

**Influence of School Heads' Direct Supervision on Teacher Role Performance in Public Senior High Schools, Central Region, Ghana**

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### Abstract

This study assessed the influence of school heads' direct supervision on teacher role performance in public senior high schools. The study adopted the embedded mixed methods design. Slovin's formula, the proportional allocation method, and simple random and purposive sampling were used to select a sample of 617 respondents comprising 295 teachers, 222 class prefects, 86 Heads of Department, 13 school heads and 1 Regional Director for the Inspectorate Division of the Ghana Education Service. Data were collected through questionnaires and interview guides. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, means and multiple regression whereas patterns and themes were developed for the analysis of qualitative data. The study found that school heads allocated very little time for supervision of lesson planning and delivery of teachers. The study established that school heads' lesson planning supervision ( $p= 0.043 < .05$ ) and lesson delivery supervision ( $p= .035 < .05$ ) had a significant influence on teacher role performance. Therefore, the study recommends the Ghana Education Service to dedicate a greater portion of the promotion requirement of the school heads to evidence of direct supervision of teachers and a reduction in the teaching load of Heads of Department by the school head to enable them play more instrumental roles in the instructional supervision process.

*Keywords:* assessment practices supervision, direct supervision, lesson delivery supervision, lesson planning supervision, teacher role performance

## Introduction

Formal education is widely acknowledged to play critical roles in both individual and societal development. It is considered an investment that accrues both private and social returns and hence, is functional for individual and national progress, irrespective of the level at which it is provided (Asafo-Adjaye, 2012). For formal education to achieve its goals, key actors such as school heads and teachers must fully accomplish their roles and responsibilities. Teachers are in the best position to make decisions that directly affect students' well-being and achievement (Stark, McGhee, & Jimerson, 2017). Therefore, one key concern for success of educational institutions is to ensure that teachers are well supervised. As Adu, Akinloye and Olaoye (2014) intimated, supervision (whether internal or external) should be considered a deliberate effort aimed at enhancing the outcomes of each educational institution. It is a process of involving teachers in instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving teaching and increasing student achievement (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). The term "instructional supervision" refers to the cycle of activities between a supervisor and a teacher targeted at improving classroom performance (Ekyaw, 2014). Undoubtedly, the most important supervision and guidance in the school setting is that given by the head of the school (Mofareh, 2011). Effective instructional supervision by the school head is critical to the realization of the outlined objectives of the school (Mankoe, 2007). These heads carry out instructional supervision through various instructional supervision practices which includes direct supervision to teachers. The concept of direct supervision as a form of instructional supervision refers to all the measures by the school head to facilitate one-on-one feedback with teachers to enhance instruction and professional capacity (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2009). In this study, senior high school heads' supervision of lesson planning, lesson delivery and assessment practices were considered.

The key concern of instructional supervision practices by the school head is to improve schools and students' achievements by helping teachers to deliver adequately in their role performance (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Teacher role performance generally includes activities that teachers professionally perform in the classroom in relation to their areas of specialization (Joshua, Ekanem & Agborbechem 2007). In this study, teacher role performance refers to the development of good instructional documents, effective lesson delivery, regular assessment of students, regular and punctual school and class attendance, effective use of instructional time, and exhibiting good working relations. In effect, instructional supervision gives teachers opportunities to collaborate, set goals, understand how their students learn and become better teachers through improvement in their role performance (Kalule & Bouchamma, 2014; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013).

Teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans are the most vital instructional documents that aid effective instructional delivery. Schemes of work and lesson plans clearly define the structure and content of a course and map out how resources, class activities and assessment strategies will be used to ensure attainment of course objectives (Gakuya, 2013). This is confirmed by Too, Kimutai and Kosgei's (2012) study on the impact of head teachers' supervision of teachers on students' academic performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. The study findings revealed the existence of a positive relationship between head teachers' inspection of teachers' instructional documents and performance of students in national examinations. This implies that head teachers' inspection of teachers' instructional documents (schemes of work and lesson plans) is a predictor of students' performance in national exams. Thus, in order to ensure effective instructional delivery of teachers, Afolabi and Lato (2008)

recommend that school heads critically examine various items of the lesson plan such as adequacy and relevance, appropriateness and clarity of learner behavioral objectives, and selecting appropriate teaching/ learning resources and evaluation techniques. Researching the strategies for improving supervisory skills for effective primary education in Nigeria, Enaigbe (2009) describes lesson planning as a reflection of the effort made by the teacher to gather information for the lesson.

In a study on the relationship between principals' supervisory strategies and teachers' instructional performance in primary schools in Delta North Senatorial district, Nigeria, Osakwe (2010) discovered a significant relationship between the principal's supervisory strategies and teachers' instructional performance in terms of teaching materials and discipline maintenance. In their study on the impact of selected models of instructional supervision activities on students' academic performance in senior high schools in Ondo State, Nigeria, Alimi and Akinfolarin (2012) established a significant impact of school heads checking of students' notes, class exercises and visitations, moderation of examination questions and marking schemes on students' academic performance in English Language. The study recommended that school heads must be keen in checking students' assessment records, such as notes given by teachers and class exercises, to ensure that teachers are effectively carrying out instructional activities. Thus, the assessment of students in any educational setting is of paramount importance to the success of such institutions (Ampofo, Bizimana, Mbuthi, Ndayambaje and Orodtho, 2014). Teachers are expected to regularly assess students with the aim of enhancing students' performance, whereas school heads oversee the appropriate execution of teachers' assigned responsibilities, which includes assessment of students.

Research has shown that school head's direct supervision of teachers is concerned with improvement of the conditions that surround learning, pupil growth and effective teacher role performance in the school system (Alemayehu, 2008). A related study by Glanz, Shulman and Sullivan (2007) in the United States of America revealed that direct supervision of school heads in the instructional supervision process focuses on identifying pedagogical challenges encountered by their teachers in their instructional delivery and providing them with needed support to overcome them. In the Indian context, Tyagi (2010) emphasized that direct supervision creates a platform for both teachers and school heads to use their collective expertise in self-appraisal of teachers, to identify gaps in teacher skills, knowledge and competencies in order to provide the vital support needed for teachers' professional development.

Research studies in Africa have revealed that effective instructional supervision through direct supervision practices of heads contributes to improvement of the education sector. Considering the case of Kenya, findings of a study by Wanzare (2011) on instructional supervision in public secondary schools showed that school heads' direct supervision improves the quality of teachers and teaching, facilitates students' academic performance and provides the opportunity to monitor teachers' instructional work. Panigrahi's (2012) study on implementation of instructional supervision in secondary schools in Ethiopia found that classroom visits enable head teachers to interact with teachers, determine whether teachers are issuing sound instruction and provide feedback to help teachers correct highlighted issues. In the case of Nigeria, a study by Asiyai (2009) showed that regular instructional supervision practices of the school head through direct supervision of teachers led to improvement in teacher lesson preparation, regular and punctual class attendance and participation in school community relations.

In the Ghanaian context, senior high school heads carry out direct supervision as a key component of their administrative responsibilities aimed at ensuring teachers perform for realization of school goals. Direct supervision roles of the senior high school heads include the supervision of day to day teaching and learning, ensuring the adherence of teachers to the school time table, facilitating provision of appropriate and adequate instructional delivery by teachers, ensuring punctuality and regularity by both staff and students, and providing direct assistance on varied issues of concern to teachers (Ghana Education System [G.E.S] as cited in Sekyere, 2014). Recent reports, however, indicate some challenges in teacher role performance characterized by absenteeism, lateness and poor use of instructional time (Dickson, 2011). The Metropolitan Annual Performance Reports on Education for Cape Coast indicates pronounced teacher absenteeism and lateness especially in the first week of reopening in senior high schools (G.E.S, 2015). Additionally, public senior high schools in the Abura Asebu Kwamankesse (AAK) district have been performing abysmally in the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) which is attributed to factors such as teachers' inadequate pedagogical knowledge and skills, application of inappropriate approaches of instruction and poor use of instructional time (Osei-Mensah, 2012). Various studies have continually demonstrated that effective instructional supervision practices by school heads lead to improvement in teacher role performance, but this is not the case in the study locale since, teachers are not performing their assigned tasks. This is negatively affecting senior high schools in terms of non-completion of syllabus, students' absenteeism and poor students' performance.

There is therefore a growing perception among the populace that teachers are not performing their assigned roles as expected because school heads are not carrying out their direct supervision. However, this remains a perception since there is a dearth of literature on scientific studies that confirm or deny this assertion. This study therefore sought to explore the extent to which direct supervision practices (activities) of school heads account for teachers' role performance in the study locale. Thus, the current study examines the influence of school heads' direct supervision on teacher role performance in selected public senior high schools in Central Region, Ghana. Specifically, the study intended finding answers to the following research questions.

1. To what extent do school heads offer lesson planning supervision to teachers?
2. What level of assistance do school heads offer to teachers through lesson delivery supervision?
3. To what extent do school heads assist teachers through assessment practices supervision?

The following research hypothesis guided the study: there is no statistically significant influence of school heads' direct supervision to teachers on teacher role performance in public senior high schools, Central Region, Ghana.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was anchored in the General Systems Theory propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. He interpreted "systems" to mean complexes of elements standing in interaction. The theory investigates the component of a phenomenon, examines the interaction between the components and the relationship that exists between the components and their larger environment. (Bertalanffy, 1968). In reference to the educational system, the General Systems

Theory recognizes the interdependencies and interrelationship among the parts of the education system (Jenlink, Reigeluth, Carr, & Nelson, 1996). Thus, any changes in one part of the education system is likely to affect other parts of the system. In the school setting, variation in a particular component is likely to result in variations in the interdependence between the other components (students, teachers, school authorities, parents, and many more).

Applying the above specifically to this study, the senior high schools in Ghana in general are independent systems with various components such as educational authorities, school heads, students, staff, parents and the community interacting continuously to achieve objectives. Changes in any of the components are likely to affect the others. Therefore, variations in school heads' supervision of lesson planning supervision, lesson delivery and assessment practices are likely to cause a change in teacher role performance in senior high schools.

### **Methodology and Methods**

This study employed an embedded mixed methods design (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Clark, 2011; Onwuegbuzie, 2012) which involved the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data within a traditional quantitative research design. This design was suitable for the study because it provided the opportunity for the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2011) which involved embedding the two strands of data to explain a research problem. It offered the opportunity for the researcher to refine and explain the quantitative data better (Creswell, 2014).

The target population for the study was 1,638 subjects comprising 1,132 teachers, 406 class prefects, 86 HoDs, 13 school heads and the Regional Director for the Inspectorate Division of GES. Slovin's formula (Amin, 2005), a proportional allocation method (Kothari 2013) and simple random sampling were used to select the teachers, and class prefects, whereas a purposive sampling technique was employed to select the school heads, Heads of Department (HoDs) and the Regional Director of the Inspectorate Division of the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S.). The reliability coefficient of the questionnaires was established using Cronbach's Alpha formula and was found to be 0.88 for teachers, 0.76 for class prefects and 0.79 for heads of department. In all, a sample size of 617 respondents comprising 295 teachers, 222 class prefects, 86 HoDs, 13 school heads and 1 Regional Director for the Inspectorate Division of GES was used for the study. The participants for the interviews included all the 13 school heads, 25 teachers (constituting 10% of the teachers who had already responded to the teachers' questionnaire) and the Central Regional Director of the Inspectorate Division of the GES. The main focus of the interview was to ascertain clarification on some of the emerging issues from the quantitative data analysis. Themes were generated from the qualitative data in accordance with the emerging issues and used to support the quantitative findings. Data were collected through questionnaires and interview guides.

Simple frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations and multiple regression were used in analyzing the quantitative data and was presented in tables. Questionnaire items were judged in accordance with parameters given by Kibuuka, Kiweewa, Nakate & Kizza (2013) and Beinomugisha, Kamyia & Said (2014). Thus, calculated mean value of between 4.21 and 5.00 for a particular item meant very high respondents' agreement with the statement, 3.41-4.20 indicates high respondents' agreement and 2.61-3.40 connotes fair agreement with the statement. On the other hand, a calculated mean value between 1.81 and 2.61 showed low respondents' agreement/high disagreement with a statement and 1.00-1.80 displayed a very low respondents' agreement.

## Ethical Considerations

The investigator obtained permission from the Central Regional Director of the Ghana Education Service to establish the authenticity of the researcher's request for assistance from heads of the sampled schools. Formal informed consent letters were issued to all respondents to assure them of confidentiality and anonymity of the information they provided. Respondents were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and their withdrawal was respected. Pseudonyms were used for interviewees to conceal their identity. Data gathered was transcribed verbatim. All sources of information for the study such as writings and research works cited were acknowledged through proper referencing.

## Results

### School Heads' Lesson Planning Supervision

The first question sought to find out the extent to which school heads offer lesson planning supervision to teachers in public senior high schools in Central Region, Ghana. Table 1 presents responses of teachers on the level of lesson planning supervision they received from their headmasters/headmistresses.

Table 1: Teachers' responses on direct supervision from school heads through lesson planning supervision

Lesson Planning Supervision	Very Often		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never		Mean	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Termly inspection of scheme of work	7	2.8	58	23.1	32	12.7	44	17.5	110	43.8	2.53	1.2
Discussion of challenges on preparation of scheme of work	10	4.0	38	15.1	89	35.5	39	15.5	74	29.5	2.51	1.3
Offers suggestions to help improve on the preparation of my scheme of work	23	9.2	61	24.3	58	23.1	45	17.9	64	25.5	2.65	1.2
Weekly Vetting of lesson plan/notes	10	4.0	53	21.1	83	33.2	56	22.3	49	19.5	2.54	1.3
Ensures lesson objectives are clear and achievable	29	11.6	66	26.3	77	30.7	29	11.6	50	19.9	2.98	1.3
Offers suggestions to improve my lesson plans/notes	15	6.0	72	28.7	76	30.3	37	14.7	51	20.3	2.85	1.2
Helps to select appropriate teaching/learning resources	10	4.0	44	17.5	69	27.5	55	21.9	73	29.1	2.45	1.2

Note: Very Often= 5, Often= 4, Sometimes= 3, Seldom=2 and Never=1

As shown in Table 1, the teachers involved in the study expressed a mostly negative reaction to the lesson planning supervision they received from their school heads, since most of the responses had mean values ranging between 2.45 and 2.54. This implies that lesson planning supervision (ie. termly inspection of schemes of work, discussion of challenges on preparation of schemes of work, weekly vetting of lesson plan/notes) is poorly carried out by school heads in the study location. It is worth noting that other aspects of lesson planning supervision (ie ensuring clear and achievable lesson objectives and offering suggestions to improve lesson plans) was averagely ensured as depicted in a mean above 2.61. Again, the respondents ranked the practice of school heads ensuring that the teachers' lesson objectives are clear and achievable highest (M=2.98) among the lesson planning supervision activities, whereas helping teachers select appropriate teaching/learning resources was ranked least.

### School Heads' Lesson Delivery Supervision

The second research question was to ascertain the level of assistance school heads offer to teachers through lesson delivery supervision in public senior high schools in Central Region, Ghana. The responses of the teachers are as captured in Table 2.

Table 2: Teachers' responses on direct assistance from school heads through lesson delivery supervision

Lesson Delivery Supervision	Very Often		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never		Mean	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Ensures that I keep to time for lesson delivery	54	21.5	91	36.3	39	15.5	26	10.4	41	16.3	3.32	1.4
Classroom visitation and supervision	21	8.4	43	17.1	95	37.8	45	17.9	47	18.7	2.78	1.2
Fulfilling outlined instructional activities in lesson plan/notes	22	8.8	74	29.5	69	27.5	41	16.3	45	17.9	2.94	1.2
Keeping to allocated instructional time	28	11.2	70	27.9	70	27.9	33	13.1	51	19.9	2.97	1.3
Supervising manner of asking/ distributing questions and moderating feedback	6	2.4	26	10.4	83	33.1	47	18.7	89	35.3	2.23	1.1
Ensures adequate delivery of subject content	24	9.6	47	18.7	71	28.3	46	18.3	63	25.1	2.69	1.3

Note: Very Often= 5, Often= 4, Sometimes= 3, Seldom=2 and Never=1

As reported in Table 2, the majority of the respondents responded positively to the issue of school heads' lesson delivery supervision. The table shows that a mean range of 2.69 to 3.32 for all the items measuring the construct. This implies that most of the respondents agreed with almost all the items under consideration, except the supervision of the manner of asking/ distributing questions and moderating feedback among students which had a mean score of 2.33. The low mean score shows low respondents' agreement with the statement. Thus, the teachers were generally of the opinion that school heads did not undertake this particular

supervision practice as appropriately as expected. It is worth noting that the item on school heads ensuring teachers keep to time for lesson delivery as indicated on the timetable was ranked highest.

### School Heads' Assessment Practices Supervision

The third research objective was to ascertain the level of supervision teachers receive from school heads through assessment practices supervision in public senior high schools in Central Region, Ghana. The views of the teachers on this issue are as depicted in Table 3.

Table 3: Teachers' responses on direct assistance from school heads through assessment practices supervision

Assessment Practices	Very Often		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never		Mean	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Ensures provision of opportunity for all students to participate fully in lessons	21	8.4	63	25.1	71	28.3	39	15.5	57	22.7	2.81	1.27
Makes sure that all teachers in the school receive supervisory feedback	27	10.8	67	26.7	67	26.7	43	17.1	47	18.7	2.93	1.27
Praises teachers for specific teaching behaviours	36	14.3	61	24.3	84	33.5	34	13.5	36	14.3	3.10	1.23
Discusses performance of pupils with teachers	79	31.5	88	35.1	46	18.3	22	8.8	16	6.4	3.76	1.17
Ensures that continuous assessment records are kept up-to-date by teachers	96	38.2	101	41.4	23	9.2	13	5.2	15	6.0	4.00	1.11

Note: Very Often= 5, Often= 4, Sometimes= 3, Seldom=2 and Never=1

The figures in Table 3 display a generally positive agreement of the respondents to all the items on the issue of school heads instructional supervision through the supervision of teachers' assessment practices. The table shows a mean range between 2.81 and 4.00 for all the items, implying that the respondents highly agreed with most of the statements. Thus, the respondents are generally of the view that school heads usually offer supervision to teachers in the form of supervising their assessment practices. Notably, the item on ensuring that teachers keep up to date records of students' continuous assessment was ranked highest.

A null hypothesis was formulated and tested using standard multiple regression analysis to examine the influence of school heads' direct supervision of teachers on teacher role performance in public senior high schools. The results of the Standard Multiple Regression are as summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Standard Multiple Regression analysis of school heads' direct supervision and teacher role performance

DV: Teacher Role Performance					
	Constant	Multiple r	R Squared (R <sup>2</sup> )	Beta (β)	P- Values
PREDICTOR					
Lesson Planning Supervision (LPS)	3.817	.354	.125	.525*	.043
Lesson Delivery Supervision (LDS)				.204*	.035
Assessment Practices Supervision (APS)				.453	.461

NOTE: \*p< .05

Table 4 shows the results of the standard multiple regression of school heads' direct supervision of teachers (LPS, LDS and APS) as predictor variable and teacher role performance as a dependent variable. Table 4 indicates R<sup>2</sup> as .125, implying that 12.5% of variation in teacher role performance is explained by school heads' direct supervision to teachers (LPS, LDS and APS). It is also clear from Table 4 that the p-values for LPS and LDS are lower than the significance level, LPS (β=. 525, p= 0.043< .05), LDS (β= .204, p= .035< .05). The p-value for APS is however higher than the significant level (β= .453, p= .461> .05). This means that Lesson Planning Supervision (LPS) and Lesson Delivery Supervision (LDS) make significantly unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable (Teacher Role Performance). Hence, the study rejected the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant effect of school heads' direct supervision to teachers on teacher role performance in public senior high schools in Cape Coast Metropolis and Abura Asebu Kwamankese District, Central Region, Ghana. This implies that school heads' direct supervision to teachers is a positive determinant of teacher role performance and thus, improved LPS and LDS would lead to better teachers' role performance.

The regression model is as follows:

$$\text{Predicted TRP} = 3.817 + 0.525(\text{LPS}) + 0.204(\text{LDS}) + \epsilon$$

Where TRP= Teacher Role Performance, LPS=Lesson Planning Supervision, LDS= Lesson Delivery Supervision and  $\epsilon$ = Error Term.

## Discussion

### School Heads' Lesson Planning Supervision

Lesson planning forms a major component of the teaching-learning process. Considering that the teachers' scheme of work constitutes the fundamental basis for any teacher's professional delivery, it is worrying that less attention is paid to its preparation by school heads in the study locale. As indicated by Gakuya (2013), schemes of work define the structure and content of a course and clearly outline how resources, class activities and assessment strategies will be used to ensure that the learning aims and objectives of a course are met. Again, the study by Too, Kimutai and Kosgei (2012) found a positive relationship between head teachers' inspection of teachers' schemes of work and performance of students in national exams. The school heads'

poor performance of this responsibility is likely to negatively affect the teacher's role performance in terms of preparation of good instructional documents if not checked.

The findings also show that lesson plans are not vetted regularly by the school heads. This contradicts the expectations from senior high school heads who are admonished to critically and consistently examine various items of the lesson plan for effective instructional delivery of teachers (Mankoe, 2007) as well as the G.E.S. policy on instructional supervision which authorizes school heads to regularly vet the weekly lesson plans of all teachers in conformity to required standards (G.E.S, as cited in Sekyere, 2014). Again, it opposes the position of Afolabi and Lato (2008) that school heads must check the adequacy and relevance of lesson notes, appropriateness and clarity of learner behavioural objectives, selecting appropriate teaching/ learning resources and evaluation techniques as well as offering suggestions where necessary to improve instructional documents.

On the issue of whether school heads helped their teachers to select appropriate teaching /learning resources for their lessons, the findings show that this is hardly done. This is likely to affect teachers' ability to deliver lessons effectively. This finding resonates with the views of some of the sampled teachers who were interviewed. One of them lamented that:

*My school head never makes sure the needed teaching /learning resources are even provided, let alone help teachers to select the appropriate ones for their lessons. He is mostly interested in ensuring that we go to class on time. He does not have time for that. He rather concentrates on other administrative duties.*

The findings of the study portray that the school heads scarcely help teachers to choose appropriate teaching/learning resources for lesson delivery. This finding is at variance with Osakwe (2010) who posited that there is a significant relationship between the school head's supervisory strategies and teachers' instructional performance in terms of teaching materials. Osakwe opined that if school heads could help teachers choose appropriate teaching/learning resources, it could positively influence teaching because that would facilitate the learners' understanding of abstract concepts (Osakwe, 2010). This implies that there is the likelihood of students in senior high schools not grasping concepts taught in various subjects in the study locale which may lead to poor students' performance.

### **School Heads' Lesson Delivery Supervision**

The results portray high commitment of school heads to the checking of teachers' punctuality and effective use of instructional time. These school heads ensured that teachers kept to time for lesson delivery as indicated on the timetable. This finding is corroborated by the views of some of the school heads who were interviewed. One of them affirmed that:

*Occasionally, I go round to check if the teachers are in their classrooms teaching at the time stated on their respective timetables. However, because I have a lot to do as the head, I have delegated the duty of regular supervision of instruction to my assistant in charge of academic, but I bear the ultimate responsibility.*

The commitment of the school heads to the practice of ensuring teachers' punctuality and effective use of instructional time is in tandem with the view of Enaigbe (2009) who found the instructional supervision activities of the school head to include seeing to it that teachers

engage in meaningful instructional activities and keep to allocated instructional time. This could help to enhance the attainment of instructional objectives, culminate in timely completion of syllabuses and improve students' performance.

According to the study findings, school heads visit and supervise teaching in the classroom. This implies that school heads monitored the instructional delivery of their teachers to offer assistance when necessary. During the interview majority of the teachers indicated that the visit by the school heads inculcated in them the habit of preparing adequately for their classes. The monitoring of teachers' instructional delivery by school heads ties in with the findings of Malunda, Onen, Musaazi and Oonyu (2016) on instructional supervision and the pedagogical practices of secondary school teachers in Uganda which revealed that school heads supervision of lesson delivery through classroom observations has statistically significant effect on the pedagogical practices of teachers in public secondary schools in Uganda. The findings further agree with Sergiovanni and Starrat (2007) that informal and formal class visitations by principals assist teachers to assess their performance and make conscious efforts to improve same. The findings of the current study are, however, contrary to the revelation of Malunda, Onen, Musaazi and Oonyu (2016) that instructional supervision (through portfolio observation and classroom observations) was inadequately carried out and this allowed teachers to employ ineffective pedagogical practices.

The fact that school heads occasionally checked the adequacy of subject content delivered to students as found in this study is of great concern. This implies that the school heads spend very little time on ensuring adequacy of subject content delivered by teachers. This finding is contrary to that of Sekyere (2014) that school heads must ensure teachers actively involve students in lessons and adequately deliver subject content.

Lack of knowledge in particular subject specialization or enormity of the duties expected of school heads may be blamed for the non-fulfilment of this important responsibility which may negatively affect role performance of teachers' lesson delivery.

The revelation that school heads were not bothered about teachers' active involvement of students in their class is not a good development. The majority of the teachers indicated during the interview that the major concern of their school heads was teacher regularity and punctuality to class and not necessarily teachers' involvement of students in their lessons. This finding is contrary to the findings of Kalule and Bouchamma (2014) that clinical supervision by school heads have been found to enhance teachers' instructional delivery through formal classroom observation by principals in which the principals collect variety of classroom variables such as teachers' active engagement of their students in their lessons.

### **School Heads' Assessment Practices Supervision**

Results on the practice of school heads' ensuring that continuous assessment records are kept up-to-date portrays headmasters/headmistresses' demonstration of a lot of interest and commitment to this activity. This is likely to reflect in regular assessment of students and make it easier to identify weaknesses in students' performance as well as implement corrective measures on time when the need arises. The finding further agrees with an idea expressed by the teachers during their interview. In fact, one of them said:

*Teachers in my school are expected to complete students' continuous assessment records, especially termly reports at least one clear week before*

*school reopens for the next term. Teachers who fail to meet set deadlines are cautioned for the first offence and given queries to answer in subsequent cases. This can eventually lead to stiffer punishment such as release from the school if it persists.*

The findings also concur with the findings of Alimi and Akinfolarin (2012) who studied the impact of selected models of instructional supervision activities on students' academic performance in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study established a significant impact of school heads' checking of students' notes, class exercises, moderation of examination questions and marking schemes on students' academic performance.

The school heads' discussion of students' performance with teachers could have positive influence on the teachers' lesson delivery because it will inform teachers of the specific content areas where students need further assistance. The teachers' agreement with this item corroborated the views of some school heads who were interviewed for the study. One of the school heads concurred by alluding that:

*I sit on the academic board at the beginning of the term and agree on the number of assessments each teacher is supposed to conduct with his/her students. At the end of the term, we have a big forum chaired by the Assistant Head (Academic) and go through the students' performance class by class. The form master responsible reads the performance, we find out where problems are and solve them.*

This view also resonates with the opinion expressed by another school head who reiterated that:

*With students' assessment, I check students' records and sometimes demand for their books. Also, together with my deputies, we meet heads of department to decide on the number of exercises each teacher needs to give to their students so that I can be checking to ensure they are on course. Sometimes too when we have hints that a particular teacher is not living up to expectation, I ask the students for their exercise books and compare it with the scheme of work.*

The views expressed by the teachers and school heads is in agreement with the findings of Adewale (2014) that school heads' monitoring /checking of students' notebooks/exercise books had a significant effect on academic achievement of students. The finding is also in tandem with a World Bank Report (2010) which established that school heads' monitoring of teachers' effective use of instructional time, checking of pupils' notebooks, giving enough classwork, marking assignments, writing and marking corrections enhanced students' academic performance

From the results, the school heads have shown interest and commitment to ensuring that teachers receive supervisory feedback from instructional supervisors. This is worthy of notice due to the crucial role timely feedback plays in the supervision process. It helps to identify whether their instructional delivery matches the expected standards and ultimately enhance instructional delivery if effectively carried out (Mapolisa & Tsabalala, 2013).

Opinions expressed by the teachers during the interview session showed that the school heads' direct supervision to teachers contributed to teachers' role performance. The teachers indicated that regular supervision of their lesson planning and delivery activities as well as supervision of assessment practices by the school heads instills in teachers, the habit of preparing adequately before teaching and make them feel their contribution to the school is appreciated.

The results of the multiple regression and views expressed by teachers during the interview concurs with the findings of Wanzare's (2011) study which found that direct supervision practices of school heads in Kenyan public secondary schools, through monitoring teachers' instructional work, improved quality of teachers and teaching. This finding is further supported by the study of Panigrahi (2012) on implementation of instructional supervision in Ethiopian secondary schools. The study found regular classroom visitation by school heads provided opportunity for headteachers to interact with teachers to know what exactly goes on in the classroom and ensured teachers performed instructional delivery activities as expected. The study by Panigrahi (2012) also established that feedback offered by school heads, helped teachers to rectify anomalies in their instructional delivery process and high standards in their role performance. In the Ghanaian context, the findings imply that effective lesson planning and lesson delivery supervision by school heads is likely to enhance teacher role performance and improve students' academic performance in public senior high schools.

### **Limitations**

One of the limitations of the study was the geographical location. The Cape Coast metropolis and the Abura Asebu Kwamankesse district constitute only two out of the twenty-three metropolitan/municipal and districts that form part of the population. Secondly, the study sample was small compared to the total population of students in the region. Caution should therefore be exercised in generalizing the findings to the population. Again, the use of multiple regression for analysis of the quantitative data fell short of finding out other statistical implications of the findings such as effect size, confidence interval and determination of spuriousity.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the study recommends that:

1. School heads should reduce the teaching load of HoDs to enable them play more instrumental roles in the instructional supervision component of the school heads' administrative responsibilities
2. School heads must commit more time and resources to lesson planning and lesson delivery supervision since they were found to have significant effect on teacher role performance in senior high schools
3. The Ghana Education Service must dedicate a greater portion of the promotion requirements of the school heads to evidence of direct supervision of teachers
4. School heads must insist on teachers' active involvement of students in their instructional delivery activities. School heads must organize periodic in-service training for teachers on various delivery strategies that can be beneficial to their students.

5. The Ghana Education Service (GES) must ensure the inclusion of group supervisory approaches for teachers in the official instructional supervision policy for senior high schools, to augment the supervision provided by the school heads.

### **Conclusion**

The primary focus of this study was to examine the influence of school heads direct supervision on teachers' role performance in selected public senior high schools in Ghana. There is dearth of studies and limited empirical findings on instructional supervision at the secondary education level in Ghana. Findings from the study revealed that school heads poorly supervised lesson preparation by teachers. Thus, instructional documents such as lesson plans/notes and schemes of work were hardly inspected and school heads failed to discuss and give suggestions to their teachers for improvement. This was mainly due to inadequate time allocated to this activity by school heads. However, the study found that school heads moderately supervised teachers lesson by ensuring teachers' punctuality, effective use of instructional time and delivery of lessons in accordance with prepared lesson plans/notes. The study established that school heads periodically discussed academic performance of students with teachers on regular basis through departmental and general staff meetings and made sure continuous assessment records of students were regularly updated. The study therefore concludes that effective school heads' direct supervision will enhance teachers' role performance in Ghanaian senior high schools. All the necessary resources must be provided for the heads to adequately execute this important administrative function.

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