Basic School Students' Learning Outcomes Through Leadership Practices: Prospects of Effective Collaboration Between the University of Education and Basic Schools in Six Districts/Municipalities in The Central Region of Ghana

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Abstract

The study investigated the collaboration between basic schools and the University of Education, Winneba through leadership practices for the purpose of improving learning outcomes in six districts/municipalities in the Central Region of Ghana. The researchers used concurrent triangulation mixed-method design. Questionnaire and interview guide were used as the research instruments to collect data from heads and teachers of basic schools in six districts/municipalities, and the Heads of Departments directly linked to basic education in the University of Education, Winneba. They employed a multi-stage sampling technique to select a sample size of four hundred and one (401) for the study. It was found that generally, basic school heads had a sense of shared leadership. They subscribed to visionary and transformational leadership styles, and teachers' perceptions of their styles were positive. It was also observed the heads of the basic schools encountered numerous challenges which impede quality learning and the desired learning outcomes. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school leadership could create opportunities for regular interactions with all stakeholders such as the past students, district assemblies and the Universities. The University of Education, Winneba could develop a policy to regularly engage basic schools in their catchment areas which would inure to their mutual benefit.

Key Words: Basic School, leadership challenges, leadership practices, collaboration, learning outcomes

Introduction

The National Education Assessment's (NEA) Technical Report reveals that the expenditure on education at the national level since the 1990s has been between 25% and 40% (NEA, 2018). However, according to the Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA, 2019), one thing which has been of great concern to stakeholders in education is the divergence in huge educational investments and learning outcomes, especially at the basic level. Evidently, learning outcomes as

measured by academic performance continue to show persistent decline. For example, the NEA's 2018 Report cited by the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC, 2014) observed that 40% of pupils in both third and sixth grade failed between 2008-2014. The Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) pass rate had drastically declined from 62.18% in 2008 to 50.2% in 2009, 49.12% in 2010 and 46.93% in 2011 (WAEC Chief Examiner's Report, 2012). Again, the Chief Examiner's Report on standards of papers for the 2015 BECE in Integrated Science showed candidates' inability to apply scientific knowledge to physical phenomena.

The Chief Examiner's Report for 2015/2016 academic year revealed that the entire results of candidates from 321 schools were withheld for suspected examination misdeeds. Much more, according to the Ministry of Education (2018), repeat rates are as high as 19%, and learning outcomes are declining rapidly as evidenced by the fact that Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) revealed that 50% of pupils were unable to recognize a single word.

The declining pupils' performance in the wake of rising expenditures, and input of human (quality teachers) and material resources bring to the fore the issues of learning and the leadership practices that could enhance such learning outcomes. Kuhry (2012) interprets the seeming disconnect that exists between educational expenditure and students' learning outcomes as a sign of leadership vacuum in schools. Typical of Kuhry's argument is the point made by the Ghana Education Service (2010) that some schools' leadership practices are robust and bureaucratic, with more emphasis towards a well-defined curriculum and assessment strategies to the detriment of effective leadership that should spur learning outcomes. Hence, these schools hold on to their bureaucratic arrangements and have not changed much in terms of leadership practices and learning outcomes.

It is further observed that basic schools situated in University catchment areas encounter the same low performance fate as those far from their peripheries. Thus, in the general effort to improve leadership for optimal learning outcomes in basic schools in Ghana, it appears little attention has been paid to the role of higher education-basic school partnership, which is a missing element in the various educational reform efforts in Ghana. This scenario of universitybasic school partnership has been so until the establishment of the Centre for the Improvement of Primary Education (CRIPE) in the University of Cape Coast and the National Centre for Research into Basic Education (NCRIBE) in the University of Education, Winneba. Elkin (2005) argued that this unabridged intellectual and cultural gap between basic schools and higher education exists because higher educational institutions have been preoccupied with their own problems leaving them with little or no energy and resources for basic school improvement. This seems to be the case in the six

districts/municipalities (Effutu, Senya East, Senya West, Gomoa East, Gomoa Central and Gomoa West) in the Central Region of Ghana where the performance in the BECE results are also declining despite the existence of UEW in that catchment area.

In nurturing and evolving leadership approaches for solutions to pupils' erratic performance through the synergy of higher education and basic schools, the case is made repeatedly that the primary function of school leadership is the promotion of desirable learning outcomes (Tedla & Redda, 2021; Leithwood, 2021). Hence, the inquiry is made: how do head teachers make their leadership meaningful to learning outcomes in basic schools, and how do higher educational institutions such as the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) enhance the capabilities of basic school heads through collaboration with basic schools to improve learning outcomes in the Central Region of Ghana? The objective of this study is to identify the leadership

practices adopted by the heads of basic schools in promoting learning outcomes in six, examine the leadership challenges basic school heads, encounter in promoting pupils' learning outcomes, and determine how the UEW and basic schools can collaborate in enhancing leadership practices of school heads for optimal pupils learning outcomes in six districts/municipalities in the Central Region of Ghana.

Significance of the Study
The significance of the research will be realised in its contribution to providing an overview of the leadership practices basic school heads adopt to promote students' learning outcomes, the challenges they encounter in adopting these leadership practices, and the nature of collaboration needed between basic schools and the UEW in promoting leadership for learning in basic schools in six districts/municipalities in the Central Region of Ghana. Specifically, the information provided by the research will be very useful to educational professionals, researchers, university administrators, head teachers (particularly in the Central Region) and other educational stakeholders interested in university-initiated basic schools improvement programmes.

Research Methodology

Research Design: This study adopted the concurrent triangulation mixed-method design, which is, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative paradigms (Amadi, 2021). The quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a questionnaire administered to teachers and headteachers in selected basic schools while the qualitative data were collected through interviews with basic school headteachers and heads of departments at UEW. The data was collected and analysed at the same time. The purpose of this type of investigation was to triangulate the findings generated by each method through evidence produced by the other. Accordingly, quantitative data generated from the teachers were triangulated by the qualitative data from the head teachers.

Population: The population comprised heads and teachers of basic schools in six districts/municipalities and the Heads of Departments directly linked to basic education in the University of Education, Winneba. The Districts/Municipalities were: Effutu, Senya East, Senya West, Gomoa East, Gomoa Central and Gomoa West. The estimated teacher population for the six districts/municipalities was thousand (6000).

Sample size: The sample size for this study was four hundred and one (401) respondents. Specifically, three hundred and eighty-four (384) were used for the survey and seventeen (17) participants were used for the in-depth interview. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample for a mixed method research should include sufficient subjects enough to keep the chance of errors at an acceptable level while at the same time avoiding making the sample unnecessarily large. According to them, for a population size of 6000, a sample size of 384 is acceptable.

Sampling Techniques: This study employed multi-stage sampling technique. In the first instance, the study employed cluster sampling technique for the selection of forty-eight (48) basic schools in the various districts/municipalities. Specifically, eight (8) basic schools were selected from each district/municipality in addition to three departments in the University. In the second instance, the researchers employed stratified sampling technique to select the basic school teachers and faculty members from three departments in the University of Education, Winneba. For the

survey, eight (8) participants comprising one (1) headmaster, one (1) assistant headmaster and six (6) teachers were selected randomly from each basic school.

In the third instance, the study employed the purposive sampling technique in selecting faculty members and head teachers for the interview. Twelve (12) headteachers (two from each district based on length of service, at least five (5) years, and five (5) faculty members. Thus, three Heads of Departments and two lecturers from the following Departments namely; Early Childhood, Basic Education and Special Education were purposively selected for the in-depth interview.

Instrumentation: Two instruments namely, questionnaire (quantitative) and interview guide (qualitative) were used. The questionnaire and the interview guides were used for the collection of the quantitative and qualitative data, respectively. The questionnaire was made up of three sections. The first section asked questions on the backgrounds of the participants. The second section dwelt on the teachers' perception of heads' general leadership practices and section three captured teachers' view on head's shared leadership practices. Sections two and three were likert scale questions with responses from 1 to 5 (1=disagree, 2=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree). The interview guide asked questions on leadership, improving learning outcomes and effective collaborations between the basic schools and UEW.

Collection Procedures: The data were collected by research fellows of NCRIBE (National Centre for Research into Basic Education). Research assistants were recruited and trained to assist in the data collection. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researchers. The indepth interviews were conducted in the English Language and tape recorded. In the process of

collecting the data, permission was sought from the district/municipal education directorates and the University of Education, Winneba. Permission was also sought from the selected schools and the departments after which participants were selected to be part of the study.

Data Analysis: The data were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative procedures. The quantitative data were analysed using means and standard deviation generated from SPSS version 27 whilst the qualitative data were transcribed and analysed based on the emerging themes. Atlas.ti was used to analyse the qualitative data.

Ethical Consideration: The purpose of the study including the general objectives, benefits, and risk of taking part in the study were explained to the participants. Furthermore, participants were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided. Moreover, they were informed about their right to stop participating in the study at any point if they desired to do so. Verbal consent was sought from participants before they were asked the questions. The University of Education, Winneba's ethics policy on research involving human and non-human subjects were adhered to.

Findings and Discussions

This section presents the analysis and discussion of the study. The research sought to investigate collaboration between basic schools and the University of Education, Winneba through leadership practices for the purpose of improving learning outcomes in six districts/municipalities in the Central Region of Ghana.

Background characteristics of respondents

Table 1 presents the background characteristics of teachers. The results show that 39.9% of the teachers were males while 60.1% were females. Slightly more than half (50.3%) of the respondents were 30-39 years, 22.6% were 40-49 years, 22.2% were 20-29 years and 2.4% each were 50-59 years and 60-69 years. The data on the gender of teachers demonstrate the recent general trend in Ghana wherein females teaching staff are more at the basic levels of education. For various social and economic reasons, many females are unable to advance to higher levels of education that would enable them to teach beyond the basic schools (Ministry of Education, 2018). This could explain why most of the headteachers were females. The indication in the data that more than half of the respondents were between the ages 30-39 years old constitutes a relatively

young labour force who are expected to be energetic enough in working hard to bring about desired learning outcomes in the municipalities. This age group is expected to gain leadership experience through mentorship.

Table 1: Background characteristics of teachers

Background	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender Male		
	115	39.9
Female	173	60.1
Age (years)		
20-29	64	22.2
30-39	145	50.3
40-49	65	22.6
50-59	7	2.4
60-69	7	2.4
District/Municipality		
Effutu	48	16.7
Awutu Senya East	48	16.7
Gomoa East	48	16.7
Gomoa West	48	16.7
Gomoa Central	48	16.7
Awutu Senya West	48	16.7
Total	228	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2023

The background characteristics of head teachers are presented in Table 2. The results show that slightly more than half (51.1%) of the head teachers were females. Also, more than one-third (34.5%) of the head teachers were between 40-49 years, followed by 34.4% who were 60-69 years, a quarter (25.0%) were between 31-39 years, and 5.2% were 50-59 years old. This implies that a much higher number of heads are in the advanced age category. They will need a replacement soon. And if GES has not trained teachers to take over from them, it could have serios implications for leadership impact and consequently, learning outcomes.

Background	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	47	48.9
Female	49	51.1

Age (years)			Table 2:
30-39	24	25.0	Background
40-49	34	34.5	
characteristics of head teachers			
50-59	5	5.2	
60-69	33	34.4	
District or Municipality Effutu			
	14	14.6	
Senya East	11	11.5	
Gomoa East	18	18.8	
Gomoa West	29	30.2	
Gomoa Central	24	25.0	
Years served as a head teacher			
1-5 years	51	53.1	
6-10 years	31	32.3	
11-15 years	9	9.4	
16 years and above	5	5.2	
Total	96	100.0	

Source: Field Data, 2023

Decision Rules of Mean and Standard Deviation

The five-point likert scale questionnaire that was administered was analysed using mean of means and standard deviations. From the analysis, a mean value of 4.5-5.0 showed that the respondent strongly agreed to the statements, a mean value of 4.4 - 3.5 showed that the respondents agreed with the statements, a mean value of 3.4-3.0 showed that the respondents gave neutral response to the statements, a mean value of 2.9-2.5 showed that the respondents disagreed with the statements and a mean value of 2.4-1.5 and below showed that the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. A standard deviation below 1.0 showed that the responses from the respondents were homogeneous and heterogeneous when it was above

1.0.

Brief Information on Qualitative Data

Seventeen (17) in-depth interviews were conducted. From the seventeen (17) interviews, twelve (12) were basic school head teachers and five (5) faculty members at the University of Education, Winneba. The five faculty members were drawn from the Department of Early Childhood, Department of Basic Education and Department of Special Education. These departments deal directly with basic education.

Objective One: The leadership practices adopted by the heads of basic schools in promoting learning outcomes.

The mean and standard deviation values of teachers' perception of heads' general leadership practices are shown in Table 3. The overall mean and standard deviation values for the teachers' perception of heads' general leadership practices rated (M=2.69; SD=0.57). This gives the impression that the majority of the teachers disagreed with the statements soliciting their responses on teachers' perception of heads' general leadership practices and their responses were consistent with each other.

However, it was a welcoming revelation that headteachers gave positive feedback after dialogue with teachers and pupils. On the other hand, the low scores relating to heads' engagement with Old Boys, critical friends, and tertiary institutions are counterproductive since engagement of heads with these categories of stakeholders could yield material benefits and ideas for leadership in improving learning outcomes (Kuhry, 2012). A very important critical friend in the catchment areas of basic schools is a university or institution of higher learning. Within these universities are Old Boys and Old Girls who could donate books, cash, furniture, serve as resource persons in a particular subject or help with the renovation work of the school. Midthasei (2017) observes that the University as a collective unit or individuals within its walls can collaborate with basic schools through professional development programmes, restructuring of teaching methods and assisting with improved technologies to improve learning outcomes.

Concerning the results that headteachers' responses to challenges that confront teaching was a perception to which the teachers were positive. It must be said that the timely response to teaching challenges is an important leadership virtue that every leader, including school leaders at the basic school should take due cognizance of. Effective time management is an essential tool for improving learning outcomes (Elkin, 2005; Midthasei, 2017).

Teachers' perception of heads' leadership practices	M	SD
The execution of tasks as prescribed by rules and regulations is only performed by the school head	2.32	1.32
The emotional support provided by my head teacher seems not to be motivating enough for me to work harder.	2.45	1.17
There is an absence of regular and supportive communication between the head and the teachers in the school.	2.26	1.22
The strict and traditional form of supervision by the headteacher has negatively influenced our working relationship.	2.33	1.13
The head teacher's response to challenges that confront teaching is not timely.	2.45	1.21

As a curriculum leader, the headteacher has not promoted training as a dialogue tool especially as it relates to school-based in-service training.	2.27	1.13	Table 3: Teachers'
Head teachers' relationship with pupils, teachers and other stakeholders who focus on learning is poor.	1.91	1.08	Perception
Positive feedback after dialogue with teachers and pupils	4.09	0.89	of Heads'

General Leadership Practices		
Community engagement especially with tertiary institutions in providing advice and helping to organize workshops is done regularly.	2.94*	1.27
Community engagement with old boys as critical friends to collaborate with the school is regularly done by the head.	2.97*	1.16
Peer engagement with the circuit supervisors for strategic decisionmaking is a routine leadership practice by the head teacher.	3.57*	1.23
Mean of Means/Average Standard Deviation	2.69	0.57

Source: Field Data, 2023   (N = 288)

The overall mean and standard deviation values for the teachers' views on heads' shared leadership practices rated (M=4.29; SD=0.51). This means that majority of the teachers agreed with the statements soliciting their responses on teachers' views on heads' shared leadership practices, but there were some differences in their responses concerning the statements (Table 4).

It is instructive to note that the teachers largely agreed that the heads had a sense of shared leadership. As society evolves with new social and economic expectations, schools have become more complex as more responsibilities are devolved to the headteacher. This will require sharing leadership responsibilities with his/her followers. CEPA (2019) reported that a common denominator required for the heads to share leadership responsibility is by creating dialogue, particularly on leadership for learning. This will require an atmosphere of trust and belongingness in teachers, students and other support staff. In addition to sharing leadership responsibilities, the GES (2010) also stresses a sense of accountability by the teachers to the public. For instance, the basic school leader must bring to the knowledge of teachers the money for the school on hand, sources of funding, values of goods and materials, total donations and openness on the use of the capitation grants. The extent of the effective management of these resources will be a measure of how the basic school will collaborate with the university to improve learning outcomes.

The results show that generally head teachers encouraged more teamwork and collaboration with teachers while few of the teachers stated that the leaders played a role in leadership activities (e.g. school discipline and decision-making).

Table 4: Teachers' Views on Heads' Shared Leadership Practices

Heads' Practice of Shared Leadership	M	SD
Understand that leadership goes beyond positional leadership.	4.45	0.84
Key actors. (Teachers support staff and students) leaders play a role in leadership 4.37 0.80 activities (e.g. School discipline, decision-making)		
Headteacher sees the mistakes of teachers and pupils as an opportunity for learning.	3.80	0.99
Acknowledges that he/she cannot do it all alone	4.39	0.81
Encourages more teamwork and collaboration	4.48	0.76
Shares responsibilities of leadership based on individual expertise and strengths	4.32	0.83
Creates an atmosphere that will encourage teachers to go beyond normal work environments toward achieving the stated goals of the school.	4.21	0.94
Mean of Means/Average Standard Deviation	4.29	0.51

Source: Field Data, 2023   (N = 288)

The results in Table 5 present teachers' views on the leadership styles of the headteachers. Two types of leadership styles namely; transformational and visionary leadership were identified. For transformational leadership, the statement "conveys a clear vision to teachers, pupils and other stakeholders" had the highest mean (M= 4.18; SD = 0.81) whiles the lowest mean (M= 3.25; SD = 1.24) was recorded for the statement "does not accept situations as they are". On visionary leadership, the statement "listens attentively to contributions to a shared vision" had the highest mean (M= 4.18, SD = 1.03) indicating agreed while the statement "engages all members of the

school community to interact to influence learning outcomes without directly directing them" had the lowest mean (M = 3.90, SD = 0.95). In general, the highest mean for the heads' leadership styles was identified by two statements "conveys a clear vision to teachers, pupils and other stakeholders" and "listens attentively to contributions to a shared vision" while the lowest mean was recorded for the statement "does not accept situations as they are". The overall outlook of the data in Table 7 suggests that the teachers generally agreed with the heads' leadership styles (both transformative and visionary), except for the two items that relate to the heads not accepting situations as they are and heads engaging members of the school community to interact to influence learning outcomes. Regarding these two items, the teachers were uncertain.

Analytically, no head should accept situations as they are and this is the essence of transformational leadership. The head of a basic school should always strive for excellence and professionalism in improving upon his/her best performance. Change is a fact of life. The basic school heads in the Central Region of Ghana should always strive to improve upon the statusquo regarding students' behaviour, teaching effectiveness, student retention and parental support. The GNECC (2014) argues that the two ways by which the basic school head can achieve these are by knowledge and self-awareness of the principles of change and the belief in their own abilities

to change or transform. Conforming to the requirements of change will enable the basic school leader to adjust to the frequent changes in educational policies, promoting gender equity and inclusive learning, adopting creative thinking skills and a creative leadership culture that produces desired learning outcomes and wholesome school climate.

Table 5: Teachers' views on Heads' Leadership Styles

Heads' Leadership Style	M	SD
Does not accept situations as they are (transformational leadership)	3.25	1.24
Always seeks to improve upon existing situations/ conditions in the school (transformational leadership)	4.16	0.84
Conveys a clear vision to teachers, pupils and other stakeholders. (transformational leadership)	4.18	0.81
Inspires teachers, pupils and other stakeholders to change their expectations and perceptions. (transformational leadership)	4.10	0.78
Engages all members of the school community to interact to influence learning outcomes without directly directing them (visionary leadership)	3.90	0.95
Coaching: develops teachers by showing them how to improve their performance (visionary leadership)	4.15	0.98
Innovates and sets standards for others to follow (visionary leadership)	4.10	0.91
Applies gender sensitivity in the administration and management of teaching (visionary leadership)	4.00	0.94
Listens attentively to contributions to a shared vision (visionary leadership)	4.18	1.03

Source: Field Data, 2023   (N = 288)

Qualitative Data on Objective One

Eight (8) main basic themes that were related to the basic school heads' leading in promoting students' learning outcomes emerged from the narratives. These were collaborating with other agencies to improve infrastructure, ensuring availability of resources, good relationships

with students and parents, instilling discipline in students, mentoring students, promoting the personal development of teachers, monitoring and supervision, and type of leader.

Theme 1: Collaboration with Other Agencies to Improve Infrastructure

Participants indicated that head teachers should do their best to collaborate with other institutions such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other individuals in their communities to help improve the infrastructure in their schools and appeal for Teaching and Learning Materials/Resources (TLMs). For instance, a headteacher indicated that he appealed for support and had assistance from an NGO to put up a three-unit classroom block.

I wrote letters to the appropriate authorities [hmmhmm] to see to it that at least we are provided with a befitting infrastructure which alone serves as motivation for the children. It's unfortunate those that I passed through them eeernm Ghana Education Service, did not get a solution but then I also looked at another NGO and by the grace of God.

The initial task rendered by the basic school head was communication (the writing of letters which was not successful. However, he further noted:

I got a three-classroom block which I want to give to my Kindergarten because that is the foundation and so when the foundation is strong it means that whatever you put on that foundation is going to be solid and so that is one way I have been able to get 3 classroom block which is furnished with desks and tables for the use of the students (P1, Male - Basic School Head).

Another basic school head teacher indicated that head teachers should appeal for support from some people in the community for TLRs:

> In the school where they don't have a library and even library books, you can appeal to some organizations to help with the books, especially the learning materials eeh some of the community, you can appeal to some of the big people in the community to assist the school with learning materials and other teaching materials (P3, Female - Basic School Head)

Ideally, it is important to note from the data that the basic school heads initiated the processes of collaboration by communicating with other entities (NGOs) and the proceeds from these engagements were given to the kindergarten section of the school. This head teacher moved to

solve the infrastructure deficit of his school. This is very important because without the necessary infrastructure, no school community will strive (MOE, 2018).

Theme 2: Ensuring Availability of Resources

Another factor that was identified was the availability of resources. The resources included provision of TLMs, infrastructure and ensuring a good classroom environment that promotes learning outcomes. Most of the participants indicated that head teachers are to ensure the availability of these resources in their schools. For example, one interviewee observed:

To ensure that you are providing materials that will not make the teacher be spending more time organizing and preparing material but that the materials are readily available and that they are really -- teaching rather than becoming the focus of the teaching. So, I believe that if our headteachers will provide a classroom environment or will support so that we can have a classroom

environment which is secure that a teacher will paste teaching and learning materials and will have it in the classroom and can keep it over months any time he needs it you just have to fetch it" (P14, Male, HoD, UEW).

A basic school head buttressed the position of the University Lecturer:

Government and stakeholders should provide the necessary resources to the teachers and ensure that they are well utilized properly to the level of the children eeerrrrmmmm I think when that is done it will improve on the performance of the pupils" (P1, Male, Basic School Head).

A second head of department from the university noted:

I think if we can promote good student learning outcomes. Then I will also mention that the heads would have to ensure that there are enough relevant materials when it comes to teaching and learning. Now, the country is developing so we are focusing more on skills and if it is academics that is fine and all of these will go with requisite materials. So at least it almost rests on heads to ensure that the relevant materials are there and they are also been used and been taken good care of (P13, Male, HoD, UEW).

Generally, the responses from the interviewees regarding ensuring the availability of resources reveal the heads' resolved to ensure efficient and effective teaching and learning environment for their teachers that included the provision of school buildings and learning materials. The Ministry of Education (2018) emphasized the provision of school facilities such as; ventilated classrooms, stores, workshops, toilets and urinals, ICT centres/computer laboratory, offices, libraries, kitchen and other buildings.

Again, the basic school heads in the Central Region should move a step further in leading by maintaining the school sites, buildings, properties and environment. Particularly, the school environment can be maintained by tree planting, provision of walkways, provision of recreational activities and spaces for sports, games and disability friendly playing environment. These should be initiatives by the district/municipal education directorate and spearheaded by the headteachers in the various basic schools.

Theme 3: A Good Relationship with Teachers, Students and Parents

Good rapport among head teachers, students, and teachers is very important to promote learning outcomes. From the interview narratives, good rapport with students helps to make them feel safe while rapport with parents helps students to learn at home since they fear that their parents will report them to their teachers when they do not learn or misbehave at home.

On the issue of rapport, a basic school head observed:

Aside from that, I think one thing I can do as head to promote student learning is to have a good rapport with the student. You need to do that, just before you came, I was in the Form 3 classroom, I was looking at their mock analysis and have interactions with them to know their problems. There should be a good relationship between the parents of the pupils and the school aaahaan so when that good rapport is established it causes the children to also feel safe when they come to school. That alone can also help improve performance in the school at the end of the day the child knows that eerrrn the headteacher or the teachers are in good relationship with my parents and so when they go home and

they don't study the parents will surely communicate back to the teachers" (P1, Male, Basic School Head).

Another participant, a head of department in the UEW, indicated that a good relationship between teachers and head teachers should lead to teamwork. Headteachers should learn to treat

their colleagues well and this will help the head teacher to sell his vision and dream to the teachers to aid in desired learning.

The views of a university lecturer on teamwork were similar to that of other participants:

Teamwork is very important and every staff should be seemed to be part of the team. The leader should also be able to attract the staff to his side to sell out his dreams, and visions and try to convince the staff to buy into the vision. If they can do that, then I think that is one of the ways to ensure effective outcomes (P13, Male, HoD, UEW).

Create a conducive atmosphere in the school by involving all the teachers and having a cordial relationship with the teachers (P6, Female, Basic School Head).

As the head of the basic school, there is the need to collaborate with the teachers, that is when there is teamwork, their activities will help to promote the learning outcomes (P11, Male, Basic School Head).

The general issues arising out of the subtheme on good relationship with teachers and students are the building of good rapport between teachers and students and the need for collaboration or teamwork in articulating a clear vision. These are very important predictors of good leadership styles. They (the heads) according to the data, collaborated by engaging and involving teachers, students and parents, all for the purpose of important leadership strategy in managing people. In this regard, it is very essential that the heads of the basic schools in the six districts in the Central Region utilize the skills of delegating responsibilities, utilize the committee system, jointly disciplining students, holding regular staff meetings, maintaining good interpersonal relationship and most important of all, adhering to the code of professional conduct. The GES (2010) stresses that heads of schools need to promote leadership in their schools by abiding by these leadership practices which stress working with, and through people.

Other sub-themes stressed regarding the heads promoting students' learning outcomes were instilling discipline in students and teachers. These are essential leadership traits that no school head should ignore

Theme 4: Instilling Discipline in Students

According to a head teacher, discipline is very important to the success of students. The quote below highlights this point:

"Now when we come to the students, I think I have to try as much as possible to instil discipline. When it comes to the students, I think I have to instil discipline in the children because if a school can run successfully there should be some maximum discipline in terms of the teachers and the members as well, a school without discipline cannot succeed" (P4, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 5: Mentoring Students/Acting as a Role Model

The findings of the study showed that mentoring of students plays a very significant role in ensuring students learning outcomes. Teachers are supposed to be role models for the students and adopt mentoring programmes that could help to direct and improve learning outcomes.

Regarding the issues of mentoring, a head of department from the UEW and a basic school teacher made these points, respectively

I think the head should try to put in place various strategic mentorship protocols to mentor the students. Some students would want to do something but it seems the direction is not there and it may boil down to issues regarding mentorship, good guidance and counselling (P13, Male, HoD, UEW).

Head teachers should be role models to the student cos they turn to emulate whatever people did believe in doing eeehm in improving upon student outcome, learning outcome (P3, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 6: Promotion of Personal Development

Both the head teachers of the basic schools and heads of departments of the University of Education, Winneba stated that there was the need for head teachers to ensure the personal development of their teachers. An enabling environment should be created for head teachers to further their education or the headteachers could regularly organize in-service training and workshops on the curriculum for teachers to upgrade their skills in teaching.

They each made the following points:

The next is that the headteacher must ensure that he promotes the community of practice he finds a way to push the teachers to develop personally and professionally and when they do it will impact positively, their instructions with the students as well as the quality of teaching to be delivered to the children (P14, Male, HoD UEW).

I also think that more often the headteacher will also have to organize in-service training for the teachers. You know these days things keep on changing and so with the new trends of teaching and other things, you also have to organize in-service training for your teachers to upgrade them in terms of the pedagogical skills that deals with how to teach in teaching so I think these are few that I know (P1, Male, Basic School Head).

Train them on current trends of the new curriculum. Especially professional learning communities help teachers to overcome their challenges. Heads can invite people to train them on this (P9, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 7: Monitoring and Supervision

Supervision by the head teachers was identified as one of the ways for basic school headteachers to improve students' learning outcomes. Most of the respondents expressed the view that headteachers should play critical roles in monitoring and supervising teachers and students. They are to monitor or supervise preparatory activities and instructions in the classrooms. In addition, the head teachers are to supervise the implementation of the new curriculum and monitor teachers' attendance as well as inspecting lesson notes.

Regarding monitoring, a head of department at the UEW had this to say:

Now I believe that first and foremost monitoring instructions should be done. If the basic school head can effectively monitor instructions, if I say instructions am not talking about the act of the teacher engaging the children, I mean all the preparatory stages or activities, including lesson notes writing, reading the

correct materials and getting fine information from textbooks, then the actual teaching and the approaches used should be child-centered. This will allow children the opportunity to grab the content and not the teacher per se, then I think that one is the number one factor, the monitoring of instructions (P14, Male, HoD UEW).

The position of the head of department in UEW was corroborated by a head from a basic school: I think when the resources are provided it behoves on the headteachers to ensure that there is proper supervision, observation of teachers' lessons and other things to ensure that they achieve what we want to achieve (P1, Male, Basic School Head).

Another basic school head agreed and noted:

You have to do effective monitoring and supervision. For example, see to it the teachers are in school, they make good use of the instructional hours, they put their notes, sorry they write their notes, prepare well with the necessary teaching-learning materials that they need.

That is for the teacher preparing to do effective teaching.

Then as a head, I have helped the teachers to make sure they use appropriate teaching-learning materials in the classroom during lesson delivery and the content that they're expected to teach. I have to make sure that they do the right thing during lessons. That's one aspect (P4, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 8: Type of Leader

Leadership is very important in terms of effective learning outcomes. From the narratives below, the results showed that leadership style improves learning outcomes. Democratic or laisser-faire type of leadership helps teachers to cooperate with the head teachers (Elkim, 2005), in that, the teachers and head teachers can share ideas and head teachers can communicate their vision to the teachers for effective student learning outcomes. Regarding this a head of department at the UEW had this to say:

The type of leader in the school will model the types of teachers who are ready to cooperate to buy into the dreams, the ideas and the vision of the heads. Of course, it will be in the head and s effective outcomes. So, if they buy into the head's dreams and they can come together, cooperate with the head to ensure effective outcomes (P13, Male, HoD, UEW).

Regarding the issue of leadership style, a basic school head noted:

At times when the leadership style is let's say autocratic, you see the head will not be opened to both the teachers and then the children. So, when it happens that way, the teachers will not get an insight into what has been around the school and at times how the decisions by the head will also influence the learning outcome of the students. But when the leadership style is democratic or laisser-faire type, I think the head is open to both the teachers and the pupils and teachers will get to know what is going on, do this, don't do this because this what is coming up in the school, this is what is going on, you do teamwork. So, by doing that, teachers will also have a say in the decision-making process (P2, Male, Basic School Head).

Objective Two: Leadership challenges basic school heads encounter in promoting pupils learning outcomes.

Table 6 presents the headteachers' views on leadership challenges. The results show that resource constraints had the highest mean for leadership challenges (Mean = 3.81, std deviation = 1.37), followed by managing varieties of conflicts (Mean = 2.92, std deviation = 1.44), and the statement with the lowest mean was conflicts among school staff (Mean = 1.68, std deviation = 0.87). The overall mean for leadership challenges is 2.33 with a standard deviation of 0.65.

The data in Table 6 virtually reveal that head teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed that they had challenges regarding leading the human resource in the basic schools. This is a very positive and important finding. It also implies that the heads were able to inspire or influence teaching staff, non-teaching staff and the student leadership towards achieving learning outcomes. Leadership is about influencing people towards a desired goal, and it could be argued that the basic school heads adequately led in involving teachers and the pupils in the administration of the schools, ensured discipline among pupils and teachers, organized in-service training for teachers, held staff meetings regularly and engaged in community organisation and mobilization efforts.

The NEA (2018) points to the fact that if heads of basic schools are able to adequately influence lower layer leaders such as the head prefect, sectional leaders, bell monitors, class prefect, compound overseers, library prefect and cupboard monitors, they will definitely add greatly to other efforts in improving learning outcomes. Kuhry (2012) stated that, since the basic

school head cannot have his/her eyes in all places at the same time, he /she must adopt shared and delegatory leadership style by sharing leadership responsibilities with the staff secretary, school counsellor, preparing weekly duty roster for teachers and the forming of specialized committees responsible for Agriculture, Health and Environmental committee and the committee on sports and games. All these actions will inure to improving learning outcomes in the school.

These individual and committee responsibilities in addition to some other tasks as prescribed by GES (2010), such as cleaning the classrooms and urinals, conducting devotions, compiling sectional reports, inspecting school uniforms and ensuring that doors and windows are locked, will obviously bring about improvement in learning.

Table 6: Headteachers' Views on Leadership Challenges

Human Resource Challenges	M	SD
Administrative incompetence of my assistant head and class teacher	1.77	0.99
Constant requests for study leave by teachers.	1.98	1.20
Managing varieties of conflicts	2.92	1.44
Apathy on the part of teachers	2.40	1.15
My male/female teachers often disregard my role as a head teacher	1.77	0.99
Poor student leadership	2.74	1.27
Teachers not accepting other leadership positions	2.09	1.26
Conflicts among school staff	1.68	0.87
Lack of organizational loyalty by teachers and support staff	2.09	1.13
Resource/facility constraints	3.81	1.37
Mean of Means/Average Standard Deviation	2.33	0.65

Source: Field data, 2023

Qualitative Data on Objective Two

From the qualitative results, eight (8) basic themes were identified under leadership challenges. These included; finance, high student enrolment, human resources, infrastructure, low motivation of staff, non-cooperation of staff, provision of teaching learning materials, and policy on discipline.

Theme 1: Finances

Most of the basic school headteachers expressed concern about finance. They reported of inadequate money to run the basic schools. This is due to the delay in the payment of the Capitation Grant. Sometimes they have to pre-finance and wait for the capitation grant to be paid

before they can be reimbursed. Also, some of the basic school heads use their own money to purchase learning materials when supplies are depleted.

A head of department at the UEW outlined some of the challenges:
Then also money to run the school, financial issues, we leave in an era that running school you have to wait for money from the top and if there's a situation at the moment you want to solve it, it becomes so difficult. So, most of the Heads are facing this crisis and they have to fall on IGF or their ways to be able to run the school (P15, Male, HoD, UEW).

The UEW head of department's position was not different from a basic school head who dilated:

Yes, delay in the payment of capitation grants, at times you draw your plan of activities, and how to go by it depends on the money that will come to the school, it will interest you to know that for about 2 years, there has been no capitation, so how do you run the school? how do you go by certain activities of the school? So, delay in payment of capitation is one of the problems I'm facing. Due to that, I'm managing, at times you have to use your own pocket money so that when capitation comes you withdraw it. It is not easy; we are really suffering (P2, Male, Basic School Head).

Another head of department views the issue as follow:

> And when it comes to acquiring teaching and learning as well, they have someone or two challenges, since the capitation which I know does not flow as it's supposed to be so sometimes the teachers in their own free will take money, their own money to purchase these items which are worrying so I think if much more attention will   be paid towards that direction (P17, Female, HoD, UEW).

Theme 2: High Student Enrolment

High student enrolment at the basic schools was identified as one of the challenges for the heads. A participant indicated that there is a high student enrolment that affects the way teachers teach and supervise students in the classroom.

Leadership Challenges, ok the very first one is student enrolment in their schools. Currently, even there's a Basic School over here and the enrolment this year is beyond imagination. UNIPRA North, yeah. It's difficult for teachers to be able to teach this huge class. I remember the

last time I visited the place and even one class when you enter you feel some heat. Alright, so you've also seen it. I spoke to a couple of people and it's one of the challenges that they're facing over there, student's enrolment (P15, Male, HoD, UEW)

Theme 3: Human Resources

Human resource was identified as one of the challenges by the basic school heads. They indicated that there is a teacher-to-student deficit and this makes it very difficult for them to get the required number of teachers for each classroom. Two participants who were heads of basic schools indicated that a class that is supposed to have two teachers now has only one teacher.

We have a deficit of teachers, as I speak at my KG the classrooms are three but I have only two teachers, even the KG is supposed to have two teachers in a class but I have two teachers and the classrooms are three so you can imagine, so we are battling with these challenges (P4, Female, Basic School Head).

We have human resource problem when it comes to eerrnn a teacher to the student ratio in the school that is also one (P1, Male, Basic School Head)

Another basic school head raised concerns about the quality of teachers. They indicated that some of the teachers are not very good and that affects their delivery or productivity.

Quality of the teacher produced nowadays is not good. They are not strong on the job; hence, delivery is very low. This is because most of the people that go into training colleges are not good. Sometimes their lesson notes are very bad" (P9, Female, Basic School Head)

Theme 4: Inadequate Infrastructure

Most of the participants reported inadequate infrastructure. They indicated that their schools are in deplorable states and the students do not have tables and chairs to sit on to learn. Consequently, this has affected the learning outcomes of these students. In addition, some participants indicated that they do not have washrooms and toilet facilities. Hence, some of the students seek permission to go home to use a washroom. Therefore, the hours spent by students in the classroom studying reduce.

A head of department from UEW had this to say:

Infrastructure wise, so the problem of finance is quiet, it affects several things, if you look the state of our schools seem quite in a very deplorable state ok, someplace when you visit very deplorable so the physical, some of them are not even very good for students to sit and learn. Very well, so not too eeehm serene for our learners and it has very serious consequences on how our learners will want to respond to teaching and learning. Eeeehm so this one will also affect our technology. So, technology, some places no light, ok. Here is the case that seems digital literacy is one of the core competencies that we expect (P16, Male, HoD, UEW).

A basic school head teacher also observed:

And some of the schools in the remote areas, they are facing a lot of challenges, like this place we don't even have toilet facilities and this issue it brings teaching and learning down. It reduces the impact on the economy because assuming that we don't have a toilet facility and the child has to ask permission to go to the house eeh in fact it disturbs most of the schools a lot.Not all the schools, but some of the schools they have but schools in the remote areas they had this challenge and also no water eeh in the, in some of the communities. In a school like Aprah, for instance, we don't have water so when the issue of the COVID came we were not washing our hands even though we know it was not good, we were only using our hand sanitiser ahaa so some of these challenges it disturbs the Headteachers (P3, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 5: Low Motivation of Staff

The data shows that there was a low motivation of staff in the basic schools and this affects teachers' standard of living as well as delivery in the classroom. The quote below highlights the view of a basic school head teacher.

And secondly, the salary is so poor. I was in GES for 11 years before I came here. The salary is so small, the prices of things are very high and the salary is so small, so as a basic school teacher, you just look at your salary and the way things are going, and you feel that it is not worth it, I will just go to school at 6:00 am, I wouldn't even kill myself for the job. Unlike, when the salary was so good, was matching the standard of living, it would have been happy and giving in their best. So, that is the challenge and I think the government should just look in that direction. I mean, financially, they should make the public sector teachers very stable because when you hear some of the comments, you realize that teachers are being cheated at every level; basic, tertiary, and every level. From the primary school teacher to the lecturer in the university, are salaries are nothing good to write home about (P17, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 6: Non-Cooperation of Staff

Non-cooperation of staff pertains to the inability of other teachers to follow what the head teacher says or asks them to do. This was reported to be a common practice among some teachers. A participant indicated that the non-cooperation could be linked to the attitudes of the teachers and the leadership styles adopted by the head teachers.

I think, there are teachers who for one reason or another will not be having the support or the necessary cooperation from their staff. It may be a s a result of the staff attitude, it may be as a result of dissatisfaction on some issues, it could also be the type of leadership style the head is displaying. Whichever way we look at it, I think the leadership style may be posing a challenge, that is where the teacher will say go ahead and do it because you are the head and you are getting your allowance of being head so go ahead and do it. So, I think the non-cooperation of some members of staff could be the problem (P13, Male, HoD, UEW).

Theme 7: Provision of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM)

Almost all participants mentioned teaching and learning materials (TLM) as one of the biggest challenges headteachers faced. They indicated that since the introduction of the new curriculum, some schools still do not have a single textbook for the new curriculum. Also, some schools do not have lesson notebooks to prepare lesson notes. Specifically, a basic school head commented:

Provision of even lesson note is a problem, provision of textbooks [hmmhmm] they are not there [hmhm] just like the Standard Base that I just [you mentioned] mentioned it was introduced 2009 and as I speak no single textbook so you see. So, the question we need to ask ourselves is how effective, how effective [hmmhmm] will the teachers be able to implement the policy, they will do their best but there will be a lot of problems for us and so we have that challenge (P1, Male, Basic School Head).

Another basic school head pointed out:

First and foremost, the biggest challenge we have now is learning materials. We

don't have test books. Eeeh this new curriculum came into place about two years ago unfortunately more than two years, unfortunately, we don't have test books and no learning materials. Even talking of chalk, we don't have (P3, Female, Basic School Head).

Theme 8: Policy on Instilling Discipline

The policy on instilling discipline was identified as one of the challenges that basic school heads encountered in promoting learning outcomes. A participant indicated that the policy on discipline is not favouring teachers. Regarding this policy, it is sometimes difficult for a student to be given corporal punishment. In a situation where a student is punished severally, a head teacher is supposed to supervise the punishment which also leads to divided attention of the head teacher. With regard to the roles of supervising discipline, a basic school head observes.

"The policy for disciplining the students in the basic schools is not helping. Sometimes teachers find it very difficult to punish the student. And if a student is punished, the law says that the teacher is supposed to supervise the punishment, by so doing, the teacher will have divided attention by focusing on teaching and at the same time supervising the punishment" (P10, Female, Basic School Head).

In addition to the human resource challenges indicated in Table 8, the heads mentioned other related challenges that hinged on Finances, especially the delay in the disbursement of the Capitation Grant, inadequate in infrastructure, provision of teaching learning resources, policy on indiscipline and low motivation of staff. Rationally, these are real challenges that can frustrate the leadership efforts of any school that can impede student learning. And these challenges should be brought to the notice of district directors of education, parents and stakeholders for timely redress.

Objective Three: UEW and Basic Schools collaborating to enhance leadership practices for optimal students learning outcomes.

Basic school heads and UEW collaborating to promote staff development activities in basic schools for effective leadership

The results show that both the basic school heads and heads of department of UEW expressed that there should be a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between UEW and the basic schools. Through this, the relationship between UEW and the basic schools would be formalized and strengthened. In addition, participants indicated that UEW should play a leadership role in the MOU, mentor the basic school staff, ensure staff development (training or workshops for teachers) and provide training and learning materials (TLMs) for basic schools. Performing these

needs by the University to the basic schools will help the University achieve one of its mandates, thus, service to the community.

Theme 1: Leadership Role and Formation of Associations

Leadership role by UEW was identified as one of the basic themes. A participant expressed that UEW should play a leadership role and guide the basic schools as well as taking the lead in publishing emerging issues in teaching to improve learning outcomes.

They can form or play leadership roles and form subject based associations so that we can display best practices and then write journals and tell people about the new things and emerging things that they can find useful and apply in the teaching (P14, Male. HoD, UEW).

Theme 2: Mentoring Basic Schools

A participant articulated that UEW should adopt some basic schools and mentor them. The quote below highlights the views of an HoD;

Formal relationship means that we can designate some of the schools, and enter serious MOU with them for them to recognize them that they have their mentoring   or mentor institution (P14, Male, HoD, UEW)

Basically, a basic school is a small community located within a wider neighbourhood community. One key community within a school catchment area that can play a leadership role is the university community. Some of the leadership roles needed to be played by the university in forming association and mentoring basic schools are skills sharing, subject group alignment, open communication between university lecturers, administrators and basic school teachers and staff, and joint problem solving. Kuhry (2012) points to some of the steps needed to be taken by universities in mentoring basic schools. One of these steps is conducting programmes, leading to innovation in teaching and organizing workshops for basic school teachers.

Theme 3: Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

The provision of TLMs is very fundamental for improving learning outcomes. A participant expressed that the UEW should assist in the provision of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) for the basic schools.

we can also plan for them and support them in terms of providing them teacher learning materials because we will have the expertise to be able to do those things and donate to them and then the key is formed or championing the formation of the subject (P14, Male, HoD, UEW)

Theme 4: Collaborate with Basic Schools for Supported Teaching in School (STS)

A head of the department at UEW indicated that there should be the adoption of the Supported Teaching in School (STS) programmes in the various districts as one of the ways of collaborating with the basic schools. This would enable undergraduate students to observe professional teachers teaching in classrooms. Through this, undergraduates will have the opportunity to learn from professional teachers.

This was the viewpoint of a head of department in the university.

So, there should be that strong communication and collaboration. There should be that partnership, ok? These days we have STS. We even have STS, our students go on STS eeeh what we call Supported Teaching in School, they go there to observe and all that. We can begin to use this as a way of getting very close to these schools and they also respond to

our invitation and I think over the years they've been doing well, but we need to, we need to deepen it ok (P16, Male HoD, UEW).

Theme 5: Staff Development

Staff development was identified as one of the ways UEW can collaborate with the basic schools. Participants expressed that UEW should organize in-service training and workshops to help improve teachers learning skills. The workshop or training will offer teachers the chance to learn new things in the educational system. A head of department at the UEW emphasized:

Ok, you know, UEW is noted for training quality teachers, so to help or collaborate with UEW in promoting staff development isn't something bad, you know UEW has quality lecturers, we have enough Professors, we have enough Doctors to carry out training for basic school teachers, organizing workshops, I mean helping the teachers in equipping themselves with new knowledge, I mean giving them training too, help to improve themselves. I think that's all I can say (P17, Female, HoD, UEW).

A basic school head teacher agreed with the UEW staff and stated:
One of the mechanisms that can be employed is through training of the staff, in-service training, bringing all of them on board, this is what they want, do this, this one we want you to do it like this. So, I think bringing all the teachers on board for let's say workshop, and in-service training will help the teachers to be on time to promote learning outcomes. Yeah, I will say; staff development (P2, Male, Basic School Head).

Another basic school head commented:

"Sensitization of staff development courses that will make teachers pursue this program on weekends and evenings" (P7, Female, Basic school head)

In addition, some of the basic school heads mentioned that through staff development, UEW should have courses for teachers to upgrade themselves. In that, those with certificates can upgrade to a diploma degree:

By giving some of the teachers the chance to upgrade themselves, that, sometimes it's very difficult for those who completed with the cert A. They find it difficult in coming down to that level so if there will be a refresher course for such people. I also think that UEW can also come out with refresher courses for Headteachers because some Head teachers had been on the post for so many years and some even find it difficult in upgrading themselves (P3, Female, Basic School Head).

Also, participants indicated that the UEW should periodically organise workshops or training on leadership for all teachers to help build their capacity and ensure effective leadership.

Organize leadership professional courses or training (P5, Male, Basic School   Head)

UEW to assist in organizing workshops to train teachers in leadership skills (P8, Male, Basic School Head)

Collaborate with the headteachers to organise leadership seminars and workshops.
         Teachers are being promoted to the headship position, the university can pick the role

of organizing orientations on leadership to help the teachers to ensure effective leadership (P11, Male, Basic School Head)

Theme 6: Posting of Subject-Based Students for Internships

From the narratives, the findings of the study show that the UEW should post students for internships to the basic schools in its catchment area. They specified that postings should be subject based. This will help the basic schools to reduce teacher deficits in the various districts. Specifically, in outlining his point, a basic school head noted:

"I think when that collaboration is affected the University can post teachers to those schools that they have collaboration with to come and help to solve the teacher deficit in the Gomoa district. I think for the last forum that we did, district needs about 200 something teachers. One thing is that because here the teachers are only posted from colleges directly there's one problem I see we need to look at, we need to look at eerrmm subject based teachers………………… Social Studies teacher so when you come specifically you will be given a Social Studies to help the teacher who is handling it. (P1, Male, Basic School Head).

The other themes relating to basic school-university collaboration dwelt on provision of training and learning materials and internship for subject teachers. These are all laudable points in the data. The CPA (2019) also makes the case that a university can collaborate with basic schools in helping them to articulate a clear vision, develop a focus-set of annual goals, effective scheduling/timetabling, teaching of large classes, and data collecting processes to reduce paperwork and cutting-edge academic planning tools.

Conclusions and Implications of the Data for Collaboration between Basic Schools and the University of Education, Winneba

The results of the study revealed that generally, the basic school heads had a sense of shared leadership. They subscribed to visionary and transformational leadership styles, and teachers' perceptions of the leadership styles of heads were generally positive. These are all very significant findings that implied that the basic school head teachers showed resolve, resilience, and leadership in building trust and maintaining relationships with their followers. These leadership attributes of the heads constitute important evidence that they can collaborate with other stakeholders of the education sector such as Universities in improving learning outcomes.

The results also showed that the heads of the basic school had challenges which included finance, teacher deficit, and teacher quality. There were also challenges of inadequate infrastructure, limited provision of teaching-learning materials, and an agreed-upon policy

related to instilling discipline. These are challenges that should not escape the attention of the government, universities, and other stakeholders. Philosophically, "if the child cannot wait" is an abiding philosophy of the Ghanaian educational system, then educational providers cannot adopt a "wait and see" approach in overcoming these challenges. Anything to the contrary will impede quality learning and the desired learning outcomes.

This brings to the fore the need for collaboration among the various subsectors of the education industry, and the University of Education, a leading teacher education university, has a key role to play. Indeed, collaboration between the University of Education, Winneba and basic schools will enhance the performance of these schools.

The overall outlook of the data in the study generally indicates that both basic school heads and the UEW embrace the idea to collaborate, but are yet to come to terms with mutually agreed pathway.

Recommendations

Based on the findings that headteachers were not reaching out enough to communities, past students and critical friends, it is recommended that they create opportunities for regular interactions with all stakeholders. They could create a database for all its major stakeholders and regularly invite them to meetings and important events in the school. During such occasions, the school would take the opportunities to discuss the myriad of challenges including large class enrolment, teacher deficit, delay in the payment capitation grant, infrastructure deficit, inadequate TLMs etc.

Universities, especially the University of Education, Winneba could develop a policy to regularly engage basic schools in their catchment areas. For instance, an MoU could be signed to capture the proposed relationship that they would want to establish for mutual co-existence. Such a formal relationship would inure to the benefit of the universities and basic schools.

The study appears to suggest that poor performance of pupils may not be due to leadership styles and overall leadership performance in target basic schools. It may therefore emanate from sources such as pupils, family or school factors either than the headteacher role. There is therefore the need to expand future research into these other critical factors in education output or learning outcomes.

The government and its agencies such as the Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Service and the District Assemblies must be more responsive to dealing with challenges such as teacher and infrastructure deficits and the delay in the release of capitations grants which are beyond the capacity and capabilities of headteachers and their schools. District Directorates of Education must not only project the challenges but should be involved in in finding smart, creative and

innovative ways of resolving the problems faced by basic schools. The situation also requires advocacy by civil society to hold government institutions and duty bearers accountable. Such advocacy could rely on research findings such as the current study.

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