remaining nine indicated that in addition to sharing their knowledge and expertise in academic circles, they are also interested in being present in non-academic circles, such as in the media especially on the radio where they engage in debates on social policy issues.

By and large, respondents preferred to share research information and knowledge in academic circles. However, a majority of them claimed to have interest in engaging the media as well as concerned groups (such as state/ local government agencies) in sharing ideas and knowledge. Two of the workers of CEGRAD stated that their expertise was made available both in academic and non-academic circles. Again, the issues about the mandate of CEGRAD as a center for outreach and advocacy on gender related issues serves as a determining factor in requiring its staff to not only work with actors in academic circles but to engage extra-academic audiences who are the ultimate consumers of the research and expertise CEGRAD was established to offer:

As a research and outreach department we are mandated to undertake outreach and advocacy with community agents, leaders, members and so on. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Likewise, contributions to public debates through participation in public lectures, symposiums and other fora to present their research and perspectives on topical issues, provision of consultancy services, involvement in social research on pressing social issues, serving on community advisory boards, involvement with extra-academic audiences (such as community youth groups or church groups) were mentioned as the channels through which public engagement is being pursued. Quite a number of them perceive themselves to be active participants of community development decision-making processes:

... When invited for presentations and talks on my expertise at different fora including youth and church programs. Also, writings in policy briefs in simple and eloquent manner is another way of engaging the public. Even serving on community advisory boards and the likes is another such means. (Female, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Respondents claimed they perform other educative functions for their various communities. Youth groups, churches and media outlets invite them to provide education on social issues. Respondents have generally come to accept that they are regarded as educators and as such through education and outreach; they can also contribute towards social debates:

[Through] outreach programs on radio stations and television. I provide education aimed at broadening people's understanding of sociopolitical issues. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

For a respondent who specializes in gender studies and who is also active in several women's groups, her position as a women's group leader enables her to provide education to communities on gender related issues:

I am a member of numerous associations and networks that deal with gender related issues. We undertake grassroots activities and volunteering works which brings me

in contact with other people and engagements with the public beyond my primary occupation as an academic creating this space for interaction with the public. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Another respondent noted that he engages in discussions with groups that provide support for people living with HIV and AIDS; these groups are linked to his research interests and his area of specialization.

So far, the prestige and status accorded them as academics and their affiliations to other social groups outside the academy provides opportunities to engage in outreach and advocacy activities and to serve as resource persons who provide education on topics usually pertaining to their area of expertise. Just like the three personnel from CEGRAD, two of the DSA participants implied that the university's requirement for academic staff to engage in consultancy services, advocacy and outreach activities and to participate in community activities mainly to contribute their expertise motivates them to collaborate with audiences outside the academy:

As part of the university's corporate plan we are supposed to be "visible" by being more proactive, assertive and open to the outside world. So we offer in work what the public may like to consume or will be beneficial to the general public. (Male, Lecturer, DSA)

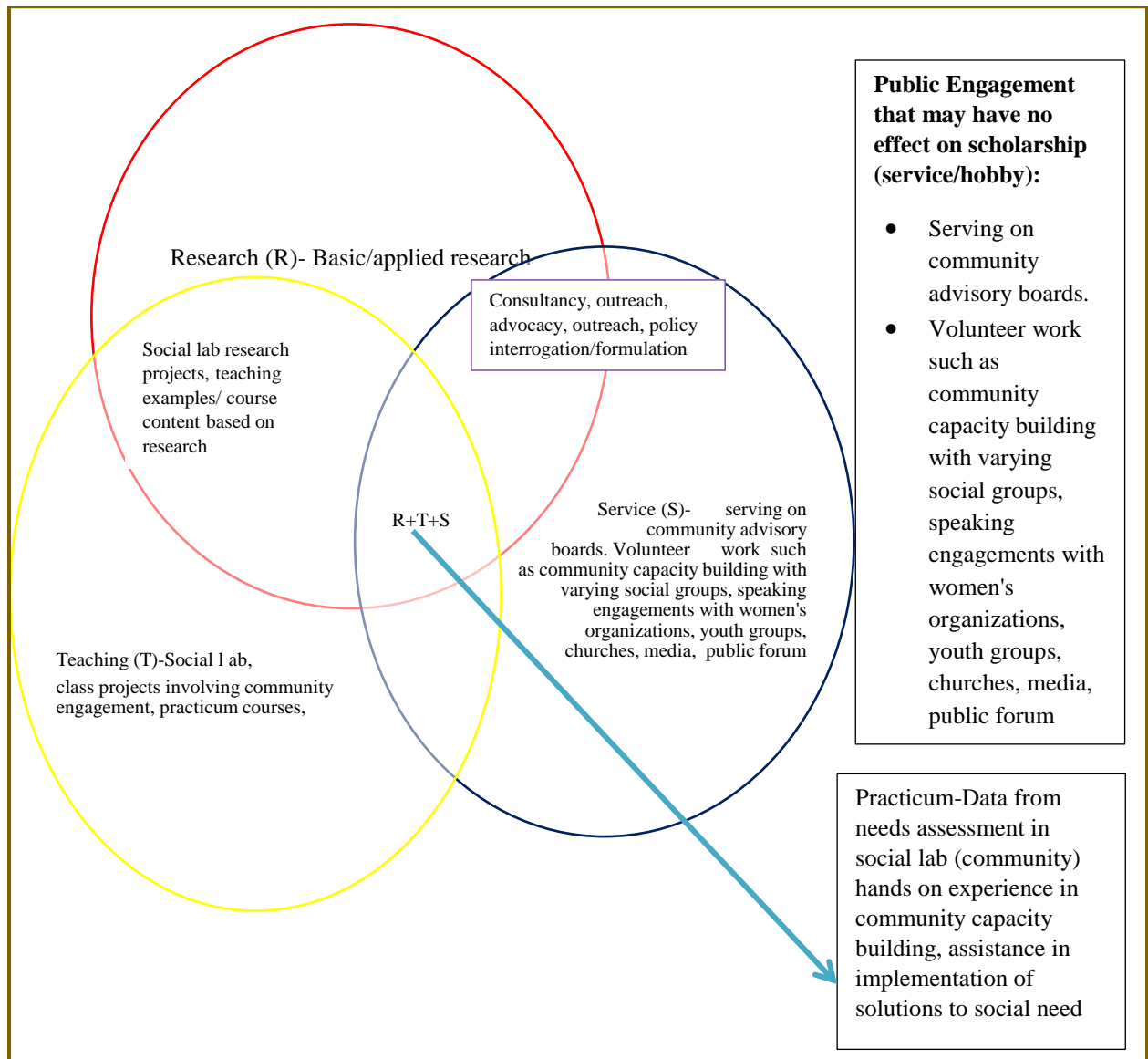
*Overview of current forms of engagement and their relation to academic scholarship:*

In all, the data suggests that some forms of community engagement are incorporated into research, teaching and service where necessary. Figure 6.3 provides an illustration of the different kinds of community engagement undertaken by faculty and how they are woven into teaching, research and service tasks. It also shows how some of the teaching, research and service functions of the academic overlap as a result of community

engagement. Typically, engaged scholarship involves the arrangement of partnerships with communities in a manner that is connected to the traditional functions of the academic (the research, service and teaching functions of the academic) (Bourke 2013; de Lange 2012; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Barge 2008; Harkavy 2005). As such, Ford's (1992) concept of goal hierarchies is useful in establishing the idea that the motivation to be involved with communities is enhanced when community partnerships are designed in a manner such that the goal of public engagement is linked to the research agenda, teaching and service goals of the academic.



Figure 6.4. Relations between community engagement and teaching, service and research tasks



For respondents of DSA, the identification of a community as a social lab, presents several opportunities for them to simultaneously accomplish some of the goals associated with teaching, research and service roles. MST's concept of goal connectivity comes to play in this situation as faculty are able to achieve their research, teaching service functions simultaneously because of their engagement with the chosen community. The use of the "Enyan Abasa" community as a social lab provides opportunities for faculty to incorporate

community engagement into teaching and learning (or course development) and research as students and faculty are able to participate in community capacity building projects, acquire experience and knowledge relating to some of their coursework/area of specialization while also pursuing both basic and applied research projects. Furthermore, the service task of faculty was accomplished when faculty and students from DSA proceeded to work with the community in implementing a solution to one of the needs identified in the needs assessment (eg. reconstruction of a market).

Though the partnership with the “*Enyan Abasa*” community provides opportunities for faculty to conduct research and for their students to acquire practical knowledge in their subjects of study while also fulfilling their service functions, it cannot be ascertained whether the methods, results and issues associated with the needs assessment and the other research projects (that of both students and faculty) were made available to others in academia through publications and other open fora. The question remains whether this partnership only helped to fulfill the teaching and service functions of the academic or whether it was also able to generate new knowledge that can be shared with others within the academic community especially through publications which are needed not only for promotion but for the extension of knowledge within the academic community. With engaged scholarship, the academic does not only work with the community on local issues but is also interested in generating knowledge that can be useful to the academic community (Nilson et al. 2014; de Lange 2012; Miller 2011; Sandman and Weerts 2008; Stanton 2007; Harkavy 2005; Barker 2004; AASU 2002; Sandman et al. 2000; Boyer 1997). However, the purpose of using the “*Enyan Abasa*” community as a laboratory for experiential learning, data collection and social engineering makes it possible to make the

claim that the department embraces engaged scholarship. This is because the social lab entails the establishment of a partnership where both DSA and the “*Enyan Abasa*” community participated in generating knowledge and experience that enhances teaching and learning and constitutes useful service to the community. Also, Barker’s (2004) taxonomy of five kinds of engaged scholarship recognizes community partnerships that emphasize social transformations as engaged scholarship.

While the academic may be interested in ensuring that community engagement enriches his scholarship, and could even be acting in his/her capacity as a sociologist in his engagement with communities, not all public engagement endeavors have a bearing on academic scholarship (de Lange 2012, Schweitzer 2010; Simpson and Seibold 2008; AASCU 2002 Boyer 1996).

Actually some community engagements do not affect teaching in any way. For instance, being a patron in my Alma mater. However, community engagement such as belonging to a youth development association can help you contribute ideas. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA).

These activities sometimes involved unidirectional flows of knowledge and expertise usually from the academic to the community. Examples of such activities include serving on community advisory boards, volunteer work involving community capacity building, speaking engagements with women's organizations, youth groups, churches, and the media. While these activities involve moving out of academic circles (the “ivory tower”), they usually do not involve the incorporation of disciplinary or theoretical methods aimed at producing useful knowledge for the academy and the involved social group and as such fall short of the tenets of engaged scholarship and public sociology (Barge and Shockley Zalabak 2008; Simpson and Seibold 2008). In de Lange’s (2012) scheme, activities that solely involve community interaction service and outreach and are conducted separately

from research and/or teaching agenda can be considered the basic form of public engagement.

In all, one-third (five) of the respondents did not mention any involvements in projects which had the dual purpose of enhancing their scholarship while being of direct usefulness to members of the engaged community or social group. However, aside from the social lab project, to the majority of the respondents, their research is based on interactions with local communities sometimes shapes the design of the courses they teach as well as the content and the method of teaching. At the same time, community engagement further informs research interests, methods, application and direction. While, practicum courses provide the academic with the opportunity to acquire diverse perspectives from the student projects that were undertaken in the social laboratories, research findings are also forwarded to the needed stakeholders for action and implementation. The two comments below reflect the views of respondents on the relationship between teaching, research and community service:

I see my work and public engagement as a cyclical process feeding into each other. Community engagement provides an opportunity to gain more knowledge and understanding into the literature available to you, confirm your studies and broadens your understanding. This thus widens your knowledge base on the practical aspects of your subject which enhances teaching and learning. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Research, service and teaching influence one another and enhance improvement of each other. They are intricately connected; perception of societal expectations may inform your research, teaching and service to the community. My current research is about armed robbery because I noticed that society will like answers to the problem. Again it shapes what I put emphasis on during teaching (Male, Position, DSA)

In sum, participants mentioned how the research projects they had either undertaken or were in the process of conducting incorporated the inputs of several

community actors and organizations. Based on the data gathered the inclusion of community actors at any point of the research process depends on the purpose of the research project. It was also possible for respondents to misconstrue the mere collection of data from communities as public engagement. Yet, engaged scholarship involves partnerships that are built on the accomplishment of goals beneficial to both the academic community and the involved social group (Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Miller 2011; Boyer 1996). Engaged scholarship also means that public engagement must be connected to the teaching, research and service agenda of faculty. In case of respondents from DSA, not all their activities had a bearing on scholarship. However, their position as professional sociologists enabled them to be involved in public education and decision making through the release of policy briefs and participation in radio discussions which provided them with the opportunity to meet other key stakeholders in their field (and other academics).

According to Burawoy and VanAntwerpen (2001), public sociology is supposed to encompass the other three sociologies: critical, policy and professional sociology. It is an extension of the educative role of the sociologist and it places the sociologist in the public domain to engage in co-creating knowledge with community actors for public dialogue, advocacy, policy building and social engineering (Burawoy 2009, 2007, 2005). To this end, respondents who have been able to make use of their status (social recognition) and expertise as sociologists to interact with communities through participation in policy briefs, policy formulation projects, the establishment of a social lab, research projects and volunteer work with social groups related to their areas of specialization could be said to be involved in public sociology.

Yes, I have been involved in research on street youth and the findings disseminated through policy briefs and radio commentaries. I have also had the opportunity to

share with the community through radio discussions on topical issues that fall within my domain and during such discussions I had instances from many other researchers that relate to the issue under discussion (Female, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Still, the level of incorporation of the standards associated with the generation of knowledge, an adherence to the principle of ensuring the community engagement project involves a two-way interaction between the community and the academic cannot be ascertained. Also, there are instances where public engagement had no connection with teaching, research or service.

#### *National and departmental influences on faculty-community partnerships*

Based on the premise that the work of the intellectual is highly dependent on the national and institutional environment within which he or she works, the researcher sought to elicit information on the perceptions of respondents when it comes to the availability of supporting organizational structures, such as the existence of an enabling policy framework, a functioning monitoring and evaluation framework and a reward system that recognizes engaged scholarship. Also, the ability of respondents to access funding for projects that are built on community engagement and the general factors that serve to enhance or inhibit the pursuit of engaged scholarship are outlined.

#### *Departmental Disposition on community engagement*

Respondents were asked to describe how their departments encouraged/supported community-engaged scholarship. For most respondents, the delegation of a community that serves as a social laboratory is a stepping stone in providing a platform for faculty who want to have a stable/reliable social setting to pursue engaged scholarship. Through interactions between the students and faculty from the department and the Enyan Abasa

community (the social laboratory), theory and practice are bridged. The students work with community members to understand social occurrences and then produce reports on their experiences. Also, experts and stakeholders within the communities are invited as resource persons to deliver lectures and explanations on some topics during the course of the semester while students also engage in research and class projects that involve interacting with community members. One person mentioned that, although internships are not a requirement by the department, they are encouraged as a means for the students to gain experiential knowledge while interacting with local communities. Another respondent from DSA noted that although the university expects them to incorporate community engagement into their work (as reflected in the university's mission and objectives), he believes the definition and constitution of community engagement is not adequately defined in the institution's mission statements.

When asked about how their departments give back or influence the broader Ghanaian society, the recurrent theme was the production of personnel with critical thinking and analytical capacities through teaching. Faculty members believed that the training they provide to the student population was the means through which they could contribute to the development of a competent human force that could, in turn, affect the pace of development. In addition, the department continually develops relevant and practical academic programs (known as sandwich programs) for state agencies such as the security services:

It has trained a lot of sociologists who are serving the society in diverse ways some journalists, public relations officers, corporate policy analysts, policy experts etc, the Sociology department produces skilled and competent personnel to understand different people from different walks of life and work with them harmoniously to ensure stability. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

For staff of DSA, serving on community development or public agency boards and participating in media conversations and conferences, both within Ghana and the West African Sub-region, are ways through which the department as a whole participates in community decision-making processes. Furthermore, DSA had been involved in some community projects in addition to advocacy ventures through the issuance of communiqués (official statements) on trending issues and the provision of professional counsel to extra-academic groups when requested. A respondent from DSA was of the view that the practice of presenting research findings to the appropriate stakeholders for consideration is a sure way through which the department influences the rest of society. In the case of the Enyan Abasa community, the needs assessment which was conducted served two purposes: 1. students got to acquire experience in conducting research and 2. Both students and the members of the community got to have an idea of the some of the widespread needs and problems of the community. Then the department went further to help the community acquire funds to undertake a project that fulfills one of the pressing needs of the community (DSA helped with the acquisition of funds for the implementation of their local market construction project). Hence the relationship between the community and the department was beneficial to both parties. The findings of the research (needs assessment) were made known to members of the community. Together with the efforts of faculty at DSA, a solution was found to a pressing need and then students and faculty were able to conduct research, share their expertise and acquire hands on experience.

Interestingly, staff members of CEGRAD also believe that teaching, research and publication are the major channels through which CEGRAD contributes to society. However, all in all, the two departments seem to encourage the growth of engaged



scholarship through their support for experiential learning, the development of a social lab, release of communiqués, participation in community development activities, advocacy, outreach and the design of courses for specific sections of the Ghanaian workforce.

*Institutional/National Policy on the Pursuit of Public Engagement in the Academy*

More than half the participants in the study noted that they did not have any idea of a national or an institutional policy framework that supports the conduct, monitoring and evaluation, and the compensation of academy-community engagement efforts. One of the three people who stated they knew of such a policy stated that the stipulated functions of a lecturer (teaching, research and community service) are an implication of a commitment to engaged scholarship. Others were of the view that the provision of the “book and research allowance” is a sign of the state’s commitment to supporting research and community engagement. One person added that the university of Cape Coast also had a research unit that provided funding and support for research and its dissemination. However, he did not specify whether community engagement was a criterion for the acquisition of funding:

As a national framework, government as part of wages for academics provides research and book allowance for lecturers. Institutionally UCC has a research department which funds conference attendants of academics to disseminate findings of their research and also provides funds for their research. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

Respondents were also asked whether they were aware of any framework within the institution that is responsible for the assessment of faculty’s community engagement activities. Four of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of any system specifically instituted for monitoring or evaluating public engagement activities. One of

them stated that the quality assurance unit was for other purposes, usually to evaluate the performance of faculty in teaching. Judging from a statement made by another respondent, the only quality assurance system set in place to evaluate the work of academics on a regular basis is the course evaluation survey where students assess the lecturer's skill and his quality of teaching.

The few participants who stated that the university provided a formal system for evaluating and supporting public engagement did not explain how such systems work. They only indicated that there is an evaluation system in place for the purposes of community engagement. However, one lecturer from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology added that the university's requirement for faculty to present evidence of community involvement in order to acquire promotion or for their contracts to be renewed is an indication of the university's commitment to community engagement; a requirement which implicitly serves as a check on faculty to pursue community engaged scholarship:

Yes, since one is supposed to show evidence of one's community engagement in some forms such as promotion, confirmation, renewal of contract and others. These forms serve as a form of monitoring. I personally do not know of other supports.  
(Female, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Two of the participants believe that the university as the principal organization does not provide any support for engaged scholarship. Yet, others believe that university has given faculty the discretion to undertake engaged scholarship and sometimes provides the logistics and funding needed to pursue community engagement ventures in their capacity as academics. As indicated in the responses of three participants, being affiliated to the university provides the academic with the recognition and credibility he or she needs to work with community members. The university provides lecturers with introductory and

cover letters which make it easier for faculty members to be able to begin the process of establishing relationships when they move out to work in the communities:

Through the university, community entry is easier...by providing cover letters to introduce and give backing to my credibility. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

*Recognition of engagement in University reward structure*

When it comes to the incentives that the university provides for involvement in civic engagement activities, three of the respondents indicated that community engagement counts towards promotion of faculty members. Lecturers are required to provide evidence of involvement in community activities in order to fulfill all the criteria for promotion. Another three of the participants mentioned that the only reward for public engagement is a citation (or commendatory remarks) usually made through the institution's publicity channels (i.e. website, university radio station, newsletters,). Two senior lecturers claimed they sometimes received rewards for such efforts, though they did not explain what forms such rewards take. Two junior lecturers of DSA explained that the university sometimes provided per diems and a little funding for activities that also include community engagement:

Probably the only thing they do is to recognize such project by placing it on the university website. (Gender, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

I am not sure about funds but sometimes recognition if you achieve a great deed. This strategy is also used to promote the image of the university by associating with the achievement. (Female, Lecturer, DSA)

All the responses provided by participants when it came to the rewarding of engaged scholarship suggest that the university valued research and publication over other aspects of scholarship. Six of the respondents claimed that they were unaware of any rewards associated with community engagement. By according a much higher weight to

research and publications in academic journals in comparison to public engagement and service to the university community, the university has implanted the practice and belief that in order for faculty to progress in the organizational hierarchy, they must concentrate on publishing in academic journals:

Yes the university promotion is based on the number of publications a lecturer has and not on how well he/she teaches or does public engagement or community service. The only thing that counts when it comes to promotion is published researches. Research takes the lion's share of the marks. Others only add up because the university is a research university. There is the slogan "publish or perish" in the university. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

A female lecturer from DSA noted that although the university places premium on the release of publication when it comes to the promotion of its faculty, individual priorities and values also influence the social issues the academic decides to study, his/her approach towards research and whether to employ participatory methods and to adopt a publicly engaged scholarship or not:

Yes, research for publication and promotion is very common in our context but depending on your personal or individual philosophy, others also engage in research on topical issues for social justice and community upliftment. There are a few instances of commissioned research on trending social issues eg. the archiving of the current Kotokuraba Market. (Female, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

However, just a little more than half of the respondents (8) hinted that so far, they have not been able to access grants or acquire funding for work, that entails public engagement. Reasons given for their inability to acquire grants for their projects include the general unwillingness on the part of organizations in Ghana to invest in research and in the academy. In answering whether he had been able to acquire grants for projects that involve local communities, a respondent stated:

No not at all it is difficult to come by such grants unless you work with CSOs or NGOs. (Male, lecturer, DSA)

The seven faculty who have been able to acquire grants/funds also indicated that such grants are not easily accessible. The majority of grants and projects discussed by respondents were those funded by development and multinational agencies, not local/indigenous Ghanaian agencies:

Grants for public engagement are not easily accessible. Securing such funding within Ghana is not easy. It is only a few organizations who are willing to provide such funding. However, we have been able to access funds from Educational Research Network for West Africa and Central Africa (ERNWACA), Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Department for International Development (DFID). (Male, Retired but on contract, DSA)

These have mostly been international and they are not easy to win. Nonetheless, there have been successes which have helped in undertaking research and publications. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD).

For quite a number of respondents (6), UCC's emphasis on research and publication overshadows the contribution of community engagement in the institutional reward system. Even those who admit that public engagement counts towards promotion still think that in comparison to research or publication, the institution only provides little recognition and reward for it. In addition, funding and support for outreach and public engagement is generally low and as such academics who want to pursue such endeavors have to look for funding from sources outside the university. As employees of the university, respondents are most likely to organize their activities to fulfill the tasks which the institution values the most. Positive perceptions concerning the practicability of the implementation of goals built on community engagement are enhanced when faculty perceive that they will be able to access to the resources needed for its implementation and they will be sufficiently recognized or rewarded for it. Thus, the inadequate support system for engagement

(funding and rewarding systems) lowers the confidence of faculty concerning their ability to implement any public engagement goals they may have outlined. In this case, respondents do not perceive that the institution attaches as much value to public engagement therefore their responses show that the motivation to pursue engaged scholarship is low.

*Participant identification of external and internal challenges and opportunities for community engagement*

Other factors mentioned by participants as barriers to the growth of engaged scholarship include mistrust from community members, access to resources, and competing demands in the academic workplace. Sometimes stakeholders in communities may not show any enthusiasm to work with members of the academy as they have come to believe that their participation in social research has not yielded any changes in social policy or development. Most community members do not understand the relevance of scientific research. As such, their involvement in activities involving the academy is dependent on the ability of the intellectuals involved to devise several measures of encouraging them to participate.

Low cooperation from community members: they believe that outcomes of such researches are not implemented: they believe there have been too many researches but no improvement in their social and economic life. Their approach is that of a lack of trust, apathy and generally they also lack knowledge. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Timing and understanding of the usefulness of the research to the community. It is quite difficult to always have access to these people. Most of the time, you would have to spend a lot of money to get them on regular bases because they need to be motivated and encouraged. Community actors are hardly ready and available to sit and grant you interviews or fill questionnaires or research questions. Where available compensation is accepted and this I think is connected to the fact that they

expect little of what will come out of the study in terms of immediate change to the issues. (Female Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

In addition, the multiplicity of languages and ethnic groups in the Ghanaian society hinders the tendency for academics to relate with diverse groups and work with them on topics of interests. A lecturer from DSA mentioned that at times, community members want to receive financial rewards before they participate in any activity which involves the university:

Some community actors expect that you give them some money. (Male senior Lecturer/professor, DSA)

Second, participants also mentioned that the previously discussed difficulty in the acquisition of funding and logistics for research projects serves as a limitation on their ability to undertake research projects that incorporate increased community participation:

Funding Challenges and other logistics such as transportation, fuel etc. There are times you may have to part from money and it may be from personal resources. So there are challenges. Also out teaching load can sometimes affect our time for community engagement thereby making it look like private work or extra work for the lecturer. (Female, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

It was also mentioned that the premium placed on publication over other aspects of scholarship worked to stifle the development of community service and engaged scholarship. One of the participants noted:

There is very little or no incentive to do so this is because the university does not value those services highly as compared to publishing articles in international journals. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Another noted the teaching load provided lecturers with little time to pursue other aspects of scholarship:

Also our teaching load can sometimes affect our time for community engagement thereby making it look like private work or extra work for the lecturer. (Female, junior Lecturer, DSA)

While many of these challenges are significant, participants also made other suggestions that can help to increase the pursuit of public engagement endeavors within academia. These recommendations encompass actions that can be taken by individual researchers (i.e., intervention research, participatory research) and those which require amendment to organizational policies (i.e., delineation of engaged scholarship for faculty evaluation, expansion of resources). Participants noted that sociologists can assist community members to understand social problems through research, educational campaigns, advocacy and mobilization of community actors to implement research recommendations. A participant suggested that sociologists could develop intervention research proposals, solicit for funds from agencies and then work together with community members to achieve change. Another suggested that the sociologist can help community leaders develop proposals for the acquisition of funds and implementation of development projects.

The use of participatory approaches in their research in ways that ensure the involvement of community members in at least most phases of the research project was recommended by a few respondents. This approach was also noted as a way of ensuring that community actors become empowered to understand their social conditions, identify problems and solutions, and move to implement them:

The sociologist through research can come out with a proposal aimed at solving community development problems and solicit for financial support or material support from organizations. He should be acting also as a social engineer and not only help out in carrying out the research but help in carrying out the suggestions. ((Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Through community mobilization, helping community members to identify social or community problems through research educational campaigns, mobilizing community members, through civic engagement Counselling, Advocacy the sociologist can become more visible in social change. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)



However, Junior Lecturers advocated for increased mentorship from experienced senior faculty as well as frequent collaborations among faculty for research that encompasses community engagement:

More mentoring and more exposure of academics to best practices. (Male, Junior Lecturer, DSA)

One person noted that unless community engagement is built into the institutional statements/declarations and the higher education system generally supports it, the sociologist would always experience difficulty in implementing projects which are heavily reliant on community participation. As well, eight respondents advocated for the recognition of engaged scholarship when it comes to the promotion of faculty. Four others also advocated for the department to prioritize community engagement by setting up structures that support and enhance the administration of community engagement as an aspect of scholarship:

Promotion should not be based on only researches that are published but should include teaching and community service or engagements. Adding outreach, advocacy and community engagement to the requirements for promotion. This would serve as a motivation and take attention off just the publications. (Male Junior Lecturer, DSA)

Maybe by the department emphasizing on its importance and taking it further as a department project rather than leaving it to individual lecturers. In that case some would be engaged in community engagement while others would limit themselves to direct issues such as lecturing of students. (Female, Lecturer, DSA)

Encourage more outreach activities by departments. Little is done in this regard as it is not mandated. Most outreaches done by departments have been by individuals within the department/faculty and on volunteer basis. (Female Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

In conjunction with policy change at the institution, respondents mentioned they wanted to see an increase in the funding/financial support needed for engaged scholarship to thrive.

One advocated for the availability of grants and the maintenance of the already existent scheme that provides financial support for research:

Grants for research should be made easily available .... The annual research grant must not be taken away. The government can still contribute a national research grant in addition to the yearly research grant that lecturers receive. (Male, Retired but on Contract, DSA)

Finally, given their resources, abilities and institutional environment, respondents were asked whether they believe that they have the capability to undertake a scholarship that was underscored by community engagement. Everyone except a senior lecturer from DSA provided an affirmative answer to the question. However, an explanation was not provided as to why he believed he was not in the position to engage in collaborations with communities. Two junior lecturers based their affirmative response off prior experiences in research and past projects undertaken. One respondent from DSA and another from CEGRAD (both Master's degree holders in the process of getting their PhDs) called for mentorship, further experience in academia and training in order to develop a stronger confidence in their abilities to undertake engaged scholarship. They did not state emphatically whether they are in the position to adopt engaged scholarship.

Learning and capacity building get better with time. As an academic there is the need to upgrade yourself continually to survive in your field of work. In this regard, I would not say I am totally equipped I really do have what it takes at the moment to undertake the tasks. I guess further training and development in this regard will not be bad by the way. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD)

The recommendations provided by respondents indicate that there is a general acceptance and interest for community engaged scholarship. With perspectives that demonstrate support for the operationalization of community engagement through applied/intervention research, calls for the increased use of participatory methods,

collaborations for applied research and partnerships with communities for social improvement, respondents seem to demonstrate an interest for public sociology or engaged scholarship. Given that most of the respondents believe that research and subsequently, publications are the most valued efforts within the institution they work for, they hope to incorporate more community engagement into their research (through increased inclusion of community members and the institution of applied research methods). In other words, the goal of the academic in this case is to integrate civic engagement with research methods and subsequently acquire publications from such projects. This disposition is characteristic of public sociology because of the interest in civic engagement for social change that is also undergirded by acceptable disciplinary practices and the quest to create knowledge that is particularly useful to both the academy and local stakeholders (Burawoy 2005).

Overall, respondents indicated that they have interests in incorporating community engagement into their work. They also noted that they believe they have the personal ability (skills, aptitude) to pursue a scholarship that involves public engagement. However, the data gathered shows that the professional rank of the academic is a critical determinant of whether the individual academic selects (and pursues) goals and aspirations that are in line with public engagement. For most Junior Lecturers who participated in this study, publishing in academic journals and the acquisition of their PhDs (for those who do not have it), which are key requirements for the acquisition of tenure, is their most important priority. To those in the junior rank, job security comes before collaborations with extra-academic groups. Therefore, most of them had little involvement with communities with regards to projects that can also be related to their scholarship. Nonetheless, these Junior

Lecturers showed interest and outlined a list of goals projects that include community engagement.

Senior lecturers were also interested in academic research and publication. However, they had been involved in several projects with community groups, state and non-governmental as well as international organizations for research and other projects that involve public engagement and the donation of their expertise to extra-academic groups. They emphasized their continued interest in public engagement.

Based on MST, the actual capacity to successfully take up public sociology goes beyond interests and belief in personal abilities to include positive beliefs concerning the capacity of the institution (UCC) and the society in which they work to provide them with an enabling environment. For Junior Lecturers, the creation of a departmental climate that encourages partnerships with senior faculty for public engagement projects will provide them with an assurance of the capacity of the institution to support engaged scholarship. Even with personal interests in community engagement, respondents of this study are also particularly concerned about the accessibility of the requisite funding and resources needed for public engagement and particularly whether their involvement with communities has any influence on their personal career advancement. So far, respondents do not see any effective institutionalized support system that provides funding and logistics for community engagement and also recognizes and rewards public engagement. Overall, these aforementioned challenges associated with the institutional context are responsible for decreasing the motivation needed to pursue meaningful community partnerships. Participants seem to have pessimistic views (negative context beliefs) about the capacity of their institutional and social context to provide the support needed for engaged

scholarship. The lack of an effective institutional support system and recognition makes it difficult for personal interests in community engagement to be translated into engaged scholarship.

*Summary:*

Based on Motivational Systems Theory (MST), one of the objectives of the survey was to elicit data that can inform a discussion on the role of individual characteristics on the development of interest in the scholarship of engagement. Data from the survey suggests that the professional (academic) rank of an individual academic is linked to actual participation or experience in undertaking certain kinds of community engagement such as involvement in social policy formulation, advocacy, outreach or the provision of consultancy service/research. In comparison to their senior counterparts, Junior Lecturers who participated in this study were less likely to have been involved in all three of the following community engagement activities: social policy development processes, the provision of consultancy services or outreach. Likewise, the short term professional goals (the next five years) of respondents of a lower academic rank tilted towards the establishment of their position as professional sociologists. To be exact, the acquisition of PhDs and publications and involvement in research were top priority for lecturers in the lower rank (though majority of the respondents are Junior Lecturers). Nevertheless, interest in increasing engagement with communities seemed to be a current concern.

According to Ford (1992) the motivation to pursue engaged scholarship is peculiar to the individual. When community engagement is a part of internalized role concepts and goals which pervade a person's conceptual framework then the individual is more likely to

adopt a professional identity that hinges on engaged scholarship (Colbeck 2008). Stated differently, an academic whose subjective knowledge of his duties (which is a culmination of perceived ideal roles and institutionally defined roles) captures community engagement operates with an engaged scholarship outlook and is more likely to integrate public engagement into their duties and goals. The results of the survey show that participants of CEGRAD had role identities that are more inclined towards direct community engagement and public sociology. Their definitions of the role of the sociologists emphasized the essence of community engagement in their work as sociologists. They mostly believe that Gender Studies is supposed to be a combination of sociological research and public engagement. Hence, they consider research and community engagement to be their principal functions. In addition, their short term goals (professional goals for the next five years) mostly concerns increasing their research productivity and public engagement. While there are indications of the assimilation of public engagement roles and the development of self-concepts that embrace engaged scholarship, the assigned mandate of CEGRAD, as a unit in charge of advocacy, research and policy review could also account for its personnel's association with engaged scholarship.

Participants of DSA on the other hand identify with the three outlined functions of the university (teaching, research and service to the university community). What they deem to be the ideal roles of the sociologist signal widespread support for basic research. They also demonstrated higher interests in communicating with academic audiences although participation in public discourse through the media is also of concern. Yet, traces of the idea that sociological knowledge (generated from research) should be based on local social problems and fed back into community building processes (through partnerships for

policy generation, research, advocacy and social engineering) can also be deduced from their definitions. To some extent, involvement with the public to acquire data for research and publication is sometimes seen as engaged scholarship. While an integration of research and community engagement is in line with engaged scholarship, where engagement with the community is not designed with the intent of also rendering some measurable (feasible) benefits to the community, then the academic is likely to have reduced community engagement to data collection (as an event only needed to be checked off). Nonetheless, by rating teaching and research as their primary roles and to a large extent indicating that research and publication are their primary short-term goals, respondents of DSA are implying an affinity with roles that align largely with professional sociology.

Given that participants demonstrated interest in pursuing engaged scholarship, the conclusion that participants of DSA align greatly with professional sociology could also be explained by their beliefs that a couple of conditions peculiar to the University of Cape Coast do not enhance public engagement activities. Whereas majority of the respondents believe they have the skills for community engagement, the belief in their overall capacity to take on an engaged scholarship approach (i.e. their personal agency beliefs) is also affected by the conditions of the UCC working environment and the social climate within Ghana. Participants are aware that the university declares a support for community engagement and requires its faculty to engage in partnerships and the provision of valuable services for the community. So, as part of the requirements for promotion, individual academics are expected to provide evidence of engagement with the community.

Yet, more than half of participants were unaware of a national policy framework directed specifically towards boosting university-community engagement. Equally,

respondents of DSA did not have any knowledge of any stipulated guidelines and/or unit in charge of overseeing community engagement at the departmental level (but the 2012 UCC statutes states the conditions associated with community engagement and/or service). They also complained that although the university expects them to be involved with local communities and also increase their research productivity in the process, DSA's focus is on teaching. The numerous courses they are expected to teach restrict the time available to pursue meaningful community partnerships. In addition, respondents believe that the university reward system values research and publication and as such their time outside teaching must really focus on these two. In essence, most of the respondents do not perceive that public engagement attracts any reward or recognition from the university. That notwithstanding, the department encourages community engagement initiatives such as participation in media discussions, the provision of consultancy services, the creation of rural practicum/service learning courses and the release of communiques. The department also established a partnership with the Enyan Abasa community where its faculty and students are able to engage in meaningful projects that are beneficial to both the community and the department.

Respondents believe that the general public expects them to be visible in public deliberations even though feelings that the academe-community partnerships are not enough and have not yielded as much output as expected persist. Participants are also of the view that the general loss of confidence in the intellectual has led to a diminished willingness to partner with academics and to fund activities designed by members of the academy. Generally, non-governmental organizations and community based organizations are more willing to partner with respondents. However, respondents admit that the nature



and purpose of a project determines the dynamics (and outcomes) of partnerships with any public.

Using Burawoy's criteria for the division of sociological labor, it can be deduced that in addition to their roles (and beliefs) as professional sociologists, respondents are interested in policy sociology- the use of sociological research to impact social policy either sponsored or advocacy research. They frequently hinted on the need to ensure that their work contributes meaningfully to social policy development. However, they believe that policy makers and state agencies are not interested in the outcomes of their research. Even with sponsored research and consultancies, it is difficult for them to follow up on the utility and impact of their work- which implies that their work ends with the provision of descriptive research reports. Therefore, although their work is influenced by surrounding social issues and they possess interests in community engagement and ensure that the opinions of community stakeholders are reflected in their research, the tendency to reduce community engagement to data collection for research (based on information on the level of inclusion of communities in their work-outlined above) also exists.

In essence, while the university's mission statements indicate a support for engaged scholarship and thereby requires community engagement to be part of the work of its faculty, the responses of respondents show that the operationalization of community engagement in the university system is quite vague. Respondents seemed to believe that institutional policies, monitoring systems, funding avenues and rewards systems that enhance engaged scholarship are inadequate or nonexistent. Those respondents from the traditional academic department in particular believe that teaching and research are the most rewarded (and valued) functions of the institutions, therefore their focus is basically

on these two. In addition, perceptions about the difficulties associated with acquiring funding and gaining the support and participation of communities (who have over the course of time lost confidence in the potential of university-community partnerships to yield any meaningful outcomes) and associated stakeholders beat down the enthusiasm and zeal needed to pursue a scholarship that is built on community engagement. Thus, even with positive beliefs about one's ability to design community partnership projects that are beneficial to the academic community, perceptions of the difficulties associated with implementation plus the lack of recognition and reward for such efforts negatively impact the development of the motivation needed to pursue engaged scholarship.

Despite the challenges explicated above, participants seem interested in engaged scholarship. Activities ranging of the provision of consultancies, advocacy, involvement in social policy building, the establishment of a social lab, the design of courses that involve community engagement, participation in media discussions, serving on community advisory boards and picking up speaking engagements with diverse publics across the Ghanaian society are among some of the ways in which faculty from the two departments deal with extra-academic audiences. Also, most of the respondents integrate some levels community engagement into their research. However, not all their engagements with the public are related to their scholarship especially teaching and research. While the scholarship of engagement involves an intricate relationship between research and community engagement, the responses of majority of the respondents from DSA show that their research (which involves some levels of community engagement) is not able to impact social policy as much as they want it to.

In all, personal characteristics such as academic rank and professional identity, which is a culmination of the needed positive personal agency beliefs; subjective understandings (and experiences with) of the nature and problems of the socio-economic and historical context within which the academic works and the style of academic scholarship one was introduced to particularly in graduate school also influence the approach to scholarship a person adopts. Specifically, areas of interest when it comes to research, teaching and service to the community are dictated by personal evaluations of the social context of individual academics who participated in this study as well as personal goals and evaluations of what the academics value most.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Using Motivational Systems Theory (MST), this study was conducted with the main objective of providing an understanding to institutional and individual factors associated with the practice of engaged scholarship among sociologists in the University of Cape Coast (UCC). Specifically, the study sought to provide answers to the following questions: How do perceptions concerning social, institutional and disciplinary demands impact the ability of academics to practice engaged scholarship. What are some of the personal factors that influence the decision to undertake engaged scholarship? In this chapter, the connections between personal characteristics such as gender, professional rank and professional identity, personal goals, values and epistemological affiliations and community engagement practices are discussed in relation to the larger theoretical model (presented in Chapter 3). In addition, the beliefs of faculty concerning the feasibility of engaged scholarship given the conditions of the context in which they work are examined in the light of information deduced from institutional and national policy documents. Furthermore, the connection between community engagement (CE) and research, teaching and service functions of academics is identified.

#### *Individual/personal characteristics and engaged scholarship.*

Ford's (1992) Motivational Systems Theory (MST) suggests that the motivation to undertake a task is a result of goals (both personal and public), positive beliefs about one's capabilities and working environment as well as one's emotional state. Because individuals appropriate information and environmental changes at different paces, Ford (1992) suggests that motivation is an individual psychological phenomenon. This implies that

personal characteristics also have an influence on the motivation needed to accomplish a task. To this end, the incorporation of community engagement into academic scholarship is likely to be influenced by personal attributes such as gender, educational background, professional identity, professional rank, values, interests and goals. In this study, the professional rank and academic level of participants played a major role in the likelihood of their involvement in public engagement activities such as advocacy, outreach, the provision of consultancy services and involvement in multidisciplinary research.

All the participants demonstrated a desire to be involved in public activities such as policy engagement processes, collaborations with local and international groups for research, outreach, advocacy and other community development processes. However, male Junior Lecturers (including one junior staff member of CEGRAD) who had only Master's degrees at the time the study was conducted had not engaged in any collaborations for interdisciplinary research, consultancy services, outreach and advocacy or policy formulation projects. On the other hand, Senior Lecturers mentioned several projects involving work with local and international public and private agencies for social policy development, research and outreach in their areas of interest and research specialization. All the female participants in this study (a mix of PhD holders and Master's degree holders but all Junior Lecturers) whose areas of specialization were mainly in the realm of gender studies mentioned that they had been involved in the provision of consultancies and advocacy. Therefore, both rank and gender appear to be important factors related to engaged scholarship.

However, because two Junior Lecturers have engaged in policy formulation processes, consultancy projects and outreach, academic rank alone cannot be seen as the

major determinant of the kinds of community engagement activities that can be pursued. The educational level of an academic could also be responsible for the arrangement of desired and assigned goals and specifically some particular community engagement endeavors. In this light, when respondents were asked to list their personal career goals for the next five years, Junior Lecturers who have Master's degrees listed the acquisition of their PhDs as their immediate goal. Then, the conduct of research for the acquisition of publications and attainment of promotion were to follow immediately. This finding complements Colbeck's (2000) argument that community engagement usually constitutes a risk to junior faculty who have to secure their positions first by producing publications in academic journals. Given that the least level of education required to be a lecturer in the university is a PhD, and publications are required to sustain or promote a faculty member, Junior Lecturers who have not acquired these were more concerned about the attainment of the requirements needed to secure their position in the institution. Certain community engagement activities like sponsored research, advocacy and outreach may be considered a long-term goal. Despite this conclusion, this study was not able to ascertain whether academic (or professional) rank and experience are responsible for attracting opportunities involving interdisciplinary and sponsored research, collaborations for work on social policy and other partnerships for community development and outreach. In other words, the data gathered does not provide any indication of whether a person's level of education reduces accessibility to opportunities for particular kinds of community engagement that serve to advance one's academic scholarship.

In addition to professional status and educational level, personal interests, experiences, and goals provided insight on the aspects of academic scholarship on which

academics are likely to focus. Generally, respondents disclosed that their work is largely inspired by the social problems prevalent in Ghana. Hence, the specific teaching and research specializations that faculty chose were in line with their experiences and concerns about particular social phenomena. For instance, experience working in the Ghana Education Service (GES), living in a society that has undergone political and economic upheavals or one undergoing social policy reforms on issues affecting women, children and the marginalized influenced the decision of respondents to focus on research that has the capacity to influence social thinking and policy.

Research was seen by both staff of the traditional academic department (DSA) and the research and public engagement unit (CEGRAD) as the tool for the generation of useful knowledge that can effect policy direction and improve knowledge of social phenomena. Also, faculty members whose graduate training also emphasized research and networking with fellow academics (particularly those with worldwide connections) were also more likely to engage in collaboration for research and outreach with fellow academics. While association with fellow sociologists has the potential to enhance the status, knowledge and social capital of the sociologist, increased networking with fellow sociologists may alienate the individual sociologist from dealing with social groups at the grassroots as focus turns towards the issues of concern to colleague sociologists. To Burawoy (2005), networking with colleague sociologists is parallel to professional sociology as it creates a space where involved sociologists become fixated on conforming to professional standards and communicating with one another in ways that sometimes restrict interaction with civil society.

The descriptions of the role of the sociologist provided by respondents suggests that the sociologist is one who conducts research and performs an educative role either as a teacher or is involved in enlightening diverse populations through outreach or advocacy (Burawoy 2005; Boyer 1996). Particularly, the research and educative roles of the sociologist are expected to align with the developmental goals of society (UCC Statutes 2012). Expectations of the impact and uses of their research outcomes to the general population and to their scholarship were the major factors determining the selection of research topics and focus. Respondents from DSA highlighted teaching and research as the most important facets of their job. Teaching is known to produce personal fulfillment and is seen as the contribution of the academic to the developmental goals of the entire nation. Graduates trained by the DSA are expected to be equipped to become agents of influence or social change. This reasoning matches McNall's (2008) assertion that sociologists view teaching as the number one channel through which they can make a contribution towards social change.

Unfortunately, teaching and research may be conducted without any meaningful community engagement or partnership with local communities. While public engagement can be infused into teaching and research, rating them as top priorities implies that to a large extent, the academic's professional identity is that of a teacher and researcher and not necessarily a public scholar. Accordingly, the value placed on teaching and research plus a personality built around these two roles implies that the possibility of directing personal goals (professional) at improving pedagogy and research productivity will be higher than goals that are associated with community engagement and service. Consequently, the motivation to engage with communities will be adversely affected when the goal of faculty



is solely focused on being confined to their classrooms and adopting research strategies that require less community engagement. Meanwhile, public engagement can be connected to both teaching and research. However, this depends on the preference and perspective of the academic-whether the three functions can be integrated or whether he believes they should be operationalized separately.

Engaged scholarship involves the adoption of epistemologies that embrace inclusive and participatory methods of social enquiry (Kruss 2012; Douglas 2012; Barge and Shockley-Zalabak 2008; Barker 2004). It is a culmination of solidarity perspectives, which requires the scholar's approach to social inquiry to be oriented towards social justice and positive social change (Bourke 2013). Hence, the engaged scholar is one whose teaching, research or service is informed by (grounded/connected to) social problems/issues and whose work is relevant for shedding in-depth understanding to social issues (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Miller 2011; Grant 2007; Appadurai 2000). Participants of this study noted that their research focused on the inequities in the Ghanaian social system that may have been overlooked. Those from CEGRAD believe that the area of gender studies inherently entails human rights and political issues. Therefore, a solidarity approach to research, which largely means the use of a language and methods which community members can relate to, is what they mostly adopt. On the other hand, most participants in DSA believe that gathering data directly from community actors and adhering to ethical standards in the data collection process is a mark of a social justice oriented epistemology. That is, they believe that a social justice and community engagement approach to research has been accomplished insofar as the views of communities are mentioned in their research. This belief or disposition has the capacity to

restrict the ability of the sociologist to set goals that are outside basic research to include action and intervention type researches.

Although, gathering information from community stakeholders ensures that the views of local actors are represented in one's work, this practice basically (with the exception of some participatory approaches) involves a unidirectional flow of information from the community to the academy. Also, the voices of the involved public can still be lost in the technical reports and articles produced from such endeavors especially when the outcomes of such researches remain within academic circles (Wiebke 2011; Warren 2009; Burawoy 2007; Inglis 2005; Appadurrai 2000). Yet, engaged scholarship goes beyond engaging communities for data to include the establishment of partnerships with communities/specific publics where the involved public can also access the expertise and resources of the academic and the knowledge produced as a result of the partnership. When the knowledge created as a result of a partnership with a community or social group (even if the relationship is a shallow one) is made inaccessible to the community involved in the partnership and the partnership also does not serve to enhance social conditions and understanding, then the academic is largely involved in basic research that is mostly useful to those confined to the academic community (Burawoy 2007; 2005b; Boyer 1996).

While some of the respondents mentioned that they are sometimes consulted to share their opinion (and expertise) on media platforms and in other extra-academic circles, they did not feel obligated to follow up on the practicality of their research findings. Follow-ups on the impact of research were only feasible when the research project involved sponsors/partners who conducted the research as a means to understand the nature of a social issue and discover practical solutions to it. They harbored concerns about whether it

was ethically appropriate for sociologists in an academic department/setting to be directly involved in activism. Most respondents from DSA shared the view that although they may not be directly involved in social policy formulation, they expect that their research outcomes will be of relevance to policy makers and inform their teaching. So, a commitment to social justice includes the practice of making policy recommendations on how the inequities they identify (through their research) can be mitigated. To them, policy recommendations made as a result of academic research is the channel through which the academic partakes in social change. However, this approach reduces their work to basic research.

Regrettably, a couple of respondents suggested that policy makers and academics operate in different spaces. Even though they are interested in making their work relevant in social policy development processes, they perceived that to an extent, policy makers do not show interest in their research outcomes and do not consider them as partners. Therefore, the indirect and passive disposition towards involvement in social policy formulation processes can be explained by their belief that the likelihood that policy makers will turn to the repertoire of research knowledge they have produced is low. Meanwhile, the academic's role in community capacity-building is deficient when advocacy does not accompany the dissemination of their research (Robinson et al. 2014; Speer and Christens 2013). For research to have any impact on social policy and social development, the academic must possess the influence and social power needed to support the implementation of the outcomes of research (Robinson et al. 2014; Speer and Christens 2013; Miller 2011; Burawoy 2005b). The engaged sociologist is one who is interested in the generation, exchange and application of knowledge and expertise for the mutual benefit

of both the academe and the involved public (Sandman and Weerts 2008). To Burawoy (2005b), public sociology involves deliberate attempts to make sociological knowledge and expertise accessible to a wider section of the public (2005b).

Participants of this study noted that though their research is inspired by the issues pertinent to Ghana, they make sure to situate it within the academic context (be it sociology or gender studies). In research, for instance, most participants indicated that the level of inclusivity and the stage of incorporating the views and inputs of community actors is mostly dependent on the nature and the purpose of study. Most of the respondents from DSA felt it was not in their place to be directly involved in ensuring the implementation of their research work. Although they favored participatory and interpretive approaches and were interested in working with varied groups across the Ghanaian society, they also emphasized the importance of maintaining independence from the groups they work with or value-neutrality as professional sociologists (academics/ researchers). Basically, respondents felt that certain kinds of community engagement, particularly activism, were outside their scope as academics. Even though they are involved in working with women and youth groups, marginalized groups (such as communities stigmatized because of HIV/AIDS), civil society and state organizations, the information generated from their research is mostly shared on academic platforms- in conferences, public lectures and with the sponsors of their research. Only a handful of them indicated they had shared research reports with community leaders, media or other extra-academic groups. However, respondents of CEGRAD believed that their subject area was political in nature and therefore did not have any issues with advocacy or direct involvement in social policy or activism. Also, their mission as an advocacy, outreach and policy engagement unit required

that they made their research available to people both within academic and non-academic circles.

In essence, the epistemological dispositions of participants of DSA are not in alignment with community engagement activities that are especially within the realm of activism. The dilemmas associated with maintaining their independence as scholars places them in an uncomfortable situation that hinders the generation of enthusiasm and devotion needed to pursue goals associated with the kind of public sociology being championed by Burawoy. By largely restricting one's research knowledge to academic crowds, the work of the sociologist becomes skewed towards professional sociology (a disposition that conflicts with the advancement of engaged scholarship). Also, the differing dispositions presented by the two departments suggest that perceptions about the demands of the departmental mandate and the discipline involved makes a great difference in the processes and perspectives associated with how knowledge can be acquired, how the academic must conduct himself, and the boundaries associated with the roles of the academic. As in the case of participants of CEGRAD, the perception that Gender Studies encompasses liberatory concepts and models makes it easier for them to identify and adopt values and perspectives that are social-justice and activist oriented. On the other hand, respondents from DSA seem to be concerned about adhering to principles and standards of professional sociology. While they are concerned about making an impact in public circles, they seem to want to maintain their niche as researchers and academics. Therefore, their approach to engaged scholarship largely centers on the inclusion of community stakeholders at some point of their research process, making recommendations for social policy based on their research and working with state and non-governmental organizations in research and policy

development, developing academic programs that involve interaction with communities at some point. (NB\* some of their community engagement activities fall outside the purview of academic scholarship)

In all, respondents showed interest in working with civil society organizations, like labor unions, women's groups, government agencies and international organizations, in community-based research and policy drafting processes. Although they also mentioned community engagement activities which were not connected to their scholarship, they demonstrated an appreciation for community engagement and were interested in partnering with communities in their research, teaching and general community service. Yet, the forms of community engagement activities that faculty members are likely to pursue cannot be explained by any singular personal attribute. Though a small sample was used, educational background and professional rank made a difference with specific reference to involvement in particular kinds of public engagement activities. For respondents with only Master's degrees (lower educational qualification) who were also Junior Lecturers (on a lower academic rank), their pressing personal goals were focused on getting their PhDs, acquiring academic publications and promotions. They were also less likely to have been directly involved in research and community partnerships with agencies outside the university, advocacy or any projects on social policy development. Senior Lecturers on the other hand, who relatively possessed job security mentioned increased engagement with communities as well as publications (required to be further promoted) as some of the goals pervading their everyday activities. In addition, the educational training of the academic was also seen to have influenced the focus and style of scholarship an academic adopts. Thus, when the individual's set of subjective/personal goals comprises objectives

associated with professional sociology (for the sake of career advancement), the individual is less likely to pursue public engagement activities that may not be perceived as immediately contributing to job security. Also, though the ratio of men to women who participated in this study is disproportionate, women were also more likely than their male counterparts (even if both sexes were Junior Lecturers), to have been involved in social policy building processes, sponsored research and collaborations as well as advocacy. Though all the four women who participated are not from the same department, the examples of public engagement projects they mentioned were usually in the domain of issues affecting women and children. Likewise, although a number of men mentioned that their interests fell in the domain of gender issues, it could be speculated that women are more prone to be engaged in actual interactions with these groups and stakeholders that are interested in working on improving the conditions of issues affecting women and children.

#### *Current practices in engaged scholarship*

In this section, the different public engagements endeavors of faculty are listed and the relations between these activities and scholarship (the accomplishment of official tasks) are ascertained. As per MST, the motivation to pursue a task increases when the accomplishment of that particular task is connected to the achievement of other equally important goals. MST emphasizes the importance of goal connectivity in motivation. Given that individuals usually have a list of unending goals and needs, tasks that are able to meet different goals and needs simultaneously or spiral into the accomplishment of other equally important goals are most likely to motivate action. The literature suggests that engaged scholarship involves an entwining of community engagement activities with the traditional

functions of academic scholarship (that is research, teaching and service) (Bourke 2013; de Lange 2012; Norris-Tirrell et al. 2010; Barge 2008; Harkavy 2005). It entails mutually-beneficial partnerships between local communities and the academic communities for the “development, exchange and application of knowledge” (Nilson et al. 2014; de Lange 2012; Sandman and Weerts 2008; Stanton 2007; Harkavy 2005; Barker 2004; AASU 2002; Boyer 1997). Simply, the engaged scholar ensures that his interaction with communities is connected to the attainment of goals associated with his teaching, research and community service tasks. This section outlines how faculty-community engagements are either connected or not connected to academic scholarship.

The statutory document for the University of Cape Coast which was enacted in 2012 encourages all academic faculty to integrate community engagement with their research and teaching specializations. Specifically, it mandates faculty to ensure that consultancy projects and their research align with a national development agenda. This directive by the university is in line with one of the basic features of engaged scholarship in that; one, it emphasizes the essentiality of ensuring that community engagement is beneficial to academic scholarship (connected to teaching and research) and two, it requires that all research, teaching and public engagement activities are connected to socio-economic development of communities. By the looks of it, this directive also means that the tasks and goals associated with community engagement should be arranged in ways such that public engagement will not only fulfill the teaching and research functions of the academic but also meet the need (s) of communities (community service). In other words, the scholar has to ensure that community partnerships are guided by appropriate disciplinary methods, beneficial to his research agenda and teaching in ways that go beyond



ordinary data collection and experiential learning to include community service (Schweitzer 2010; Barker 2004).

Respondents in this study mentioned that they incorporated community engagement into their pedagogical strategy. DSA had also adopted the Enyan Abasa community as a laboratory for its students and faculty to acquire practical knowledge and experience that enhances the teaching and learning process. Knowledge acquired through research that involves community participation was also incorporated into the teaching materials that faculty used. Sometimes community stakeholders also acted as resource persons during some of the classes. Similarly, with regards to research, respondents were able to generate context-relevant knowledge and highlight the voices of community actors as they engaged them to volunteer information. Respondents suggested that community engagement expanded their knowledge on the issues they seek to research and it provided them with novel research ideas. It also informed the content of courses and the methods they adopt in teaching:

Research, service and teaching influence one another and enhance improvement of each other. They are intricately connected, perception of societal expectations may inform your research, teaching and service to the community. My current research is about armed robbery because I noticed that society will like answers to the problem. Again it shapes what I put emphasis on during teaching. (Male, DSA)  
*\*Rank/position not indicated by the respondent.*

Communities, especially the one selected for the social lab, benefit from their engagement when their interaction with the department increases their understanding of issues that affect them and help them to identify solutions to some of their issues. A case in point is when respondents claim they conducted a needs assessment and worked together with the community selected as the social lab to find a solution to one of their needs. Given

that engaged scholarship entails mutually beneficial partnerships, the social lab project is not one where members of DSA (faculty and students) simply went in to the community for data or to acquire experiential knowledge. Through research, pertinent social needs were identified and DSA was able to help the community implement a solution to one of those. Thus, the social lab project involved a mutually beneficial partnership, where teaching and research were connected to a social need- a disposition that is characteristic of engaged scholarship and public sociology. For instance, while the students and faculty acquired knowledge and experience in community capacity-building, through the partnership, the community was able to identify and find a solution to one of its major needs.

Quite a number of respondents mentioned offering research consultancies to both state and non-governmental organizations. These researches mostly relates to their areas of interest and specializations. Therefore, it is expected that even if these research collaborations were not accounted for through academic publications, they at least fulfilled the service and research tasks of their mandate as academics. Additionally, their knowledge in the related fields of these sponsored researches broadens and this knowledge impacts their teaching, research and subsequent engagement with communities.

According to Barker (2004), not all community engagement activities have a bearing on academic scholarship. Such activities comprise the provision of services that benefit either the academic or the community involved. Although public engagement is incorporated into teaching, research and service, respondents were also involved in partnerships and the provision of services for communities in their capacities as academics that are not directly beneficial to their teaching and research. A couple of the respondents

admitted that their position as learned people presents them with opportunities to speak with youth groups, churches and community groups on topical issues, but these could only be counted as service. A number of the respondents were members of community organizations and advisory boards and they volunteered to provide education and their expertise to these groups:

I am a member of numerous associations and networks on gender related issues. We undertake grassroots activities and volunteering work which brings me in contact with other people and engagements with the public beyond my primary occupation as an academic creating this space for interaction with the public. (Female, Research Fellow, CEGRAD).

Altogether, respondents are aware of the benefits of public engagement and seek to incorporate it into their work. They ensure that students have opportunities to acquire practical knowledge and experience on issues connected to local communities. Communities are also included in research processes, be it sponsored research or academic research. For members of CEGRAD engaging in research and advocacy means partnering with various community groups, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, not all community engagement endeavors are connected to research or teaching. In line with the tenets of engaged scholarship, respondents are sometimes able to connect their interaction with communities to their teaching or research objectives and both the department and the involved communities are able to benefit from the partnership. That is, the goals of community service, research and community engaged teaching and learning are accomplished simultaneously. Every so often, their status and knowledge as academics (and sociologists) is drawn on to provide valuable services such as public education and community advisory services which are not connected to their academic work. While these services may not include any standard academic methods for deriving knowledge and

measuring impact, they constitute forms of community that contribute towards bridging the gap between the academy and civil society. Universities (in this case the sociology department and those connected to it-students, fellow academics) and communities are able to benefit from one another even if these benefits are not immediately accounted for. Unfortunately, to the advocates of “public sociology” and “scholarship of engagement”, these activities will not qualify to be placed in the category of engaged scholarship insofar as they are not guided by systematic methods of inquiry, or the academy cannot ascertain a tangible benefit from such encounters. Yet, to others who are a bit skeptical about creating a separate niche and label for faculty community engagement (in what is termed as “engaged scholarship and public sociology), all forms of activities involving direct community engagement especially those tailored towards improving the social conditions of specific marginalized or underprivileged publics should be recognized and rewarded all the same (Collins 2013; Noy 2009; Burawoy 2007; Burawoy 2005b).

### *Social and organizational conditions and engaged scholarship*

Following MST, it is expected that faculty will be motivated to incorporate community engagement into their work when they have perception that the environment within which they work provides the needed support for it (Ford 1992). Additionally, the scholar needs to have positive beliefs about his own ability to pursue engaged scholarship. Engaged scholarship is boosted when universities declare a commitment to ensuring that its activities are connected to the issues pertaining to local communities by setting up structures that support and reward its conduct (de Lange 2012; Kruss 2012; Boyer 1997). While institutions can do their best to support community engagement, the nature and pace

of developing such support structures for public engagement to thrive also depends on the policy and socio-economic climate within which it is situated (Bourke 2013; Kruss 2012; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Allison and Eversole 2008; Wright 2008). Participants were not aware of any specific national policy on university-community engagement. They also did not believe there was any formal structure set in place to evaluate, reward or support community engagement in the academic department/ the university. A majority of the respondents did not feel that community engagement counted towards promotion. They lamented that only research, specifically publication, and teaching were used as the criteria for promotion. Most quoted the popular slogan “publish or perish.” Even respondents from CEGRAD were concerned that publication was the major means for promotion.

Two of the respondents from DSA mentioned that they are expected to provide evidence of engagement to the faculty evaluation division of the institution in order to be promoted. They believed the university wants them to be involved in partnerships with communities that brings change to the communities and impacts their scholarship positively. However, they noted that the university provided little support and did not adequately recognize for community engagement endeavors. The academic department did not make things any easier for respondents of DSA as it burdened them with teaching loads that made it difficult to find time to pursue other facets of scholarship such as research and public engagement.

To verify whether these beliefs are justified, websites of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) were scrutinized to identify guidelines for university-community engagement. It was discovered that there is no specific policy document dedicated solely for the regulation, support and

remuneration of faculty/university-community engagement. However, short-term policies for the tertiary education sector showed that faculty's public engagement is expected to be connected to their research. Largely, the focus of the education sector policy was on boosting research particularly, those that are connected to the improvement of science and technology. Consequently, the institution of the National Science Technology and Innovation Policy which was drafted in consultation with a cross section of intellectuals from various disciplines (including social scientists) focuses so much on the encouraging research productivity in the physical sciences. The term "engaged scholarship" is not explicitly mentioned in the NSTI Policy. However, universities and their faculties are encouraged to liaise with communities, industries, local and international organizations to identify and find solutions to local problems through research. While this is a mark of engaged scholarship, still, these two documents which were found focused more on research and not specifically community engagement. Therefore, it is justifiable that respondents have no knowledge of national policies on university-community engagement.

As departments that are directed by these policies (the NSTI and the Education Sector Strategic Plan for 2010-2020), a national directive for universities which focuses on research and a tacit support for engaged scholarship affects universities in the following ways: one, the direction for universities on community engagement is vague and universities may not implement stringent and effective policies to boost public engagement and two, universities will begin to hold research in a much higher regard than other equally important functions. Community engagement then becomes a peripheral activity in relation to research. Eventually, increasing and rewarding research becomes central in university documents, statutes and actual culture. As evidenced in the responses of participants,

faculty have doubts that their context provides support for public engagement. The convictions that a national policy on faculty-community engagement is non-existent plus an organizational (university) culture which valorizes research and academic publications implies that personal goals that are directed towards career advancement and the acquisition of higher wages, recognition and relevance within academic circles (and probably the Ghanaian society at large) can only be achieved through research. With these negative beliefs about the unsupportive nature of their context, the motivation to interact with the public outside the sphere of research is likely to be impeded.

Apart from national and institutional policies, the general socio-economic climate and the approachability of communities is also very crucial in motivating faculty to establish partnerships with communities (Bourke 2013; de Lange 2012; Kruss 2012; Modise and Mosweunyane 2012; Norris-Tirrell et. al 2010; Allison and Eversole 2008; Wright 2008). Communities that view universities as indispensable partners in the search for knowledge and viable solutions to their social problems are more likely to attract and boost the capability beliefs of faculty (Ford 1992). Participants were of the view that communities hold academics in high esteem and sometimes expect them to act as the third force mediating between them and the state. In addition, communities expect to see that their contribution and participation in academic research translates into tangible impact. In spite of this, participants believe that most communities do not really understand the work of the sociologist or the usefulness of social research. They also believe that over the course of time, communities have lost hope in the academy's ability to provide viable solutions to their issues or represent their views on platforms that have the capacity to induce change. This loss of trust is because they have participated in projects (especially research) with

university stakeholders that have not yielded the impact such collaborations should produce. As a result, they can sometimes be indifferent, distrustful, and unwilling to cooperate with academics or university actors. Similarly, the socio-cultural landscape in Ghana presents language and cultural barriers that hinders the development of partnerships between individual academics and particular communities. Altogether, an anticipation of a lackadaisical response from communities and uncertainties concerning the procurement of the necessary community participation and support reinforces the negative beliefs respondents harbor concerning the possibilities of successfully embarking on projects requiring public participation.

In addition to the low cooperation from communities, respondents believe avenues to access funding for community engagement projects within the nation are mostly unavailable. They mentioned that funding for research/projects that involve community engagement usually comes from multi-national or international organizations. The only funding, they could rely on to undertake any project that entailed public engagement is the annual “Book and Research Allowance” which is designated to support research. Although respondents were generally aware of the benefits of engaged scholarship, and they believed they had the skill set to fully incorporate it into their work, they were generally not optimistic about its contribution towards promotion, and its continued practice. First, most of the respondents from DSA believe that there is an over-emphasis in the institution on publication. To them, community service and engagement were not encouraged because promotion is largely based on the number of publications one is able to produce. With the heavy teaching load that they have, research and publication have become their immediate major priorities aside teaching. Given that individuals are motivated by goals that they



deem to be socially valued and highly rewarded (Ford 1992), the perception that community engagement does not count towards promotion in addition to the perception that community engagement is not a top priority to the institution constitute negative beliefs about their working context that eventually hinders the development of motivation required to pursue goals associated with engaged scholarship.

Ironically, these beliefs that UCC values teaching and publication over the other functions of the academic represent a discrepancy between what the institution professes to uphold in its policy (the 2012 UCC Statutes) and what actually transpires in the academic department. The (2012) UCC statutes specify that service to the community (which may be linked to engagement-because not all community service counts as engaged scholarship) constitute 15% of the total score for promotion.

6.3.2 -15 marks for service to the community, i.e. involvement in activities within and outside the University to be scored as follows: (UCC Statutes, 2012. P. 90)

6.7.1: Candidates seeking promotion to the rank of Senior lecturer must satisfy the following conditions:

(i) must have been engaged in University teaching, research and community service as a Lecturer for at least four (4) years.... (UCC Statutes, 2012. P. 91)

Technical reports based on community projects also attract marks in the scheme for promotion. The policy also states that all consultancy projects and community service projects must be connected to the academic areas/specializations of faculty; an outlook that matches with the basic definition of engaged scholarship (since community engagement is expected to be interlaced with the traditional functions of the academic). While the statutory document appears to support engaged scholarship, community engagement

becomes a lesser priority for academics since research alone constitutes 50% of the score for promotion. Respondents believe that although the institution makes an open declaration of support for community engagement, its individual academic departments do not institute measures that ease the burden of teaching off academics so that they can focus on other aspects of scholarship such as community engagement. This finding echoes Kruss (2012) finding that open support for community engagement does not necessarily mean that faculty will be able to work as engaged scholars.

But the question remains whether the specialized institutes set up for engagement (such as CEGRAD) are supposed to ease the burden of community engagement on the academic. Staff members of CEGRAD are also promoted based on publication. Known as Research Fellows, they are expected to produce 50% more publications than a sociologist in DSA is expected to produce. For those from DSA, teaching follows with a 35% share of the total marks for promotion. The evidence of research which is usually in the form of publications and technical reports have also been made key requirements for promotion. More or less, these requirements present the academic with the view that teaching and research which are typical of professional sociology comes before any other endeavor. Accordingly, the motivation to undertake any community engagement projects that cannot be executed through teaching, research and publication is affected. Perhaps even the interest in drawing up projects involving community engagement may be affected when teaching, research and publications can still be undertaken without community engagement.

MST's position that individuals are affected by their perceptions about the capacity of their context to provide the support needed to pursue their goals have been demonstrated

in this study. Basically, respondents believe that their interest in community engagement is hindered by inadequate funding and support from the institution as well as the general Ghanaian society. Interestingly, respondents sometimes seemed to equate engaged scholarship with community service. They sometimes perceived community engagement as a separate endeavor as its link to tenure and promotion is tenuous at best.

*Understanding individual, emotive, and institutional influences on engaged scholarship*

In essence, sociologists in the UCC Faculty of Social Sciences who participated in this study showed interests in adopting community-engaged approaches in their teaching and research. To a large extent, respondents believe they are required to be active partners with communities for social change and are in favor of research traditions that support community engagement. Almost all of them had worked with varying extra-academic groups and communities on projects ranging from research, policy formulation, advocacy, and outreach and have served on community advisory boards. Yet, given the lack of adequate resources and support within the nation and specifically, the institution in which they work, most of them exhibited doubts concerning the feasibility of continuity in engaged scholarship. Ford's (1992) Motivational Systems Theory supports the findings of this research in that the belief that engaged scholarship is fraught with many challenges that makes its practice difficult within the UCC and Ghanaian context can be explained by factors associated with the working context of faculty and how the arrangement of personal goals and tasks as academics affects one's disposition and level of enthusiasm (and emotive energy) towards engaged scholarship.

First, a specific policy that outlines systems that can be implemented to boost faculty-community engagement is virtually nonexistent. However, the two policies that are related to the activities of universities which were reviewed portrayed universities to be fundamentally teaching and research agencies. To motivate engaged scholarship, universities were encouraged to partner with both local and international agencies and industries to provide meaningful support for national growth. These partnerships were largely expected to be in the realm of research and its dissemination and also provide experiential learning opportunities. While these directives are supportive of the model of engaged scholarship, the overall outlook of these policies were to a large extent unclear about the steps associated with implementing comprehensive structures that have the capacity to engrain a culture of community engagement in public universities. Also, the two policies (The NSTI and the Education Strategic Plan for 2010-2020) were biased in favor of the physical sciences; social sciences research and public engagement were minimally mentioned. Emphasis was also placed on enhancing funding and support for teaching and research in the physical sciences- particularly boosting research in science and technology development. Consequently, research funding for universities focused on science and technology is higher than those that are concentrated on the social sciences or education (Jowi et al. 2013). As such, respondents, who are also in the social sciences are doubtful about the possibility of acquiring the funding needed to implement any projects they may have planned.

In addition to an ambivalence in national policy directives concerning engaged scholarship, plus inadequate funding and avenues for support, the following conditions pertaining to UCC as the institution within which respondents (as sociologists and

academics) function affects the practice of engaged scholarship. The statutory document that outlines the functions of faculty and the systems of evaluation of academic (and research) staff portrays community service and engagement as one of the crucial functions of the academic. Faculty are encouraged to incorporate public engagement into their teaching and research and to partner with communities in ways that are beneficial to national development- either through the provision of consultancy research, outreach, community capacity building and so on (UCC Statutes 2012).

Ironically, the statutes of the institution emphasize teaching and research as its major objectives (though all of it is to be conducted with cognizance of local developmental objectives). Teaching, research and publications take up the larger proportion of the score for promotion. Apart from being compelled to teach many courses within the academic year, faculty in DSA have to conduct research and acquire numerous publications. Their counterparts from CEGRAD are not exempted as they even have to provide one and half times the number of publications that respondents from DSA have to provide (UCC Statutes 2012). These directives present faculty especially those in DSA with a professional sociology model of work.

Also, the difference in institutional objectives and its reward systems and the tasks assigned to teaching staff are slightly inconsistent and do not support a fully engaged scholarship (given that the objectives of the institution support engaged scholarship or public sociology but the reward system and the workloads veer towards a professional sociology model). Eventually, respondents of DSA seem to have identified with teaching, research and the dissemination of research information within academic circles as their major functions. For personnel from CEGRAD, their mandate as an outreach, policy

interrogation and research documentation agency helps to keep their activities within the realm of community engagement. All the same, just like their counterparts from DSA, their promotion is highly dependent on their research and production of publications. Eventually, staff in academic departments are presented with a module that prioritizes increased research productivity which may not necessarily involve long-lasting community partnerships.

Regardless of their interests in participating in social policy, outreach, advocacy and research involving community partnerships, respondents are restricted by their belief that most publics are not fully interested in working with them. Policy makers on one hand hardly turn to their research for direction. Likewise, despite the respect and appreciation the public has for academics, communities seem to be doubtful about the benefits of interacting with members of the academy. As a result, respondents are not very hopeful about the possibility of successfully establishing meaningful partnerships with communities. The belief that policy makers and state agencies could possibly be indifferent about their research work and their expertise in general compels respondents to take on an indirect/passive approach to involvement in policy making processes. They hope their research is able to inspire social policy direction and furthermore impact social processes. But at the same time, they seem to be less interested in direct advocacy for policy based on their research. They may be willing to share information with policy makers but are not very willing to be visibly lobbying for their ideas to be heard by stakeholders involved in policy. Thus, their perspectives about the role of the intellectual (the sociologist) are more inclined towards a professional sociology model of work. To them, the sociologist

Even though respondents are open to speaking with the media and other extra-academic groups, their research largely remains in academic circles because of their indirect approach to making their expertise, knowledge and research known. They are mostly divided about the appropriateness of advocacy, activism or any kind of public engagement that has any political connotations which are typical of public sociology. To them, a social justice epistemology (requisite of public sociology) lies with the selection of research topics and interests (those motivated by local issues and the quest to find solutions to them), the inclusion of public engagement in teaching and learning and the acquisition of data from associated stakeholders/publics. Hence, respondents are not fully open to an engaged scholarship approach that embraces a broader social activism. Their participation in academic circles, which is typical of professional sociology is higher than their involvement in public sociology which involves the dissemination of research knowledge through activism in non-academic circles - given that the dissemination of their research is restricted to academic circles and interaction with concerned policy makers/stakeholders is limited (Burawoy 2005b)

In addition to individual perspectives on the boundaries of academic scholarship, personal attributes such as one's academic rank, educational level and background and the quest to acquire publications for promotion was found to have a link with the level of prioritization of community engagement. The ambitions of Junior Lecturers who were mostly Master's degree holders, centered on career advancement through the acquisition of PhDs, publications and involvement in research projects. Community engagement at this stage is largely restricted to data collection from communities, pursuit of sponsored research, sporadic conversations/ interactions with the media and community groups.

Basically, faculty in the junior rank are focused on the development of a professional sociology career since their goals align with a professional sociology model and their involvement with extra academic actors have mostly been either outside their academic scholarship or restricted to research (both personal, basic or sponsored research) and data collection. An academic career built on vigorous community engagement (as envisaged in public sociology) seems to be secondary to the attainment of the status and the rewards that come after tenure and promotion has been achieved (as professional sociologists). In addition to educational level and professional rank, one's affiliation with sociological associations and academic networks, as well the culture of scholarship one was exposed to in graduate school impacts his or her style of academic scholarship. As was the case of a female lecturer, interest in professional sociology is heightened when one is interested in participating in academic conferences and fellowships with colleague sociologists both nationally and internationally.

While gender did not seem to be an exceptional factor in determining the susceptibility to pursue partnerships with the public, the women (only four of them) who participated in this study demonstrated more involvement than their male counterparts in the following endeavors with communities: advocacy, social policy development processes, collaborations. In sum, using Ford's Motivational Systems Theory, the effect of contextual issues such as inaccessibility of funding, an ambiguous policy direction on engaged scholarship, a reward system that prioritizes publication, teaching and research all peculiar to the domain of professional sociology plus personal goals that are targeted at the acquisition of the status and rewards of professional sociologists inhibit the interest, enthusiasm and hence the motivation for engaged scholarship.



Based on the aforementioned factors, it is logical to conclude that participants of this study are not adequately motivated to pursue engaged scholarship. Generally, respondents called for increased funding, support, reward and recognition for engagement with communities. Junior lecturers in particular called for increased mentorship from senior staff who had worked with varying community groups and agencies on different levels.

#### *Limitations and Recommendations for future research*

A couple of factors limit the generalizability of the findings of this research. While sociologists working in universities may be confronted by issues similar to those who participated in this study, the sample used for this study is not representative of the population of sociologists in Ghana. First, the sample is a relatively small one which comprises a disproportionate mix of Senior and Junior Lecturers, males and females, and faculty who have varying years of work experience in only one university. Also, the research uses Motivational Systems Theory which emphasizes the importance of personal characteristics in motivating human behavior. To truly understand the influence of personal and contextual characteristics in motivating the practice of engaged scholarship among Ghanaian sociologists, it would have been more productive to use a purposive sample of sociologists from universities across the country. Such a sample should comprise a nationally representative number of Senior and Junior faculty and of females and males. A broader sample would enable the researcher to more concretely identify the impact of work experience, years of service, personal and professional networks, gender, and professional rank on attitudes towards community engagement.

However, given that the researcher wanted to gain in-depth information on the subjective views of the respondents and to also identify their emotions concerning the subject of the research, face-to-face interviews would have given respondents the leeway to produce more information which would have enriched the study. It would provide the added advantage of identifying emotions on particular issues pertaining to engaged scholarship. During interviews, Colbeck and Weaver (2008) were able to identify the emotions of interviewees through their body language and the tones of their voices (i.e. gestures revealed emotions of interest, discouragement, boredom).

One of the major findings of this research is that Junior Lecturers with Master's degrees had goal sets that were in line with acquiring PhDs and tenure and intense public engagement seems to be secondary to their short-term goals. Yet, the data gathered did not provide any indication that public engagement will be pursued after one has acquired tenure. Therefore, to obtain extensive knowledge on whether academic rank and educational level are responsible for the selection of short-term goals, future studies on this topic should incorporate indicators for gauging short-term and long term goals (goals after one is tenured). Future research using MST on engaged scholarship among sociologists may include a scheme that will allow respondents to rate the importance of the different functions they perform, to rank short-term versus long-term goals and to provide reasons for such ordering. This additional indicator could provide a general overview of goal arrangement that was not attainable in this research model. It would elucidate whether community engagement has been imbued as a personal goal and/or whether personal goals coincide with social goals. In addition, it would provide more complex indicators of personal and contextual factors that underlie attitudes towards community engagement.

Nonetheless, this case study is suggestive of the conflicts inherent between the university workplace and the stated policy and mission of educational institutions in Ghana. While faculty desire to participate in engaged scholarship is clearly impacted by select individual characteristics, the fulfillment of engaged scholarship in the discipline relies heavily on amending institutional practices and contexts.

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## APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study entitled “*Understanding the development of the scholarship of engagement in a 21st Century Ghanaian University: A case study of sociologists at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.*” being conducted by Rebecca Tachie as part of efforts to acquire the necessary data to complete her Master’s thesis. The main objective of this study is to gain insights on the forms of scholarship pertaining to the work of sociologists in the University of Cape Coast (UCC). Hopefully, the researcher hopes to elicit information on the influence of institutional and contextual factors on the ability of individual sociologists to undertake engaged scholarship in order to highlight successes, challenges and the way forward in the academy’s quest to contribute positively towards the overall progress of society. With the aim of acquiring a holistic view of factors influencing engaged scholarship, this interview centers on identifying the extent to which epistemological dispositions, perceptions about disciplinary, institutional and social demands influence the practice of engaged scholarship.

To ensure confidentiality, you will be identified by a code and not your name. Thanks once again for your willingness to partake in this study. Your responses are greatly valued.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca M. A. Tachie", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rebecca M. A. Tachie

Graduate Student

South Dakota State University

Email: [rebecca.tachie@sdstate.edu](mailto:rebecca.tachie@sdstate.edu); [rebecca.tachie@jacks.sdstate.edu](mailto:rebecca.tachie@jacks.sdstate.edu)

Participant No -----X                      Sex      ( ) Male    (      )  
Female

**Part A – Background Information on the individual lecturer/Faculty member (Please Check all that apply)**

1. What is the nature of your employment contract with the University of Cape Coast

- Full time senior lecturer/Professor
- Full time junior/assistant lecturer
- Part time senior lecturer
- Part time junior/assistant lecturer
- Retired but on contract to teach and engage in projects delineated by the department and university.

2. What is your current position in this department- example: head of department, head of research coordination, examinations and curricula development coordinator etc

3. What is your specified role in this department as outlined in your employment contract

(Check all that apply)

Teaching

Research

Service to the university community

Service to the community

4. What has your area(s) of specialization been so far- Example criminal justice, gender and sexuality, social organizations, general sociology, etc.

**Part B: Nature of Research work**

5. What has been your research focus so far? (Mention as many research projects as you can remember-focusing on the ones you deem your area of specialization)

6. Do you provide research consultancies for state and non-governmental agencies?

Yes/

No.

Mention examples

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Have you been involved in any project as part of efforts towards building social policy formulation (in conjunction with any state, non-governmental agency or civil society group)?

YES                       NO    If Yes, explain the nature and kind of such work.

7. So far have you been actively involved in any advocacy and outreach enterprises in your capacity as an academic/sociologist?

YES

NO

If Yes describe any of these

projects.....

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What are some of the factors that direct your research, teaching and service interests?

- Any prior experiences as a citizen and/or academic that influences your interests?

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**10. What is the most important aspect (and purpose) of your job?**

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11. Do you feel obligated to follow up on the utility of your research findings?

- Yes
- No
- Why/Why not?

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12. On which platforms do you usually present your expertise as an academic

in academic circles and platforms- example journals, symposiums, Lectures, etc.

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On non-academic platforms- media, policy debates etc.

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13. How are you received by the groups you work with (institutions, communities, civil society groups and *the media*\*\*\* where applicable)

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14. How is your research work disseminated? (With which publics- how is it presented to





2. How would you broadly define who a sociologist is? What do you think is the role of a sociologist?

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3. Based on the description you provided so far and the role you play teaching sociology, would you consider yourself a sociologist?

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4. Do you perceive a difference between what the university and the department requires of you and what you think is the ideal role of a sociologist?

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**Part D: Nature and forms of engagement**

1. In what ways does your work embrace public engaged scholarship?

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- How is public engagement integrated into your teaching, research and service

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- Do the courses that you teach provide students with service learning opportunities and platforms for students to engage in community projects and community based research?

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2. Do you see any connections between your research, service and teaching? How does community engagement impact teaching, learning and research?



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- 4. Can you identify situations where you have successfully engaged community actors in a project that has been beneficial to your scholarship and the community as a whole?

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3. In engaging with the public (either through research, public education advocacy or outreach), do you take on a value-free/outsider disposition or do you have a moral commitment towards addressing social issues using your expertise?

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4. Does your scholarship incorporate a commitment towards ensuring social justice?

- Yes
- No
- Please explain your

answer.....

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5. In the conduct of social research do you concern yourself with addressing the topical issues which concern the Ghanaian society at a point in time or do you emphasize issues that are more disciplinary related?.....

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6. Do you feel obligated to highlight the lived realities of the groups you work with in public discourse (through the media, civil society groups, symposiums etc)?

Yes/No Why/Why not

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7. Do you believe that sociologists (and social scientists) should act as a third force mediating in the day to day affairs between the state and civil society groups? Why or why not? Check all that apply.

- a) Distracts sociologists from objectivity in their research
- b) Allows sociologists to provide marginalized groups with the critical view they need to ensure achieve social justice
- c) Other reasons

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**F. Institutional and departmental influences on faculty-community partnerships**

1. In your opinion, how does the department of Sociology and Anthropology give back to (or influence) the broader society?





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3. Does the university provide any rewards (recognition, funds, etc.) for pursuing civic engagement avenues?

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4. Does the university provide you with monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance support systems which enhance faculty-community partnerships and engagement?

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5. How is community engagement built into teaching and learning in this department?  
Any formal practicum courses, service learning, activities etc?

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6. Do you believe that the department (and the university) places a premium on research for publication more than the other aspects of scholarship (public engagement, service, *teaching (where possible)*)? Why/why not?

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7. Have you been able to access grants, funding and social support for any civic engagement avenues that you have pursued (or about to pursue). – Are grants for public engagement purposes easily accessible?

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8. Is there a national and institutional policy framework which supports university and faculty community engagement?.....

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In all, what are the challenges that you face in the bid to establish partnerships with community actors for research, teaching and community development

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**G. Recommendations on improving the scholarship of engagement.**

1. What are some of the professional goals you have outlined for yourself to achieve in the next five years

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3. How can the sociologist participate directly in the process of community development?

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4. What can be done to ensure the growth of the scholarship of engagement among faculty in the University of Cape Coast and the department of Sociology and Anthropology.....

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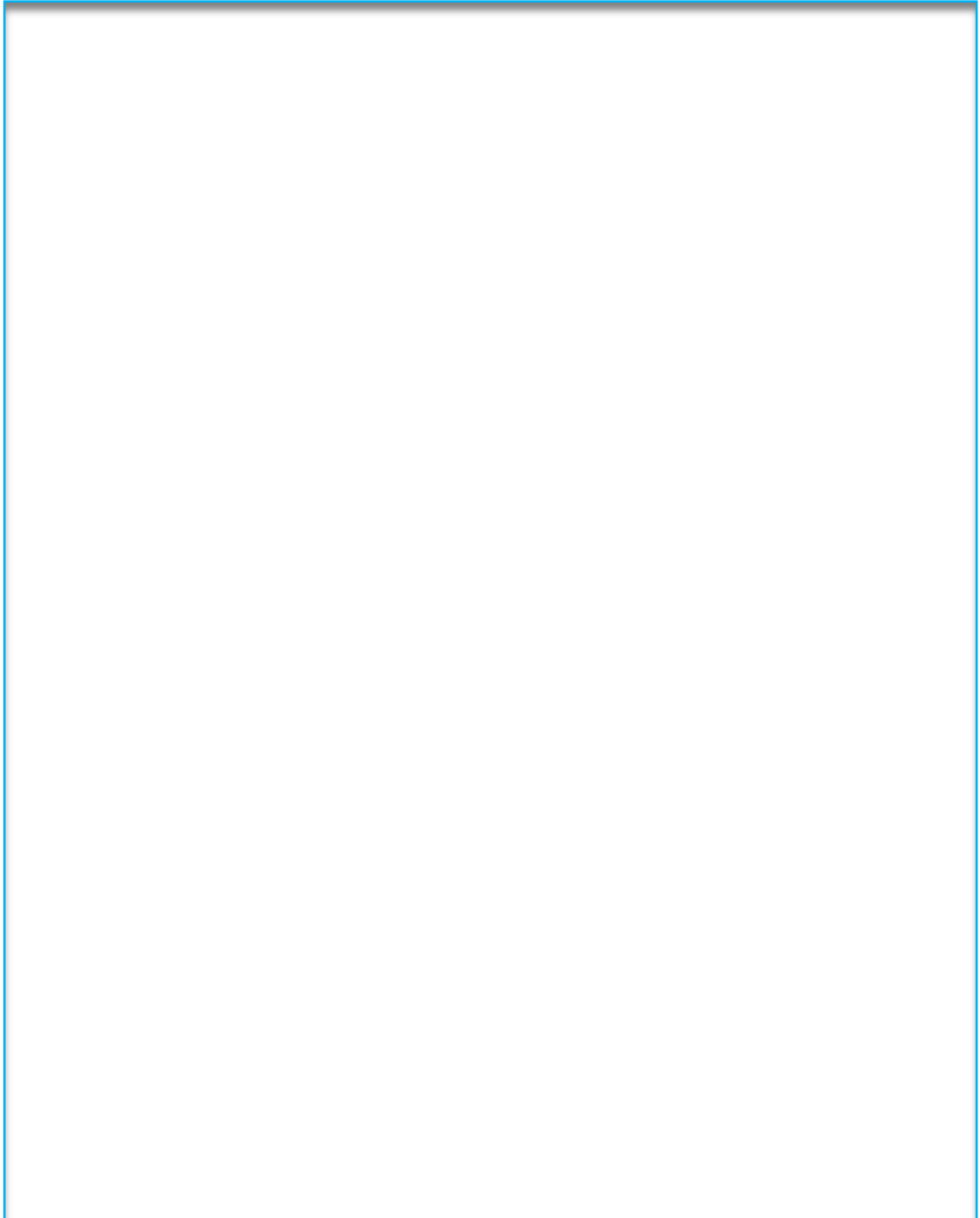
What is the highest level of education you have attained so far?

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Professional or Doctoral Degree

If you have any additional thoughts about any of the above topics, please share them here

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin blue border, occupying most of the page below the text. It is intended for the user to provide additional thoughts or comments.