Educational reform in Ghana: the leadership challenge

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Abstract

Purpose
Leadership is a key commodity in twenty-first century organizations. This is especially true for school organizations. This paper aims to respond to six questions about head teachers and leadership of basic schools.

Design/methodology/approach
Head teachers responded to survey items about proficiencies required for effective leadership and those demonstrated in practice. The Greater Accra region of Ghana was the setting and head teachers constituted the sample. A survey with a unique identifier was distributed to head teachers at their schools. Analysis was conducted using SPSS and output was translated into frequencies and percentages.

Findings
A premise of the research was that heads of basic schools lacked leadership proficiencies because of the absence of school leadership preparation programs. Heads of basic schools lack professional preparation in leadership, and practice management and administrative behaviors rather than leadership.

Practical implications
Ghana has implemented several reforms with the intent of developing a quality education system; however, there has not been a focus on leadership. The literature is clear about the vital role head teachers have in effective schools and student achievement. This research calls attention to the leadership needs of head teachers in the Ghana education system.

Originality/value
This research reveals that Ghana faces a leadership challenge related to head teachers' professional development. The results are an alert to policy makers to institute educational reform that addresses head teachers' leadership in basic schools.

Keywords
Leadership, Schools, Principals, Training, Ghana

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Vocational Technical Education; Vocational reforms; Leadership; Leadership Development; Leadership Development Programs. 1. Introduction. Vocational technical education in Ghana faces a lot of challenges as in other countries. In 2003, the Government of Ghana commissioned a body to review the general educational system for strategic planning for the year 2003-2015. The committee reported a serious deficiency in the present public educational system as the neglect of the vocational technical education sub-sector (Government of Ghana, 2003). The report stated that, the reforms introduced in 1987 ignored completely the vocational technical education sub-sector. 11. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. – This research reveals that Ghana faces a leadership challenge related to head teachers' professional development. The results are an alert to policy makers to institute educational reform that addresses head teachers' leadership in basic schools. Keywords. Leadership. You may be able to access teaching notes by logging in via Shibboleth, Open Athens or with your Emerald Account. Login. If you would like to contact us about accessing teaching notes, click the button and fill out the form. Contact us. To read the full version of this content please select one of the options below. You may be able to access this content by logging in via Shibboleth, Open Athens or with your Emerald Account. Login. Education in Ghana was mainly informal, and based on apprenticeship before the arrival of European settlers, who introduced a formal education system addressed to the elites. Pre-Independent Ghana was known as the Gold Coast. The economy of pre-colonial Gold Coast was mainly dependent on subsistence farming where farm produce was shared within households, and members of each household specialized in providing other necessities such as cooking utilities, shelter, home, clothing and furnitures. Trade Promoting Learning in Ghanaian Primary Schools: the context of leadership and gender role stereotypes. In J. MacBeath and Y.C.Chang (Eds.) Leadership for Learning; International Perspectives. Rotterdam: Sense Publications. Zame, M.Y., Hope, W.C. and Repress, T. (2008). Educational reform in Ghana: the leadership challenge. International Journal of Educational Management, 22 (2) 115-128. Educational reform in Ghana like any other parts of the world calls for the type of teacher who is highly trained, motivated, dedicated and committed to the teaching profession to effect the anticipated desirable changes among students. In the era of increasing standard and accountability in education, teacher quality and training is more important than ever. Teachers are to exhibit courage and leadership, and work collaboratively with colleagues for the benefit of students. There are a number of key events which have changed the post independence environment in which teachers teach and students learn in many African countries. With the new Educational Reform of 2007 in Ghana, the question is, how can we improve upon student learning in our schools?