LEADERSHIP ROLES AND CHALLENGES AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL: THE PERCEPTION OF HEAD TEACHERS IN THE KASSENA NANKANA WEST DISTRICT OF THE UPPER EAST REGION OF GHANA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to find out the leadership roles and challenges facing Junior High School head teachers, as perceived by the head teachers in the Kassena Nankana West District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The study used a quantitative research approach and a descriptive survey design. The population included all Junior High School Headteachers in the Kassena Nankana West District. A purposive sampling technique was employed to include all 34 Headteachers in the 34 Junior High Schools in the District. Structured questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection. The data was analysed using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. The study found that Junior High School Headteachers were not properly prepared before and after their appointments. It emerged from the study that Headteachers' were generally satisfied with the performance of their roles and responsibilities, though these responsibilities were considered to be numerous. The study revealed some particular challenges that affected head teachers. Most prominent among these were: performing administrative work and teaching at the same time; inadequate infrastructure; lack of offices for heads and store rooms; late payment of capitation grant; late submission of teaching lesson notes for vetting; misuse of instructional time; lack of teachers' accommodation; indiscipline among students; non-payment of responsibility allowance and lack of motivation. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the procedures employed by Ghana Education Service in appointing head teachers should be reviewed and clearly defined procedures be followed in appointing professionals with relevant knowledge and experience as head teachers and not merely those who have achieved academic success or are in the system for long years. The government and GES should supply teaching and learning resources as well as other incentives before the beginning of the academic year.

Keywords: Challenges, Headteacher, Junior High School, Leadership.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Leadership has today become a very complex phenomenon because of the complexity of industrial, education, social or political organization, globalization and technological advancement especially in information technology. The issue of leadership is very central to management especially human resource developments and application. The art of leadership is as old as age itself, and covers all aspect of life be it simple nuclear family unit or extended

family, social and religious organization, business, small or large industrial firms, politics and education.

Leadership is an essential ingredient of positions that go with supervisory responsibilities as Ojo and Olaniyan (2008: p. 172) says, "leadership is the moral and intellectual ability to visualize and work for what is better for the company and its employees". The most vital thing the leader does is to create team spirit around him and near him, not in a school boy sense, but in realistic terms of mature adults. The function of leadership pervades all organizations. A good leader therefore, is one who is capable of persuading others to move enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals.

The importance of leadership in any kind of institution or organisation cannot be over-emphasized. History has shown, and the experts on leadership have also confirmed, how on many occasions and in many ways, the paths of communities and entire nations have been paved very much by their leaders. In fact, for many schools or organisations, their coming into being was through the unique instrumentality of a particular leader (Jackall, 1990). Research on effective schools points to the crucial role leaders play in establishing and monitoring quality schools for all students. School leadership has therefore become a priority in education policy agendas internationally. It plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment. Effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling.

The headteacher of a school therefore, appears to be the most important and influential individual in most schools. It is his or her leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for learning, the level of teacher professionalism and morale, and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become. The Commonwealth Secretariat's initiative on headteacher training and support reflects an understanding that the success of teaching and learning depends on the headteacher's skill in organizing and managing the professional and administrative life of the institution (Zame, Hope, & Respress, 2008). Additionally, successful school improvement is said to be 70-90 percent leadership and only 10-30 percent management (Zame, Hope, & Respress, 2008). It is widely recognized and agreed that, one of the essential factors influencing school effectiveness is the nature and quality of the leadership and management provided by each school head. Thus, school effectiveness reflects headteacher effectiveness. Effective school leadership emanates from preparation that inculcates the proficiencies that enable headteachers to create effective schools.

In describing the cultural elements in an effective school, Gorton and Snowden (1993) observed four major expectations: (a) Striving for excellence is an important expectation in an effective school; (b) Teachers and Administrators are held accountable for high performance; (c) teachers and administrators should adopt the attitude that all students are capable of achieving; (d) staff must improve themselves in part by helping each other through experimenting with different approaches and in order for academic success to be achieved, there should be a safe and an orderly environment. However, for an educational administrator who is a leader in the school to effectively perform his or her role, he or she has to embrace change. Therefore, he/she needs to adopt the transformational leadership style. This style is basically about change that aims at consolidating the current trends in our educational institutions through accepting the fact that staff and pupils in the school constitute a rich source

of knowledge. Through the creation of motivation packages, not involving command or coercion, but rather encouraging the constant growth and development of followers, an institution can be transformed (Owens, 2001).

Ibrahim, (2011) exposed the leadership training problem in a study of school headteachers in Kenya where they found out that despite the crucial role of the headteacher, the process wherein they are trained, inducted, and in-serviced is ill suited to the development of their effectiveness and efficiency. The situation is not different in Ghana. The numerous educational reforms that Ghana has experienced have not done much to improve the leadership development for headteachers either as part of their training before they became heads or as they are practicing, through well needs assessment structured in-service. For example, (Zame, Hope, & Respress, 2008; Mushaandja, 2006) research underscored the need for pre-service and in-service training for beginning and experienced headteachers. Today, the work of the headteacher as noted earlier is complex. It requires heads to be knowledgeable about the curriculum, student growth and development, assessment, and best teaching practices. Moreover, headteachers must be expert communicators with an understanding of leadership behaviour. These can only be acquired through regular training.

In Ghana, several efforts have been made during the pre- and post-independence era to promoting quality education in the country. The history dates back from the colonial era. In the colonial era, Governor Frederick Governor Guggisberg formulated 16 principles, which advocated comprehensive elementary education for children, equal opportunity for boys and girls, character training, and the provision of good secondary and technical schools (MOE, 2001). However, the principle on teacher development was limited to the provision that "the staff of teachers must be of the highest possible quality" (MOE, 2001, p. 137). After independence came the Education Act of 1961. This reform initiative: (a) mandated fee-free and compulsory basic education for all school-age children; (b) specified terms and conditions of teacher service; (c) established a teachers' council to preserve high standards in the teaching profession; and (d) specified training and certification requirements for teachers. Also, in 1987, education was at the forefront of the debate which leads to the 1987 educational reform. The intent of the reform was to: (a) increase access to basic education, (b) alter the structure of pre-university education from 6:4:5:2 to 6:3:3, i.e. from 17 years to 12 years; (c) make education cost-effective and achieve cost recovery, and to be able to sustain the reform programme after the adjustment period, and (d) improve the quality of education by making it more relevant to socio-economic conditions.

After these reforms, efforts were still needed to better the system. Then, came the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education [FCUBE], perhaps the most comprehensive educational policy in Ghana's history, which was introduced in 1995 to further strengthen the education system. FCUBE sought to improve the quality of education via: (a) in-service training for teachers at all levels to update their knowledge and skills for effective teaching; (b) the revision of curriculum materials such as syllabi and textbooks; (c) grants to head teachers to purchase materials for teaching and learning in schools; (d) training of circuit supervisors now School Improvement Support Officers (SISO) to monitor and support teachers for effective teaching; (e) incentives for teachers who work in difficult areas of the country; (f) enforcement of the teachers' code of conduct to regulate professional behaviour and monitor misuse of instructional time; (g) an annual best teacher award to motivate teachers; (h)

improving teacher education programmes to provide practical training that leads to competent and creative teachers; and (i) training of district directors, SISO, regional managers of educational units and head teachers in school management and supervision.

Furthermore, the In-Service Unit of the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service (GES) developed the Head teachers' Handbook (Ministry of Education [MOE], 1994), the purpose of which was to improve the quality of learning at the basic school level through head teacher behaviour. What these reforms have in common is a lack of focus on developing head teachers' leadership proficiencies, which according to literature available, are integral to the success or failure of any reform or efforts to promote quality education. Leadership research informs us that head teachers have a major effect on virtually every aspect of school life. Their decision-making and influence echoes throughout the school and the community. Head teacher can be the: (a) initiators – i.e. they get projects started; (b) innovators – i.e. they develop new ideas; (c) motivators – i.e. they encourage others to achieve goals and objectives; (d) calculators – i.e. they plan for programmes and activities; and (e) Communicators – i.e. they disseminate information. With all these efforts, similar to the previous reforms came the 2007 educational reform which sought to address some of the challenges of education in the country. It added two years to the basic primary level that is kindergarten 1 and 2 beginning from age 4 unlike the other which started at age 6. It also made senior education four years instead of three years as was previously and then back to three years. All these are evidence that the country has problems relating to education.

Head teachers are therefore indispensable when it comes to the effective implementation of educational reform and all other policies enacted to promote quality education. Currently, there is no comprehensive reform initiative that addresses the need to develop head teachers' leadership competence. As it stands, individuals are promoted to the head teacher position without extensive leadership training. Also, there are no educational institutions that focus solely on preparing head teachers to lead basic schools. Even though the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba have put up some programmes to address these issues, they are not enough to cater for all head teachers in the whole country. Hence, Ghana still faces a leadership challenge with respect to the preparation of head teachers through provision of rigorous training in leadership. Without effective leadership in basic schools, the chances of achieving quality education will be a mirage. This state of affairs motivated the researcher to find out leadership roles and challenges in public junior high school level in the Kassena Nankana West District of the Upper East Region of Ghana.

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Effective school leadership is essential to improving teaching and learning within each school and to connect the individual school to the outside world. But school leaders across countries both developed and developing, appear to have challenges which policy makers need to address. In recent years, the workload of school leaders has expanded and intensified as a result of increased school autonomy and accountability for learning outcomes. Literature available on leadership recognises the key role played by the headteachers in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Cotton (2003) asserted that certain types of behaviours put up by headteachers have a significant impact on students' achievement. For instance, the headteacher needs to keep up to date with curricular and pedagogical developments and focus

purposefully and relentlessly on the quality of teaching and learning. But they also need to keep in mind that they themselves do not have a direct influence on student learning, except if they are teaching classes. Therefore, as the literature tells us, head teachers must create the conditions that ensure that teachers engage in the best pedagogical practices. Providing opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively and exercise influence over each other will necessitate acknowledging and developing leadership among a wide range of teachers.

Empowering head teachers to identify their own needs and design strategies for solving school level problems is critical in quality education initiatives. As research evidence indicates how head teacher leadership influences positively pupils' performance (Cotton, 2003), it stands to reason therefore that head teachers of Kassena Nankana West District Junior High School have leadership challenges, since in recent past the district has recorded poor performances continuously. Even though some researches have focused on the leadership challenges of head teachers in basic schools in Ghana, that which focused mainly on junior high schools only is not available, especially in the Kassena Nankana West District. The District has not been researched into in this area and since it has a peculiar problem of pupils' continuous poor performance, it is worth researching into, to derive its problems and seek solutions to them. Moreover, as a deprived district, much attention might not be made to research deeply into its educational problems.

Also, aware of how head teachers' leadership play crucial roles in improving the achievements levels of the schools, and having observed the performance level of the district deteriorating year in and year out, itself is motivational therefore, to carry out this investigation. These leadership challenges of head teachers will therefore redirect the attention of authorities in the District, to strife to develop the leadership skills of head teachers in basic schools, most especially the Junior High School. The focus is on Junior High Schools because it is at this level that the first national assessment of the pupils is conducted. This assessment serves as a basis by which stakeholders measure educational achievements in the country.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out leadership roles and challenges facing Junior High School head teachers, as perceived by the head teachers in the Kassena Nankana West District of the Upper East Region of Ghana.

2.2 Objectives of the study

The study sought to:

1. Find out the preparatory stages head teachers go through for appointment in the Kassena Nankana West District.
2. Assess leadership roles of Junior High school head teachers in the Kassena Nankana West District.
3. Find out leadership challenges of Junior High school head teachers in the Kassena Nankana West District.

2.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What preparatory stages do head teachers go through for appointment in the Kassena Nankana West District?
2. What leadership roles do head teachers play in running Junior High schools in the Kassena Nankana West District?
3. What leadership challenges are head teachers facing in the administration of Junior High Schools in the Kassena Nankana West District?

2.4 Significance of the Study

The results of the study will be of importance to all the stakeholders involved in seeking answers to the problems that have bedevilled the educational system particularly in the Junior High Schools in recent times. Besides, the results of the study will help authorities in the education field to appreciate the problems associated with the leadership of head teachers in the junior high schools. Again, this research will provide additional evidence to educational authorities in choosing and training their leaders. The results will enable the directorate of Ghana Education Service to identify the training needs and opportunities for head teachers with the aim of enhancing their professional growth and development, and promoting students' learning outcomes.

Moreover, where differences exist in the leadership challenges of both male and female head teachers, such differences will provide basis for authorities Ghana Education Service to design programmes to address such differences by encouraging the side that suffers most to cope with the situation. Moreover, the findings will also provide the basis for designing and implementing an intervention to sensitise the public to avoid creating challenges.

Finally, the findings will make recommendation to policy makers and administrators to design policies based on the leadership needs of head teachers in junior high schools. It will also to contribute to the plethora of existing academic knowledge and the knowledge base among head teachers and other school leaders who may face similar challenges in their context.

3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Recent theories on education have fallen on transformational theory, transactional theory, and participative theory which are also used as the basis for this study. Figure 1 indicates the flow of the leadership theories derived for this study. It is meant to give a quick view imprint of the theories. These three theories explored are some of the recommended forms of leadership that favour school-based leadership. These are;
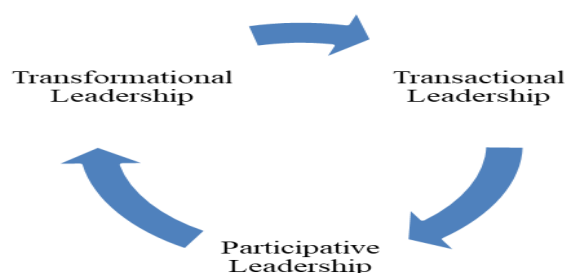
Source: Author's own construct

Figure 1. Evolution of modern theories on leadership.

Through the years, "leadership is a subject that has long excited interest among people" (Yukl, 2012). Different scholars have studied different aspects of leadership according to their interests, rather than creating new theories or models (Grille, Schulte, & Kauffeld, 2015). However, within the past century influential theories for leadership have been developed. The Trait Approach that endured up to the late 1940s claimed that leadership ability is inborn. From the late 1940s to late 1960s Behavioural Approach became dominant advocating that effectiveness in leadership has to do with how the leader behaves. Recent approaches to leadership focus on vision and charisma, the term used by sociologist Max Weber to describe leaders who can lead but who do not hold a ''sanctioned office'' (English, 1992). Later, Burns (as cited in Deluga, 1995) introduced the concepts of transactional and transformational leadership. These constitute the background for this particular survey research.

3.1 Transformational Leadership

The transformational approach has its roots in the work of Burns (1978) (as cited in Khanin, 2007). This approach was refined and operationalised by Bass (1985). Later, Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, (2002) and their colleagues including other scholars applied this approach to educational administration and leadership. Transformational leaders create "a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agent" Miller, (2006). Moreover, Transformational leadership focuses on change of an organization as a mutual commitment. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) explained that "transformational leadership entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leaders-follower relationship, but an elevation of both--a change "for the better" (p. 28). Burns remarked that, leadership that is meant to effect change is perhaps difficult and challenging tasks, because transformational leaders have to deal with the changing of organizations and systems. Bass and his colleagues defined factors which represent the behavioural components of transformational leadership as including: a) inspirational motivation, b) intellectual stimulation, c) idealized influence, d) and individual consideration. Transformational leadership reflects followers' strong personal identification with the leaders and a shared vision of the future, resulting in followers' attitudes and behaviours that go above and beyond an exchange of rewards (Fields & Herold, 1997). Leithwood and Jantzi stated further that, transformational leaders are problem-solvers who can deal with problem-conditions in many life circumstances. They also enhance individuals in their organization to expand capacities of problem solving. It is believed that transformational forms of leadership help shape educational conditions to foster and enhance positive changes in teaching and learning (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). With transformational leadership, subordinates feel trust, admiration, honesty, and respect toward their leaders (Yukl, & Lepsinger, 2005).

However, transformational leadership has its specific distinction from transactional leadership. Stewart, (2006) conceptualized components to distinguish "extraordinary" or transformational leadership from "ordinary" or transactional leadership (p. 20). Burns said that, transformational leaders raise subordinates' consciousness level about the importance and value of designed outcomes and strategies and ways of achieving them. To reach satisfactory outcomes, Bass, (1990) advised that transformational leaders should motivate and inspire their subordinates by

(a) making them more conscious and aware of the importance of outcomes; (b) inspiring them to transcend their self-interest for the sake of the group, team, or organization; and (c) activating their higher need to produce effective outcomes. In contrast, transactional leaders focus on an exchange relationship in which subordinate compliance (e.g. effort, loyalty, and productivity) is exchanged for expected rewards. Details about transactional leadership are discussed in the next sections.

3.2 Transactional leadership

Transactional approach is defined by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). As stated by Burns, this leadership style originated from formal leaders focusing on the exchange of mutual benefits between the leaders and the subordinates. This approach focuses on leadership as exchange processes in which followers are rewarded for enacting a role to achieve mutual objectives. Clarification of task requirements and specifications of contingent rewards is the typical characteristic of transactional leadership (Bass, 1990). Transactional theorists believe that transactional leadership is based upon contingent reinforcement. Transactional leaders concentrate on the present and keep going on maintaining an organization running effectively and smoothly (Daft, 1999). By contrast with transformational leadership, transactional leaders often maintain quality and stability of the organization rather than promote changes. As Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) have explained, transactional practices focus on ongoing work by emphasizing the basic needs of organizational members. Subordinates are performers who agree with the leader's promises of reward or avoidance of punishment for enacting the mutual tasks. Leaders are persons who control and manipulate subordinates' actions. Transactional leadership relies on top-down decision processes or the power to control followers and allocation of resources (Joseph, 1997).

3.3 Participative Leadership

One of the different approaches that are important for school leaders who work with complex tasks and difficult decision-making processes is participative leadership which most apply to the leadership role of today's head teachers. believed that a school's effectiveness is proportional to the extent to which people participate in all aspects of the school's functioning, including policy decision-making processes, sharing a coherent sense of direction, interaction, and acknowledging the wider school community. Murphy and Beck (1995) wrote that participative leaders will help their subordinates to initiate and discover new challenges and opportunities including to learn through acquiring, contributing, and sharing with others. As opposed to autocratic or authoritarian leaders, participative leaders consult with subordinates about decisions. Participative leaders solicit their subordinate's ideas and suggestions in problem identification and problem solutions.

Somech (2005) found that participative leadership helped enhance school effectiveness. He also found that participative leadership enhanced teachers' opportunities to uphold a sense of self-efficacy and self-determination. This was evident in his study conducted in northern Israel, were data was collected from 140 teams selected from 140 different elementary schools. The purpose of this study was to examine the relative effect of a directive leadership approach as compared with a participative leadership approach on school-staff teams' motivational mechanisms (empowerment and organizational commitment) and effectiveness (team in-role performance and team innovation). The subjects of the study were teachers and administrators.

Yukl, (2011) suggested that two important aspects of participative leadership are empowerment and delegation. In his view, participative leader empowers his/her followers by involving them in the decision-making processes. He explained that a participative leader engages in delegation by giving a subordinate the chance to learn and work on specific tasks. Yukl also opined that, subordinates can learn how to achieve those tasks, deal with problems they may encounter, and find solutions for those tasks.

Some writers have described leadership in terms of allowing people to participate in the decision-making processes. For example, people's participation is more than simply sharing knowledge, communication, and information with leaders. In his opinion, leaders should focus on common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability for achieving the mission. Johnson, & Hackman, (2018) noted that in order to allow followers to participate in decision making processes, leaders must have a clear agenda setting and an outline of the items to be discussed. They advised leaders to listen to ideas or concepts, not just facts, and should be open-minded. They should also focus on relationships between people including communicational patterns this promotes effective management of schools. The above Western perspectives on participation are also recognized by Thai Scholars. Hands, (2014) stated that the participation between school leaders and community members and other school networks are also important. He suggested that school leaders should establish relationship with different groups of people. Also, Gamede, & Uleanya, (2021) agreed that the participation between schools and stakeholders should be promoted in school administration. Stakeholders should be engaged in processes of decision making and they should have a sense of belonging in developing their children.

4.0 EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 The Concept of School Leadership

Generally, depending on the contexts of the study, the term school leadership is often used interchangeably with school management and school administration. Although the three concepts overlap, we use them with a difference in emphasis. An often-quoted phrase is "managers do things right, while leaders do the right things" (Vasilescu, 2019). While leadership involves steering organisations by shaping other people's attitudes, motivations and behaviours, management is more closely associated with maintenance of current operations (Bush & Glover, 2003). Dimmock (1999) provided a distinction between school leadership, management and administration while also recognising that the responsibilities of school leaders often encompass all three. Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration).In this study, it is believed that successful schools need effective leadership, management and administration. While the study's focus is on leadership, this term may encompass managerial and administrative tasks as well. The three elements are so closely intertwined that it is unlikely for one of them to succeed without the others.

The school administrator is essentially a leader of the staff and students of the school. Some years ago, head teachers were asked to become "Instructional leaders" exercising firm control by setting goals, maintaining discipline and evaluating results. Today they are encouraged to

be facilitative leaders by building teams, creating networks and "governing from the centre". With these new moves in leadership, they are still expected to be instructional leaders. Murphy and Lynn (as cited in Ojo & Olaniyan, 2008) observed that the metaphors of school leadership have changed frequently over the years; no sooner have school leaders assimilated one recommended approach than, they are seemingly urged to move in a different direction.

The concept of headship is rooted in the industrial model of schooling, where one individual bears the prime responsibility for the entire organisation. Leadership is a broader concept where authority to lead does not reside only in one person, but can be distributed among different people within and beyond the school. School leadership can encompass people occupying various roles and functions such as head teachers, and assistant head teachers, leadership teams, school governing boards or School Management Committees (SMC) and school-level staff involved in leadership tasks. It is therefore necessary that for a study of this nature there is the need to explore how school leadership and leadership theories surrounding education in general, to facilitate a deeper understanding of the challenges head teachers faced in exercising their duties.

4.2 Preparation Stages of Head teachers

Leadership literature points to a strong need for professional development of headteachers to prepare them to manage the problems they face in their work situations. The term 'preparation' refers to all the professional development activities which take place before one takes up a position (Cardno, 2003). Cardno categorised preparation into two stages: "pre-employment preparation which encompasses selection, formal qualification programmes and/or training, and post-employment preparation which comprises induction into their role" (p. 2). Cardno (2003) stated further that "within both the pre- and postemployment categories there are directed and self-directed forms of preparation and formal and informal aspects of elements of education, training, development and mentoring" (p. 2).

The preparation of aspiring head teachers is highly recognised in most advanced countries because of the importance of headship in school improvement and effectiveness (Simkins, 2005). In some of these countries, teachers with headship ambition are required to obtain formal qualification in leadership before applying for such positions. Among the developing countries, Hong Kong and some South East Asian countries such as Malaysia and Singapore have Pre- Service Training [PRESET] for head teachers (Kitavi & Westhuizan, 1997; Acquaro, 2019). In Ghana and some other developing countries, no formal qualification and PRESET are required for headship post; long-serving and experienced teachers are normally appointed to such posts (Bush & Oduro, 2006). Moreover, there is no formal induction programme for newly appointed head teachers (Government of Ghana [GoG], 2004; Bush & Oduro, 2006). Therefore, they are left to either "sink or swim" (Weindling, as cited in Kusi, 2008) on their appointment.

Nevertheless, most of the developing countries in the continent of Africa and elsewhere have carried out educational reforms to improve the quality of education provision (Kitavi & Westhuizan, 1997; GoG, 2004), and they perceive that school heads have significant roles to play in the success of the new reforms. In this era of educational reforms, it is important that aspiring and practicing head teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and competences required to meet the challenges in their educational contexts. The importance of a formal and

appropriate recruitment/ selection process, as well as training and induction programmes in such contexts can, therefore, not be underestimated.

4.3 Recruitment/Selection/Appointment of Head teachers

Oduro (2003) (as cited in Dampson, (2019) differentiated recruitment from selection and argues that the former involves making an effort to attract the most suitable applicants from whom the most suitable person is chosen for the job, while the latter involves choosing the most suitable from among the attracted applicants for the job. This process means that selection takes place after recruitment, but Oduro goes on to say that both recruitment and selection have a common goal"hiring the most capable to lead the school" (p. 298). He has highlighted two strategies for effective recruitment, namely (a) job description and person specification, and (b) recruitment advertising. Much research has consistently revealed that having a structured approach has the tendency to increase validity of recruitment/selection (Crawford, Bush, & Middlewood, 1997). The criteria for selecting/appointing head teachers in Ghana and other developing countries differ from those in the developed countries, such as England and Canada. Among the developing countries, especially those in Africa, it appears that apart from using experience as the basis for selecting/appointment of head teachers, some country-specific issues are considered in the process. Bush and Oduro (2006) indicated two approaches used by the GES directors to appoint head teachers in Ghana:

The first step is appointment through direct posting, which involves appointing newly-trained teachers to lead schools, especially in the rural areas. The unattractiveness of rural life appears to have made working in rural schools non-competitive among teachers, who might otherwise have had aspirations to be appointed as head teachers. The second strategy is appointment through selection interviews, which is largely associated with the appointment of urban school head teachers. Candidates for interviews are selected through recommendation (Bush & Oduro, 2006, p. 366). Traditionally, teachers in Ghana rise to Senior Superintendent Rank in the GES before they are appointed as head teachers. At that stage, they are considered to be experienced enough to manage schools. Some developing countries also appoint head teachers on the basis of their experience, in addition to some other criteria.

4.4 Pre-Service/Initial Training of Head teachers

Middlewood, & Bush, (2013) indicated that management programmes are related to management theories which shape the training approaches. The training of head teachers takes many forms because each country has a unique context (Bush & Jackson, 2002). Bush and Jackson argued that, despite globalization, the striking feature is that nations and states have developed very different models to address their common need for high quality leadership in schools. This diversity undoubtedly arises from the very different political, social and professional contexts, which have led to provision being tailored to the particular requirements of each society. In learning from the experience of others, it is vital to recognise that what works well in one country may not succeed elsewhere (Bush & Jackson, 2002).

In Malta, the Faculty of Education has been running courses in administration and management for teachers occupying management positions or intending to assume headship posts since the mid-eighties. Bezzina added that the participants are awarded Diploma qualification. The course aims to acquaint participants with theories and research in behavioural sciences that are

related to the studies of the organization. Within the framework of current developments in educational theory and practice, it also aims to provide participants with opportunities to analyse situations and formulate strategies for tackling administrative and management problems in education.

An evaluation of the impact of the programme showed that the participants made significant improvement in their schools. According to Bezzina, many teaching professionals with leadership aspiration have been encouraged to undertake this course, but the programme is not formalised. Contrary to the situation in many developing countries, PRESET of head teachers has received some attention in most developed countries. Government of some of these countries, have set up centres and established agencies which train/prepare head teachers (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Simkins, 2005). For example, in England and Wales, the Teacher Training Agency has recognised the link between the development of head teachers and the improvement of schools. Therefore, it has introduced the National Professional Qualification for head teachers' initiative to provide aspiring head teachers with the skills and competences required for their roles (Isik, 2003; Bush & Jackson, 2002).

The candidates for the programme are required to have prior experience in leadership at the whole-school level enabling anyone in the school management team or deputy head position to apply for it (Bush, 2008). Burns further stated that, the background of the candidates implies that "they are deemed to be 'ready' in certain respects while needing training in other aspects of headship" (p. 326). Therefore, to make the programmes useful to them, their needs are determined at regional assessment centres and incorporated into the design of the courses.

4.5 Induction of Head teachers

Induction is a key issue in leadership development in recent times. It is a process "which enables a newcomer to become a fully effective member of an organization as quickly and as easily as possible" Earley and Kinder (as cited in Coleman, 1997, p. 156). Kitavi and Westhuizan (1997) also defined induction as: "A well-structured comprehensive professional development programme with concisely articulated goals designed for the purpose of helping beginning head teachers to develop among other things: knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to carry their roles effectively" (p. 13). O' Neil et al (as cited in Coleman, 1997, p. 156) believed that induction is meant for "socialisation; achieving competence; and exposure to institutional culture". Despite the usefulness of induction programmes for head teachers, they have received little or no attention in most developing countries, including Ghana. Oduro and MacBeath (2003) indicated that the newly qualified teachers who lead schools in the rural areas of Ghana are often left to fend for themselves owing to the absence of induction programmes for them. Also, there is no evidence of formal induction programmes for head teachers in the countries in Africa. Therefore, within the last decade, some researchers have made an effort to provide a guide for inducting head teachers in that context. Kitavi and Westhuizan (1997), for example, provided a framework for induction of head teachers in the Kenyan educational context. The features of the proposed framework were:

1. Mentoring of newly-appointed head teachers by experienced head teachers.
2. Organization of in-service programmes and other activities for them.
3. Out-going head teachers facilitating transition of the newly-appointed head teachers.

4. Helping them to establish links with experienced head teachers for their professional growth and development.
5. Experienced head teachers helping the training of deputy head teachers, as future leaders.
6. Visiting other schools to see how such environments operate.

Bush and Oduro (2006) also proposed some strategies for inducting head teachers in the African continent, but the strategies were similar to those proposed by Kitavi and Westhuizan (1997). These strategies were in 38 service preparation, opportunity for new head teachers to establish links with their colleagues (networking) and mentoring by experienced head teachers. The proposals are inconsistent with Bush and Jackson's (2002) advice for contextualisation of professional development programmes offered for head teachers.

4.6 Leadership Roles of Head teachers

In the twenty-first century, it is important that head teachers clearly identify and understand their leadership roles. The leadership roles of school head teachers influence the effective school administration. "Principal's leadership is crucial because they are uniquely situated to exercise some special skills of initiation, support, and visioning" (Lambert, 1998, p. 51). It is important that head teachers be aware of their leadership roles. School heads need to have a clear vision of the roles of the school in today's complex world (Flanary & Terehoff, 2000). The effective leadership roles of school heads are to make positive differences in the lives of their learners, staff, and communities. Head teachers who possess effective leadership skills know how to manage their administrative work, cooperate with teachers, parents, and communities, inspiring them to the mutual consensus of the organization. Ubben, Hughes and Norris (2007) (as cited in Queen, Peel, & Shipman, 2013) stated that another key leadership role of the leaders is to develop their visions, especially the vision of what should be and are encouraged to the resolution of important issues that concern them. Head teachers' visions and actions reflect what they are going to create or to be founded in their values and beliefs. By establishing a clear vision through collaboration with other stakeholders of the school, effective heads establish a bounding agent that holds members together as they work toward a common goal (Mackay & Ralston, 1999). Today's school heads must be effective not only in dealing with policy implementation, but also maintaining the daily operations of the schools and being responsive to changes. As managers of the schools, head teachers also have tasks in promoting the professional development and support staff including the learning achievement of students (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990).

Bunyamani (2003) offered similar portrayal for headteachers in Thailand. He asserts the critical roles of administrators in basic education consist of four main components including; a) academic administration, b) financial management, c) staff and personnel administration, and d) general administration. In terms of academic administration, school leaders need to be experts in academic management, especially school curriculum and learning and teaching management. In terms of financial management, head teachers must possess leadership in financial administration, allocation, and evaluation. The roles of head teachers in terms of staff and personnel administration focus on staff and personnel policy development such as professional development, supervision, and evaluation. The last role of school administrators

emphasizes administrative affairs, information and technology affairs, community relationship, and quality assurance.

It can be concluded that it is essential to define leadership roles for school heads. Head teachers will never achieve their functions and responsibilities without understanding leadership roles. Since the functions and responsibilities of the school heads become more complex, they may have to act out their leadership roles differently depending on their values, beliefs, the nature of their organization, and the nature of the problems or changes in their organizations. These differences and variety of head teachers' roles in their day-to-day administration are discussed in the next section.

4.7 Leadership Roles of Head teachers in Ghana

In the Ghanaian educational context, specific leadership roles are required of head teachers of basic schools even though there are other leadership requirements that are expected of them. The Ministry of Education's (1994) Head teachers' Handbook reflects these roles, which is used for training head teachers of basic schools. Section 1 of the handbook describes "Managing your school", while Section 2 is concerned with "Improving the quality of learning". There are five proficiency areas under "Managing your school". These areas are:

1. managing people;
2. managing instructional time;
3. managing co-curricular activities;
4. managing learning resources; and
5. managing financial matters.

These are subsequently considered in detailed, stating further the various activities that are to be carried out under each.

Managing people. In managing people which is the staff and pupils as well as the community, the Head teachers' Handbook (1994) noted that it is a management function of the head to: (a) involving staff and pupils in his/her administration; (b) ensure disciple among pupils and teachers; (c) organize in-service training for teachers; (d) hold staff meeting regularly; (d) help staff and pupils to solve their problems; and (e) mobilize the community to participate in the school's development.

Managing instruction. In the provision of instruction, the head must: (a) plan the overall instruction time; (b) Procure syllabus and oversee schemes of work as tools for instruction; (c) make regulations about instructional time; (d) design the school time table; and (d) monitor instructional time in the classroom.

Managing co-curriculum activities. The head in collaboration with the staff carry out the follow: (a) determine the scope of co-curriculum activities; (b) schedule various activities' (c) ensure adequate supervision of all co-curriculum activities; (d) organised open days and special occasions; (e) formulate rules and regulations about all activities; (f) stress the importance of health in the school; and (g) plan the appropriate involvement of the community in these activities.

Managing learning resource. Both the head and the staff make sure they: (a) ensure efficient use, care and maintenances of all learning resources; (b) manage the school building and furniture; (c) look after the school compound; (d) establish and maintain the school library; (e) procure, store and distribute textbooks and stationery; and (f) equipment and tools.

Managing finances. Every aspect of school management depends on funds. It is therefore very crucial for the school heads to: (a) identify various sources of school funds; (b) utilize efficiently all money the school obtains; (c) keep proper financial records; and (d) demonstrate accountability in the use of funds.

The leadership roles or proficiencies in this section of the handbook can be categorized as management and administration. There are five proficiency areas identified in "Improving the quality of learning":

1. increasing school intake and attendance;
2. assessing pupil performance;
3. assessing teacher performance;
4. staff development; and
5. improving relations between school and community.

The roles in this section two can be categorized as leadership behaviour. The second source is the Ghana Education Service (GES) appraisal instrument that specifies the leadership roles required of head teachers of basic schools. Head teachers are appraised on:

1. management activities;
2. instructional supervision;
3. staff development;
4. record keeping;
5. relationship with the community; and
6. communication skills.

With the inception of decentralization education, decision-making power is transferred from the headquarters, to the local level, to the individual school. The school thus becomes the basic decision-making unit, which means more skills and knowledge are needed by the heads of the schools.

In summary, the roles of head teachers as stated earlier shows clear that their roles are numerous and complicated. One should therefore be skilful enough to be able to carry them out successful. Considering the literature on head teacher preparation this is lacking, which implies that heads would be having challenges. One needs effective leadership strategies to achieve success in his/her leadership roles.

4.8 Leadership Challenges of Head teachers

The roles of the school administrators as considered complicated, it becomes imperative on the other hand to highlight the new challenges with a view to getting our educational administrators prepared. It has been argued that the modern-day challenge of the superintendence is to manage all the various national, state, and local pressures for improving school performance while

working with the local school board, central office administrators, and school staff to develop the most effective schools possible (Cunninghan & Cordeiro, 2004). Educational leaders are faced with a myriad amount of political, social, and economic pressures to deal with the everyday realities of public education. These realities include inadequacy of educational financing, compliance with state/federal mandates, assessment and testing requirements, accountability, educational programming, curriculum, aging/inadequate school facilities, administrator and school board relationships and community relations. Further demands faced by 21st century leaders in education in the moral/social realm include dealing with irate parents, consolidation, student drug use, violence, bullying, and sexual harassment to name a few. These demands create real problems for schools and school leaders (Quick & Normore, 2004). In some cases, the nature of these issues and related problems appears to be unresolvable. The issues facing educators and their related problems are always surrounded by controversy, therefore, personal, group, and organizational conflict are inevitable (Norton, 2005).

Many of the problems encountered in school systems and other organizations are due to the mere fact that humans are human, schools are people, and school problems largely are people problems (Norton, 2005). In complex societies, creating and sustaining a vital public school system is a tall order. It cannot be done without a dedicated, highly competent teaching force, working together for the continuous improvement of the schools. One cannot get skilled teachers working in harmony without leaders at all levels guiding and supporting the process (Fullan, 2003).

Most agreed that increased focus on school leadership preparation was important. Schools have as their fundamental purpose the promotion of student learning and development. While it is true that student learning is dependent upon a variety of factors, it is also true that effective leadership preparation for school and district level administrators (i.e., preparation that ensures leaders are able to provide high quality learning experiences for all children and to meet the current and changing needs of their school communities) is critical.

Four leadership responsibilities have been consistently identified as improving learning outcomes:

1. Supporting, evaluating and developing teacher quality;
2. Supporting goal-setting, assessment and accountability (including the use of data to improve practice);
3. Enhancing strategic financial and human resource management which includes enhancing financial skills and involving leaders in recruiting their teachers;
4. Adopting a systemic approach to leadership policy and practice by encouraging collaboration with partners external to the school and by distributing leadership responsibilities (Fullan, 2003, p. 66).

These leadership responsibilities present quite a challenge to school heads.

To date, at post-primary level, there is very little tradition of head teachers evaluating teacher performance. These problems include:

(a) Poor supervision by heads; (b), Inadequate preparation and training of heads; (c) Lack of commitment on the part of heads and teachers; (d) Heads combining management with teaching

at the basic level, leaving them little or no time for management and supervision; and (e) Heads at the basic level not having sufficient authority in the discharge of their duties.

Yet, despite the threat the above problems could pose to quality education provision, little is known about the issues responsible for such problems. The studies conducted by Dadey have highlighted the problems faced by secondary school head teachers in Ghana, but Hobson, et al., (2003) argued that the problems facing head teachers are a function of many factors, including the school phase. Thus, the problems facing junior high school head teachers in Ghana and their professional development needs are an under-explored area (Kusi, 2008).

Ghana's education system, especially the basic level (pre-SHS education), faces major challenges, which have slowed down the achievement of quality educational provision in that context. These challenges are related to ineffective management of schools; poor academic preparation of teachers; and inadequate facilities, particularly workshops, laboratories and libraries (GoG, 2004). Some of these challenges form the basis of the policy priorities faced by the education system and JHSs, which include improving the quality of teaching and school leadership; efficiency in management; and increasing access to education and participation. Although these policies were formulated many years ago, little effort has been made by the government of Ghana to introduce new ones to achieve its desired educational goals, making educational change notoriously slow.

In this study therefore, efforts will be made to get the leadership challenges of the head teachers in the junior high schools and to derive possible solutions to them at the Kassena Nankana West district level.

Another research conducted in Ghana by EdQual and reported in a workshop in 2007, enumerated a number of challenges identified by the head teachers as posing hindrance in the process of accomplishing their leadership tasks. These have been summed up below:

1. Poor conditions of service
2. Inadequate school infrastructure
3. Poor attitude of District Assemblies
4. Negative attitude of G.E.S officials, towards head teachers.
5. Heavy workload of the Headteacher
6. Unprofessional attitude of some teachers
7. Misuse of instructional time
8. Inadequate supply of text books/Teaching + Learning Materials
9. Lack of preparation of scheme of work and lesson notes by teachers
10. Inadequate funding
11. Proposals are either delayed or not approved
12. Difficulty in getting resource persons to support in-service training of staff
13. Inadequately trained teachers.
14. Poor knowledge and understanding of Government policies
15. Lukewarm attitude of community to school
16. High illiteracy rate of community
17. Irregular attendance of both teachers and pupils
18. Frequent transfers of teachers
19. Non-payment of responsibility allowances.

20. Late supply of registers, teacher note books and chalk
21. Lateness/absenteeism of both teachers and pupils

Clearly the demands placed on today's educational administrators far surpass what is realistically possible for one person to manage with the existence of such challenges. McPeake (2007) reported that the average time worked by educational leaders was 60.3 hours per week. The incessant increase of the role and responsibilities of school administrators must be explored for the survival of the profession. The profession of educational administrator is very complex and multifaceted. Professional school leaders perform a job that is fragmented and varied, while being expected to remain focused on emphasizing teamwork and promoting consistent school reform (Blair and Morrow, as cited in Jeffcoat, n.d.).

To prevent these professionals from being overwhelmed by the challenges they face daily, assistance must be offered. Such assistance would help school administrators focus on their first priority, providing quality education for all students. First, this study will explore what the headteachers are doing on their own to cope with the situation. The second point will be what must be done to promote effective leadership in the schools.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive survey design. In a descriptive study, no attempt is made to change behaviour or conditions, things are measured as they are, to establish only associations between variables (Hopkins, 2000). Also, according to Gay (1992), the descriptive survey design is directed towards determining the nature of the situation as it exists at the time of the study. The descriptive function of research is heavily dependent on instrumentation for measurement and observation (Borg & Gall, 1989). Descriptive research holds a valuable place within education, because in contrast to laboratory experiments, the human nature of educational research is critical to the result. Educational environments and experiences inherently contain many extraneous variables that cannot be controlled in a realistic situation, often call for careful observation of specific life situations, and can require the collection of data from a large number of people-spread throughout a wide geographic region. It focuses on vital facts about people and their beliefs, opinions, attitude, motivation and behaviours and simply describes and provides understanding of a phenomenon.

A disadvantage of this design is that, it is not generally capable of testing specific hypothesis. The design often represents a step of intermediate scientific sophistication by which semi-crude relationship among phenomena is explored. Secondly, even though qualitative surveys investigate phenomena in their natural setting, there are no controls as in the experimental research approach. This lack of control precludes the definitive test of hypotheses.

5.1 Population

The population of interest was head teachers of all Junior High schools in the Kassena Nankana West District. There were 34 Junior High school head teachers, six of whom were females and 28 males. They had headship experiences ranging between 20 and 30 years and above.

5.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

There were 34 public Junior High schools in the District. This implies that there are also 34 head teachers. Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970, as cited in Sarantakos. 1997, P. 163) recommended a sample sizes for a given population of 35, as 32. Considering population for this study which was 34 based on the 2010/2011 academic year, using this recommended sample, 32 sample size would have been appropriate, but bearing in mind the possibility of not achieving 100% returns, the researcher decided to include the whole population which was 34. The sample size, therefore, was 34. A purposive sampling procedure was used to include all the 34 Junior High schools in Kassena Nankana West District and head teachers in the schools.

5.3 Research Instrument

The main data collection instrument for the study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to ascertain the junior high school head teachers leadership challenges and how these practices in their schools, contribute to the current standards of education in the Kassena Nankana West District. The questionnaire was primarily an attitudinal one and therefore used the Likert-type scale format for most of the items. The Likert-type scale places people's answers on an attitude continuum (Gay, 1992). The items in the questionnaire were divided into four sections. Section A of the questionnaire solicited the participants' demographical information, Section B had items that required information on the preparatory stages of appointment of head teachers. Section C required information on the roles of head teachers; Section D was based on challenges head teachers of junior high school faces in performing their roles. The researcher used questionnaire because, it facilitated data-gathering from a high percentage of the head teachers in the schools.

5.4 Pilot Testing of Research Instrument

To assess the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it was pilot-tested using a sample of Junior High school head teachers in Kassena Nankana East district in the Upper East Region who were not part of the study sample. This district had features just as that of Kassena Nankana West district. They were both deprived districts. The return rate of the questionnaires for the pilot-testing was 86% representing 30 which were used to clarify the research questions and identified more specific issues of concern to head teachers for the main study. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire using the Cronbach Alpha, was .831 of the 66 items in the questionnaire.

5.5 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to all the head teachers of Junior High schools in the Kassena Nankana West District, after permission was sought from the District Director of Education. The instrument was personally administered to the head teachers at different days and time in the district. To ensure a high return rate of the questionnaire, the questionnaires were distributed to all the head teachers concern in their various schools. Each respondent was given the questionnaire to respond and return it on same day. This made it possible for the 100% retrieval rate. In all, the researcher spent one week in the district distributing and retrieving the questionnaires because some of the areas were hard to reach.

5.6 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics namely frequency, percentages, means and standard deviations were used for data analysis.

6.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to find out the leadership roles and challenges of head teachers in Junior High Schools in the Kassena Nankana West District.

Research Question 1: What preparatory stages do head teachers go through for appointment in the Kassena Nankana West District?

Research Question 1 sought to find out the preparation head teachers go through before their appointment. Percentages, frequencies and standard deviations were used for the analysis. The responses from respondents have been analysed in Table 1. These activities are being considered individually, because of the individual role they each play in the head teachers' effectiveness.

Table 1: Preparation Headteachers go through Before and After their Appointment

Preparation	Ratings				Total		
	SA	A	D	SD			
	4	3	2	1			
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	Mean	S
Appointed through interview	7(20)	2(6)	20(58)	5(15)	34(100)	2.4	.98
Initial leadership training	4(12)	5(15)	15(44)	10(29)	34(100)	2.1	.97
Orientation on the job	6(18)	15(44)	10(29)	3(9)	34(100)	2.7	.87
Induction on the job	2(5)	4(12)	24(71)	4(12)	34(100)	2.1	.69
In-service training covers needs and context	4(12)	15(44)	12(35)	3(9)	34(100)	2.6	.82

Source: Field Survey data, (2024).

On the issue of appointment through interview, the findings suggest that, 25(74%) of the respondents were not appointed through an interview. Twenty-five of the respondents representing 74% stated that they were appointed by dent of seniority and/or after completing a degree programme in any field. This supports Bush and Oduro's (2006) assertion that two approaches are used by the GES directors to appoint head teachers in Ghana. The first step is appointment through direct posting, which involves appointing newly-trained teachers to lead schools, especially in the rural areas. The second strategy is appointment through selection interviews, which is largely associated with the appointment of urban school head teachers. However, in this district the first step was practically used in most cases.

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Table 1 further indicates that, 15(44%) disagreed and 10(29%) strongly disagreed to have been given initial leadership training before they took over their headship roles. The absence of pre-service training makes many head teachers struggle, especially when they assume office. Such training will provide them with the competences required for the position. Because of the absence of pre-service training, new head teachers lose confidence in themselves, leading to frustration. As Bezzina (2001) noted, PRESET aims to provide participants with opportunities to analyse situations and formulate strategies for tackling administrative and management problems in education.

Also, on induction, the findings support the views expressed by Oduro and MacBeath (2003) that despite the usefulness of induction programmes for head teachers, they have received little or no attention in most developing countries, including Ghana as 24(71%) disagreed and 4(12%) strongly disagreed.. Moreover, there is no evidence of formal induction programme for newly appointed headteachers (GoG, 2002; Bush & Oduro, 2006). Therefore, they are left to either 'sink or swim' (Weindling, as cited in Kusi, 2008) on their appointment.

Apart from the orientation on job and In-service training covers needs, and context that recorded 21(62%) and 19(56%) out of the 34 head teachers that agree and strongly agree respectively, the rest of the other indicators as noted earlier, had 7(20%) or less agreeing, with any of the statements. The mean rating which ranges from 2.1 to 2.6 further indicates that, these activities were inadequately provided. This finding corroborates the assertion that in Ghana and some other developing countries, no formal qualification and PRESET are required for headship post; long-serving and experienced teachers are normally appointed to such posts (Bush & Oduro, 2006).

In general, what goes on in the district is contrary to the assertion by Oduro (2003) that, with the implementation of the educational reforms and the introduction of the FCUBE programme in Ghana, the roles and responsibilities of headteachers in the educational context has increased, therefore, head teachers need to be trained to enable them to acquire requisite knowledge, skills and competences so that they can cope with the challenges brought by these changes. It is essential therefore, that beginners as well as practicing head teachers are well prepared, with appropriate and relevant administrative and leadership knowledge, skills and attitudes to face the practical demands and challenges of the role that they perform in the schools. (Lahui-Ako, 2001).

Research Question 2: What leadership roles do head teachers play in running Junior High schools in the Kassena Nankana West District?

Research Question 2 sought the views of head teachers on the roles they played based on the demands on the head teachers' handbook (MOE, 1994). These views have been categorised into four major indicators for the purpose of this study, such as; managing people, managing co-curricular activities, managing learning resources, and managing financial matters. Each of these has activities attacked to it that the heads must carry out. The head teachers were expected to express their opinion in a Likert-type scale questionnaire, as to whether they carry out such activities. Table 2 presents the analysis of data which were analysed using percentages, frequencies and standard deviations.

Table 2: Activities Involved in Managing People in the Schools

Roles	Ratings				Total		
	SA	A	D	SD			
	4	3	2	1			
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	Mean	S
Involving staff and pupils in administration	17(50)	16(47)	1(3)	-	34(100)	3.5	.56
Ensuring discipline among pupils and teachers	16(47)	18(53)	-	-	34(100)	3.5	.51
Organise in-service training for teachers	12(35)	17(50)	5(15)	-	34(100)	3.2	.69
Hold staff meeting regularly	16(47)	18(53)	-	-	34(100)	3.5	.51
Help staff and pupils solve their problems	10(29)	23(68)	-	1(3)	34(100)	3.2	.61
Mobilise the community to participate in the school's development	13(38)	19(56)	2(6)	-	34(100)	3.3	.59
Hold myself accountable for my pupils' performance	6(18)	18(53)	9(26)	1(3)	34(100)	2.8	.74

Source: Field Survey data, (2024).

It can be observed from Table 2 that, 50% of the head teachers strongly agreed and 47% agreed that it is part of their roles to involve staff and pupils in administration of the school. The findings as shown in Table 2, further indicate that, head teachers in the district carry out their role of managing people effectively as the mean rating for most activities falls between 3.2 to 3.5, except for holding themselves accountable for pupils' performance which has a mean rate of 2.8, indicating a disagreement. The data suggest that head teachers in the district perform their role as demanded of them in the head teachers' handbook of the Ghana Education Service (1994). What is worth noting is that, apart from one who strongly disagreed to helping solve pupils' problems and another on being accountable for students performance, none of the respondents disagreed strongly to any of the activities as being part of the roles they play. At least 10 of the respondents strongly agreed to carrying out these activities. However, only 6 strongly agreed to holding themselves accountable for pupils' performance, even though Kavanaugh (2005) explained that the increase in accountability impacts head teachers because they are evaluated by student performance on the state achievement tests. These heads did not consider pupils' performance as part of the accountability that they are expected to give.

6.1 Activities in Managing Co-curricular Activities

Table 3 gives the opinion of head teachers on their role as managers of co-curriculum in the schools. The head in collaboration with the staff are expected to carry out the following roles as stated in their handbook (1994); (a) determine the scope of co-curriculum activities; (b) schedule various activities; (c) ensure adequate supervision of all co-curriculum activities; (d) organised open days and special occasions; (e) formulate rules and regulations about all activities; (f) stress the importance of health in the school; and (g) plan the appropriate involvement of the community in these activities. The views of head teachers as co-curriculum managers are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Activities Involved in Managing Co-curricular Activities in the Schools

Roles	Ratings				Total		
	SA	A	D	SD			
	4	3	2	1			
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	Mean	S
Determine the scope of co-curriculum activities and schedule various activities	6(18)	24(71)	4(12)	-	34(100)	3.1	.55
Ensure adequate supervision of all co-curriculum activities	7(21)	27(79)	-	-	34(100)	3.2	.41
Organized open days and special occasions	4(12)	18(53)	12(35)	-	34(100)	2.8	.65
Formulate rules and regulations about activities	3(9)	24(71)	6(18)	1(2)	34(100)	2.9	.61
Stress the importance of health in the school	13(38)	20(59)	1(3)	-	34(100)	3.4	.54
Plan the appropriate involvement of the community in school activities	7(20)	23(68)	4(12)	-	34(100)	3.1	.57

Source: Field Survey data, (2024).

On the question of the activities involved in managing co-curricular activities in the school by head teachers, they once again gave themselves high ratings, indicating that they agree or strongly agree with most of the statements. However, on organizing open days and special occasions, 35% disagreed with it.

Notwithstanding, the views expressed by these heads in Table 3 indicate that, majority of the respondents agreed that they performed their leadership role in managing co-curriculum activities in the school. This is evident in the mean scores as it ranges from 2.9 to 3.4, showing a confirmation that head teacher performed their roles as managers of co-curriculum activities in the schools. It is not surprising, therefore, to have majority of the heads performing their roles as managers of the co-curricular activities, since it prepares students practically for the future. The normal curriculum can only go so far as to teach and educate students about academic theories. Students, whose only experience of school is one of rigid academic study, may not be able to apply what they have learned in practice. So, if the co-curriculum is given an equal footing in student life, there will be an improvement in the student ability to grasp things as a whole, because students will have received a more rounded education. Also, Tucker and Codding (2002) supported this view when they asserted that head teachers require a deeper understanding of the circumstances and the nature of an instructional system and assessments.

6.2 Activities on managing learning resources

Table 4 depicts the views express by head teachers as part of their roles in managing learning resources. Even though head teachers were aware that they were not trained for their job as heads of the school, when it came to management of the school they were up to the task as shown on Table 4.

Table 4: Activities Involved in Managing Learning Resources

Roles	Ratings				Total		
	SA	A	D	SD			
	4	3	2	1			
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	Mean	S
Ensure efficient use, care and maintenance of all learning resources	14(41)	20(59)	-	-	34(100)	3.2	.50
Manage the school building and furniture and look after the school compound	11(32)	21(62)	2(6)	-	34(100)	3.3	.57
Procure, store and distribute textbooks and stationery, and equipment and tools	12(29)	19(56)	3(9)	2(6)	34(100)	3.1	.79
Establish and maintain the school library	6(18)	16(47)	11(32)	1(3)	34(100)	2.8	.77

Source: Field Survey data, (2024).

Forty-one percent and 50% of the head teachers strongly agreed and agreed respectively that as part of managing learning they ensure efficient use, care and maintenance of all learning resources in the school. On the issue of procuring, storing and distributing textbooks, stationery, equipment and tools, 56% of the heads agreed, while 29% agreed strongly. On the other hand, 33% disagreed while the remaining 3% strongly disagreed to the fact that they establish and maintain the school library. Moreover, most of them agreed that this activity was really carried out in the schools as the mean score ranges from 3.1 to 3.3, showing that majority of the respondents agreed that they performed their leadership roles in managing learning resources as in the head teachers' handbook (MOE, 1994).

6.3 Activities involved in Managing Finances

This aspect of the study was interested in challenges faced by head teachers regarding the management of finances. Table 5 presents the head teachers' views in that regard.

Table 8: Activities involved in Managing Finances

Roles	Ratings				Total		
	SA	A	D	SD			
	4	3	2	1			
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	Mean	S
Identify various sources of school funds	4(12)	28(82)	2(6)	-	34(100)	3.1	.42
Utilize efficiently all money the school obtains	15(44)	18(53)	1(3)	-	34(100)	3.4	.56
Keep proper financial records	19(56)	15(44)	-	-	34(100)	3.6	.50
Demonstrate accountability in the use of funds	6(18)	19(56)	8(24)	1(2)	34(100)	2.9	.73

Source: Field Survey data, (2024).

From the Table 5, 12% of the heads agreed strongly in identifying various sources of school funds while majority (82%) of them agreed. Table 5 further shows that 56% of the heads strongly agreed that they keep proper financial records with the remaining 44% also agreeing. The mean score for these activities ranges from 3.1 to 3.6, showing a total agreement to these activities as regards managing the school finances. It goes to confirm that, heads perform their

role as managers of school finance as documented in the head teachers' handbook (MOE, 1994).

This is in line with Duke, Grogan, and Tucker's (2003) findings, when it came to light that to promote the challenge of accountability, leaders need to monitor student's achievement, coordinate and assist students, and supervise instructional improvement of schools. However, on this particular issue on financial documents, it was difficult for the heads to reveal them. I, however, was able to view the financial documents of 5 schools. These five schools had their financial and other documents in tacked, but once I was not a financial expert. It was difficult for me to make any proper judgment. On the contrary, there was no evidence also in any of the schools documents indicating that, they had other sources of fund to run the school aside the capitation grant.

In summary, in answering the Research Question 2 most of the heads gave themselves high rating. The mean rating puts the following indicators below the agreed rating range of 3 to 3.9. These include: holding myself accountable for my pupils' performance 2.8; organize open days and special occasions 2.8; formulating rules and regulation about activities 2.9; establish and maintain the school library 2.8 and finally demonstrate accountability in the use of funds. However, the rest of the indicators fall on mean rating ranging from 3.0 to 3.6. This corroborates the study of head teachers in Thailand by Bunyamani (2003) who put critical roles of administrators in basic education into four main components, namely: academic administration, financial management, staff and personnel administration, and general administration. It can therefore be concluded that, even though head teachers in the Kassena Nankana West District had not been, adequately trained for the job, they were able to carry out their roles as leaders effectively.

The observations made saw some heads really carrying out their roles but a good number of the heads report late to school and are always among the first to leave. It can therefore be contested that they perform their roles effectively as they claim to. However, there is no doubt that, they had challenges as none of the roles mentioned, scored a higher mean rating of 4 which would mean that they strongly performed such roles.

Research Question 3: What leadership challenges are head teachers facing in the administration of Junior High Schools in the Kassena Nankana West District?

Research Question 3 sought to find out leadership challenges that head teachers faced as they carry out their day-to-day headship roles. Frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Leadership Challenges of Junior High School Headteachers

Challenges	Ratings				Total	
	SA	A	D	SD		
	4	3	2	1		
					Mean	S
		N(%)				

	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)			
Poor conditions of service	27(79)	7(21)	-	-	34(100)	3.8	.41
Inadequate school infrastructure	19(56)	13(38)	2(6)	-	34(100)	3.5	.62
Poor attitude of district assemblies	4(12)	18(53)	10(29)	2(6)	34(100)	2.7	.76
Negative attitude of G.E.S officials towards headteachers	7(21)	17(50)	7(21)	3(8)	34(100)	2.8	.87
Heavy workload	21(62)	12(35)	1(3)	-	34(100)	3.6	.66
Unprofessional attitude of some teachers	12(35)	19(56)	2(6)	1(3)	34(100)	3.2	.70
Misuse of instructional time	7(21)	20(59)	7(20)	-	34(100)	3.0	.65
Inadequate supply of text books and TLMs	24(71)	8(23)	1(3)	1(3)	34(100)	3.6	.70
Lack of preparation of scheme of work and lesson notes by teachers	3(9)	(26)	16(47)	6(18)	34(100)	2.3	.86
Inadequate funding	14(41)	17(50)	2(6)	1(3)	34(100)	3.3	.72
Proposal (SPIP) are delayed	10(29)	19(56)	4(12)	1(3)	34(100)	3.1	73
Proposal (SPIP) are not approved	7(21)	12(35)	11(32)	4(12)	34(100)	2.7	.95
Difficulty in getting resource persons to support in-service training of staff	10(29)	12(36)	11(32)	1(3)	34(100)	2.9	.87
Inadequate trained teachers	10(29)	22(65)	2(6)	-	34(100)	3.24	.55
Poor knowledge and understanding of government policies	12(35)	17(50)	3(9)	2(6)	34(100)	3.2	.82
Lukewarm attitude of community to school	9(26)	19(56)	5(15)	1(3)	34(100)	3.1	.74

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Lateness and Irregular attendance of both teachers and pupils	13(38)	9(27)	8(24)	4(11)	34(100)	2.9	1.1
Non-payment of responsibility allowances	16(47)	15(44)	1(3)	2(6)	34(100)	3.3	.81
Late supply of registers, teachers note books and chalk	12(35)	17(50)	2(6)	3(9)	34(100)	3.1	.88

Source: Field Survey data, (2024).

Table 6, shows the views of head teacher with regard to the challenges they faced as heads of junior high schools. Almost all the respondents agreed that, these challenges are there. However, 33.3% and 66.7% of the respondents disagreed and disagreed strongly that poor attitude of District Assemblies and lack of preparation of scheme of work and lesson notes by teachers respectively, were challenges they experienced. Similar percentages also disagreed to issues of proposal of SPIP not approved and difficulty in getting resource person to support in-service training of staff as serious challenges to their work.

These findings support the study conducted by Harber and Davies (2002) that, head teachers are faced with numerous challenges. It is also in line with the GoG (2002) findings. The GoG asserts that Ghana's education system, especially the basic level (pre-SHS education), faces major challenges, which have slowed down the achievement of quality educational provision in that context and these challenges are related to ineffective management of schools; poor academic preparation of teachers; and inadequate facilities, particularly workshops, laboratories and libraries. Another study conducted in Ghana by Edoual (2007) enumerated most of these challenges as facing head teachers in the northern part of the country. However, the findings in this study have revealed that, lack of preparation of schemes of work and lesson notes by teachers was not posing much challenge to their work as was the case in the educational study. As many as, 65% of the head teachers disagreed that it posed a challenge to their work.

6.4 Summary of Key findings

The following findings were obtained:

1. Head teachers were not properly prepared before and after their appointments.

2. It emerged from the study that head teachers' were generally satisfied with the performance of their roles and responsibilities, though these responsibilities were considered to be numerous.

3. Head teachers faced lots of challenges which made it difficult for them to manage the schools well. The study revealed some particular challenges that affected head teachers. Most prominent among these were: performing administrative work and teaching at the same time; inadequate infrastructure; lack of offices for heads and store rooms; late payment of capitation grant; late submission of teaching lesson notes for vetting; misuse of instructional time; lack

of teachers accommodation; indiscipline among students; non-payment of responsibility allowance and lack of motivation.

4. The heads of the junior high schools did not face challenges relating to preparation of scheme of work and lesson notes.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

1. On the basis of these findings, it can be concluded that the preparedness of head teachers for their headship roles was inadequate. Also, it was revealed from the study that, heads were appointed by dint of seniority and/or experience meant that sometimes head teachers who were appointed through this procedure held lower academic and professional qualification/s than some of their teachers. This could make it difficult for such head teachers to manage teachers who were better qualified than themselves.

2. It emerged from the study that head teachers' role and responsibilities were complex and multiple. It can, therefore, be concluded that, head teachers of junior high school surveyed had numerous challenges.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The procedures employed by Ghana Education Service in appointing head teachers should be reviewed and clearly defined procedures be followed in appointing professionals with relevant knowledge and experience as head teachers and not merely those who have achieved academic success or are in the system for long years. A more appropriate approach to achieving this appears to begin with job advertisement, highlighting job and person specifications followed by selection interviewing to determine the candidates' suitability for the positions.

2. As noted already, the study suggested that the workload for headship is great. Efforts must be made by Ghana Education Service to reduce the burden of head teachers by employing teaching assistants to support head teachers in preparation for lessons and to take minutes for them when they attend meetings. Operationalising in this context can be complicated for a head teachers' role without being equally remunerated. Therefore, it is the recommendation that the pay structure and responsibility allowances of head teachers should be reviewed by policy makers to align them with other professionals of the same status. This has the potential to motivate them.

3. The government and GES should supply teaching and learning resources before the beginning of the academic year. Where they anticipate any delay in the supply of these resources, they should give the capitation grants to head teachers on time and mandate them to use a component of it (the capitation grant) to acquire the relevant resources to avoid interruptions in teaching and learning.

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