



Decentralisation of Educational Management: Evidence from Ghanaian Basic Schools

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ABSTRACT

Although touted as having impacts on educational outcomes in some countries not much attention has been given to evaluating the operations of the District Oversight Committees toward implementing decentralised education management functions at the basic level of education, on a national level. The study sought to evaluate the role of DEOCs toward decentralization of school management at the basic level of Education and also identify existing challenges towards their operations. A mixed design was employed in this study. A multistage random sampling technique was used to select 408 public and private schools from 9 regions and interviews conducted with selected District directors and Headteachers from which schools are selected. It was found that the District Education Oversight Committees were sometimes involved in their roles toward Personnel management, Organization of Instruction, and in Planning and Structures. While it was found that DEOCs were particularly active in supervision and monitoring in schools they were less active in some personnel management functions as the power and means to perform such functions remained centralised. Key challenges which affected the operations on the DEOCs were financial constraints, inadequate logistics for the operations, inadequacy and delay in supply of teaching and learning materials, delays in decisions on appointments, promotions and sanctions, political interferences, poor communication, and difficulty in monitoring and supervision of school. It was recommended that there a more improved form of devolution may be needed to address some lingering challenges observed after decade of practicing educational decentralization. Again, there should be a consistent supervision of school instructions at various levels of decentralization of educational management to ensure standard is maintained.

KEY WORDS: Decentralisation, District Education Oversight Committees. (DEOC) Management, Ministry of Education (MoE), Ghana Education Service (GES) Government of Ghana (GoG)

INTRODUCTION

The old forms of delivering of public goods is experiencing changes. One of such change manifests in the provision of public services at the local or grassroots level with minimal control by the central government. This concept is termed decentralization. Decentralization is a system of governance where central administration transfers power to a local authority with

the aim of being more responsive to citizens at the grassroots, and to enhance their participation in decision-making (Barr & Reid, 2014).

Relating the concept to education, it is assumed that in order to achieve higher performance in public basic education, the local education office should be given the authority to recruit, sanction, and reward teachers instead of maintaining power at the national office of the country's Educational Ministry. It is also believed that decentralising will improve on collaboration between schools and major stakeholder which according to Sheppard and Brown (2006) will lead to strategic resourcing for schools within the districts.

Again, through the regular monitoring of district monitoring teams or oversight committees responsible for implementing decentralised function, challenges regarding the structural deficits, and issue pertaining to teacher wages, shortages of teaching and learning materials promotion, classroom teaching and assessment, and other work place conditions which are relevant for motivating teachers are identified and resolved, thus, result in improved teaching and learning in schools as outlined in (Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2008).

Although, education decentralisation efforts have been posting some positive results in some developed countries, a number of studies conducted in less developed nations seem to question the appropriateness of decentralisation in the Education system including (e.g. Sakyi, 2008; Sakyi, Awoonor-Williams, & Adzei, 2011), as these studies indicate that several challenges have bedeviled the implementation of decentralization and, thus, not had the expected positive impacts in educational quality.

For two decades now the Government of Ghana has been embarking on a decentralization of education management to districts as part of wider social and democratic governance reforms. Although this process is legally supported by the Ghana Education Service Act, 1995 (Act 506) which emphasizes a collaborative approach in which all stakeholders have spell-out roles and responsibilities in the planning process, there remains yet a number of deficits with regards to its implementation. Nolan and Hoover (2011) have hinted that there are delay in resource allocation, lack of effective supervision and delay in most decisions on appointments, promotions and sanctions (Ajarfor, 2014) as most decisions are still taken by the central government in Accra without grassroots participation. This undermines effective teaching which adversely affects the academic performance of students.

Prior studies have examined the implementation of various elements of decentralization in the school system. Studied elements of decentralisation include school management teams (Ikoya, 2008), monitoring of secondary schools (Shah 2009), fiscal responsibility and management of basic education to local governments (Zhao & Quiu, 2012). Other studies have examined child safeguarding (Baginsky, Driscoll, & Manthorpe, 2015), the internal administrative structure, the enrolment capacity, the criteria of admission and the quality assurance method in higher education in China (Mok & Han, 2016), curriculum and pedagogy (Toh, Hung, Chua, He, & Jamaludin, 2016). Other researchers including Hanushek, Link, and Woessmann (2013) have sought to investigate the appropriateness of school autonomy in different economies. The few Ghanaian research including Sakyi (2008) and Sakyi, Awoonor-Williams, and Adzei (2011) on decentralization in education based on qualitative designs have focused on themes such as challenges in implementing decentralization policies in one or two districts thus making their

finding was limited as the with regard to generalisation on a national level. Again, there is a dearth of empirical exist which specifically examine the functions of the main body mandated to implement the various aspects of educational management which have been decentralized by the Ghana Education Service Act, 1995 (Act 506).

Evaluation of educational systems are necessary for Improvement and delivery. Addressing these gaps will lead to the strategic realignment of structures and policies in order to encourage participation, and, eventually, improve coverage and quality of education.

Hence this study based on the distributed leadership model sought to address the following questions:

- To what extent are the district education oversight committees towards their roles regarding the basic schools?
- What are the mitigating factors/challenges towards the implementation of decentralization in public basic schools?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Collegial and participative leadership were popular shared approaches in the late 1900s but distributed leadership has become the normatively preferred leadership model in the 21st century. Harris (2004: 13) indicates, "Distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role". The approach which has gained popularity proposes that although there is a positional leader who has the final responsibility for overseeing educational outcomes Gronn (2010), these leaders can tap on the expertise of a group of other members within the school community. An immediate advantage of the distributed leadership according to Hartley (2010) is the burden of overworked Principal or School leaders is lessened. Evidence have shown a connection between improved schools and distributed leadership. For example, Glickman *et al.* (2001) posit that distributed leadership is a key feature of school which has improved education outcomes over time. This statement is corroborated by the finding of Hallinger and Heck (2010) which showed an association between the change in academic capacity and distributed leadership.

The theory serves as a framework for this study as it explains how distribution of leadership powers could help in improving school outcomes. The model usually discussed in relation to the best leadership approaches within individual schools lacks empirical basis. This study investigated how decentralized mechanisms in relation to educational management does affect proximal and final outcomes of student, thus extends on Distributed leadership model by providing empirical evidence to support suggested relationships.

Empirical Review

Decentralization and Educational Outcomes

The World Bank (2010), reports most countries funded have decentralized responsibilities to at least one level of lower government. The decision by many countries to subscribe to the decentralisation of schools, despite unpleasant outcomes in some countries, seem to be in line with the proposition by the World Bank (2004) and previous calls on the issue. For instance,

some authors have proposed that to increase the quantity and quality of education, there is a need to decentralize responsibility for and control of education (Tamukong, 2004), and perhaps have a wider policy environment which may not necessarily be related to decentralization (Conyers, 2007).

Osaigbovo (2013) in a review examined how decentralization of education could help improve educational delivery in Nigeria. The researcher assumed decentralising educational systems will result in effective management schools, effective use of schools' infrastructure, as well as improving on the quantity of resources available for use in school. Osaigbovo (2013) stated the need committees responsible for ensuring the implementation of decentralised function to be proactive in supervision of learning in schools of to ensure standard is maintained. Again, the research against exist drawback in implementation recommended that there was the need for timely provision of adequate resources including teaching and learning materials as these are necessary for order to improve on the quality of education.

Carr-Hill, Rolleston, Schendel and Waddington (2018) also concluded that devolution results in improved teacher attendance and reduces on school dropout. However, noted that in communities with generally low levels of education, where parents have low status relative to school personnel, school-based decision-making reforms appear to be less effective (Carr-Hill et al., 2018) This view is also shared by Hanushek, Link, and Woessmann (2013) who found that devolution had negatively affected student achievement in developing and low-performing countries.

While some studies including Sakyi (2008), Essuman and Akyeampong (2010), Sakyi et al. (2011) have examined decentralization in Ghanaian schools, these studies largely focus on challenges in the implementation of decentralization which may not be existing after a decade of implementation. Again, their findings are limited in terms of their generalizability as results are based on qualitative designs and samples selected in these studies were selected from at districts from one region in the country.

Sakyi (2008) in a qualitative study observed that transfer of authority for management decision making and planning was rarely operational at district level; and control over financial and personnel decisions remained centralized. Sakyi (2008) study also found that there was lack of staff capacity, lack of commitment and inter-organizational conflict between health managers and local government officials as factors obstructing the implementation of management decentralization in the district.

Similarly, Sakyi et al. (2011) enumerated some other challenges to include inadequate funds, lack of qualified personnel, inadequate logistics and equipment, poor interpersonal relationships, lack of transparency and a good operational system, lack of incentives to motivate the staff, political interference, poor interference, poor infrastructure and high rate of illiteracy. A major factor which could easily annul the beneficial effects of Decentralisation is when local educators are not equipped with the requisite knowledge, and skills as well as they not been motivated to accomplish their duties. The study was limited in terms of its generalisability as the study focused on few rural communities in Ghana.

In another Ghanaian study, Essuman and Akyeampong (2011) posit that local politics exist within rural community, which do influence the realisation of decentralisation policy in education in order to improve education service delivery. Their research explored the different meanings community participation had for school community stakeholders. Participants included member of PTA and schools from local schools in the Mfantseman Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. Concluded that participation by community member were low.

Effective instructional delivery and maintenance of standards in the school system are enhanced through regular internal and external supervision. Whereas principals and headteachers provide internal supervision within schools, the Education Oversight committee are mandated to provide external supervision. The primary responsibility of inspectors is to see that high standards are maintained and that schools are run in accordance with the laid down regulations. While it has been argued that the principals have been discharging their duties as internal supervisors, the external supervisor (inspectors from the Ministry of Education) appear non-functional as they seldom visit schools to monitor the operations in these schools Ayodele (2002). This has invariably hindered effective teaching-learning in schools. According to Bloom (2007) effective supervision of instruction is needed to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed design which will consist of a qualitative and quantitative stages. The population of this study includes 14405 primary schools across 216 districts in all 10 regions of Ghana (MoE, 2016). A multistage random sampling technique was used to select 408 public and private schools from 9 regions and interviews conducted with some district education directors, headteachers and some PTA representatives of the districts from which schools are selected. Three main instruments were used in capturing primary data. The instruments were (i) Headteachers Questionnaire (ii) Headteacher's and PTA Interview Guides (iii) District Directors Interview Guides.

The researcher provided a covering letter from the university of the Researcher to all schools involved in the study. The letter included the names and the address of the researcher. The introductory letter requesting access outlined in brief the purpose and type of access required so that participants were fully aware of what was required from them. These steps were necessary to establish the credibility of researcher.

The questionnaire highlighted the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality of responses which were to be provided by the respondent. Data was collected in September to November 2019. Content analysis of qualitative data will be conducted using N-VIVO. Descriptive analysis was conducted for quantitative data using SPSS.

LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Although measures were put in place to ensure that the aims of the study are met it is, however, expected that the following unavoidable limitation could influence the outcomes of the present study. It was assumed that implementation of decentralization differs across countries and even within the same country, the Governance of schools at various levels of education differ, hence the findings of this study is limited to Ghanaian basic schools and may not be generalised at all levels of education and other educations beyond the context of study.

Again, as the study employed a cross-sectional data to examine relationships, observed effects may differ when a longitudinal study is conducted, as existing challenges and roles may vary over time and could influence the responses provided. It will therefore be recommended for future study that a longitudinal study be employed in investigating impacts of decentralization on school outcomes.

Delimitations

The population of this study included pupils from Ghanaian basic school. Hence the study was delimited in terms of the population. The reason for the choice of delimitation was, leadership structure at the basic level of education is in some ways different from that of that of tertiary education system.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Sample (socio-demographics) Characteristics

Sample characteristics of parents were analysed using frequency distributions (Table 1). Analysis shows respondent largely consisted of Head Master/Mistress representing Assistant Headmaster/Mistress representing 68.9% and 23.5% of all respondent respectively. The least proportion of respondents were Directors who represented 7.6% of all respondent. Results in table 1 also show that most respondent had worked in the current school for at least a year (85.6 %),

Table 1: Sample Demographic of Respondent

School Type		
Private	144	35.3
Public	264	64.7
Total	408	100.0
Your Position in the School		
Head Master/Mistress	281	68.9
Director	31	7.6
Assistant Headmaster/Mistress	96	23.5
Total	408	100.0
For how long have you worked in this capacity in your current school		
Less than a year	58	14.2
1-2years	74	18.1
More than 2 years	275	67.4
Total	407	99.8
System	1	.2
	408	100.0

Reliability Testing

The reliability of survey items was evaluated using the Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The estimate Cronbach's co-efficient Alpha (α) values for all construct all constructs are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Internal Consistence measures and the number of measurement items

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
DOEC Roles	.796	12

Result as shown in table 2 show an acceptable value for measures the Cronbach's Alpha = 0.796 exceeded the minimum threshold of coefficient of 0.75 (Borg & Gall, 1983). Thus, implying reliable and valid research instrument.

How involved are District Education Oversight Committees in Personnel management, Organization of Instruction, Planning and Structures in Basic Schools?

The researcher elicited the views of school heads regarding the functions of DEOC as they have experience in their district. A multiple response analysis was employed to analyse school heads views as responses provided were open ended and respondents provided more than one role. Table 3 presents results from the multiple response analysis.

Table 3: Multiple Response Analysis on District Education Oversight Committee Roles

	Responses		
	N	Percent	Percent of Cases
Providing Feedback and Recommendation	3	1.3%	1.5%
Recruitment of Staff	3	1.3%	1.5%
Environment	1	.4%	.5%
Supervision and Monitoring Teaching	57	25.6%	29.4%
Visitation	8	3.6%	4.1%
Supply of textbooks	5	2.2%	2.6%
Training of Teachers	20	9.0%	10.3%
Provision of TLMS	5	2.2%	2.6%
Infrastructure	12	5.4%	6.2%
Implemented assessment systems	15	6.7%	7.7%
Assessment of Student Performance	25	11.2%	12.9%
Appraise teacher performance	23	10.3%	11.9%
Rewards for Teachers and Students	15	6.7%	7.7%
Extra classes	13	5.8%	6.7%
Complaints	8	3.6%	4.1%
Discipline	10	4.5%	5.2%
Total	223	100.0%	114.9%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

It is observed from table 3 that the most dominant role of District Education Oversight committee was Supervision and Monitoring Teaching in schools. This was evident in the fact that 25.6% of all responses provided by respondents (57 out of 223).

It is also observed that DEOCs were also engage in the (Appraise teacher performance (10.3%) and the Training of Teachers (9.0%). The results above suggest that DEOCs were actively involved in personnel management and Organization of Instruction in schools. Some

headmasters responded during interviews “[There is] routine monitoring and evaluation of teachers during school hours” and “[They] monitor teaching, learning, administrative Interacting with teachers and giving them advice on how to improve teaching and learning”.

Results in table 3 again reveal that DEOCs were also engaged in also engage in the Organization of instruction as they ensured the Assessment of Student Performance (11.2%) and also Implemented assessment systems (6.7%) like the conduction of common district mock examinations.

The results above suggest that DEOCs were also engaged in also engaged in Planning and Structures. Results in table 3 indicated that DEOC were committed to ensuring that some Infrastructural need were met for schools 5.4%. For example, some responses provided by headteachers are as follows: “[They] Help in finding decent Accommodation for teachers” and “The DEOC has facilitated the supply of computers to the school to improve ICT lessons”

Next the researcher sought to evaluate the proactiveness of DOEC toward all three functions of educational management. Headteachers rated various roles of their District Education Oversight Committees, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 – Always involved to 1 – Not involved. Summaries on measurement items for each construct are presented in terms of the mean and standard deviation as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Headteachers appraisal of Education Oversight Committee Activities

	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic
Personnel Management		
Involved in the recruitment of qualified teachers for schools	2.84	1.356
Supervise regular and punctual attendance of teachers and students at schools	3.55	1.114
Monitor the moral behaviour of staffs and students and matters relating to general disciple	3.54	1.138
Take disciplinary action or make recommendation on staffs who are found to act unprofessional.	3.55	1.178
Proper performance assessment of staff in schools	3.39	1.112
Address complaints relating to or from teachers, non-teaching staff and students	3.36	1.202
Determine provision of in-service training for teachers and school heads	3.42	1.110
Make recommendations on the rewards promotion, wage adjustment etc. for teachers and school heads	2.96	1.115
Average	3.33	1.17
Organization of Instruction		
Ensure the supply of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to schools	3.21	1.111
Performance assessment used by teachers and schools are appropriate	3.51	1.138
Average	3.36	1.12
Planning and Structures		
Concerned with the conditions of school buildings and other infrastructural requirements of schools	3.35	1.188
Ensure environmental cleanliness of schools and facilities therein	3.50	1.211
Average	3.42	1.20

Results in table 4 suggest that headteachers of basic schools generally were of the view that the Education Oversight committee in their district were sometimes (mean = 3.33, SD = 1.17) involved in the personnel management of staff in schools.

With regard to specific personnel management measures, the mean response on *Supervise regular and punctual attendance of teachers and students at schools* (mean = 3.55, SD = 1.114), *monitor the moral behaviour of staffs and students and matters relating to general discipline* (mean = 3.54, SD = 1.138), *take disciplinary action or make recommendation on staffs who are found to act unprofessional* (mean = 3.55, SD = 1.178), exceeded the general average rating for all Personnel management items. The results suggest that with regard to these three personnel management activities headteachers believed that the Education Oversight committee in their district were often involved. The large values of the standard deviation suggest that though headteacher believed that DEOC were often involved there were substantial amount of variation in their views.

Result for remaining four activities suggest that headteachers believed that the Education Oversight committee in their district were sometimes involved. These

activities include *Address complaints relating to or from teachers, non-teaching staff and students* (mean = 3.29, Std = 1.264), *Determine provision of in-service training for teachers and school heads* (mean = 3.26, Std = 1.165), *Make recommendations on the rewards promotion, wage adjustment etc. for teachers and school heads* (mean = 3.07, Std = 1.250), proper performance assessment of staff in schools (mean = 3.39, SD = 1.112), *Address complaints relating to or from teachers, non-teaching staff and students* (mean = 3.36, SD = 1.202), *Determine provision of in-service training for teachers and school heads* (mean = 3.42, SD = 1.110), *make recommendations on the rewards promotion, wage adjustment etc. for teachers and school heads* (mean = 2.96, SD = 1.115), with the least rating observed for item *Involved in the recruitment of qualified teachers for schools* (mean = 2.84, Std = 1.356).

With regard to Organization of Instruction results in Table 4 suggest that headteachers of basic schools suggest that whereas the Education Oversight committee in their district were often involved in the ensuring *Performance assessment used in schools are appropriate* (mean = 3.51, Std = 1.014), the DEOC were only sometimes involved in *Ensure the supply of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to schools* (mean = 3.21, Std = 1.111).

Some headmasters responded “[There is] routine monitoring and evaluation of teachers during school hours” and “[They] Monitor teaching, learning, administrative Interacting with teachers and giving them advice on how to improve teaching and learning”.

With regard to Planning and Structures results in Table 4 suggest that headteachers of basic schools were of the view that whereas the Education Oversight committee in their district were often *Ensure environmental cleanliness of schools and facilities therein* (mean = 3.50, SD = 1.211), they were sometimes *concerned with the conditions of school buildings and other infrastructural requirements of schools* (mean = 3.35, SD = 1.188). The results above suggest that DEOCs were also engaged in also engaged in Planning and Structures. Results in table 3 indicated that DEOC were committed to ensuring that some Infrastructural need were met for schools 5.4%. These results are supported by headteacher views during interviews. Some responses provided by

headteachers during interview as follows: “[They] help in finding decent Accommodation for teachers” and “The DEOC has facilitated the supply of computers to the school to improve ICT lessons”

Challenges in the Implementation of decentralization

In telephone interviews with four (4) district directors also responded on the main challenges affecting the operations of your oversight committees. From the views most dominant challenge affecting their operation was the Financial constraints (100%), Logistics constraints (75%), delay in the implementations taking Decisions taking at their level (100%), Irregular meetings (25%), Non-commitment of some members (50%), Lack of motivation (50%).

The perspective of headteachers were also solicited regarding the challenges with the DEOC operations in their districts. A multiple response analysis of responses as outlined by headteachers are presented in table 5

Table 5: Multiple response analysis of School Heads views on challenges of DOC

	N	Percent	Percent of Cases
Support for infrastructure	34	13.8%	16.2%
Poor roads hinder monitoring and supervision of school	3	1.2%	1.4%
Poor communication	6	2.4%	2.9%
Untrained and Limited human resources	11	4.5%	5.2%
Lack of financial support	73	29.7%	34.8%
Inadequate logistics	35	14.2%	16.7%
Poor Infrastructure in school	13	5.3%	6.2%
Delay in supply Textbooks	31	12.6%	14.8%
Delay in decisions appointments etc.	24	9.8%	11.4%
Political interference	13	5.3%	6.2%
Disagreement teachers and DEOC	3	1.2%	1.4%
	246	100.0%	117.1%

Results in in table 5 reveal that the leading challenge as outlined by headteachers was the lack of financial support for implementation. This view accounted for 29.7% of all responses provided by headteachers. Some Headteachers explained that one reason for the lack of funds was cancelation of levies which they collected. This view supports views of District directors. Again, headteachers noted that there was generally lack of financial support for improving on school infrastructure. Some commented that *school structure were in poor condition*.

Some comments from headteachers are outline as below:

“Financially, they are not independent and they have to rely on regional and national offices”

“There is delay in supply of fiscal and material resources. Also there are attempts by some political party sympathizers/ actors to intimidate personnel or influence policy implementation creates needles hurdles ”

The second leading challenge as outlined by headteachers, relates to the Inadequacy in logistics for the operations of DIOC within their districts (14.2%). Headteachers also pointed out that there is limited support for infrastructure (13.8%) needed by the DIOC for their operations, Again, issues regarding the inadequacy and delay in supply of text books to various schools (12.6%), delays in decisions on appointments, promotions and sanctions (9.8%) and Political interference on the DIOC operations (5.3%), were enumerated.

Some comments from headteachers are outline as below:

"It is very difficult to get support from district such as infrastructure, ICT tools, etc."

"There are delay in salary payment and the incentives"

"The system is very bureaucratic therefore there are delays in implementation"

Head teachers also noted that there were some members of the DIOC who were not well trained and hence were not very effective with their operations (4.5%), Infrastructure deficits within the schools (5.3%). Other issues outline by headteachers were the poor communication or delay of relevant information to some schools (2.4%). disagreement between teachers and DIOC (1.2%), Difficulty in monitoring and supervision of school due to poor roads (1.2%).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following finding emerged based on both quantitative and qualitative data:

- The study found that Education Oversight committees were sometimes involved in the Organization of Instruction and Planning and Structures and personnel management of staff in schools.
- Headteachers laid emphasis on active engagement of DIOC in Supervising regular and punctual attendance of teachers and students at schools, Monitoring the moral behaviour of staffs and students and matters relating to general discipline
- Ensuring the Assessment of Student Performance (11.2%), Appraise teacher performance (10.3%) and the Training of Teachers (9.0%). and also Implemented assessment systems (6.7%) like the conduction of common district mock examinations.

Some challenges were enumerated during the study to include:

- Financial constraints, Inadequate logistics for the operations, limited support for infrastructure, inadequacy and delay in supply of TLMs, delays in decisions on appointments, promotions and sanctions,

Theoretical Implications of Research Findings

The finding of the study implies that to some degree were actively in their roles toward educational management. Specific emphasis was made regarding the activeness of DIOC toward the toward Organization of Instruction within schools as both headteachers, District directors confirmed that were very involved in supervision and monitoring teaching in schools. The findings do not only have theoretical Implications but gives suggestion for practice and policy. The finding of the study is in line with distributed leadership theory as it shows that a number of management activities are carried out at the district level although there the final responsibility for overseeing educational outcomes is still centralised (Ajarfor, 2014). Harris (2004: 13) indicates by engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization in meeting out the set-out targets of the organization there is a distributed leadership. An immediate advantage of the distributed leadership according to Hartley (2010) is the burden

of overworked Principal or School leaders is lessened. Decentralising educational systems to the district level allows schools to operate as open systems which allow for collaboration between schools and major stakeholder which according to Sheppard and Brown (2006). Such collaboration will not only lead to strategic resourcing for schools but also help in bringing school to focus on relevant thing. Through the improvement of facilities and proper planning teachers are also motivated to improve on assessment and delivery of instruction which is directly related to the students learning in school

Again, as found in this study decentralisation leads to effective supervision of both teacher and pupil attendance which according to headteacher keep the teachers on their toes as they to deliver in schools.

In the interview with headteacher indicated that DOEC also assist to getting accommodation for posted teachers to the community. Issues relating to accommodation and other infrastructural deficits of some rural school have been said in literature to discourage some posted teachers to rural communities. Fadipe (2003) posited that teachers, apart from students, are the largest most crucial inputs of an educational system. They influence to a great extent the quality of the educational output.

The most role District Education Oversight committee engaged in from table 4.5 is Supervision and monitoring in schools. The finding of study indicates that there have been some improvement school monitoring and personnel management. Nolan and Hoover (2011) who posit that, lack of effective supervision especially in government schools, which is seriously undermining effective teaching and have had adverse effects on the academic performance of students. Again, the finding generally contradicts Bloom (2007) who posit that external supervisor (inspectors from the Ministry of Education) appear non-functional as they seldom visit schools to monitor the operations in these schools which According to Bloom (2007) has hindered effective teaching-learning in schools.

Among least involved roles were Involvement in the recruitment of qualified teachers for schools, Make recommendations on the rewards promotion, wage adjustment etc. for teachers and school heads, and ensure the supply of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to schools. This observation is because aspect of education systems including teacher recruitment, promotions, supply of textbooks still remain centralised, and for this reason there are sometimes delay in the execution of these functions. This observation was made by Sakyi (2008) over a decade ago. This outcomes are also outline by Nolan and Hoover (2011) who posit that, lack of effective supervision especially in government schools, and delay in most decisions on appointments, promotions and sanctions Teachers' irregular promotion, low pay package (when compared to other public workers), societal perception of the job and many more have dampened the morale of teachers. When teachers are not motivated, their level of job commitment may be low and the objectives of the school may not be accomplished Fadipe (2003).

In line with Osaigbovo (2013) suggest that to achieve true decentralisation all decisions pertaining to teacher recruitment, remuneration, training and rewards should be taken at the local level. However, Prinsen and Titeca (2008), Sayed and Soudien (2005) have cautioned however that Decentralisation certain decision of power are decentralised it can cause

overlapping and conflicting decisions citing that conflicting teacher recruitment policies entailing different types of service contracts and benefits in In Nepal. In Uganda and South Africa, the decentralised funds are driven by local elite interests and dominated by a small group of better educated and networked individuals who are capable of presenting themselves to the donors, central government and the local population as an effective conduit for handling these funds. Consequently, the poor and disadvantaged groups are neglected or excluded (Prinsen & Titeca, 2008; Sayed & Soudien, 2005).

CONCLUSION

There is little doubt that decentralization of educational management leads to active engagement of external supervision of classroom instruction, motoring of behavioural issues of teacher, motivating teachers, timely identification of structural and logistical deficits of schools, allow for the engagement of other stakeholders in improving on the quality of education at the basic level. As there remains a limitation regard key decision on personnel management and financial issues, in line with Ajarfor (Nov, 2014), the researcher recommends that devolving of Ghanaian education system could help in addressing challenges experienced over the decades in the practice of decentralization. However careful planning and recruitment of well trained and experienced personnel will be needed in ensuring effective implementation, especially when decision making and financial systems are devolved in order to avoid the negative effects experience in other developing countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Recommendations to Ministry of Education

As regards to the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to the Ministry of Education so as to improve the effective implementation of decentralization of educational management at the district level:

- Effective supervision is very important for effective teaching that leads to student performance from external (National Inspectorate) to the school level.
- There is the need to harmonise Ghana Education Service and Education Act 556 (1998) and 778 (2008) respectively to avoid existing conflict for effective decentralization of Public Basic Schools in Ghana.

Recommendations to DEOCs

As regards to the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to improve the effective implementation of decentralization of educational management at the district level:

- To achieve true and effective decentralization in Public Basic Schools, major decisions like financial and personnel issues must be taken at District level as contained in Ghana Education Service and Education Acts 1998 and 2008 respectively.
- The work of DEOC is very important for effective decentralization at the basic school level but the study identified serious logical challenges which hinders their functions as spelled out in both Acts. It recommended that various Assemblies must take the work of DEOC seriously and make resources available for their effective role in the management of Basic School.

- To make Assemblies take their work serious the government must include how DEOC function in the districts in the annual Functional Assessment Functional Tool (FOAT).

Recommendations to Schools

As regards to the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to improve the effective implementation of decentralisation of educational management at the school level.

- Regular in-service training for teachers at local level is very relevant for professional development which enhances effective teaching and students' academic performance.
- Parents and Community leaders and all other major stakeholders in education must be encouraged to improve infrastructure and take active part in school management through advocacy and orientation for them to appreciate the full benefits of school-based involvement to their wards.
- Headteachers must be motivated to monitor and enforce discipline at school level and be encouraged to practice distributed leadership in schools.

Recommendation for future Research

- To address part of limitation of this study Cross-country research using Methodology of this study is recommended for generalisation for future policy formulation
- Decentralisation and the role of parents to quality education in public basic schools.
- Decentralisation of education management and its effect on urban, peri-urban and deprived community schools' performance.
- Finally, as the study employed a cross-sectional data to examine relationships, observed effects may differ when a longitudinal study is conducted. It is therefore recommended for future study that a longitudinal study be employed in investigating impacts of decentralization on school outcomes.

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