



## CHALLENGES TEACHERS ENCOUNTER WHILE SEEKING FOR PROMOTION AND UPGRADING

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### **Abstract:**

Promotion and upgrading of teachers after years of service and/or further studies are very essential in the working life of teachers as other formal employees. This is because promotion and upgrading serve as motivational means for hard work and high productivity. However, they do not come without challenges. The challenges inherent in the processes of promotion and upgrading of teachers and the effects the challenges have on teachers seemed to have received little scientific investigation. This research gap precipitated the conduct of this exercise in the Bono region of Ghana. The descriptive survey study was conducted among public senior high school teachers and a sample size of 246 was used. The data were collected using a survey questionnaire and SPSS version 23 was used to analyze the data. The study revealed the following as the challenges teachers encounter during promotions: irregular and untimely release of promotion information, long procedure in the application, too many documents required, and untimely release of promotion results. The challenges tend to have effects on teachers' work output as well as their psychological, social, and emotional well-being. The study further disclosed that the teachers encounter challenges with upgrading as well which also tends to affect them psychologically, emotionally, and socially as well as their work output. It is therefore concluded that the challenges that the teachers encounter while undergoing promotion and upgrading tend to have an effect on their psychological, social and emotional states as well as their confidence to work which can affect their work output. This would be detrimental to student learning and progress. The study then recommends that the Ghana Education Service (GES) has to take the necessary steps to eliminate the challenges inherent in promotion and upgrading to enable teachers to devote adequate time to their work.

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## 1. Introduction

Teaching is a profession that aims at nurturing human beings to understand their roles and responsibilities towards themselves, their families, their communities, and the environment. In the context of modern communities, the term 'teacher' has a wide understanding. Every individual who engages in a formal or informal education process that involves the delivery of knowledge or skill to an individual or group of individuals is called a teacher. It is an undeniable fact that the responsibilities and roles of teachers are very challenging. Now the role of teachers is not only limited to teaching, educating, and guiding students but more importantly controlling the moral and ethical balance of students as well (Zamri-Mahamod, 2010). According to Sulaiman (2012), the roles of teachers have changed and will continue to turn out to be more complicated in the future. This is due to the ever-changing needs of learners. Consequently, teacher education programmes should provide them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that would enable them to deliver to meet the changing needs of students. They should be conscientised of the need to constantly update their knowledge and skills via continuous learning. Doing that would also enable them to be promoted and upgraded in their professional job and to enjoy the benefits associated with them.

The professionalism of teaching and teacher upbringing are important factors for the achievement of learning goals, institutional advancement, and the total success of any educational sector. Teachers, therefore, need to acquire competencies such as pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, technological knowledge, and others through further education, training, and practice. The pivot of any educational system lies in the premise of dedicated, knowledgeable, competent, and better-trained teachers in any given location (Apuega & Anenna, 2015). The rapid expansion of the educational sector in Ghana coupled with the implementation of free senior high school education called for the high demand for teachers and consequently their upgrading. Besides, the free education policy necessitates the use of non-professional teachers in the Ghanaian education stream. Those non-professional teachers later do upgrade themselves by undertaking professional courses through different modes such as regular, distance, sandwich, and evening programmes. As Kuranchie (2019) posits, in contemporary times, universities offer a variety of professional education programmes to train teachers to teach at the pre-tertiary level of education. Professional education programmes for degree and non-degree holders include Master of Education (MEd), Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), Top-up, and Diploma in Education. In Ghana, tertiary institutions such as Catholic University of Ghana (CUG), University of Education, Winneba (UEW), and University of Cape Coast (UCC) offer teacher education programmes on distance, sandwich, weekend, and regular modes to, among others, train teachers to handle various subjects at the basic and secondary schools. Teachers who undergo those professional education courses get upgraded upon completion. The

education programmes are supposed to equip them with the skills, knowledge and expertise required to be professional teachers. This is in line with a discovery that as a result of the swift expansion of education infrastructure, the majority of education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa have employed non-professional teachers. This has contributed to the reforms within the educational sector. Attempts are also made to upgrade and promote the non-professional teachers to professional status through educational upgrade programmes such as Diploma in Education, Post-graduate Diploma in Education, and Master of Education. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which is education for all by the year 2030, (United Nations, 2015 as cited in Kanwetuu, de Paul, Brenya & Obeng, 2020) countries have realised the need to maximise the use of trained teachers to deliver education to students. There is no doubt that without well-trained and motivated teachers the SDG 4 on education could be attained. Teachers are believed to be the make or break of the educational system of every nation (Kuranchie, 2013). The quality and willingness of teachers available, among other things, determine whether the education system will be successful or not. This belief underscores why some countries treat their teachers very well as opposed to those which do otherwise. Again, some educational systems provide teachers with adequate knowledge of upgrading and promotion processes so that when they are due for any of them, the processes become smooth. Unfortunately, some educational systems do not live up to expectations by adequately exposing their teachers to what processes entailed in promotion and upgrading.

According to GES (2018), policy guidelines on further studies with pay, teachers have, at least, three years until they are permitted to embark on further studies after being posted by the service. It can be gathered from the above that both professional and non-professional teachers after going through further education and/or serving for the required number of years, they are promoted and upgraded. In the teaching service, long service makes teachers get promoted and upgraded while further studies also do the same. Besides, teachers who have attained higher qualifications get upgraded if they are not due for promotion. Hence, promotion and upgrading are very vital issues in the teaching service. Promotion and upgrading are synonymous with each other (Mwijage, 2015) as hierarchically, promotion automatically comes before upgrading as in agreement with the condition of service in GES.

The Public Service Commission of Ghana defines 'promotion' as the conferment upon a person in the public service to which is attached a higher salary or higher salary scale than that attached to the public office to which he was last substantively appointed. The promotion has become everyone's dream in any endeavour, being civil service, public service, or others. Staff in the formal and informal organisations of the economy apply for promotion when their time is due. According to Savych (2005), the simplest form of incentive pay is a promotion ladder. It encourages employees to invest in their human capacity development. This stems from the fact that promotion comes about as a result of an increase in the level of education and/or long service in one's profession (Ofei, 2011). Organisations' conditions of service do unambiguously spell out the conditions under which an employee can seek promotion. According to Adam, Boakye, Ashie,

Bawah, and Pobbi (2016), promotion is entrenched in employees' terms and conditions of service and work. Consequently, it is expected that when employees are due for promotion and go through the processes they should be promoted without unnecessary delays. Workers become aggrieved when they experience these things.

According to Afrane-Okese (2017), upgrading teachers to higher ranks is one of the conditions of service of teachers in GES. In a press conference in May 2021, the Director General of GES clearly indicated that teachers who pursued relevant courses in their work and had approval prior to pursuing the courses qualified for upgrading (Google News, 2021). In spite of this, the ordeal teachers go through during upgrading looms large in the ears of stakeholders of education including these researchers. There are always complaints by teachers that their promotion and upgrading issues are not so well handled. As professionals in the teaching service, reports and complaints are heard on the issue of upgrading to occasion the need to undertake a study to unravel the mysteries surrounding the promotion and upgrading of teachers in the Bono region of Ghana,

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

The provisions of promotion and upgrading of teachers are clearly stipulated in the Conditions of Service of teachers in Ghana. Consequently, teachers have been enjoying them when they are due. Strides have been made to upgrade teachers through study leave with pay. Teachers who undergo various forms of studies or work for a long time are expected to be promoted to the next rank. Most often, this does not happen and sometimes it takes a substantial amount of time for them to be upgraded. For instance, in 2019, a great number of teachers were not promoted to the ranks of Principal Superintendent, Assistant Director II, Assistant Director I, and Deputy Director (Amofah, 2020). There were also discrepancies in the promotional ranks and criteria of teachers who successfully completed bachelor's degrees. These remain critical issues of concern in the education sector of the country.

According to Ofei (2011), teacher promotion and upgrading are a process of improving the quality or usefulness of a teacher to a higher position or rank. Upgrading and promoting teachers to different ranks in Ghana used to be quite smooth. Kanwetuu et al (2020) indicated that ample evidence exists in the literature that blockages, interruptions, and injustice manifest in the promotion process of teachers in recent times. Danku, et al. (2015) identified that the teachers' appraisal which forms the basis of recommendation for promotion is being adopted as a tool for victimization. Kombat (2017) and Adam et al (2016) contend that the promotional process for teachers within GES is bureaucratic, awkward, unethical, and not merit-based. They further stress that many teachers opt for study leave with pay at the expense of promotion to develop themselves and terminate their appointment at later date. The aftermath of teachers' successful completion and passing through the promotional processes is characterized by a delay in the placement of such teachers on the right salary scale (Sambou, 2019). This uncomfortable situation is not peculiar to only Ghana but to some other countries as well

supported by Mwijage's (2015) study on the promotion of teachers in public secondary school teachers delays.

The foregoing points out that when teachers return from school, they do not get promoted or upgraded easily. They make reports and complaints about their promotion and upgrading as they are a challenge to them. GES acknowledged in May 2022 that the promotion and upgrading of teaching and non-teaching staff were delayed due to the verification process. GES added that teachers who were promoted in June 2021 would be upgraded in May 2022 (Google News, 2022). A concerned teacher on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 lamented that some teachers who had completed degree top-up courses after their initial diploma programme had been denied upgrading (Google News, 2022). The litany of challenges that have been leveled at the promotion and upgrading of teachers shows the need for stakeholders of education to be aware of the situation in all educational directorates in the jurisdiction.

However, literature is sparse with studies on the effects of the promotion and upgrading challenges on the teachers' work and well-being. A lot of studies have been done on teacher promotion and upgrading but they did not cover all aspects of these phenomena. For instance, the works of Bennel and Akyeampong (2007), Chiduwoli (2007), Johnson and Donaldson (2006), Loeb and Page (2000), and Masondo (2014) did not cover this pertinent issue. These studies covered some important aspects of teacher motivation, promotion, and upgrading, yet the effects that this denial or delay in these processes has on the affected teachers had been neglected. There is no doubt the fact that when teachers are not given what is due them after going through bureaucratic processes and meeting all requirements, they would be upset. Again, if the pains and anguish they experience do affect them, they would not give off their best at work and they are the best people to say it. The identified gaps thus influenced the researchers' decision to conduct this study to provide empirical evidence from teachers who had gone through promotion and upgrading processes to bridge the knowledge gap. This study aimed at examining challenges inherent in the processes of upgrading and promoting of teachers and the effects the challenges have on teachers' work and well-being.

## 2.1 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to address the following specific objectives:

- 1) To find out the promotion challenges faced by teachers in the Bono region.
- 2) To examine the effect of promotion challenges on teachers in the Bono region.
- 3) To find out the upgrading challenges encountered by teachers in the Bono region.
- 4) To examine the effects of upgrading challenges on teachers in the Bono region.

## 2.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- 1) What are the promotion challenges faced by teachers in the Bono region?
- 2) What are the effects of the promotion challenges on teachers in the Bono region?
- 3) What are the upgrading challenges encountered by teachers in the Bono region?
- 4) What are the effects of the upgrading challenges on teachers in the Bono region?

### 3. Literature Review

#### 3.1 The Concept of Promotion

Promotion is a transfer of an employee to a new position that commands higher pay, privileges, or status than the old one (Kombat, 2017). Goblar, Warwich, Carrel, Elbert, and Hatfield (2013) regard promotion as an advancement in a staff position or in the hierarchical system of an organisation. It is a vertical move in rank and responsibility. On his part, Bull (2005) says that promotion mostly transforms into chances of progression and growth in the current job or enhances the opportunity to find an alternative job. Besides, the advancement in the rank of organisational hierarchy serves as a reward for good performance (Tuwei, 2013). It leads to an improvement in pay, prestige, position-designation, and responsibilities of employees within their organization. Where a change in designation and rise in pay does not add to promotion, it is not deemed as a promotion. The conceptual map as shown above depicts how promotion has been everyone's dream in any field of life (Bennet & Graham, 1992). Civil, public, and other workers in the formal and informal sectors of the economy apply for promotion when they are due. If one comes across employees in any field of endeavour and asks them about what motivates workers, this is what one is likely to hear from them, *"it is a human nature and everyone is expected to grow and as an employee one needs to grow on his or her job and duties"*. According to William (2019), promotion enhances professional growth which serves as a conveyor belt for migration to a higher position with more duties and enhanced salaries. In apparent support of this view, Jyoti and Manisha (2020) contend that employee promotion means the growth of an employee to a higher rank, responsibilities, status, and benefits.

This aspect of work is what drives workers most to contribute adequately to job growth. In practice, promotion requires more job efforts based on the organizational policies and decisions taken. The uplifting of a worker to a position that has a higher salary range, a higher-level position, or a title with some different duties in an organization is considered a promotion (Heathfield, 2019). The author went on to say that promotion leads to an employee taking on responsibility for accepting the oversight role of the responsibilities of other employees. As one is promoted, their authority over their job is also on the rise.

#### 3.2 The Concept of Upgrading

Upgrading is one kind of promotion. This type of promotion involves an increase in responsibilities, pay, and a change in designation (Kombat, 2017). Also, having acquired the promotion to any rank in GES is the first step. The second is that, after acquiring the letter promoting one to a rank, he or she needs to undergo what is popularly referred to as upgrading which means he or she would have to go through tough bureaucracy in the service to be upgraded to the rank and be placed on the scale to attract the corresponding salary to the said rank. The system of upgrading begins at the District or Municipal level then at the Regional Education Directorate and finally at the National Directorate of Education. The latter is the headquarters of the Ghana Education Service. This

bureaucratic system that exists in GES is not the best for teachers. It makes the processing of promotion and upgrading very tiresome for teachers (Adam et al., 2016). This becomes worse when many departments are supposed to handle the promotion processes (Nwijage, 2015). In this case, more education officers have to work on the documents. More time is also spent on handling the documents at every stage to work on the promotion.

It is observed that each stage of handling the promotion and upgrading documents in GES experiences some bureaucratic difficulties. Each level involves some sort of payment as a way of greasing the palms of the personnel charged to assist teachers to process their promotion and upgrading documents. For instance, teachers are said to pay money to personnel who are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that teachers' promotion and upgrading are done. At times, the personnel is alleged to demand some amount of money before processing teachers' documents. Teachers who refuse to pay anything do not have their documents processed (Adelabu, 2005). Masondo (2014) had a concern about posts being sold to teachers. The author's study disclosed that some undeserving teachers were given positions at the expense of the most suitable ones. In some instances, even the teachers who are able to pay the money demanded in the end do not receive their promotion letters on time and are not put on the scale. For instance, it can take a teacher two years to go through the promotion and upgrading processes. This situation becomes tiresome for the teachers, which does not make promotion a motivation any longer. This contradicts Flippo's (1999) postulation that promotion serves as both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for employees.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Study Type and Design**

This study adopted a quantitative research approach as it sought to gather data from respondents to describe a status quo, that is, challenges teachers encountered regarding promotion and upgrading. The quantitative approach follows the positivism philosophical assumption (Kuranchie, 2021, Creswell, 2014). The researchers employed descriptive survey design to guide the data collection and analysis. A descriptive survey allowed the researchers to gather large volumes of data from a large sample size. The study, therefore, sampled respondents in the teaching profession and their opinions on the promotion and upgrading issues as well as the effects the challenges have on teachers.

### **4.2 Population and Sample**

In the study, the target population was pre-tertiary education teachers in the Bono region of Ghana. The number of teachers in the target population was 3,139. The accessible population consisted of the senior high school teachers in the Sunyani East and the Sunyani West Municipalities who had either gone through upgrading and/or promotion within the last five years. Those teachers were also required to have had professional training. These categories of teachers, upon completion of the professional programmes of study, undergo, at least, upgrading in the education service.

Purposive and simple random sampling methods, which are non-probability and probability sampling techniques respectively were used. The Bono region and two of its municipalities were purposively sampled for the study. The non-randomized sampling technique was used to select the municipalities whose teachers participated in the study. The study, therefore, used a purposive sampling technique to select the municipalities in which the teachers were drawn to participate in the study while a simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the teachers for the study.

Cochran's (1977) sample size determination formula for cross-sectional studies was used to determine the sample size which is 246. With the sample size of 246 teaching staff of the senior high schools; 123 were drawn from the Sunyani East Municipality consisting of 64 males and 61 females and 123 from the Sunyani West Municipality made up of 64 males and 61 females. Finally, 226 (92%) of the questionnaires were returned which were properly and accurately filled and that constituted the return rate. The selection of the schools was based on the fact that the schools in each group have similar characteristics, according to classifications used by GES.

### 4.3 Data Collection Instrument

A five-point Likert scale questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. The five-level of the scale of measurement was used to enable respondents who were either not sure of some items or wanted to remain neutral to do so. The items on the questionnaire were close-ended. The five-point Likert-type scale ranged from 'Strongly Agree (SA) with a score of five (5) to 'Strongly Disagree' (SD) with a score of one (1). The researchers agree with McMillan and Schumacher (1993) that a scale is a series of gradations, levels, or values that describe various degrees of something. Scales were used in the questionnaire because they allow a fairly accurate assessment of beliefs or opinions.

### 4.4 Validity and Reliability

This section of the study presents the validity and reliability analysis. The face and content validity of the instrument was checked prior to conducting the reliability check. The study used Cronbach alpha for the reliability test and the results are shown in Table 1. Reliability analysis is a typical way of determining whether a Likert scale is reliable. It is used to find out if items are internally consistent (Kuranchie, 2021).

**Table 1: Reliability Test**

S/N	Variable	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Upgrading Challenges	9	0.714
2	Promotion Challenges	8	0.805
3	Effects of Upgrading Challenges	10	0.713
4.	Effects of Promotion Challenges	10	0.821
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0.770</b>

The reliability analysis of the four variables; upgrading challenges, promotion challenges, effects of upgrading challenges, and effects of promotion challenges revealed Cronbach's alpha of 0.714, 0.805, 0.713, and 0.821. These values portray that the instrument is reliable,



according to Hair and colleagues' rule of thumb (Hair, 2010). These results and the overall  $r$  of 0.770 demonstrate that the instrument was reliable to be used for data collection.

## 5. Discussion of The Study Results

The study did not only seek to uncover the challenges that teachers in the pre-tertiary sector of education encounter when seeking promotion and/or upgrading, but also the perceived effects that the challenges tend to have on them. Based on these issues, four research questions begged for answers hence the findings of the study are presented along those lines. The responses which are analysed and presented were obtained from 226 teachers who had gone through promotion, upgrading, or both within the last five years in the region.

### Research question 1: What promotion challenges do the teachers face?

The first issue that the study tackled was the challenges the teachers in the region face when seeking promotion from one rank to the other. The responses are presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Challenges Teachers Encounter While Seeking for Promotion

	N	Mean	S.D
Irregular and untimely announcement of promotion time	226	3.23	1.68
Inadequate education on the issues of promotion	226	2.31	0.96
Too many requirements to meet prior to applying for promotion	226	2.12	1.12
Long procedure in the application procedure for promotion	226	4.32	1.32
Too many documentations required	226	4.10	1.00
Negligence on the part of GES staff	226	3.97	0.54
Unhelpful attitude of heads of schools	226	3.10	0.67
Uncertainty in the time of releasing promotional results	226	4.50	1.23
Unofficial demands by some officers at the education offices	226	2.23	1.30

**Source:** Field data.

The intention of the study was to discover the major challenges the teachers in the region go through when they are due for promotion. The responses concerning the challenges inherent in the promotion processes revealed that 'irregular and untimely announcement of promotion time for teachers' was a challenge ( $M=3.23$ ;  $SD=1.68$ ). The mean score for the item is above the cut-off of 3.0 with a wide variation in the responses. The issue of 'GES not giving enough education on the issues of promotion', was not a challenge to the teachers in the region. This is because their responses yielded a mean score of 2.31 with a standard deviation of 0.96. Probably, the teachers might have received adequate education on promotion by the rightful authority such as GES. The other issue which was not a challenge to the teachers in the region when it comes to promotional issues is 'So many requirements to meet prior to applying for promotion'. The responses relative to the issue had a mean score of 2.12 and a standard deviation of 1.12. The mean score falls below the cut-off point of 3.0.

The results further show that the issue of 'long procedure in the application procedure for promotion' was a huge challenge to the teachers in the region. The responses of the respondents concerning the issue had a mean score of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 1.32. The mean score is far above the cut-off point of 3.0 signifying that the respondents go through a long procedure when seeking for promotion from one rank to the other. The responses also indicated that 'too many documentations are required of teachers when seeking for promotion, which was a challenge to them. The mean score of the responses was 4.10 with a standard deviation of 1.00. The mean score is far above the cut-off point with a relatively close agreement of the teachers' responses. In addition, 'negligence on the part of GES staff was a challenge during the promotion process' as the mean score was 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.54. The response demonstrates that the mean score is above the cut-off point which is a challenge that the teachers have to battle with during promotion. Besides, the majority of the teachers considered the 'unhelpful attitude of heads of school as a challenge'. The response had a mean score of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 0.67. The response points to the direction that the teachers' head masters and mistresses do not, directly and indirectly, assist the teachers during that period of their working life.

Moreover, the respondents had a challenge with the untimely release of promotion results. Their responses on the 'uncertainty at the time of releasing promotional results attracted a mean score of 4.50 and a standard deviation of 1.23. The mean score is far higher than the cut-off which tells that the teachers had a huge challenge with it. However, the respondents did not consider 'unofficial demands by some officers at the education offices' as a challenge as their responses had a mean score of 2.23 and a standard deviation of 1.30. The mean score is lower than the cut-off point indicating that the issue is not too much of a problem when they are working on promotion.

Generally, it is observed from the results that the major challenges that teachers encounter while seeking for promotion from one rank to the other are: 'irregular and untimely announcement of promotion time for teachers'; 'long procedure in the application procedure for promotion'; 'too many documentations'; 'negligence on the part of GES staff'; 'unhelpful attitude of heads of school'; and 'uncertainty in the time of releasing promotional results. These demonstrate that promotion poses a challenge to teachers. Mwijage (2015) also discovered that the hierarchy for promotion is highly prolonged where many departments are responsible for the promotion processes of teachers. Moreover, Mayaru's (2015) study conducted in Tanzania revealed that the promotion process of teachers was uncomfortable and payment of arrears was delayed. Similarly, Ofei (2021) contends that most of the time, teachers' promotion letters delay at the district or municipal, regional and national education directorates. The documentation and paperwork that go on result in much bureaucracy. These may have influenced Adam et al (2016) and Komat's (2017) conclusion that the promotion of teachers in GES is bureaucratic, awkward, unethical, and not merit-based.

**Research question 2:** What is the effect of the promotion challenges on the teachers?

The study then sought to ascertain from the teachers how the challenges inherent in the promotion procedure affect them. This effort became necessary as the presence of a challenge does not necessarily indicate its effect. The respondents were therefore made to indicate the extent to which the challenges affect their personal and professional wellbeing. Their responses are presented in the table below.

**Table 3:** Effects of the Promotion Challenges on the Teachers

	N	Mean	S.D
The challenges tend to reduce my confidence in the service	226	2.13	1.20
The challenges make me have less confidence in the GES staff at the education offices	226	2.24	1.23
The challenges do demotivate me to perform my responsibilities	226	3.56	0.87
The challenges do reduce my confidence to work as a teacher	226	3.67	0.76
The challenges tend to affect my commitment to work	226	4.23	0.97
The challenges tend to have negative effect on my work output	226	3.95	1.23
The challenges tend to affect my time to perform my responsibilities	226	4.13	1.04
The challenges tend to affect me psychologically	226	3.54	1.01
The challenges tend to affect me emotionally	226	3.44	1.10
The challenges tend to affect me socially	226	3.76	1.22
<b>Mean of means</b>		<b>3.27</b>	<b>1.17</b>

Source: Field data.

If there are challenges inherent in the promotional processes the teachers go through, the challenges could affect them. The results as seen in the above table indicated that ‘the challenges tend to reduce the confidence the teachers have in the teaching service. This assertion stems from the fact that the statement had a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 1.20. The mean score is higher than the cut-off point of 3.0 which shows that the various challenges that the teachers go through any time they were due for promotion and initiated the process to seek for the promotion tend to erode their confidence in the teaching service.

On the other hand, the challenges the teachers go through during promotion ‘do not make them have less confidence in the GES staff at the education offices. The statement received a mean score of 2.24 with a standard deviation of 1.23. The mean score falls below the cut-off point but with a wide variation in opinion. The mean score indicates that although the teachers tend not to have confidence in the teaching service but not the GES staff at the education offices per se. The teachers attribute the challenges they go through to the system but not the staff manning the education offices.

The mean score of the statement ‘the challenges do demotivate me to perform my responsibilities’ attracted a mean score of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 0.87 signifying that the challenges have a toll on the teachers and a close agreement of the responses. The mean score of 3.56 is above the threshold set as the mean of determination. The idea gained from the score is that the numerous challenges that the teachers face in their bid to get promotion tend to demotivate them and make them feel reluctant in performing

their responsibilities in schools. This is an unfortunate situation as it can negatively impact students' learning outcomes which is the ultimate goal of education.

Similarly, the statement 'the challenges do reduce my confidence to work as a teacher' had a mean score of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.76. The mean score points out that the challenges that the teachers encounter during their time for promotion have the capacity to reduce the confidence of teachers to perform their roles in school. The mean score of the response to the statement is above the threshold and with close agreement. Confidence is essential in the performance of professional responsibilities and if the majority of teachers lack it due to the promotion challenges that they are confronted with once in a while, then it is not good for the education service.

The results also revealed that the statement 'the challenges tend to affect my commitment to work' received a very high mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of 0.94. The mean score for that statement is far above the cut-off point of 3.0 showing that the challenges the teachers face while seeking for promotion had a huge toll on their commitment to work. The teachers' commitment to work seriously dwindles as well as their confidence to teach effectively as teachers are affected. Coupled with the high mean of the statement 'the challenges tend to have a negative effect on my work output of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 1.23, their commitment to work reduces which can also negatively impact student learning hence the achievement of national goals of education and that of the SDG 4 of education will be at stake.

The results further disclose that the challenges tend to affect the teachers' time to perform their responsibilities. This statement attracted a high mean of 4.13 and standard deviation of 1.04. The mean is above the estimated mean of determination, 3.0, indicating that the challenges they face while going through their promotional processes do negatively affect their time to perform their professional responsibilities in their schools although there is a wide variation in the response.

The table also depicts that the challenges that the teachers face while pursuing their promotions when they were due to tend to affect them psychologically. The statement had a mean score of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 1.01 demonstrating that the challenges had a psychological impact on the teachers. This is because the mean score of 3.54 is above the cut-off point of 3.0. The statement 'the challenges tend to affect me emotionally' received a mean score of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 1.10. The mean score is above the cut-off point which indicates that the challenges were a trigger of emotional difficulties some of the teachers had. In addition, the statement 'the challenges tend to affect me socially' received a mean score of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 1.17. The mean score is above the cut-off point indicating that the challenges had social effects on the teachers.

The overall mean of the challenges is 3.27 and a standard deviation of 1.17 implying that the numerous challenges that the teachers encounter while undergoing promotion processes tend to have negative effects on them and various aspects of their teaching work. The challenges affect their confidence in the teaching service and also affect them psychologically, emotionally, and socially. This situation may make some teachers think that it is not important to embark on further studies to enhance their

portfolio and also attract promotion. It can demotivate teachers in the profession and supports the complaints made by the concerned teacher (Google News, 2022) and discoveries by Adam et al (2016), Mwijage (2015), and Savych (2005).

**Research question 3:** What upgrading challenges do the teachers face?

The third research objective was to unravel the challenges surrounding the upgrading of teachers. Thus, the research sought to bring to the limelight the challenges teachers experience during upgrading. Upgrading is another issue in the working life of workers and teachers are no exception which may present its own challenges. From time to time, employees enjoy upgrading which requires them to go through some processes. The table below shows the specific challenges that teachers face when going for upgrading.

**Table 4:** Challenges Teachers Encountered during Upgrading

	N	Mean	S.D
Inadequate knowledge about upgrading issues	226	4.57	0.21
Delay in receiving information on when one is due	226	4.21	0.65
Untimely submission of information or documents	226	2.32	0.91
The bureaucracy involved in the upgrading process	226	3.87	1.21
Unhelpful attitudes of heads of schools	226	1.34	1.23
The attitude of GES staff at the education offices	226	3.92	1.13
Unofficial demands by some officers at the education offices	226	2.15	0.85
Teacher unions' failure to press for members to enjoy upgrading	226	4.53	0.25

**Source:** Field data.

The results as presented in the table above clearly indicate that the teachers' inadequate knowledge about upgrading issues was a challenge. The responses of the respondents had a mean score of 4.57 and a standard deviation of 0.21. The mean score for the statement is far above the cut-off point of 3.0 which discloses that teachers had inadequate knowledge of upgrading of staff in the education service, which poses as a challenge to staff. Another challenge the respondents agreed most to is the delay in getting information that they are due for upgrading. The statement 'delay in receiving information on when one is due for upgrading' attracted a mean score of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.65. These scores indicate closeness in the agreement of the respondents that information on upgrading is not provided to teachers on time. This tendency has the capacity to deny the upgrading of a good number of teachers.

However, the respondents did not agree to the issue of 'untimely submission of information or documents for upgrading' as a challenge. The mean score and standard deviation of 2.32 and 0.91 respectively were recorded for the responses to the statement. The mean score falls below the cut-off point of 3.0 indicating that the statement was not supported by the majority of the respondents as a challenge they faced during upgrading. Besides, most of the respondents did not consider the unhelpful attitudes of heads of schools as a challenge when it comes to teachers upgrading issues and processes. The mean score and standard deviation for the statement are 1.34 and 1.23 respectively. The

mean score which falls far below the cut-off point of 3.0 demonstrates that the respondents did see their head masters and mistresses as a hindrance to their upgrading. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents did not consider unofficial demands at the education offices as a challenge in their quest to get upgraded when they were due. The mean score and standard deviation for the statement 'unofficial demands by some officers at the education offices are 2.15 and 0.85 respectively. The mean score which is below the cut-off point demonstrates that most of the respondents did not see the statement as a challenge when it comes to the upgrading of teachers.

However, most of the teachers considered the bureaucracy involved in the upgrading process as a challenge. This is based on the fact that the statement received a mean score of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 1.21. The mean score which is above the estimated mean of 3.0 implies that most of the respondents considered the bureaucracy involved in teacher upgrading as a challenge. Again, the respondents considered the attitude of some officers at the various education offices as a challenge. The mean score and standard deviation of the statement 'the attitude of GES staff at the education offices' are 3.92 and 1.13 respectively. The mean score which is above the mean of determination shows that most of the respondents did not regard the attitude of some GES staff at the education offices as helpful during the period of upgrading. Lastly, the statement 'teacher unions' failure to press for members to enjoy upgrading' as a challenge receive a very high mean of 4.53 and a very close in the agreement of 0.25.

The results signify that most of the respondents did not consider the teacher unions helpful in championing the course of their members, especially on matters of upgrading. The teacher unions have not lived up to expectations on the issue of upgrading of teachers. It will, however, be appropriate if the teacher unions live up to expectations since they are the welfare unions of the teachers. On the contrary, the teacher unions seem to fight for their members on such issues. In an instance, the Director General of GES indicated that through the teacher unions, teachers who did not seek for approval prior to pursuing relevant courses were upgraded (Google News, 2021). But for the teacher unions, those teachers would not have been upgraded. The Ghana Association of Teachers (GNAT) also assured that with their efforts, GES had taken steps to upgrade teachers with the Bachelor of Education Certificates. GNAT pushed for the acceptance of the teachers because the minimum professional qualification to teach was a first degree (Google News, 2021). The teacher unions seem to be ensuring improved conditions of service for teachers as their mandates dictate contrary to the views of the respondents of this study. Teacher unions are organised labour, which is legally constituted to, among others, engage employers for the welfare of teachers.

**Research question 4:** What is the effect of upgrading challenges on the teachers?

The objective of the study was to ascertain the effects that the various challenges tend to have on teachers. This effort was made because as promotion challenges have a significant effect on teachers, upgrading challenges may also have some effect on teachers. Hence, views were sampled from the respondents about the possible effects the

challenges posed to them. The responses concerning the effects that the various challenges have on teachers are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Effects of Upgrading Challenges on the Teachers

	N	Mean	S.D
The challenges tend to reduce the confidence I have in the service	226	3.62	1.21
The challenges tend to reduce the confidence I have in staff at the offices	226	2.74	1.03
The challenges do demotivate me to perform my responsibilities	226	3.85	1.02
The challenges do reduce my confidence to work as a teacher	226	3.75	1.03
The challenges tend to affect my commitment to work	226	4.32	0.23
The challenges tend to have a negative effect on my work output	226	3.52	0.34
The challenges tend to affect my time to perform my responsibilities	226	3.03	0.97
The challenges tend to affect me psychologically	226	3.54	1.34
The challenges tend to affect me emotionally	226	3.40	1.23
The challenges tend to affect me socially	226	3.22	1.74
<b>Mean of means</b>		<b>3.45</b>	<b>1.21</b>

**Source:** Field data.

The results in the above table show that the challenges the respondents encounter during upgrading tend to reduce their confidence in the teaching service. The statement had a mean score of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 1.21. The mean score is above the cut-off point of 3.0 showing that the confidence the teachers have in the education service has dwindled due to the challenges they do encounter any time they had to go through the upgrading processes.

However, the challenges they encounter while undergoing the process of upgrading do not reduce the confidence, they have in the GES staff at the education offices. This stems from the fact that the mean score and standard deviation of the statement are 2.74 and 103 respectively. It is an indication that the officers at the various education offices are not the cause of their challenges.

The results also portray that the challenges that the respondents face during upgrading tend to demotivate them in performing their responsibilities. The statement had a mean score of 3.85 and a standard deviation of 1.02. The mean score is above the cut-off point of 3.0 indicating the challenges the respondents faced while seeking for upgrading; this makes them become demotivated which can have serious consequences on them and eventually their performance. In a similar vein, the challenges tend to reduce their confidence to work as teachers. The statement attracted a mean score of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 1.03. The mean score of 3.75 is above the cut-off point of 3.0 showing that the challenges associated with upgrading have a negative effect on the teachers' confidence to work.

Again, the results depict that the mean score for the statement 'the challenges tend to affect my commitment to work' is high with closeness in their agreement. The mean score and standard deviation of the responses to the statement are 4.32 and 0.34 respectively. The mean score is far above the cut-off point of 3.0 signifying that the challenges they encounter tend to negatively impact their commitment to work. Besides, the responses show that the challenges tend to have a negative effect on their work output

as the mean score shows 3.52 and a standard deviation of 0.43. The low commitment to work due to challenges that the teachers face when seeking for upgrading contributes to their low work output. Moreover, the challenges the respondents encounter tend to affect their time to perform their responsibilities. They consider it as time-consuming as their responses attracted a mean score of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 0.97.

On whether the challenges that they encounter have a psychological effect on them, their response was in the affirmative and had a high mean score with a wide variation in the responses. Thus, the statement 'the challenges tend to affect me psychologically' had a mean score of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 1.34. The mean score which is above the cut-off point shows that the challenges have an effect on them psychologically. The challenges also had emotional effects on them as the statement 'the challenges tend to affect them emotionally' received a mean score of 3.40 and a standard deviation of 1.23. The statement 'the challenges tend to affect them socially' also received a mean score of 3.22 and a standard deviation of 1.74

Generally, the total mean of 3.45 and a standard deviation of 1.21 as shown in the above table demonstrate that the challenges that the teachers encounter while going through the process of upgrading tend to have an effect on them. The challenges affect their confidence in the teaching service as well as their psychological, emotional, and social well-being.

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Although promotion and upgrading are the wish and desires of GES staff, both teaching, and non-teaching, the processes entailed in them are fraught with challenges that have the tendency to negatively affect teachers and their work performance. Most of the challenges were the result of poor implementation of guidelines for the promotion and upgrading of employees like negligence of responsible officials, too much documentation, lack of proper guidelines on promotion and upgrading, and excessive bureaucracy caused by complex hierarchy. The impacts of delayed promotions for the teachers tend to contribute to lowering their morale to work or demotivate and discourage them from working hard, which all can eventually affect the academic progress of students who have been entrusted into their care. Policies and institutional frameworks guiding the promotion and upgrading of teachers seemed to be weak in the education service hence, the numerous promotions and upgrading challenges tend to affect the teachers and their productivity. The resulting effect is work apathy, low commitment to work, and an increase in teachers' turnover.

It is very important for every teacher who has been appointed into the teaching profession to be introduced to the guidelines in order to make them aware of how to keep themselves up to date in the profession. This will reduce teachers' complaints as they will be aware of what they are required to do at what time and may help to raise their morale to work hard in order to be promoted. Also, this will help teachers to take the right decisions in case of any inconvenience and thus avoid unnecessary claims. It is therefore recommended that mechanisms to minimize bureaucracy in the promotion process



should be designed by GES in order to reduce the time to process teachers' promotions. There should be a specific department in the service that will only be dealing with the promotions of teachers. This is due to the fact that having different departments dealing with the promotion of teachers may not prolong the bureaucracy which leads to delayed promotions. Promotion rights of teachers should go timely with employees' rights such as salary increments.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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