

# Headteachers Effectiveness in the Context of School Leadership: Perspective of Basic School Headteachers in Tamale Metropolis, Ghana

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Received: February 20, 2025   Accepted: March 21, 2025   Published: May 9, 2025

doi:10.5296/ije.v17i2.22663   URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v17i2.22663>

## Abstract

The effectiveness of headteachers is a critical determinant of school success, particularly in Ghana's basic educational system. This study examined the dynamics of school leadership within basic schools in the Tamale Metropolis, stressing how headteachers' leadership practices impact school performance, teacher motivation, and student outcomes. Employing a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaire administration from a sample size of 136 headteacher respondents who were surveyed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in analyzing the data. The findings showed that all twelve (12) considered predictors collectively accounted for a modest 96.8% of the variance observed in the leadership effectiveness of headteachers ( $f(7.522) = 336.035$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The study further found that the headteachers functioned with a participatory democratic leadership model because they involved the teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents, and community stakeholders in their administration and leadership.

**Keywords:** effectiveness, school leadership, basic school, school performance, student outcome

## 1. Introduction

Naturally, all school heads concurrently perform leadership, management, and administrative tasks. Regardless of how these tasks are performed, there is a difficulty differentiating one from the other. In an attempt to clarify the difference, Dimmock (2003) states that higher-order tasks designed to improve staff, learner, and school performance are tasks of leadership while routine maintenance of present operations qualified as management. For Dimmock, the lower-order duties represent chores of administration. From another perspective of unfolding the difference between the concepts, Ackoff (1998) opines that administration has to deal with directing others in carrying out the will of a third-party using means selected by the same party while management consists of directing others in pursuit of ends using same means both of which have been selected by the manager (Ackoff, 1998).

The discussions above may suggest that improving learning and teaching in schools, which is a higher-order task is a collective responsibility of school stakeholders: headteacher, teachers, pupils or learners, the Education Directorate (Ghana Education Service - GES), parents, and the school community leaders. The ability of the headteacher to carry along all these critical stakeholders in pursuance of the broader vision of the school will determine the effectiveness of the headteacher as a school leader. School leaders are expected to nurture school surroundings that encourage participation, sharing of ideas, and the virtues of honesty, openness, flexibility, and compassion. The headship tasks, in many circumstances, encapsulate administrative, management, and leadership activities. During planning, decision-making, and problem-solving, the headteacher has to choose the goals and objectives of the school, bearing in mind the available human, material, and financial resources and selecting the means and processes to achieve them.

To successfully achieve the goals of the school, one must plan effectively. As for decision-making, the procedure involves understanding and analysis of the present state of school difficulties, and then selecting among practical substitute resolutions. A collaborative decision-making model where the various key stakeholders' perspectives are acknowledged is recommended (Nikolaros, 2015). The know-how of problem-solving involves the recognition that something is not working well in a unit. For the school, an effort should be made to acknowledge the cause of it by the membership. Once the causes are well-known, a resolution can then be implemented to rescue the situation. The leadership of the school, precisely the headteacher, should ensure that adequate preparations are made to have the requisite staff in place so that staff deficiencies do not emerge. Headteachers need the collaborative involvement of the teaching staff when it comes to planning, decision-making and problem-solving. They thus perform social influencing roles and there is leadership at multiple stages in the school as well.

In performing these interrelated activities, headteachers are expected to endure as supportive leaders and approve ways that address school needs. By urging individuals to pursue collective objectives and satisfying staff and learner needs and expectations with meaningful returns, the followership is motivated to work up to the vision and mission of the school and value rewards. Some writers perceive leadership, management, and administrative activities as skills while

others retain them as deeds (Abdul-Kadiri, 2009; Boachie-Mensah, 2000). If headteachers engage in these interrelated activities at the right time and with the appropriate skills of social influencing, team building, coaching, and mentorship in handling human, material, and financial resources, learning and teaching should improve, and the pupils, parents, and school staff will be in a golden age of schooling.

## **2. Headteachers' Roles: Indication of Effectiveness**

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2004) identified six non-hierarchical key indicators, which when taken together, represent the roles of the headteacher. These indicators include: 1) leading learning and teaching; 2) shaping the future; 3) developing self and working with others; 4) managing the school; 5) securing accountability; and 6) strengthening community participation. Whilst particular knowledge and professional qualities are assigned to one of the six key areas, it is important to highlight that they are interdependent, complementing one another in the activities of the headteacher (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2004: 4). These six key roles are discussed in what follows.

1. ***Leading learning and teaching:*** Headteachers have a central responsibility for leading learning and teaching in the school because the main purpose of schooling is to inculcate socially acceptable traits in the learners. They lead because they are considered to be the most experienced and qualified teachers, supervising the work of subordinate teaching staff and providing professional guidance in the school as well as being the eye of the school to the outside world. This means that they have to set higher expectations for pupils and at the same time monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning outcomes within time bounds through reviews of classroom practices and promote improvement strategies.

2. ***Shaping the future:*** The headteacher has to work with the governing body and other stakeholders (religious and/or funding units) to create a shared vision and a strategic plan for the school. The strategic planning process which is critical to sustaining school improvement should ensure that the school moves forward for the benefit of its pupils. Moreover, the headteacher is to ensure that the necessary values and actions enshrined in the vision of the school are clearly articulated, shared, understood, and acted upon effectively by all stakeholders. This vision should express core educational values and moral purposes and should be inclusive of stakeholders' values and beliefs because it is when their inputs are factored in that they can assist in rallying support for its success and demonstrate ownership. The headteacher has to ensure that in shaping the future of the school, the strategic plan takes account of the diverse values and experiences of the school and the community at large.

3. ***Professional self-development and collaborations.*** Effective communication and relationships are important in headship because headteachers work with and through others. Effective headteachers handle themselves and their relations well. Through performance handling and effective continuing professional development practice, the headteacher becomes a super leader, supporting all staff to achieve higher standards. Equipping themselves with the capacity to deal with the complexity of their roles with a range of leadership skills and actions

required means that headteachers are committed to their own continuing professional development (CPD). The headteacher must ensure that effective planning, resource allocation, and evaluation of works undertaken by teams and individuals are in place. There is also the need for a regular review of own practice of handling own workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work and life balance.

4. ***Management of the school as an organization:*** The headteacher needs to ensure that the school is handled and organized effectively by improving the organizational structures and functions of all those involved in leadership and their followership based on strenuous self-evaluation systems put in place. Managing the school as an organization means that the headteacher ensures that the human, material, and financial resources within the school are organized and fixed to provide an effective safe learning environment. These responsibilities imply the re-examination of the roles and activities of those working in the school to build capacity across the workforce and ensure that resources are deployed to achieve value for money in a more prioritized manner.

5. ***Security accountability:*** Headteachers have a responsibility to the whole school community. In carrying out this responsibility, headteachers are accountable to a wide range of groups, particularly pupils, parents, the GES, and the school community. They are accountable for ensuring that pupils enjoy and benefit from a high-quality education, for promoting collective responsibility within the whole school community; and to the Ghana Education Service (GES) more extensively. The headteacher is legally and contractually accountable to the governing body for the school, its environment, and all its work. Therefore, fulfilling commitments to the governing body and developing the school philosophy which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understand issues, celebrate success, and accept responsibility for outcomes are vital factors to this role. The headteacher has to ensure that staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood, and agreed upon to enable them to achieve their respective targets.

6. ***Strengthening school-community relations:*** Schools exist in an idiosyncratic social context, which has a direct bearing on what happens inside the school. School leadership and more precisely the headteacher should pledge engagement with the internal and external school community to secure equity and entitlement. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to collaborate with other school heads to share expertise and bring positive benefits to their own and other schools. Headteachers should work collaboratively at both strategic and operational levels with parents and stakeholders for the well-being of all learners.

Dean (1990) used several other case studies that relate to learners' attainment and their general growth to buttress and endorse the factors associated with leadership effectiveness to include: 1) focused leadership by the head; 2) participation of the other teachers; 3) consistency amongst teachers and pupils; 4) a positive school working environment; 5) communication and consistency across levels; 6) structured and limited forms within sessions; 7) record-keeping duties; and 8) parental involvement. The establishment of these factors in schools does not make up a formula for effective leadership; but rather, constitutes a structure in which other numerous stakeholders and partners in the life of the school can be increasingly functional. If

all the stakeholders and partners such as the headteacher, teaching staff, parents, and learners participate positively, the result will be effective schooling. It is also observed that purposeful leadership is confirmed by the prominence of monitoring pupils' progression through individual pupil records' keeping (UR-CE, 2018).

The value of teaching naturally is central to endorsing the learning progress and development of pupils. The stage of communiqué, giving feedback on assignments of pupils and creating a contest for pupils to brainstorm and innovate suggests that the teacher and learners are engaged intellectually and that the pupils are capable of responding to the challenge (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). Once the class is meaningfully engaged and is closely monitored, this approach advances pupils' development.

While the various collaborating partners could contribute meaningfully to the administration and management at varied lifecycles of educational institutions especially at the basic level, the headteacher remains accountable for the achievements and disorders to the visions and aspirations, and his effectiveness is determined by his navigating roles. This explains the relevance of the participatory leadership theory which informed the study. Participatory leadership theory places a strong emphasis on the value of including stakeholders in decision-making procedures that foster ownership, inclusivity, transparency, empowerment, and cooperation (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Smylie & Hart, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1994). In the school organization, the theory suggests the creation of an inclusive and empowering environment where all stakeholders are viewed as critical contributors who subscribe to the educational process. Participatory leadership in the educational setting thus, can enable educators, learners, parents, the state, and community members to make contributions to the school's mission, guidelines, and procedures while also encouraging a feeling of community and dedication. Leadership in this regard is seen as a shared responsibility.

As in Ghana, scholarly works on headteacher effectiveness highlight the multifaceted roles headteachers play as well as areas of improvement in their leadership. Oduro and MacBeath (2003) study on leadership and supervision found that headteachers in Ghana are tasked with curriculum implementation, staff discipline, and ensuring instructional quality. Their role is central to school improvement, as effective leadership fosters a positive school environment and enhances teacher performance.

Bush and Jackson (2002) study on professional development emphasized the need for continuous professional development to equip headteachers with the necessary skills for effective school management, including supervision, financial management, and staff motivation. The study suggested that leadership development programs can directly enhance school outcomes.

Amankwah and Guo-Hua (2020) study touching on community engagement revealed that headteachers are integral in fostering community involvement in school governance, which is critical for addressing resource constraints and building accountability. However, their effectiveness in this area often depends on their ability to manage stakeholder relationships effectively.

These studies collectively underscore the important role played by the headteacher as a leader. The challenge with these works is that none holistically examined the various roles performed by headteachers which suggest their level of effectiveness. This accentuates the importance of the current study.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 The Study Area*

The study was conducted in the Tamale Metropolis, now divided into Tamale Metropolis and Sagnarigu Municipality. The metropolis, covering an area of approximately 646.9 sq. km (TAMA Report, 2014), lies between latitudes 9°16'N and 9°34'N, and longitudes 0°36'W and 0°57'W. It is bordered by Savelugu-Nanton Municipality to the north, Mion District to the east, Tolon District to the west, Kumbungu District to the northwest, and East and Central Gonja districts to the south. Politically, Tamale serves as both the metropolitan capital and the regional capital of the Northern Region (Fuseini, Yaro, & Yiran, 2017).

As of 2020, Tamale Metropolis had 609 basic schools, including 168 Junior High Schools (JHS), 277 primary schools, and 164 kindergarten and preparatory schools. These schools enrolled 139,035 pupils (70,163 boys and 68,972 girls) (Tamale Metro Directorate of Education, 2022). The teaching staff totaled 6,121 as of September 2021, comprising 50.68% males and 49.32% females. Among them, 599 (9.78%) were untrained teachers, predominantly male (6.35%). The schools were managed by 168 headteachers for JHSs and 341 for primary and kindergarten schools. Additionally, 20 circuits, supervised by School Improvement Support Officers (formerly circuit supervisors), provided support to the schools (Tamale Metro Directorate of Education, 2022).

#### *3.2 Research Design and Target Population*

The study utilized a cross-sectional design to examine the effectiveness of basic school headteachers in the study area. Respondents were selected based on their diverse leadership roles and familiarity with BECE performance over more than five years. Targeted headteachers fell into three categories: those managing only Junior High Schools (JHS), those handling both JHS and primary schools, and those overseeing JHS, primary, and kindergarten (KG) schools.

#### *3.3 Sampling Techniques*

A total of 136 out of 168 basic school headteachers with at least five years of BECE results were selected for the study using the census method. This group included 92 males and 44 females. The five-year criterion was chosen to ensure the inclusion of headteachers with extensive experience, providing comprehensive and representative insights, as recommended by Omona (2013).



**Table 1.** Summary of Headteachers Selected

Category of headteachers	Number
Headteachers of JHS Only	80
Headteachers of JHS and Primary	31
Headteachers of JHS, Primary, and KG	25
Total	136

Source: Field Survey, 2023

### *3.4 Data Collection Method*

The primary method of data collection was interviewer-administered questionnaires, which allowed researchers to confirm that the selected respondents provided the data. This approach, recommended by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), enhances data accuracy compared to distributing and collecting questionnaires.

The questionnaires were carefully designed, pretested in three circuits in Savelugu Municipality involving 15 headteachers, and validated with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.853 and 0.750, indicating high reliability (Taber, 2017). Data collection took place over three weeks in October 2022. Researchers, assisted by two trained field assistants, administered questionnaires to all 136 headteachers. Adjustments were made to accommodate rescheduled appointments, ensuring comprehensive data acquisition.

### *3.5 Method of Analyzing Data*

The survey instruments for the headteachers were edited to ensure data accuracy. According to Kumar (2019), the process of editing confirms that the data are clean and free devoid of contradictions and incompleteness. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the primary data gathered through interviewer-administered questionnaires.

### *3.6 Ethical Consideration*

Social research involving human subjects is guided by ethical principles (Wahab et al., 2020). Accordingly, permission was obtained from the Tamale Metro GES Directorate for school-community access. Respondents were informed about the study's purpose, their voluntary participation rights, and assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. To uphold these principles, no identifying information, such as names, was collected.

## **4. Results**

The concept of effectiveness encompasses various aspects such as rationale, effort, and accomplishment, and in the context of school leadership, it refers to how well headteachers

adhere to school norms and practices. Effectiveness involves performing the right actions in the right way and at the right time, with a focus on enhancing pupils' learning outcomes (Tatlah & Iqbal, 2012).

To assess headteacher effectiveness, a Likert-scale questionnaire was administered, and a regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between 12 identified variables and effectiveness. Data included raw scores, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each item. The scale was coded as follows: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Uncertain (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5). Key aspects such as social influence, coaching and mentorship, team building, multi-stage leadership processes, and stakeholder involvement were pivotal in determining the effectiveness of headteachers in their leadership roles.

**Table 2.** Leadership Effectiveness of Headteachers

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	St D
The headteacher maintains a focus on learners and creates favourable school environment	53(39)	74(54)	3(2)	1(1)	5(4)	4.29	.70
The headteacher involves the teaching staff in decision-making school performance.	29(21.3)	11(8.1)	71(52.2)	20(14.7)	5(3.7)	3.29	1.07
The headteacher keeps records to maintain discipline	34(25)	67(49.3)	14(10.3)	14(10.4)	7(5)	3.84	.98
I serve as a mentor of teachers in curriculum matters for teaching to emulate	28(20.6)	51(37.5)	31(22.8)	14(10.3)	12(8.8)	2.51	1.19
The headteacher delegates authority for the smooth implementation of policies	57(41.9)	51(37.5)	15(11)	5(3.7)	8(5.9)	4.06	1.10
The headteacher practices win-win approach to conflict resolution in the school	44(32.4)	35(25.7)	40(29.4)	13(9.6)	4(2.9)	3.75	1.10
The headteacher practices Team-building leadership	49(36)	54(39.7)	20(14.7)	11(8.1)	2(1.5)	4.00	.99
I motivate the staff and pupils to improve goal-directed behaviour	57(41.9)	43(31.6)	13(9.6)	10(7.4)	13(9.6)	3.89	1.29
There is no communication gap between teachers and school management	30(22.1)	56(41.2)	31(22.8)	14(10.3)	5(3.7)	3.68	1.05
The community is well informed of school performance (except SPAM)	61(45)	56(41)	11(8)	3(2)	5(4)	4.41	.65
School leadership is about coaching	58(42.6)	34(25)	22(16.2)	15(11)	7(5.1)	2.89	1.22
School leadership is about influencing	23(16.9)	38(27.9)	37(27.2)	29(21.3)	9(6.6)	3.27	1.17
<b>Grand mean</b>						<b>3.65</b>	<b>1.04</b>

Fieldwork 2023. Means range 0.00 – 3.64 = Respondents' disagreement concerning the statements made while 3.65 – 5.0 = Respondents agreement concerning the statements made. N=136; Number of items 12

Table 2 reveals that most participants strongly agree on the leadership effectiveness of headteachers in several key areas. Headteachers are recognized for focusing on learners, fostering a positive school environment, maintaining discipline, delegating authority, using a win-win approach to conflict resolution, building teams, motivating staff and pupils, ensuring open communication between teachers and management, and engaging the community about



school performance. These findings align with studies by Shaharbi (2010), Vilkinas and West (2011), which highlight the crucial role of headteachers in maintaining discipline, prioritizing the curriculum, and implementing collaborative decision-making. Participative and adaptive leadership styles further enhance headteacher effectiveness (Tatlah & Iqbal, 2012), though leadership behavior may vary by school type (Izgar, 2008).

**Table 3.** The Influence of Effective Leadership Practices in School Management on Leadership Effectiveness of Headteachers: A Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.985	.971	.968	.14962

#### ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	90.267	12	7.522	336.035	.000
Residual	2.731	123	.022		
Total	92.998	135			

#### Coefficient

Model	B	SE	B	T	P
(Constant)	.739	.064		11.463	.000
The headteacher maintains a focus on learners and creates a favourable school environment.	.068	.010	.111	6.513	.000
The headteacher involves the teaching staff in decision-making on school performance.	.090	.005	.314	19.388	.000
The headteacher keeps records to maintain discipline.	.116	.011	.166	10.084	.000
I serve as a mentor of teachers in curriculum matters for teachers to emulate.	.073	.005	.254	15.638	.000
The headteacher delegates authority for the smooth implementation of policies.	.096	.006	.253	15.689	.000
The headteacher practices a win-win approach to conflict resolution in the school.	.080	.003	.426	26.066	.000
The headteacher practices Team-building leadership.	.083	.003	.460	28.901	.000
In this school, I motivate the staff and pupils to improve goal-directed behaviour.	.080	.006	.202	12.427	.000
There is no communication gap between teachers and school management.	.080	.003	.374	23.287	.000
The community is well informed of school performance (e.g. SPAM).	.011	.011	.018	.973	.333
School leadership is about coaching.	.005	.011	.007	.428	.669
School leadership is about influencing.	-.012	.008	-.023	-1.404	.163

**Source: Fieldwork 2023**

However, there is notable disagreement among respondents regarding headteachers' roles in involving teaching staff in decision-making, mentoring teachers on curriculum matters, and adopting coaching and influencing styles. These areas highlight the complexity of school leadership. Huber and Muijs (2010) stress the growing importance of leadership in school-based management, while Day (2017) underscores its influence on teacher quality. Contrarily, Harris (2003) suggests that effective leadership can extend beyond headteachers to a more dispersed model within schools.

The findings suggest that while headteachers are largely seen as effective in certain domains, their leadership effectiveness in fostering decision-making and mentoring requires re-evaluation. Table 3 presents the regression analysis results linking leadership practices to headteacher effectiveness.

The findings indicated that these twelve (12) predictors collectively account for a modest 96.8% of the variance observed in the leadership effectiveness of headteachers ( $f(7.522) = 336.035, p < 0.05$ ).

## 5. Discussion

Examining the effects of each predictor, the following results were found: the headteacher maintains a focus on learners and creates a favourable school environment ( $\beta = .111, t = 6.513, p = .000$ ); the headteacher involves the teaching staff in decision-making on school performance ( $\beta = .314, t = 19.388, p = .000$ ); the headteacher keeps records to maintain discipline ( $\beta = .166, t = 10.084, p = .000$ ); the headteacher serves as a mentor of teachers in curriculum matters for teachers to emulate ( $\beta = .254, t = 15.638, p = .000$ ); the headteacher delegates authority for the smooth implementation of policies ( $\beta = .253, t = 15.689, p = .000$ ); the headteacher practices a win-win approach to conflict resolution in the school ( $\beta = .426, t = 26.066, p = .000$ ); the headteacher practices Team-building leadership ( $\beta = .460, t = 28.901, p = .000$ ); in this school, the headteacher motivate the staff and pupils to improve goal-directed behaviour ( $\beta = .202, t = 12.427, p = .000$ ); there is no communication gap between teachers and school management ( $\beta = .374, t = 23.287, p = .000$ ). All these variables were found to have a positive significant influence on the leadership effectiveness of headteachers. Contrarily, the community is well informed of school performance (e.g. SPAM) ( $\beta = .018, t = .973, p = .333$ ); school leadership is about coaching ( $\beta = .007, t = .428, p = .669$ ); and school leadership is about influencing ( $\beta = -.023, t = -1.404, p = .163$ ) demonstrate significant negative influences on leadership effectiveness of headteachers.

The findings align with prior research by Sukmawati et al. (2019), Tatlah and Iqbal (2012), and Barker (2001), which highlights the significant influence of headteacher leadership styles on teacher performance and overall school effectiveness. Effective headteachers employ balanced leadership styles that motivate staff and students, while poor performers tend to rely on limited approaches (Barker, 2001). Participatory leadership, where headteachers actively involve themselves and their staff in decision-making, plays a critical role in achieving school success (Tatlah & Iqbal, 2012).

The study emphasizes the importance of headteachers focusing on learners and fostering a positive school environment, which has a statistically significant impact on leadership effectiveness (Boyle & Clarke, 2019). However, it contrasts with Kabeta et al. (2015), whose study in Zambia found that a lack of instructional leadership negatively affects schooling outcomes.

Additionally, the findings corroborate Sukmawati et al. (2019) and Sehar & Alwi (2019), who assert that involving teaching staff in decision-making positively influences headteacher effectiveness. A positive correlation exists between leadership styles and teacher performance, satisfaction, and enthusiasm. Emmanouil & Paraskevi-Ioanna (2014) further emphasize the importance of educational leaders' engagement in the teaching process for enhancing teacher effectiveness. However, a gap remains between the ideal and actual levels of teacher participation in decision-making, underscoring the need for greater collaboration (Mualuko, 2009).

The findings challenge Martha's (2020) assertion that teacher participation in decision-making does not significantly impact headteacher leadership effectiveness. In contrast, several studies highlight a strong link between headteachers' leadership practices and various aspects of school performance. For instance, Saqee et al. (2022) and Wahab et al. (2020) found that leadership training and instructional leadership practices positively influence administrative and teacher performance. Mbogori (2012) demonstrated that democratic leadership styles are particularly effective in promoting student discipline. Similarly, Shaharbi (2010) emphasized the importance of a headteacher's vision, collaborative leadership, and managerial skills in sustaining school excellence.

These findings suggest that maintaining discipline records as part of leadership practices significantly enhances headteacher effectiveness. However, studies by Martha (2020) and Evans (2011) found no direct relationship between headteachers' leadership styles and pupils' academic performance. This suggests that the influence of leadership practices, such as record-keeping, on effectiveness may vary depending on contextual factors.

The findings align with Wahab et al. (2020), demonstrating that headteachers' instructional leadership significantly enhances teacher performance. Similarly, supportive and participative leadership styles have a notable positive effect on teacher effectiveness (Sirisookslip et al., 2015). Mentorship also plays a critical role, with mentoring programs for headteachers identified as essential for improving educational leadership (Daresh & Playko, 1992). Classroom teachers' leadership roles, particularly in mentoring on curriculum matters, are equally crucial for fostering effective educational change (Henderson & Barron, 1995).

Conversely, some studies report no statistically significant relationship between headteachers' leadership qualities and various school performance aspects. For example, Martha (2020) found no link between headteachers' qualities and teachers' assignment practices, while Wahab et al. (2020) observed no significant relationship between headteachers' instructional leadership and teacher performance. However, the delegation of authority by headteachers has been shown to positively influence leadership effectiveness (Emmanouil &

Paraskevi-Ioanna, 2014). Effective headteachers exhibit key traits such as the ability to enhance school outcomes and improve pupil achievement (Lawlor & Sills, 1999). These findings highlight that while leadership effectiveness is context-dependent, certain practices and personal qualities consistently contribute to better outcomes.

Effective headteachers significantly contribute to motivating staff and students, with their leadership styles positively correlating with well-motivated individuals (Barker, 2001). However, the lack of instructional leadership in some schools negatively impacts teaching and learning outcomes (Kabeta, 2015). A win-win approach to conflict resolution is highlighted as a critical practice for headteachers. This aligns with Shaharbi (2010), who emphasized that a headteacher's vision, focus on curriculum, and collaborative decision-making enhance school excellence. Similarly, Tatlah and Iqbal (2012) underscored the importance of participative and adaptive leadership styles for school effectiveness.

Sompa (2015) highlighted the need for effective conflict management strategies, such as dialogue and mediation, to resolve interpersonal conflicts between teachers and headteachers. Aquino et al. (2021) also found that headteachers play a pivotal role in enhancing teacher performance through their leadership practices. These studies collectively underscore that practices like a win-win approach to conflict resolution, coupled with effective leadership styles, significantly boost headteacher effectiveness and positively influence overall school outcomes.

The findings highlight the importance of team-building leadership practices among headteachers, aligning with Boyle and Clarke (2019), who reported a positive and significant impact on leadership effectiveness. Headteachers who prioritize collaboration and teamwork are more likely to excel as leaders. Motivating staff and pupils to improve goal-directed behavior also shows a strong positive effect on headteachers' leadership effectiveness ( $\beta = .202$ ,  $t = 12.427$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This aligns with studies by Darmiati et al. (2020), Nyagaka and Odongo (2013), and Sukandar (2019), which demonstrate that headteachers' leadership behaviors significantly influence staff and student motivation and discipline.

Specifically, initiative structures and participatory traits positively affect academic performance (Nyagaka & Odongo, 2013), while cooperative leadership styles directly enhance teacher work motivation (Rani, 2012). These findings suggest that headteachers who effectively motivate their teams can significantly enhance their leadership effectiveness and overall school outcomes.

Effective communication between teachers and school management significantly enhances headteachers' leadership effectiveness ( $\beta = .374$ ,  $t = 23.287$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This finding resonates with Vilkinas & West's (2011) study, which suggests that self-evaluations by headteachers may reveal communication gaps, emphasizing the critical role of mutual understanding in leadership efficacy.

Conversely, a knowledgeable community about school performance (SPAM) ( $\beta = .018$ ,  $t = .973$ ,  $p = .333$ ) negatively impacts leadership effectiveness, aligning with Amankwah and Guo-Hua's (2020) findings on the drawbacks of autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles.

However, these results contradict Weathers' (2011) findings that emphasize the positive influence of principal leadership on the teacher community, crucial for school improvement.

Stressors related to coaching in leadership ( $\beta = .007$ ,  $t = .428$ ,  $p = .669$ ) also negatively affect headteacher effectiveness. This aligns with Kılınç (2014) and Pounder et al. (1995), who highlight the challenges posed by restrictive school climates and advocate for distributed leadership. Nonetheless, research by Sardar and Galdames (2018) and Grant et al. (2010) underscores the positive impacts of coaching, such as enhancing goal achievement, reducing stress, and improving leadership styles.

Collectively, these findings suggest that while coaching and community engagement hold potential benefits, effective communication and balanced leadership approaches are pivotal for headteacher success.

Sardar and Galdames (2018) highlight that headteachers perceive coaching as a supportive tool that enhances their performance and resilience. However, the effectiveness of school leadership, measured by its influence ( $\beta = .023$ ,  $t = 1.404$ ,  $p = .163$ ), shows a significant negative impact on headteachers' leadership effectiveness. These findings align with Bruggencate et al. (2012), who noted that school leaders' influence on student achievement is mediated through school organization and classroom practices, emphasizing an indirect impact. Similarly, Day (2017) underlined the importance of school leaders in modelling teacher quality, focusing on professional autonomy, commitment, and organizational capital. Collectively, these studies stress the vital role of school leadership in shaping school climate, enhancing organizational commitment, and improving teacher quality to drive school effectiveness.

Conversely, the results contrast with Kılınç's (2014) findings, which identified a directive school climate as a positive predictor of teacher leadership, highlighting the potential of a structured environment to boost leadership outcomes. Additionally, Pounder (1995) demonstrated that leadership practices by both principals and teachers contribute positively to organizational commitment and overall school effectiveness. These insights underscore the nuanced and context-specific nature of effective school leadership, blending supportive strategies and structured environments to achieve optimal outcomes.

## **6. Conclusion**

The study examined headteachers' leadership effectiveness against the 12-point performance variables. The study revealed that all these variables have a positive significant influence on the leadership effectiveness of headteachers. Contrarily, while school leadership is about coaching, school leadership is about influencing which demonstrates significant negative influences on the effectiveness of headteachers' leadership.

The study concluded that headteachers in the study locality at least practice participatory leadership demonstrating the involvement of teachers, students, and school management, all critical stakeholders in the educational sector.

## 7. Recommendation

This study revealed that headteachers need improvement in social influencing, coaching, and mentoring skills to boost their leadership effectiveness. To address this, the Ghana Education Service (GES) should provide training and development programs through the School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) to enhance these skills. Additionally, headteachers should seek mentorship from experienced leaders, engage in peer coaching, and foster a culture of teamwork and support to share best practices and learn from each other.

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### **Acknowledgments**

Not applicable.

### **Authors contributions**

Not applicable.

### **Funding**

Not applicable.

### **Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

### **Informed consent**

Obtained.

### **Ethics approval**

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Macrothink Institute.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

### **Provenance and peer review**

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

### **Data availability statement**

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

### **Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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