

Instructional Leadership of Basic Schools in Ghana: The Case Study of Schools in Kwaebibirem District

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Abstract

For a school to function effectively, heads should provide instructional leadership. Research indicates that where instructional leadership activities are performed, the output of teachers and academic performance of pupils are most likely to improve. The purpose of this study was to find out how instructional leadership of heads of basic schools in Kwaebibirem district of Ghana takes place. The study explored the following areas: (1) Lesson planning, organization and delivery (2) heads' direct personal support for teachers (3) heads' supervision of teachers and pupils' performance and (4) heads' evaluation of teachers and pupils' performance. A descriptive design was used for the study. A questionnaire and an interview guide were used to collect data from head-teachers, teachers, and circuit supervisors. The population of the study included 207 head-teachers, 933 teachers and 10 circuit supervisors. A total of 305 respondents formed the sample. This consisted of 60 head-teachers, 240 teachers, and 5 circuit supervisors drawn from sixty basic schools in the district. The data was presented using percentages and frequencies. Supervision, evaluation, and direct personal support activities were found to be more dominant in the basic schools than curriculum planning, organization and delivery. The study will provide broad guidelines toward effective instructional leadership in schools, help heads of basic schools to assess their performance as instructional leaders, identify their short comings, ascertain possible avenues to help, and improve upon their effectiveness as school managers.

Keywords: Instructional leadership, basic schools, heads, head-teachers, school district.

Introduction

There has been increasing public concern about the issue of ineffective instructional leadership in basic schools in Ghana. Since schools in the contemporary world are required to produce measurable results, instructional leadership is therefore moving to the centre stage. Head-teachers are, in recent times, being held accountable for pupils' performance. The quest for leaders with skills and experiences, that will enable them change poor performance, has become a critical priority. According to Cole (2002) and Maicibi (2005) a school endowed with all kinds of facilities or resources without a well-defined leader to manage the affairs of the school will not yield good results, including students' and teachers' performance.

Currently, emphasis on the traditional role of head-teachers has shifted to a more constructive form of leadership called instructional leadership. An instructional leader focuses on the direct teaching and learning activities in the classroom, especially, what teachers teach and how they teach or what pertains in the curriculum. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), instructional leadership focuses on core responsibilities of a school such as teaching and learning. In addition, it defines school vision, mission, and goal. Moreover, it is also about managing instructional programs and promoting school climate. The tasks include, providing the resources needed for learning to occur; supervising and evaluating teachers; coordinating staff development programs; and creating collegial relationships with and among teachers. Blasé and Blasé, as cited in South worth (2002), defined instructional leadership as a blend of supervision, staff development, and curriculum development. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) also described instructional leadership as a series of behaviors that is designed to affect classroom instruction.

The clarion call for effective instructional leadership practices in schools sounds laudable today. This may be attributed to the fact that people have become more interested in what goes on in schools. The existence of parent teacher associations (PTA), the formation of school management committees (SMC), and the institution of the district education oversight committees (DEOCs) buttress the point that there is an increased interest in the affairs of schools. The heightened interest is comparable to the awareness of most people in the community that education holds the key to the development of the nation. There is a general belief that no country can have a promising future without a well-trained human resource. It is the responsibility of heads of schools to ensure that the country's educational goals are realized by producing the required manpower resources. The performance of the school system in Ghana seems to be unsatisfactory, and one possible cause of the poor performance includes, ineffective instructional leadership in the schools. Many researchers, such as (Galabawa & Nikundiwa, 2000; Hallinger & Walker, 2014), have stressed the importance of the instructional leadership responsibilities of the elementary school principals.

According to Stronge (1988), if school heads are to heed to the call from educational reformers to become instructional leaders, it is obvious that they will take on a drastically different role. Evidently, there is an apparent gap between what is and what needs to be. Stronge (1988) calculated that 62.2% of the elementary principals' time is spent on school management issues, whereas only 6.2% of their time is spent on program issues. He added that, "a typical school principal performs an enormous number of tasks each day but only 11% relate to instructional leadership" (p. 32). This means that very little time is spent on instructional leadership (Ngirwa, 2006). Berlin, Kavanagh, and Jensen (2000), concluded that, if schools are to progress, "the heads cannot allow daily duties to interfere with the leadership roles in the curriculum" (p. 49).

The Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education program (FCUBE) in Ghana requires an instructional leader who will not only perform the traditional goals of fixing pipes and replacing them, sending sick pupils to the hospital, managing finances and drawing budgets but one who will also form an integral part of the teaching and learning process. This type of leadership will create an instructional environment to enable the school run effectively and achieve better results. The head's direct participation in the teaching and learning process is part of the solution to improve basic school system in Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

A critical look at pupils' performance at the basic schools in the school district under study indicates that some schools were consistently performing well whereas other schools continued to have poor performance. For example, eight schools had zero percent in the 2012 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results in the district. The crucial question was: To what extent do head-teachers provide effective instructional leadership in the district? This and several other questions were raised during school performance appraisal meetings, school management committee meetings, and education forum that were organized in the district in the year 2013. One wonders whether effective instructional supervision was effected in schools in the district. According to Manaseh (2016), the head is a key person in the administration of a school, whose function is to offer effective instructional leadership.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to find out the instructional leadership practices of heads of basic schools in Kwaebibirem District of Ghana. To achieve this goal, the study sought to find out what specific activities were undertaken by head-teachers as a means of providing instructional leadership.

Research Questions

The Research questions that guided the researchers in the study are:

1. What support do heads in the schools personally give to teachers to improve teaching and learning?
2. In what ways do heads in the basic schools supervise and evaluate the performance of teachers and pupils?

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will help to reveal the leadership practices, qualities and character school heads are supposed to exhibit in order to become effective instructional leaders. Consequently, the findings and the recommendations of the study will be of immense help to the school district education directorate training officers and circuit supervisors in planning training programs for instructional leadership, especially for newly recruited

head-teachers. In addition, educational planners and policy makers can make use of the results in developing strategies that will improve the training of heads of basic schools in the country. The study will also be of educational value to heads of Senior High Schools and principals of Teacher Training Colleges in the country since they also need instructional leadership. Head-teachers, as leaders, can also reaffirm and validate instructional leadership practices with which they are already familiar and comfortable, providing encouragement, and motivation to further refine these skills in the school setting. The study will provide broad guidelines toward effective instructional leadership in schools, it will help heads of basic schools to assess their own performances as instructional leaders, identify their short comings, ascertain possible avenues to help others, and improve upon their effectiveness as school managers.

Review of Literature

The Concept of Instructional Leadership

One of the most consistent themes in the description of the role of the school head is that the only way instructional programs can improve in schools is for the heads to provide teachers with sound instructional leadership. Though researchers agree that the head must be a strong instructional leader, they do not always agree on a definition or the characteristics that embody instructional leadership. The importance of the head's role as an instructional leader and the direct relationship on changing instructional practice to improve student performance has been researched into extensively. Baron and Uhi (1995) defined instructional leadership generally as the school principal's role in providing direction, resources and support to staff members and students to improve teaching and learning. To execute this role effectively, the school principal must develop and practice relevant skills in instructional planning, organization, supervision, curriculum, and evaluation. The term instructional leader clearly describes the primary role of the principal in the quest for excellence in education. To achieve this quest, it will take more than a strong principal with concrete ideas.

There is a common belief that there is no single definition of instructional leadership or specific guideline or direction as to what an instructional leader does. However, leaders create their own definitions and, as a result, meanings vary considerably from one practitioner to another and from one researcher to another. This lack of consistency in definition then becomes part of the problem. As Cuban (2000) stated, "Road signs exist, but no maps yet for sale" (p 132). Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) described instructional leadership as a series of behaviors that is designed to affect classroom instruction and Walker, Begley & Dimmock (2003), said that heads are responsible for informing teachers about new educational strategies, technologies and tools that apply to effective instruction. That heads also assist teachers in critiquing these tools to determine their applicability to the classroom. In his vision for improving schools, Barth (1990) declares, "Show me a good school, and I'll show you a good head" (p. 6). This phrase captures the essential belief of researchers who study instructional leadership. When the concept of instructional leadership first emerged, heads were thought to be effective if they led a school by setting clear expectations, maintaining firm discipline, and creating high standards. Current research reveals that the indicators for effective instructional leadership involve a number of variables.

Andrews and Souder (1996) described the effective instructional leader as a principal performing at high levels in four areas such as: resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence in the school or college. As resource provider, the principal takes action to marshal personnel and resources within the building, district, and community to achieve the school's vision and goal. These resources may be seen as materials, information, or opportunities, with the principal acting as a broker. As instructional resource, the principal sets expectations for continual improvement of the instructional program and actively engages in staff development.

Instructional leadership concentrates on the 'role of the school principal in co-ordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction in the school' (Bamburg and Andrews, cited in Hallinger, 2003, p. 331). It has been seen as a process of guiding and encouraging staff to achieve greater professional effectiveness. Instructional leaders have been described as leading from a combination of expertise and charisma (Cuban, 2000, as cited in Hallinger, 2003). In addition, they have also been described as 'hands-on principals, 'hip-deep' in curriculum and instruction and who are also not afraid to work with teachers for the improvement of teaching and learning. Hallinger (2003) also described them as culture builders. The three dimensional leadership, include: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting the school climate. This leadership approach is said to have influence on the quality of the school outcomes through the alignment of school structures with the school's mission.

An instructional leader protects instructional time, promotes professional development, maintains high visibility, and provides incentives for teachers and for learners (Hallinger, 2003).

Blasé and Blasé, (cited in Southworth, 2002) described instructional leadership as a 'blend of supervision, staff development, and curriculum development' (p.78). They present three aspects of effective instructional leadership as: talking with teachers, promoting teachers' professional growth, and fostering teacher reflection. Blasé and Blasé also added that principals who are good instructional leaders establish a profound appreciation for the potential artistry of an instructional conference with teachers (cited in Southworth, 2002). According to Southworth (2002), "Instructional leadership is complex and demanding, thus it requires high levels of professional knowledge, skill and understanding" (p.18). Some of the strategies for instructional leadership presented by Southworth (2002) are modeling and monitoring. By modeling, it means principals use their teaching as an example of what and how to do things; work alongside staff in their classroom, coach staff and consciously use assemblies as occasions to promote and reinforce educational values and practices. With regard to monitoring, it involves the principals looking at teachers' weekly plans, classroom visitations, examining samples of pupils' work, and observing the implementation of school policies. It has been observed that monitoring and evaluating teachers serve as an important tool to raise the standards of teachers. Heads, engaging in actual classroom observation when teachers are teaching will enable them know the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher (Manaseh, 2016).

Instructional Leadership in Practice

According to Gillet (2010) and Hallinger (2005), school heads spend most of their time dealing with managerial issues. Although the role of the head as instructional leader is widely advocated, it is seldom practiced.

The head's role is still, primarily, that of a manager. Hallinger (2005) attributed this reality to the fact that there has been little or no provision for enhancing or supporting these new skills in the instructional leadership domain. Technical assistance, adjustment in role expectations, and policies designed to support the use of this new knowledge and skills are, for the most part, lacking. Thus, the image of instructional leadership has become entrenched in the professional rhetoric, but all too often is lacking in administrative practice.

Smylie and Conyers (1991) concluded that teaching has become a "complex dynamic, interactive, intellectual activity (not a practice that can be prescribed or standardized)" (p. 13). In order to meet the rapidly changing needs of our students or pupils, teachers must be given the authority to make appropriate instructional decisions. They are the instructional experts. Therefore, the basis for school leadership must include teachers (and parents) as well as the school principal, in the role of problem finding and problem identification, a process currently referred to as transformational leadership. School heads, then become the leaders of leaders; those who encourage and develop instructional leadership in teachers. According to Cooper (1993), this "mode of instructional leadership provides for learning and working with other teachers, students and parents – to improve instructional quality" (p. 16). This becomes the basis for shared instructional leadership. This restructuring requires a different view of leadership. School goals would be based on problems identified by teachers and parents – not on a head's personal vision or one of the central offices. There would be a greater emphasis on problem finding and goal setting by staff and community. Problem solving would be a collaborative activity. Collegiality, experimentation, teacher reflection, and school-based staff development become important issues. Rather than being the source of all knowledge, the head's role would be to tap the expertise and leadership of teachers.

The idea that one model of school leadership or one model of classroom instruction is appropriate for all schools is incompatible with this form of school-based restructuring and improvement. It becomes apparent that school leaders will require a greater tolerance for ambiguity than ever before. The head becomes a key player. Even if this approach is collaborative in nature, the leadership taken by the head is pivotal. Therefore, the head needs to know and do much in order to become an effective instructional leader (Spillane & Zuberi, 2009). Improved students learning is the primary goal. It includes, a visible presence, which is where heads visit classrooms, attend departmental or grade - level meetings, discuss matters dealing with instruction, as well as active participation in staff development.

Educational Philosophies of Heads

In order to be an instructional leader, one must factor the knowledge of effective schools and effective teaching into his or her educational philosophy and beliefs. If the school's goal is instructional improvement, how does the head achieve this? Is one strategy preferred over others? Are there other, more effective methods? Here, the three major educational philosophies proposed by Glickman (1990) include: *Essentialism*, here, the supervisor holds the knowledge about absolutes or truths in teaching which he or she imparts to teachers to systematically improve their teaching; *Experimentation*, is where supervisors work democratically with teachers to achieve something that is helpful to everyone. They convey knowledge, provide a balance between management and instructional skills, develop and implement plans for dealing with students' reading problems (p. 20). Also, Brookover and Lezotte's (1990) study presents the role of the head as instructional leader as the catalyst for school improvement. However, the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective instructional leader are not innate; they must be learned. Richardson, Prickett, Martray, Cline, Ecton & Flanigan (1997) stated that "a systematically designed and implemented training program has a positive effect on practicing heads" (p. 9). Bamburg and Andrews' (1990) study indicated that school districts and professional associations must develop in-service programs that will provide on-going leadership training and support for practicing administrators. Heads must recognize that the role of instructional leadership is inherent to school success. That is why this study seeks to assess the way heads in the school district practice instructional leadership.

Instructional Supervision/Evaluation

One way to help teachers improve instruction is through supervision. A comprehensive guide is found in Glickman's (1990) model of clinical supervision which he presents as a cyclical sequence of events that should ideally, be implemented at least thrice a year. This sequence include: (a) teacher pre-conferencing to determine the method, focus, and duration of the observation; (b) classroom observation – methods which include categorical frequencies, physical indicators, performance indicators, visual diagramming, space utilization, detached open-ended narratives, participant observation, focused questionnaires and educational criticism; (c) interpretation of observation, either interpersonal or directive analysis / interpretation; (d) post-conferencing to discuss results and remedial action; and (e) critiquing (p. 333).

Staff Development

According to Glickman (1990), learning is a life-long pursuit so heads should improve the quality of education of their staff. Ways in which they can do this on-going education are through school in-service training, workshops, staff meetings, conferences, and professional reading. Glickman sums up the elements of effective in-service as: Concrete, continual, relevant, and "hands-on" activities; follow-up assistance; peer observation; school leader participation at in-service training workshop; post observation analysis and conferencing focused on skills introduced in workshops; classroom experimentation and modification of implemented skills; release-time provision for teacher leaders and individualized activities. When planning for in-service, it is helpful to understand that teachers' thinking concerning in-service topics will vary from concrete to abstract levels. Teachers may view in-service activities as providing information for implementation, as a collaborative venture, or as time to refocus or to be informed. Heads, by respecting and considering these varying levels in teacher thinking concerning in-service, will enable teachers to become "the agents rather than the objects of staff development" (Glickman, 1990, p. 333). It will be worthwhile at this stage, to draw on the works of (Hoadley, Christie, Jacklin & Ward, 2007; Hallinger, 2005; Gillet, 2010) specifying the role of the leader in learning and teaching. Taken as a whole, this presents a picture of school administrators whose time is heavily devoted to matters other than curriculum and instructions, to issues of student discipline, parent relations, plant operations, and school finance. Most heads do not meaningfully supervise or evaluate teachers, plan and co-ordinate curriculums, actively monitor the technology of the school or the progress of schools, or spend time in the classrooms. That is most heads do not act as instructional leaders. The researchers mentioned above admitted that instructional leadership entails supervision and evaluation of teachers, planning, and co-ordination of curriculum and monitoring the technology and progress of the school and its students. In reality, it means that the head of a basic school must become the leader of teaching and learning.

According to Porter and Brophy (1988), effective teachers understand their instructional goals, design instruction according to these goals, communicate goals to students, create learning situations and use a variety of instructional approaches to promote creative thinkers, as well as factual learners, and evaluate them. Learning to become an instructional leader is a complex and multidimensional task.

This is because if heads believe that the growth in students' learning is the primary goal of schooling, then they must consider instructional leadership as a task worth learning. In the contemporary world, one can be a leader of leaders only by learning and working with teachers, students, and parents to improve instructional quality. Goal setting and problem solving become side-based, collective collaborative activities. The instructional leadership of the head is pivotal in ensuring that teachers make informed decisions about the most appropriate strategy to use, especially those that are related to student instruction.

There are three major areas where learning is required if a head is to become an instructional leader: a knowledge base, task understanding, and appropriate skills. The knowledge base includes the research on effective schools and teaching, an instructional administration, and familiarity with the processes of change. In addition, one should understand educational philosophies and beliefs and, ultimately, be able to determine the strengths and weaknesses of one's own philosophy. Instructional leadership tasks include supervision and evaluation of instruction, staff development activities, curriculum development, group development, action research, development of a positive school climate, and the creation of links between school and community. To carry out these tasks, the head must possess critical interpersonal and technical skills. Interpersonal skills include those of communication, motivation, decision making, problem solving, and conflict management. Technical skills include ways to approach goals setting, assessment and planning, instructional observation (to provide feedback to teachers) and research and evaluation (to determine the success of instructional progress). If a school head possesses this background, the person (head) is likely to become an effective leader of leaders. Instructional improvement is an important goal, a goal worth seeking, and a goal, which when implemented, allows both students or pupils and teachers to control their own destiny in making a more meaningful learning environment.

Research Methods

The design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey with the fundamental aim of finding out instructional leadership practices of heads of basic schools in the school district. Descriptive research is adopted because it specifies the nature of a given phenomena. It determines and reports the way things are or answers research questions concerning the current status of a subject under study. According to Cohen and Manion (2000), descriptive surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intension of describing the nature of existing conditions or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationship that exists between specific events. The descriptive survey is considered the best design in this study since it is aimed at finding out the instructional leadership behavior of heads of basic schools in a district.

Population

A total of 207 head-teachers, 933 teachers, and 10 circuit supervisors constituted the population for the study.

Sample

Sixty schools were selected out of the 222 schools as the sample for the study. Five respondents were selected from each school. These included the head-teacher and four other teachers in the school. Additionally five circuit supervisors were also selected. In all, 305 respondents formed the sample for the study. They included 60 head-teachers, 240 teachers and 5 circuit supervisors.

Sampling Procedure

The study used stratified, purposive, and simple random sampling techniques. The researchers stratified the schools into rural and urban to eliminate the possibility of selecting more rural schools since the rural schools were more than the urban ones. Thirty rural schools and 30 urban schools were selected for the study. Stratified sampling technique generally is applied in order to obtain a representative sample (Kothari, 2009). All the female head-teachers in the district were purposively selected. This was because the district had only 30 female head-teachers so the number was considered not large enough to do any random sampling. According to Frankel and Wallen (2000), purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling, which is characterized by the use of judgment and deliberate effort to obtain representative samples by including typical areas or groups in the sample. The teachers were selected through simple random sampling by using the lottery method. Where a school had less than two female teachers, they were purposively selected to get more views from female teachers since male teachers were more than the female teachers. In all, 240 teachers, 60 head-teachers, and 5 circuit supervisors were selected as participants for the study.

Instruments

The main data collection instruments for the study were questionnaire and an interview guide. Kerlinger (2000) observed that the questionnaire is widely used for collecting data in educational research because; it is very effective for securing factual information about practices and conditions of which the respondents are presumed to have knowledge. It elicited information on all the perceived areas of instructional leadership practices, the means through which instructional leadership is provided, problems associated with providing instructional leadership and suggestions and recommendations necessary to enhance the heads' provision of instructional leadership in the basic schools.

Data Analysis

Since the study is a descriptive survey, the researchers did quantitative and qualitative analysis. Thus, descriptive statistics served as a tool to describe, summarize or reduce to manageable form the properties of mass data. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2011), descriptive statistics describe data in terms of measures of central tendency and measures of spread dispersion. Thus, the data obtained were described and analyzed using percentages and frequencies.

Findings and Discussion

The findings were discussed around parameters set for the research. They include the following: The extent to which head-teachers in the school district assist teachers to plan, organize and deliver lessons; supports head-teachers personally give to teachers to improve teaching and learning; ways head-teachers evaluate the performance of pupils and teachers; staff development programs that the head-teachers have put in place to develop their teachers and; ways head-teachers in the school district supervise their teachers and pupils performance.

Theme One

Support for teachers to improve teaching and learning

This theme was to solicit information from respondents on head-teachers' direct personal involvement in helping teachers to improve performance of pupils. The following tables (1 and 2) present responses of the respondents.

Table 1: Teachers' Views on Head-teachers' Provision of Direct Personal Support

Activities	Rural			Urban		
	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)
Providing ideas for preparation of teaching materials	16(50.0)	46(40.0)	8(7.0)	53(42.4)	65(52.0)	7(5.6)
Helping with teaching and learning materials	76(66.1)	31(27.1)	8(6.9)	59(47.2)	60(48.0)	6(4.8)
Providing support on lesson delivery	69(60.0)	37(32.2)	9(7.8)	48(38.4)	70(56.6)	7(5.6)
Recommending teachers for awards	63(54.8)	37(32.2)	15(13.0)	53(42.4)	56(44.8)	16(12.8)
Helping teachers solve problems	63(54.8)	56(31.3)	16(13.9)	58(46.4)	61(48.8)	6(4.8)
Providing feedback regarding classroom performance	65(56.6)	41(35.7)	9(7.8)	52(41.6)	62(49.6)	11(8.8)
Discussing matters affecting teaching	71(64.3)	33(28.7)	8(7.0)	68(54.4)	52(41.6)	5(4.0)
Providing counseling	87(75.7)	24(20.9)	4(3.5)	82(65.5)	34(27.2)	9(7.2)
Assisting teachers to get accommodation	90(78.3)	23(20.0)	2(1.7)	67(53.6)	46(36.8)	12(9.6)
Assisting teachers with problems in specific subjects	85(73.9)	24(20.9)	6(5.2)	65(52.0)	49(39.2)	11(8.8)

Key: O – Often, S – Sometimes, N – Never

The activity with the highest percentage in Table 1 as far as the provision of direct personal support is concerned is provision of counseling for teachers. The majority of respondents in the rural schools 75% and 65% in the urban schools indicated that head-teachers provided counseling for them. Only 3.5% and 7.2% respectively indicated that head-teachers never provided them with counseling services. The next activity in the Table is head-teachers assisting teachers to get accommodation. That is a little above 78% and 53% of the respondents in the rural and urban schools respectively indicated that this aspect of instructional leadership is occurring in the district. The difference between the responses might be due to the fact that getting accommodation in the urban towns is more difficult than in the rural towns due to rural-urban migration and numerous governmental agencies in the urban towns. The activity with the lowest percentage in the Table is the provision of ideas for the preparation of appropriate teaching materials.

That is, 52% of the respondents in the urban schools indicated that though the practice was occurring, it was very low. This is a matter of concern in instructional leadership, because it is very pivotal in instructional leadership. Its low occurrence on the head-teachers agenda must give cause for concern especially to stakeholders in education.

On the issue of recommending teachers for awards, 63(54.8%) of the respondents in the rural schools indicated that head-teachers recommended teachers for awards. About 42 % of the teachers in the urban schools showed that head-teachers recommended them for awards. Only 13.0% and 12.8% of the respondents in the rural and urban schools respectively indicated that head-teachers had never recommended them for awards. A teacher from one of the rural schools in the district won the overall second runner up for the 2005 National Best Teacher Award. The presence of this aspect of instructional leadership practices of head-teachers in the district especially in the rural schools may have accounted for it. Head-teachers, especially those in the urban schools should strive to provide this aspect of instructional leadership to help bring more glories to the district. Head-teachers' provision of direct personal support concerning lesson delivery 70(56.0) is also low as compared with their counterparts in the rural schools.

According to Stronge (1988), head-teachers spend 62.2% of their time on managerial issues and 11.8% on instructional leadership issues. This might account for the low performances of head-teachers in the urban schools since pupils' enrolment in the urban schools was higher than those in the rural schools. On the whole, the responses indicated that head-teachers in rural schools provided instructional leadership in the area of direct personal support than those in the urban schools.

Table 2: Head-teachers' Views on their Provision of Direct Personal Support to Teachers

Activities	Rural			Urban		
	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)
Providing ideas for preparation of teaching materials	19(63.3)	11(36.7)	0.0	18(60.0)	10(33.3)	2(6.7)
Helping teachers obtain materials	25(83.3)	5(16.7)	0.0	21(70.0)	9(30.0)	0.0
Providing support on lesson delivery	23(76.7)	7(23.3)	0.0	22(73.3)	7(23.3)	1(3.3)
Recommending teachers for awards	20(66.7)	9(30.0)	1(3.3)	16(53.3)	12(40.0)	2(6.7)
Helping solve problems	22(73.3)	8(26.7)	0.0	19(63.3)	11(36.7)	0.0
Providing feedback	25(83.3)	5(16.7)	0.0	18(60.0)	12(40.0)	0.0
Discussing matters affecting teaching	28(93.3)	2(6.7)	0.0	25(83.3)	4(13.3)	1(3.3)
Providing counseling	26(86.7)	4(13.3)	0.0	21(70.0)	7(23.3)	2(6.7)
Assisting teachers to get accommodation	25(83.3)	5(16.7)	0.0	19(63.3)	9(30.0)	2(6.7)
Assisting teachers with problems in specific subjects	22(73.3)	7(23.3)	1(3.3)	19(63.3)	9(30.0)	2(6.7)

Table 2 displays the views on head-teachers on their provision of direct personal support to teachers for enhancement of their teaching to improve the performance of pupils. On the discussion of matters related to teaching and learning, about 93% and 83% of the head-teachers in the rural and urban schools respectively said this aspect of instructional leadership was provided. Only 1(3.3%) of them indicated that they had never discussed matters related to teaching and learning with teachers. This supports the assertion made by Glickman (1990) that head-teachers must develop and implement plans with teachers dealing with students' learning problems (p.20). A total of 46(76.7%) of the head-teachers indicated that they identified and helped teachers obtain teaching and learning materials. Head-teachers provision of ideas for the preparation of appropriate teaching materials was least rated by head-teachers in the rural schools, even though it was above average. The activity that had the lowest percentage on the part of head-teachers in the urban schools was recommending teachers for awards. Again, the Table 2 depicts that head-teachers in the rural schools did better than head-teachers in the urban schools as far as direct personal support to teachers was concerned. The overall assessment indicated that head-teachers in the district provided instructional leadership (67.0%) in the area of direct personal support. Only 11.3% did not (never) provide any form of instructional leadership to support teachers and pupils to improve performance in the schools. Since most of the heads are doing this, the pupils are likely to pass their final examinations.

Theme Two

Supervise and evaluate the performance of teachers and pupils

The results of this theme were presented in Tables 3 and 4. In Table 3, as many as 81.0% of the teachers, indicated that head-teachers have been supervising activities in the schools. Over 74.8% and 82.4% of the respondents from the rural and urban schools respectively indicated that head-teachers often ensured that teachers filled out pupils' continuous assessment and report cards in their schools.

Table 3: Teachers' Views on Head-teachers' Supervision of the Pupils' and their performance

Activities	Rural			Urban		
	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)
Going round classes to monitor teaching and learning	81(70.4)	27(25.5)	7(6.1)	72(57.6)	47(37.6)	6(4.8)
Ensuring that class attendance registers are marked	57(75.7)	22(19.1)	6(5.2)	100(80.0)	20(16.0)	5(4.0)
Inspection of teachers time book to check lateness and absenteeism	83(72.2)	25(21.7)	7(6.1)	89(71.2)	28(22.4)	8(6.4)
Checking roll of classes during assembly to check lateness	78(67.8)	17(14.8)	20(17.4)	83(66.4)	33(18.4)	19(15.2)
Making sure that teachers lesson notes are prepared	90(78.3)	18(15.7)	7(6.0)	98(78.4)	22(17.6)	5(4.0)
Ensuring that proper records are kept by teachers	85(73.9)	24(20.9)	6(5.2)	99(79.2)	23(18.4)	3(2.4)
Ensuring that teachers fill out pupils continuous assessment and report cards	86(74.8)	16(13.9)	13(11.3)	103(82.4)	5(14.0)	17(13.6)

However, 11.3% and 13.6% of the respondents showed that it never occurred in the rural and urban schools respectively. A total of 77.9%, 17.5%, and 4.6% of the respondents indicated that heads of the schools often, sometimes or never ensured that class attendance registers were marked. Inspection of teachers' time book to check lateness and absenteeism were also shown to be performed by the head-teachers. In all 71.7%, 22.1% and 6.3% of the teachers indicated that it often, sometimes, or never occurred in the schools. Ensuring that teachers kept proper records was another activity the heads were performing. Ninety-nine of the respondents representing 79.2% and 73.9% from the urban and rural schools showed that it often or never occurred in the schools. This is a revelation considering the importance of supervision and its effects on pupils' performance. According to the Education Review Report (2013), school-based supervision is crucial in determining what and how teaching and learning goes on in schools. This means that if this trend continues, academic performance of pupils in the district would be improved.

Responses from Table 4 were in agreement with the teachers' response presented in Table 3. Majority of head-teachers, that is over 81.0%, indicated that they frequently supervised teaching and learning activities in the schools. Eighty six percent of the respondents from both urban and rural schools indicated that they often went round the classes to monitor teaching and learning. Only 3.3% of the respondents showed that they never monitored teaching and learning. On the issue of ensuring that class attendance registers were marked, a total of 90.0%, 6.7%, and 3.3% of the heads said it often, sometimes, or never occurred.

Table 4: Head-teachers' Views on their Supervision of Teachers and Pupils' Performance

Activities	Rural			Urban		
	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)	O No. (%)	S No. (%)	N No. (%)
Going round classes to monitor teaching and learning	24(80.0)	5(16.7)	1(3.3)	24(80.0)	5(16.7)	1(3.3)
Ensuring that class attendance registers are marked	29(96.7)	1(3.3)	0.0	25(83.3)	3(10.0)	2(6.7)
Inspection of teachers time book to check lateness and absenteeism	27(90.0)	3(10.0)	0.0	23(76.7)	5(16.7)	2(6.7)
Checking roll of classes during assembly to check lateness	24(80.0)	6(20.0)	0.0	24(80.0)	4(13.3)	2(6.7)
Making sure that teachers lesson notes are prepared	28(93.3)	2(6.7)	0.0	27(90.0)	1(3.3)	2(6.7)
Ensuring that proper records are kept by teachers	25(83.3)	5(16.7)	0.0	24(86.0)	5(16.7)	1(3.3)
Ensuring that teachers fill out pupils continuous assessment and report cards	24(80.0)	6(20.0)	0.0	24(80.0)	4(13.3)	2(6.7)

One significant feature of table 4 is that 83.3% and 80.0% of the head-teachers in both rural and urban schools showed that they ensured that teachers kept proper records. This is very encouraging considering the importance of records keeping in teaching and learning. Another important feature of table 4 is that over 80.0% of the head-teachers in both rural and urban schools ensured that teachers filled pupils' continuous assessment and report cards. This would help parents to know the performance of their wards. An interview with the Circuit Supervisors indicated that the report cards and the continuous assessment gave documentary proof of pupils' academic performance in the schools.

The overall assessment of the research questions indicated that 84.3%, of the head-teachers often supervised activities of teachers and pupils in the schools while about 9% in the district never supervised activities of teachers and pupils in the schools. The study confirmed the assertion by Glickman (1990) that one way head-teachers could help improve instruction and performance of teachers and pupils is through effective supervision.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study produced the following results: Majority of the head-teachers were trained teachers who had the requisite qualification and experience to head the schools in the district; supervision, evaluation and direct personal support to teachers were found to be more dominant in the schools than implementation of curriculum planning, organization and delivery activities. Head-teachers in the rural schools were found to be performing the instructional leadership activities set for the objective of the study more than the head-teachers in the urban schools. Circuit supervisors acknowledged that head-teachers spent more time on administrative and managerial issues than on matters of instructional issues. The commonest activities head-teachers performed in the schools were:

Communicating clearly with staff regarding changes in instructional matters; encouraging teachers to undertake distant learning programs; encouraging teachers to join subject associations; going round the classes to monitor teaching and learning activities; ensuring that class attendance registers were marked; ensuring that teachers filled out continuous assessment and report cards of their students; making sure that teachers' lesson notes were prepared and marked; organizing staff meetings for teachers to interact on academic issues; assisting teachers to get accommodation when they were posted to the schools; assisting teachers who had problems in specific subject areas; ensuring that teachers make effective use of instructional hours; providing curriculum materials for teachers and also monitoring their effective use in the classrooms.

Instructional leadership activities that head-teachers did not perform in the schools were: Providing opportunities for teachers to share ideas and delivering a lesson during school and cluster based in-service training; organizing in-service activities that have clearly defined goals for teachers; involving teachers in the planning of in-service training; holding formal meetings with pupils to discuss their problems regarding teaching and learning; meeting teachers, parents and pupils' on academic performance; observing classes to assist teachers to improve upon lesson delivery methods; offering teachers opportunities to observe and discuss classes taught by other teachers with the view to improving teachers instructional skills. There was a significant difference in instructional leadership between head-teachers in the rural schools and head-teachers in the urban schools. However, there was no difference between them in the area of supervision and evaluation of teachers and pupils performance. There was no significant difference between the instructional leadership provided by the female heads and their male counterparts.

In conclusion, the findings of the study revealed that some amount of instructional leadership exists in the basic schools in the district. However, some aspects of instructional leadership activities seemed to be implemented more than others. For instance, supervision, evaluation, and direct personal support to teachers seemed to be performed more than curriculum planning, organization and delivery. The study revealed that head-teachers did not take active part in staff development programs. In addition, the study confirmed researchers findings that very little or inadequate time was spent on instructional leadership by school managers (Stronge, 1988; Ngiwa, 2006). This may account for the poor performance of both teachers and pupils or students in the basic schools of the study.

The following recommendations are offered for consideration: Head-teachers in the urban schools need to be encouraged by Circuit Supervisors to allocate more time for instructional leadership activities; head-teachers need to be adequately motivated by the government in the form of remuneration, rewards and other incentives to provide instructional leadership in the schools; head-teachers need to organize in-service training or staff development programs that will help teachers to develop and acquire skills necessary to improve their teaching and learning; head-teachers need to shift emphasis from purely administrative task and make a conscious effort to provide real instructional leadership in the schools. This will help basic schools in the district to produce pupils with requisite skills to fit into the society. There is the need for a policy that will require heads of schools to allocate adequate time for instructional leadership activities in the basic schools. This however, will need regular checks by circuit supervisors, school management committee members, and training officers at the various District Education Directorates in the country. Furthermore, there is a need to organize induction or workshops for newly appointed head-teachers on the relevance of providing instructional leadership in the basic schools.

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