

IDENTIFYING MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT TRAINING NEEDS OF PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL HEADS IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

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Abstract

This research study aimed to identify the Management Development Training (MDT) needs of public Senior High School (SHS) heads in the Central Region of Ghana. The study used a mixed methods approach to collect data via questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The findings revealed that SHS heads needed MDT in various areas, including ICT, financial management, academic management, and human resource management. The study recommends conducting a detailed needs assessment before providing any MDT to ensure that it positively impacts the performance of school heads. The study also outlines best practices for addressing MDT needs for SHS heads, and it reviews past studies on MDT needs assessment. Theoretical frameworks utilized in the study include Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) and Scientific Management Theory (SMT). The lack of effective MDT for school heads in developing countries is highlighted, and the study aims to contribute to the development of alternative strategies for effective MDT implementation. The results of the study provide insight into the future development of MDT programs for SHS heads in Ghana.

INTRODUCTION

Quality management is evident where there is a continuous process indicative of the ability to plan, organise, direct, and control workers and diverse other resources in achieving the predetermined goals of the company/firm (Jones & George, 2018, p. 5). Management can therefore be explained as involving efficiently and effectively working towards achieving organisational goals; integrating different streams of work; and making sure that the proper resources function in a manner which is planned, organised, and controlled.

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Khan et al. (2015, p. 1) affirm that the essence of management lies in the optimal use of resources. Deriving the best from available resource, is a management process. It therefore stands to reason that a competent and well-qualified manager is needed to effectively run an organisation like secondary school. This can be ensured through management development training (MDT) of heads. The management of any educational institution – as it seeks to effect change, growth and development in the life of the organisation – can be facilitated by MDT (Kalpana, as cited in Yadav, 2014, p. 1). MDT is both systematic and developmental, and are effective for improving managers' cerebral and emotional abilities (Bohlander & Snell, 2010, p. 306). Rao (2010, p. 218) comprehensively captures MDT as a strategy of learning and growth in which manager increase their conceptual and analytical ability to manage by imparting knowledge, changing attitudes, or enhancing skills in a planned, Ordered, and ongoing manner. It is the outcome of both academic and informal education, as well as on-the-job experience. Its goal is to improve managers' performance by providing them with stimuli.

MDT could thus be described as a strategic procedure for growth and development by which managers mature their managerial competencies. The ultimate objective of MDT is to facilitate and develop school heads' conceptual and analytical abilities, skillsets and attitudes needed to improve their managerial performance (Rao, 2010, p. 218). Thus, MDT can enhance leadership, management and supervisory capabilities to plan, structure, lead and steer an institution and its staff. There is no doubt that most training programmes don't bring out the desired results due to the lack of or inadequate management development training needs assessment (MDTNA). MDTNA, according to Beardwell and Holden (as cited in Altarawneh & Aseery, 2016), seeks to describe the gap between actual and desired levels of performance.

In countries such as Hungary, Lithuania and Slovenia MDT are mandatory prior to becoming a head. Candidates must, for example, train in school management (Balansikat & Gerhard, as cited in Suaka & Kuranchie, 2018, p. 34) and also complete work experience. However, in Africa, the development of school heads is often lacking or informal in nature (Bush & Oduro, as cited in Wekhuyi, 2014, p. 3).

Contextually, the Ghana Education Service (GES), especially at the pre-tertiary level (basic- & secondary school) appoints heads from among the teachers' cohort (Donkoh, 2015, p. 11; Zame et al., 2008, p. 35). Since school heads are key to the development of schools, educational quality and standards is primarily dependent on the effectiveness of their managerial abilities (Aluko & Adan, 2015, p. 107; Ibukun et al., as cited in Suaka & Kuranchie, 2018, p. 35). Ghana also has no well-established and mandatory MDTs for heads to complete prior to their appointment. Though some inservice training exist for both heads and teachers once appointed to managerial positions (Bush & Oduro, 2006, p. 359; MoE, 2018a). Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (cited in Bouchamma et al., 2014, p. 19) contend that to distinguish between the roles of school heads and that of teachers, separate and specialised MDT is required. This does not imply that a head with MDT is more professional than a teacher – it merely offers a distinction between their respective roles.

In spite of the importance of their roles, most school heads in developing countries; like Ghana, are not being prepared (MDT) or appointed in an effective manner (Bush & Oduro, cited in Suaka & Kuranchie, 2018, p. 35; Lumby et. al., 2008, p. 85). Also, despite a succession of in-service training for SHSs heads, their performance remains poor, a sign of improper needs assessment procedure, and its effect on teachers' performance. Although several studies have been conducted relating to MDT (Donkoh, 2015; Suaka & Kuranchie, 2018) little research has been undertaken – to the best of the researchers' knowledge–on the MDT needs of SHS heads. Further, previous studies analysed data in either qualitative or quantitative method, no mixed methods study has focused specifically on MDT for public SHSs heads. Therefore, this paper seeks to assess MDT needs of public SHS heads in Ghana. The study's objective was to assess the management development training needs of public SHSs heads in the Central Region of Ghana and to suggest alternative strategies to make MDT effective at improving heads' managerial duties in SHSs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MDT needs assessment of SHSs heads

Management development training needs assessment (MDTNA) is described as an investigation carried out to determine the nature of performance issues with a view to determine the underlying causes thereof and the best method to address such causes through training. Needs assessment is the most important stage in determining MDT requirements. The assessment process involves three dimensions: determining organisational needs, tasks, and personal needs.

Hussian and Zamair (2011, p. 27) asked their study respondents of their managerial training needs, they reported needing financial, curriculum, office, teacher, and human resource management (HRM) training. Also, when SHS heads in a study by Nasreen and Odhiambo (2018, p. 257) were asked about the areas in which they would benefit from formal professional training, they prioritised leading school learning, developing organisational vision, serving as instructional leaders, managing school operations, and engaging parents and the community. Given these findings, it appears that official training programmes should primarily prepare heads to serve as instructional leaders and manage school operations. Training must also help them establish organisational vision, and allow them to engage parents and the community in the overall development of the school (Nasreen & Odhiambo, 2018, p. 257).

The main competencies of a professional school manager– in terms of specific skills– are related to communication and networking, psychosocial encounters, computer skills, management and coordination, assessment, and administration (Tusa et al., 2013). As Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) opine, where the professional development of heads is the goal, any training should extend beyond conferences and workshops, and should drill down into the details of curriculum and instruction, as well as include human resource-based activities such as cohort visits, peer observation, and study groups.

Specifically, a study conducted in Kenya by Makori and Onderi (2013) on the assessment of secondary school training needs, discovered that school heads require training in micro-competencies, such as how to motivate teachers and staff, communicate better, maintain sound public relations, exercise scrupulous financial management, plan and coordinate pedagogical endeavours, undertake curriculum and instructional evaluation, and develop staff (both in teaching and administrative). These skills are deemed to enable heads to better supervise teaching and learning in their respective schools. All in all, management training needs like ICT, financial management, academic management, and HRM were identified. And these are all needed to efficiently and effectively run schools and influence teachers' performance. Strategies to improve heads' MDT needs is discussed next.

Strategies/best practices to improve school heads' MDT needs

Several strategies in respect to MDT needs for heads can be identified. First is the use of technology or computer-based training. Many organisations use technology as a training platform allowing for training to be delivered from a variety of locations, both near and far. In this sense, information technology serves to improve and assist educational and learning processes (Sarwar et al., 2011, p. 45). Three vital roles of new technologies are identified: helping heads to envisage a new relationship with the market; enabling information sharing via the internet; and practicing e-management by doing research and organising teacher training (Rivoltella, 2014).

Induction/orientation training can also be used to improve MDT needs for heads. New workers receive induction training to not only help them understand the organisation's operations and ideals, but to also understand the difficulties it faces. It further aids new employees in overcoming the anxiety that comes with learning a new functional responsibility. Bush (2008, p. 100) however, warns that there is a scarcity of material on the induction of heads in poor nations, because no or few institutional programmes are in place. This is due to the fact that, in Africa, school heads are frequently promoted without proper preparation, necessitating the implementation of a well-structured introductory training programme (Mapolisa et al., 2014, p. 1).

Another strategy for improving school heads' MDT needs is coaching. This is a training method in which an experienced superior guides and trains subordinates. This might be as simple as the trainees observing the

supervisor supervisor showing them the ropes step by step (Ayalew, 2017, p. 17; Dessler & Varkkey, 2010). Coaching as a strategy works successfully if both the coach and the coachee are open up and communicate effectively.

Mentoring is closely related to coaching, and also used to deliver MDT needs as a type of training in which senior and junior employees form a long-term professional relationship. As Dessler and Varkkey (2010) note, such training focuses on attitudinal development and is usually aimed at employees in management positions. Needs assessment is a useful practice offering a tool for identifying an organisation's skills, knowledge, and talent base. It typically involves organisational, personal, and task analyses and aids in identifying areas where training programmes can most effectively be implemented and with the greatest impact (Dahiya & Jha, as cited in Kassie, 2017, p. 17). The next discussion is on theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Taylor's Scientific Management Theory (SMT) (Taylor as cited in Bush, 2007). Taylor realised that workers in organisations were not looked at or considered as human beings with distinct needs, abilities, and interests, and sought to change that perception. Maduakolam (2016, p. 5) asserts that SMT seeks to maximise workplace efficiency and productivity through the standardisation of labour. SMT is supported by Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) (Lamb, 2013, p. 9), because the most significant aspect in achieving changes in school performance, is school leadership (Ihsani et al., 2020). TLT was first proposed by Burns (1978) and believed that leadership theories that was in use up until the mid-1970s lacked ethical/moral components which led him to developed his exchange theory. His theory holds that followers play a significant role in defining leadership. Transformational leaders are not only self-sufficient, inspiring and optimistic, but they are also moral, visionary change catalyst who are devoted to their work (Arokiasamy, 2018, p. 27; Burns, 1978). S/he is charming, inspirational, compassionate and intellectually curious (Bass, 1985). Four major conceptual dimensions associated with such leaders are inspirational motivation; idealised influence; individualised consideration; and intellectual stimulation—the four I's (Ihsani et al., 2020; Northouse, 2016). According to Squires (2001, p. 4) and Sandrome (as cited in Kayiwa, 2011, p. 10) the most important purpose of both the manager and the organisation should be to train and develop each individual; such that s/he may complete even the most challenging job to the best of his/her abilities. These theories were selected because they advocated the training of staff for better performance (Taylor, 1911), thus will promote effective MDTNA of SHS heads.

METHODOLOGY

The research method was guided by the positivist paradigm (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 5); and aligns with the mixed methods approach (MMA) (Brown et al., as cited in Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Pragmatism as a research philosophy holds that a researcher should not be fixated on only one method to solve a problem, but rather use all approaches available to get to the bottom of a problem (Keleman & Rumen, 2008, p. 72).

Mixed methods approach (MMA) was adopted for this study as it was deemed best able to address the complexity of MDT needs for school heads on their performance. This approach of inquiry is to ensure that the findings reflect a breadth and depth of understanding (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), of the chain of evidence that connects the MDTNA for SHSs heads in Central region of Ghana and can be corroborated. Mixed methods sequential explanatory design was used for data collection, involving the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 39).

The study's population 680, drawn from Effutu municipality, Awutu-Senya West and Gomoa East districts, and comprised all SHS heads, teachers and GES office staff in Ghana's central region. A sample size of 290 participants was deemed manageable, and the sites could be reached within the study's time frame (Bryman, 2015, p. 229). 280 public SHS teachers were sampled by means of simple random selection-providing avenue for every member of the group to have fair and equal chance of being selected (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p. 242). Also, three DTOs were sampled using the census technique (Lavraka, 2008, p. 2). Finally, seven SHS heads were

purposively sampled from the SHSs based on their proficiency and knowledge of the phenomenon of interest (Alvi, 2016, p. 176).

280 SHS teachers were administered the structured questionnaires. Before that, the questionnaire was pilot-tested in the Awutu-Senya East municipality. The researchers believe the heads and teachers in that district share similar characteristics with those in the districts sampled for the larger study, so the researchers could fine-tune the instrument. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaires of Strongly Agree (SA=5), Agree (A=4), Undecided (U=3) Disagree (D=2), Strongly Disagree (SD=1) were used to gather data. Also, three DTOs and seven heads which is the second group answered semi-structured face to face interview questions with sampling done qualitatively.

The researcher obtained permission and ethical clearance certificate from the GES offices and UNISA respectively to conduct the research. Finally, documentary analysis was used to supplement the literature review and back the study findings. To establish accountability and consistency, the researcher used document analysis to confirm what was said during the interviews and what was derived from the questionnaire data.

The quantitative and qualitative data sets were analysed separately: first the quantitative data were gathered and analysed, then the same was done to the qualitative data, with a view to explaining the quantitative findings. The two data sets were merged and interpretation. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 137). The completed questionnaires by SHS teachers were analysed quantitatively in 3 phases. First, data were entered into Microsoft Excel software; next, data were analysed using SPSS version 24.0; and finally, analysed descriptive data were displayed in charts, frequency and percentage tables. To examine the relationships between the research variables, inferential statistics such as t-tests, Univariate, ANOVA, Cronbach's alpha, and correlation tests were used. Descriptive analysis aided the researchers in drawing conclusions about the phenomenon under study by critically probing the numerical data.

Using the thematic approach, transcribed data were distilled into themes by coding and condensing the codes (School heads: SH1-SH7 & District training officers: DTO1-DTO3), before debating them (Creswell, 2009). The results from the field interviews were classified according to sub-themes in MDT, developed from the literature, and these corresponded to themes revealed by the study through questionnaires. The sixstep process: (1) familiarisation, (2) coding, (3) generating, (4) reviewing, (5) defining and naming those themes, and (6) writing up the findings with some modifications was followed (Caulfield, 2019). Covid-19 safety protocols were followed in data collection.

RESULTS

Exploratory and demographic data analysis

Table 1 Summary statistics on respondent attributes (n = 280)

Variable	Group	Frequency	%
	Male	151	53.9
	Female	129	46.1
	Total	280	100
Gender	Master's	80	28.6
	First degree	161	57.5
	PGDE	33	11.8
	HND	6	2.1
	Total	280	100
Education	1–5 yrs	23	8.2
	6–10 yrs	73	26.1
	11–15 yrs	101	36.1
	15+ yrs	83	29.6
Nature of MDT	Total	280	100

Forms of MDT	On-the-job training	70	25
	Off-the-job training	34	12.1
	In-service training	155	55.4
	Further studies	21	7.5
	Total	280	100
	Seminars & workshops	122	43.6
	School-based INSET	113	40.4
	Training on personal/career development	41	14.6
	Coaching/mentoring	4	1.4
	Total	280	100

Source: Questionnaire data, 2020

As indicated in Table 1, 54 per cent (n = 151) of the respondents were men, and 46 per cent (n = 129) were women. In terms of education, 28.6 per cent (n = 80) had a Master's degree; 58 per cent (n = 161) had a first degree; 11.8 per cent (n = 33) had a PDGE; and 2.1 per cent (n = 6) had an HND (Higher National Diploma). In terms of experience, eight per cent (n = 23) had worked 1–5 years; 26 per cent (n = 73) 6–10 years; 36 per cent (n = 101) 11–15 years, and 30 per cent (n = 83) 15+ years.

In addition, 25 per cent (n = 70) had received on-the-job training (OJT); and 12 per cent (n = 34) off-the-job training (OFJT); 55 per cent (n = 155) had received in-service training, and eight per cent (n = 21) had completed further studies. Clearly, MDT in Ghana consists mainly of in-service training. Finally, 44 per cent (n = 122) of the respondents had attended seminars and workshops; 40 per cent (n = 113) had received school-based in-service training; 15 per cent (n = 41) had received training on personal career development, and one per cent (n = 4) had received coaching and mentoring. Hence, seminars and workshops, as well as school-based in-service training, were the dominant forms of MDT. Table 2 shows the summary statistics of the MDT needs of SHS heads.

Results analysis

Quantitative analysis

Table 2

Summary statistics on the MDT needs of SHS heads

Variable	Mean	SD
Budgeting and resource mobilisation for improving school programmes	4.31	0.73
The procedure of getting funds and other financial assistance.	4.12	0.80
The procedure of maintaining records, income, expenditures, etc.	4.38	0.66
Financial management	12.81	1.48
Supervising and evaluating teachers' teaching methods.	4.37	0.67
Involvement of teachers in the development of a planned approach.	4.23	0.76
Providing professional guidance in solving staff conflicts.	4.20	0.77
Assigning subjects to teachers, according to their qualifications.	4.26	0.81
Academic management	17.05	1.75
The school head does a needs assessment and analysis before employing new staff.	4.06	0.85
Performance appraisal of teaching and non-teaching staff.	4.26	0.74
Motivating the staff for professional and career development.	4.34	0.66
In-service or induction training of staff.	4.48	0.56
HRM	17.14	1.65
Mentoring/coaching of "would-be" school heads ...	4.22	0.85
Attending school heads' (CHASS) annual conferences.	4.41	0.64

Electronic school management or reading management journals. 4.10 0.96

MDT strategies **12.73** **1.49**

Note: Financial management, Academic management, and HRM are the domains of performance.

Source: Questionnaire data, 2020

In Table 2 all items produced mean scores close to 5, suggesting that the MDT needs of SHS heads, in terms of performance, were generally high. “Procedure of maintaining of records, income, expenditures, etc.” (Mean = 4.38; SD = 0.66) produced the highest mean score, followed by “Budgeting and resource mobilisation for improving school” (Mean = 4.31; SD = 0.73). “Financial management” produced a mean score of 13 (Mean = 12.81; SD = 1.48), which represents 85 per cent of the maximum scale score of 15.

In terms of academic management, “Supervising and evaluating teachers’ teaching methods” produced the highest mean score (Mean = 4.37; SD = 0.67), followed by “Assigning subjects to teachers, according to their qualifications” (Mean = 4.26; SD = 0.81). “Academic management” produced a mean score of 17 (Mean = 17.05; SD = 1.75), representing 86 per cent of the maximum scale score of 20. In terms of HRM, “In-service or induction training of staff” produced the highest mean score (Mean = 4.48; SD = 0.56), followed by “Motivating the staff for professional and career development” (Mean = 4.34; SD = 0.66).

HRM produced an overall mean score of 17 (Mean = 17.14; SD = 1.65), which represents 86 per cent of the maximum scale score of 20. For MDT strategies,

“Attending school heads’ (CHASS) annual conferences” accounted for the highest mean score (Mean = 4.41; SD = 0.64) followed by “Mentoring/coaching of ‘would-be’ heads by experienced heads” (Mean = 4.22; SD = 0.85). “MDT strategies” produced a mean score of 13 (Mean = 12.73; SD = 1.49), which represents 85 per cent of the maximum scale score of 15.

These statistics indicate that all the variables- performance and classroom management of SHS teachers in the table improved and their ability to plan and deliver lessons were better. Table 4 displays the descriptive statistics used to examine the data distribution. The Shapiro-Wilk test (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965), which is commonly used to determine whether data are normally distributed, is also shown in the table.

Table 3

Univariate assessment of normality of the data

Variable	Mean		SD	Skewness		Kurtosis		Shapiro-Wilk's test	
	Stats	SE		Stats	SE	Stats	SE	Stats	P
On-the-job training	12.25	0.09	1.56	-0.61	0.15	0.85	0.29	0.94	0.054
Off-the-job training	11.58	0.10	1.74	-0.12	0.15	-0.73	0.29	0.96	0.321
Further studies/Education	8.10	0.08	1.38	-0.44	0.15	-0.30	0.29	0.92	0.099
SHS association training	7.83	0.09	1.44	-0.30	0.15	-0.28	0.29	0.93	0.111
Financial management	12.81	0.09	1.48	-0.53	0.15	0.22	0.29	0.93	0.209
Academic management	17.05	0.10	1.75	-0.88	0.15	1.02	0.29	0.92	0.191
HRM	17.14	0.10	1.65	-0.32	0.15	0.33	0.29	0.95	0.244

Note: HRM – human resources management; MDT – management development training; SD – standard deviation; Stats – statistics.

Source: Questionnaire data, 2020

In Table 3 skewness and kurtosis are statistics used to evaluate the data distribution. These investigations are a way of building the foundation for the subsequent research, because parametric statistical tools such as linear

regression analysis require normally distributed data. The normality of the data is assessed in two phases, using the results in Table 3.

During the first stage, skewness and kurtosis values are compared with a global standard, whereas the non-significance of the Shapiro-Wilk's test is ascertained in the second stage. According to Garson (2012), skewness and kurtosis are satisfactory when their statistics are less than 3 or greater than -3. This condition was met by each variable, as shown in Table 3. As a result, the data were roughly normally distributed. Checking whether the Shapiro-Wilk's test is non-significant for each variable, is a more certain technique to assess the normality of data (Garson, 2012). This criterion was likewise met by all variables, as is evident in Table 3, with the p-values of each variable fulfilling the criterion $p \geq 0.05$. Data generated in the study was normally distributed. As a result, a foundation for using parametric statistical techniques was established. Nonetheless, the validity and reliability of the measurements used in this study also had to be established. Qualitative analysis is discussed next.

Qualitative analysis

MDT needs of SHS heads

The data analysis revealed the different types of MDT which heads reported needing, on-the-job training aimed at improving heads' HR management skills. This serves as the basis for assess the performance and needs of students and teachers, and to compare actual performance to expected performance. HR-focused training should be structured to satisfy the demands of assistant heads and substantive heads, as indicated by the following comment:

"On-the-job training on how to manage school resources, is required. More management training on how we can effectively handle our human resources such as staff and student[s], to produce desired results. This training should start with 'would-be' heads, assistant heads and substantive heads, on the [job]. This will help to equip us for the work of management."

(SH2)

The school heads reported lacking basic skills in accounting, auditing, and budgeting – key areas affecting the performance of leaders in SHSs. That confirms the imperative for school heads to receive training in these job-related tasks. Some school heads noted that an institutional leader should not merely have elementary accounting and auditing skills, but must also demonstrate high-level expertise in these areas, as reflected in this comment:

"We need frequent management training on principles of general management, budgeting, and preparation of school accounts."

What's school management without a strong hold on these areas, as the head?" (SH5).

Strategies to improve school heads' managerial performance

One of the strategies that can be adopted to ensure that MDT boosts the performance of school heads, is needs assessment, to understand what skillsets they require, to fulfil their mandate and ensure effective teacher performance (Dahiya & Jha, as cited in Kassie, 2017, p. 17). Needs assessment of MDT is helps to meet the specific needs of school heads as stated below:

"To improve management training programmes and to make heads perform better, first, there must be thorough needs assessment. [It] should be conducted to ascertain the kind of skillsets training required [by] heads. Also, proper adult training and methodologies should be used to engage [trainees] in actual issues [related to] school and academic management. When these strategies are used in conducting MDT, it will impact positively on the performance of SHS heads." (DTO2).

Inductive training was also identified as a potential way of improving heads performance through MDT needs assessment. This approach should be backed with regular follow-ups by trainers on participants, to monitor their

progress after a training session will be great. No doubt trainees struggle to put into practice what they were taught during training, hence follow-ups. This is how one participant captured it:

“The different strategies that could be used to make MDT effective for training school heads, are induction training and regular follow-up of MDT programmes. The induction training will help to expose the new school heads to the job and best practices. Followups to track the progress and the effectiveness of MDTs for heads [are needed].” (SH4)

To support the interview data discussion, we now turn to the document analysis.

Document analysis

The document review showed that the Ghanaian educational review committee (MoEYS, 2007, p. 35) recommends that “persons appointed to positions of responsibility at all levels of school management should be academically and professionally qualified and should receive training in management and administration”. Implying that, while a great deal is expected of persons desiring to become school heads, they should also be appropriately equipped to exercise their duties.

The ESP (2018–2030) (MoE, 2017) document reviewed also showed that education system has a strategic goal and policy objectives as: improved equitable access to and participation in, inclusive education at all levels; a better quality of teaching and learning, and the promotion of STEM across all levels; and educational service delivery which is more efficient and sustainable, and speaks of better management and greater accountability. These measures ensure that heads and teachers perform at their best. In summary, the documents reviewed were mainly INSET-related, rather MDT.

Discussion of the research results is next

Discussions

Quantitative results

MDT needs of school heads

The findings revealed a need for more specific training in ICT, financial management, academic management, HRM and MDT strategies, if heads are to efficiently and effectively run a school, and boost the performance of their respective cohorts of teachers.

The statistical analysis of the MDT needs of SHS heads (Table 2) revealed that all items produced mean scores close to 5 - it suggests that the targeted training needs of SHS heads were generally high, meaning they require more specialised training in areas such as financial management, academic administration, and HRM.

These results mirror those of a study conducted in Kenya by Makori and Onderi (2013), which found that secondary school heads require training in micro-competencies like motivation, communication, and public relations, financial management, planning and coordination, curriculum and instruction evaluation, and staff development. These skills enable heads to be better positioned to supervise educational activities in their respective schools. Suaka and Kuranchie (2018) found that heads were very aware of the managerial abilities they needed to effectively manage their schools, thus corroborating the results of this study.

The findings also revealed that the study participants were required to perform personnel-related services, undertake financial and business management, and build school–community relationships. To that end, the participating heads admitted required ongoing professional development, to update their knowledge and skills, to help them grow and develop professionally.

MDT strategies to improve school heads’ MDT needs

Table 2 indicates that “attending heads’ (CHASS) annual conference training” accounted for the highest mean score, followed by “mentoring/coaching of ‘would-be’ heads by experienced heads”. The “MDT strategies” result appeared to indicate that heads’ annual conference training and the use of mentoring/coaching approaches were deemed the most effective means of implementing MDT, to help heads boost the performance of their teachers.

The study also identified conduct of needs assessment to ascertain which skillsets heads require to perform their roles effectively. The literature reviewed (Altarawneh & Aseery, 2016; Kassie, 2017, p. 17) identifies a training needs assessment as a tried and tested way of ensuring that MDT is designed to meet the specific needs of heads.

Discussion of qualitative results

Implications of TLT and SMT theories school heads MDT needs

As regards the practical implications of TLT and SMT for MDT the study revealed that the participating SHSs heads did not apply any specific MDT theory in their everyday work. Most pointed out that no specific MDT theory is applicable in all circumstances, and that TLT and SMT would each suit different situations. These findings resonate with the work of Dampson and Edwards (2017), who found that transformational school heads work with their subordinates to identify what change is needed are inspired to create a vision to guide any change processes, and execute the change in collaboration with committed members of staff.

MDT needs of school heads

As indicated, the participants identified the need for more training in accounts management and improved organisational communication. This wider scope resonates with the findings of Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) who opine that professional development for heads should not merely stop with regular conference and workshop attendance— also, should benefit from collaborative cohort visits, peer observations, study groups, and other activities that create a forum for them to share what they have learnt from experience, and to collaboratively problem-solve.

Some participating heads reported that most of the training they undergo, was not new. They therefore issued a call for relevant, updated training which can teach them how to carry out their leadership duties effectively. Supporting a finding by Walpole and McKenna (2011), who reported that many principal preparation programmes only grant limited chances to heads to hone the skills they need to implement a successful overall school improvement programmes. It also links to research by Mulkeen (2007) who found that training was required for the SHS heads who felt ill-prepared to meet the demanding and challenging nature of their jobs. The results obtained from all three study sites correlated with all the heads confirming how important MDT is in terms of the trickle-down effect it has on teachers' performance.

Summary of findings (mixed results)

Both quantitative and qualitative phases of the study were connected when the participants from the former phase were selected for the latter phase. This was also achieved by finalising the interview schedule once the quantitative data analysis was complete. Prior to confirming the interview questions for the second phase the questionnaire results were reviewed to ensure that the interview questions would afford participants an opportunity to describe, in more detail, their responses to the questionnaire items.

The reliability of the qualitative findings was established as the participating heads and DTOs echoed one another's sentiments. To recall, the quantitative findings indicated that the main domains of MDT had a positive influence on teacher performance, which was supported by the qualitative findings, which detailed various ways in which such training of heads was to the benefit of teachers.

The qualitative, in-depth interviews performed during the second phase of the study allowed the participants to recount their perspectives on, and share their experiences with, the MDT offered to the public SHSs heads and the impact on their performance in Ghana's central region.

Finally, the results from the three research sites strongly correlated, which shows that the participants concurred that heads' performance benefited from the MDT needs which public SHS heads received. That implies that every benefit which a head gleans from MDT and implements in practice in his/her school automatically translates into more effective teacher performance. The study recommends detailed needs assessment should be conducted before any training. Also, the MoE should develop a comprehensive MDT policy making it compulsory for all new and practising heads to undergo MDT before and after assuming office. A more andragogical and competency

based approach must be applied in offering MDT to school heads to ensure that training is practical. The study concluded that MDT needs assessment have positive impact on school heads.

Implication to Research and Practice

The findings indicated that SHS heads needed MDT in ICT, financial management, academic management, and HRM to efficiently and effectively run schools and influence school heads performance. By implications, SHS heads needed MDT in ICT, financial management, academic management, and HRM to efficiently and effectively run schools.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the literature review and the opinions shared by the participating heads, the researcher concluded that MDT needs was strongly linked to heads performance. The interview results indicated that a thorough needs assessment is the basis for effective MDT. A targeted needs assessment is vital for effective MDT (Walton, as cited in Altarawneh, & Aseery, 2016).

Higher performance is predicted where a proper MDT needs assessment is conducted and a targeted programme is rolled out, and confirmed by Hussian and Zamair (2011, p. 27) who cited the importance of MDT which pertains to financial, curriculum, office-related, teacher-focused, and HR matters.

With regards to MDT strategies, it can be concluded that attending heads' (CHASS) yearly conferences, mentoring/coaching of 'would-be' heads by experienced heads, needs assessment, follow-ups and induction training have positive effects on school heads performance.

For SHS heads, no MDT policy is in place, and there is no framework for newly promoted and practicing SHS heads to improve their professional management skills. The lack of a defined policy that focuses primarily on heads' MDT, could hurt teachers' performance.

Future Research

Further studies should be conducted into management development training needs assessment of Public Senior High School heads on teachers' performance in Ghana.

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