



## Leadership style of school administrators of Senior High School and their effect on academic performance in the Sekondi Takoradi Metropolis

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### ABSTRACT

Leadership is vital in raising and maintaining educational standards, providing clear leadership for staff and students, running the school effectively, and helping develop the ethos and vision for the school as a whole. The study sought to assess the perceived influences of leadership styles on students' performance, investigate the leadership roles and practices school administrators adopt to improve students' achievements, elicit the viewpoints of school administrators, teachers and students on their preferred leadership styles. The study adopted a descriptive study design. A total of 286 respondents were sampled from a total population of 6,425. Simple random sampling procedure was used to sample students and teachers, while all the six (6) head teachers of the selected schools were used for the study. The study found that any leadership approach could be used to enhance the academic achievement of schools at the second cycle level. However, students and teachers were more satisfied with participatory/democratic leadership style. The study therefore recommended that head teachers should adopt democratic leadership style to enhance interaction with students.

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### Introduction

Education has been regarded in all societies and throughout human history both as an end in itself and as a means for the individual and society to grow. It is not only the key to sustainable development, but also a fundamental human right (Theunynck, 2003). As a result, various efforts have been made towards achieving Education for All. Education is a means of overcoming poverty, increasing income, improving nutrition and health, reducing family size and not the least important, raising people's self-confidence and enriching the quality of their lives (Clifton, 2004). Globally, educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the developing world (Aikaman & Unterhalter, 2005).

It is generally agreed that effective leadership is essential in all organisations, whether business, government, religious or educational. The concept of leadership style has been applied to education as a way of examining the behaviour of principals and head teachers (Bush & Oduro, 2006). According to Onguko, Muhammed and Webber (2008), the major criteria for appointing teachers to the headship positions in African countries is based on their teaching experience and exemplary classroom practice.

Educational leaders play an important role in ensuring that teaching and learning are more effective and giving quality education to students. Good leaders should be able to influence their subordinates towards the achievement of organisational objectives. The success of a school depends largely on the quality of its leadership. Owens and Valesky (2007) define leadership as the process of influencing activities of an individual or a group towards goal achievement in a given situation based on the situational leadership theory.

The role of the head teacher in the provision of professional leadership and overall management of the school is a major

concern in several countries. It has been seen as vital in raising and maintaining educational standards, providing clear leadership for staff and pupils, running the school effectively, and helping develop the ethos and vision for the school as a whole (Fullan, 2005). Fullan describes the headteacher as the keeper of keys, the director of transportation, the coordinator of correspondence, the quartermaster of stores, the divisor of intricate schedules, the publisher of handbooks, the director of public relations and the instructional leader.

Most educational experts consider administrators as the driving force and main source of the school's development and academic growth of students (Dinham, 2005). Meanwhile, the successes of an administrator have been thought to be due to the various methods that are used in their administrative processes. Kruger, Witziers and Slegers (2007) report that the headteacher's leadership style influences the efficiency and also the effectiveness of the school. This is because school effectiveness is ultimately determined by the impact of the headteacher on student learning. The headteacher takes care of the final arrangements for the education of students in a school. His/her role cannot be taken for granted if he/she is expected to give the right kind of education to students, hence this sets the focus of the study.

In order to enhance high-academic excellence in educational performance, Barker (2007) advises that it is important to deal with effective leadership styles performed by head teachers, as they indeed play the most important role for determining students' excellence in academic performance. It is therefore essential that schools have effective and quality leaders. However, Crum and Sherman (2008) indicate that the leadership style of a headteacher depends on the leader's

assumptions about human being, human nature and human learning. These assumptions consciously and unconsciously are the main foundation for decision making and choosing a leadership style.

The quality of leadership makes the difference between the success and failure of a school (Castangno, 2008). Castangno further explains that research and inspection clarify the extent to which the quality of leadership is crucial to improvement. In highly effective schools, as well as schools which have reversed a trend of poor performance and declining achievement, it is the headteacher who sets the pace, leading and motivating pupils and staff to perform to their highest potential (Musungu & Nasongo, 2009).

Other school factors that the headteacher ought to address due to their influence on students' behaviour and scholastic achievement include an amount of teaching, degree of academic emphasis, extent and nature of ability groupings, teacher expectation, styles of teaching and classroom management, size of the school, patterns of discipline and characteristics of school climate (Armstrong, 2010). Kythreotis, Pashiardis and Kyriakides (2010) stress that headteachers in effective schools should be charged with the daunting task of improving instruction and training, managing teachers, among other school resources. Teachers are nominally required to follow the directions given by the headteachers of which they are liable for disciplinary action. Toward this end, Jacobson (2011) is of the view that input-output studies should be done using learning achieved as seen from student examination performance.

However, the increasing number of enrolment of students creates problems in leadership, management and administration of academic institutions in Ghana (Sammons, Gu, Day & Ko, 2011). While the equation of effective school leadership and improved school performance appears to be relatively simple and straightforward in theory, in practice, Sammons et al. (2011) assert that it is complex and unpredictable. The authors argue that although it is evident that a fundamental connection between the principal's leadership style and school performance in terms of student achievement exists, research on this relationship begins and ends with that concept.

According to Theunynck (2003), lack of vision in the management of schools often leads to imbalance in the allocation and use of resources which translates into poor results in education. If this parameter is not recognised, it becomes difficult to understand why a school continues to perform poorly in national examinations. For example, Namirembe (2005) argues that many secondary schools still lack the necessary performance requirements, not only because of inadequate funds or even poor facilities, but as a result of poor leadership. To improve students' performance, Yukl (2006) indicates that head teachers are required first to improve the management of the schools. This can be done by setting a clear vision for the schools and communicating this vision to teachers, supporting staff and students.

Although the availability of learning resources is significant factors in educational performance, some bright students have performed poorly in the absence of good management and organisation in various schools (Barker, 2007). According to Castangno (2008), there is no doubt that every headteacher's dream is to get his school ranked among the best in national examinations results. A closer investigation reveals that good performance does not just happen, but rest on good teaching and overall effective headship (Musungu & Nasongo, 2009). Since independence in 1957, Ghana's education system has undergone several changes. Successive governments have reviewed the

education system to make it more relevant to national needs. This is evident in the numerous reforms and review committees that have been set up by successive governments to examine the existing system and make recommendations for improvements (Steve, 2009).

The Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis has eleven public Senior High Schools (SHSs). These are Adiembra Senior High, Ahantaman Senior High, Archbishop Porter Girls' Secondary, Diabene Secondary Technical, Bompeh Secondary Technical, Fijai Secondary, Ghana Secondary Technical School, Methodist Senior High, Saint John's Secondary, Takoradi Secondary and Sekondi College.

The people who occupy the top position of administration are the headmasters/headmistresses who are deputised by assistant headmasters/headmistresses. Following from these positions downwards are heads of department, senior house tutors through to student leaders. From time to time, information flows through this structure either downwards or upwards to the appropriate superior(s) or subordinate(s). Complementary to this structure are academic committees, disciplinary committees and functions committees whose objectives are basically to facilitate teaching and learning as well as promote high academic performance in the schools.

#### **Research questions**

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between school administrators' leadership styles and students' academic performance?
2. What roles and practices do head teachers play and employ to improve students' academic performance?
3. What leadership styles do students, teachers and school administrators in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis prefer?

#### **Research Methodology**

##### **Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The study was centred on six (6) schools out of 11 due to time and resource constraints. The total population for the six (6) schools was 6,425. This was made up of 6,039 students, 380 teachers and 6 headteachers.

With a population of 6,039 students, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) as cited in Sarantakos (2005) indicate that a sample size of about 375 respondents is required to satisfy the principle of representativeness. With a population of 380 teachers also, a sample size of about 194 respondents is required. This was based on a 95% confidence level and an error margin of 5%. However, due to time and resource constraints, the researcher arrived at 200 and 80 respondents as sample sizes for students and teachers respectively. All the six (6) headteachers were selected for the study. The total respondents for the study was therefore 286.

Simple random sampling procedure was used to sample six schools from the total of 11. The names of the eleven (11) schools were written on equally sized pieces of papers and folded into a bowl. The papers were shuffled to make sure that they were not in any pre-determined position. The first draw was made without replacement. The name of the school was noted. The process continued until the sixth school was sampled.

The sampled schools were Adiembra Senior High School (Adisec – option 1 school), Archbishop Porter Girls' Senior High School (APGSHS – option 3 school), Bompeh Senior High Technical School (Bompeh SHTS – option 1 school), Diabene Senior High Technical School (Diabene SHTS – option 1 school), Fijai Senior High School (Fijai SHS – option 2 school) and St. John's Senior High School, a boys' school (St. John's SHS – option 2 school). Consideration was given to gender

balance in the selection of teachers as well as students in the mixed schools.

The student lists from the schools were obtained from the Assistant headteachers in charge of academics. The list for each school was entered into Microsoft Excel 2010 Professional edition. Random numbers were generated for the names. The random numbers were used to sort the names, and the first names that corresponded to the sample size of the school were sampled. The same process was used in selecting teachers as respondents.

### Research instrument

Questionnaires which contained both closed and open-ended questions were used as instruments to gather data from the respondents because the respondents were perceived as literate who could read, understand and administer the instrument themselves without detailed directions from the researcher. Ideas were borrowed from Bolman and Deal's Four Framework Approach to Leadership in constructing the questionnaires used for the study (Bolman and Deal, 2010).

The questionnaire was organised into four sections, sections A, B, C and D. The questions in section A sought answers from respondents on their background characteristics such as gender, form, age, qualifications and other responsibilities for teachers in the case of the teacher questionnaire. Questions in section B sought responses from respondents to answer the question on the perceived relationship between leadership styles of headteachers and academic performance. The section considered issues such as leadership styles of school administrators, headteachers', teachers' and students' satisfaction with the schools' academic performance in the previous West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

Section C of the questionnaires was on the roles and practices employed by headteachers to improve academic performance of their schools. The section captured issues such as supervision of academic work, adequate supply of teaching and learning materials, delegation of work to teachers and students, skilful resolution of conflicts among students and teachers and ensuring discipline in school. The last section was on leadership styles students and teachers prefer their headteachers possessed or adopted in the execution of their duties as headteachers. Questions in the section D of headteachers' questionnaire sought responses on their preferred leadership skills, which were intended to reveal their preferred leadership styles. Some of the issues considered under the section were concern and support for people on one side and zeal for headship duties on the other side, leadership traits and skills and swift response to issues in the schools.

### Data analysis

The data were first edited to check for consistencies and grammatical errors. It was analysed with the use of Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 17. Cross tabulations and Chi-square test of independence were used to test the relationship between leadership styles of headteachers and academic performance of students. Frequency and Percentage tables were used to present the findings of the study.

## Results And Discussion

### Answer to Research Question One

What is the relationship between leadership styles of school administrators and academic performance of schools? This question was answered using the tables below:

From table 1 in describing the academic performance of their schools, 61% of the students indicated that the performance is very good, 28% of them answered that the performance is good and 11% answered neutral. In describing their schools'

academic performance, 77% of the teachers indicated that the performance is very good while 23% indicated it is good. On the part of the head teachers, 67% of them indicated their schools' academic performance is very good while 33% indicated that the performance is good.

The responses given reflect the analysed WASSCE results obtained from the schools, especially with regard to the results of Archbishop, St. John's and Fijai SHSs.

From table 2 on the question of how satisfied they are with their academic performance, 36% of the students answered they are very satisfied, 52% answered they are satisfied, 5% answered they are neutral whereas 7% answered they are less satisfied. On the part of teachers, 41% indicated they are very satisfied with the academic performance, 53% indicated they are satisfied while 6% indicated they are less satisfied. On the part of the head teachers, 33% answered they are very satisfied while 67% answered they are satisfied.

From table 3, on the question of rating of the last three WASSCE with previous ones, 24% of the students answered the last three are far better and 76% answered they are quite better. On the part of the teachers on the above question, 37% answered the last three WASSCE are far better while 63% answered they are quite better. The head teachers, in comparing the last three WASSCE with previous ones, 67% of them indicated the last three are far better whereas 33% indicated they are quite better.

In ranking the leadership styles of their school heads as shown in table 4.1.9a, 78% of the students indicated their heads often use autocratic style. On the part of the teachers, 46% indicated their heads often use autocratic style. In ranking their leadership styles, all the head teachers (100%) answered they occasionally use autocratic style. Here, there is a disparity between students' and teachers' opinion and that of the head teachers'.

In ranking the leadership styles of their heads as shown in table 5, 17% of the students indicated their heads occasionally use democratic style, while 54% of the teachers indicated their heads occasionally use democratic style. All the head teachers (100%) indicated they often use democratic style. Here too, disparity exists in the responses given by students and teachers on one side and the headteachers on another side.

In ranking the leadership styles of their heads as shown in table 6, 5% of the students indicated their heads seldom use laissez-faire style.

Table 7 shows how the respondents described the leadership styles of their headteachers. From the table, 90.5% of the students described their heads' leadership styles as very good and good, while 9.5% described their heads' leadership styles as bad. On the part of teachers, 87.5% described their heads' leadership styles as very good and good, while 12.5% described their heads' leadership styles as bad. All the headteachers (100%) described their leadership styles as very good.

From table 8, on the question of the extent to which they agree that the leadership styles of the school heads accounts for the academic performance of their schools, 7% of the students answered they strongly agree, 43% answered they agree, 8% answered neutral, 32% answered they agree to a little extent and 10% answered they do not agree. The teachers, in answering the question on the extent to which they agree that leadership styles of their school heads affect academic performance, 58% answered they agree, 27% answered they agree to a little extent and 15% answered they do not agree. On the part of the head teachers, 67% answered they agree whereas 33% answered they agree to a little extent.

**Table 1. Description of Academic performance**

Respondents	Reponses				
	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Bad	Very Bad
Students	61%	28%	11%	-	-
Teachers	77%	23%	-	-	-
Heads	67%	33%	-	-	-

No. Of students = 200      No. of Teachers =80      No. of Heads = 6  
Source: Field survey, 2013

**Table 2. Satisfaction with Academic performance**

Respondents	Reponses				
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Less Satisfied	Not Satisfies
Students	36%	52%	5%	7%	-
Teachers	41%	53%	-	6%	-
Heads	33%	67%	-	-	-

No. of Students = 200      No. of teachers = 80      No. of Heads = 6  
Source: Field survey, 2013

**Table 3. Rating of last three WASSCE with previous ones**

Respondents	Responses				
	Far Better	Quite Better	No Improvement	Bad	Very Bad
Students	24%	76%	-	-	-
Teachers	37%	63%	-	-	-
Heads	67%	33%	-	-	-

Source: Field survey, 2013

**Table 4. Perceived leadership styles**

Leadership Style	Respondents	Responses		
		Often used	Occasionally used	Seldom used
Autocratic	Students	78%	-	-
	Teachers	46%	-	-
	Heads	-	100%	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Table 5. Perceived leadership styles**

Leadership Style	Respondents	Responses		
		Often used	Occasionally used	Seldom used
Democratic	Students	-	17%	-
	Teachers	-	54%	-
	Heads	100%	-	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Table 6. Perceived leadership styles**

Leadership Style	Respondents	Responses		
		Often used	Occasionally used	Seldom used
Laissez- faire	Students	-	-	5%
	Teachers	-	-	-
	Heads	-	-	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Table 7. Description of Leadership Styles of Headteachers**

Respondents	Responses					
	Very good F %	Good F %	Neutral F %	Bad F %	Very bad F %	Total F %
Students	98 49%	83 41.5%	- -	19 9.5%	- -	200 100%
Teachers	19 23.75%	51 63.75%	- -	10 12.5%	- -	80 100%
Heads	6 100%	- -	- -	- -	- -	6 100%

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Table 8. How leadership styles account for academic performance**

Respondents	Responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree to a little extent	Do not Agree
Students	7%	43%	8%	32%	10%
Teachers	-	58%	-	27%	15%
Heads	-	67%	-	33%	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Table 9. Students' perception of heads' leadership styles and description of academic performance during WASSCE**

Description of academic performance	Autocratic		Democratic		Laissez-faire	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Very good	95	61%	21	61%	6	61%
Good	44	28%	9	28%	3	28%
Neutral	17	11%	4	11%	1	11%
Bad	-	-	-	-	-	-
Very bad	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	156	100%	34	100%	10	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2013  $\chi^2 = 9.35$  df = 6 p-value = 0.24

Question	Respondents	Frequency Percentage	Respondents responses					Total
			Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Shows high levels of support and concern	Students	Frequency	-	66	84	28	22	200
		Percentage	-	33%	42%	14%	11%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	19	38	23	80
		Percentage	-	-	24%	47%	29%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	2	4	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
Inspires students and teachers to do their best	Students	Frequency	-	-	28	54	118	200
		Percentage	-	-	14%	27%	59%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	51	29	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	64%	36%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Builds trust through collaborative relationships	Students	Frequency	56	114	22	8	-	200
		Percentage	28%	57%	11%	4%	-	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	--	39	26	15	80
		Percentage	-	-	49%	32%	19%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Uses persuasive and influential tactics to accomplish academic goals	Students	Frequency	-	-	34	126	40	200
		Percentage	-	-	17%	63%	20%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	38	25	17	80
		Percentage	-	-	47%	31%	22%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	4	1	1	6
		Percentage	-	-	66%	17%	17%	100%
Anticipates and deals adroitly with conflicts in the school	Students	Frequency	-	-	28	114	58	200
		Percentage	-	-	14%	57%	29%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	41	39	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	51%	49%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Adopts effective measures in soliciting support from influential and powerful people towards academic work	Students	Frequency	-	-	74	52	74	200
		Percentage	-	-	37%	26%	37%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	30	37	13	80
		Percentage	-	-	37%	47%	16%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	2	4	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%

Communicates a strong and challenging sense of vision and mission	Students	Frequency	-	-	52	44	104	200
		Percentage	-	-	26%	22%	52%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	26	54	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Sets specific, measureable goals and holds students and teachers accountable for results	Students	Frequency	-	-	16	28	156	200
		Percentage	-	-	8%	14%	78%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	26	54	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Employs listening and receptive skills to ascertain ideas and inputs	Students	Frequency	20	34	86	42	18	200
		Percentage	10%	17%	43%	21%	9%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	25	34	21	80
		Percentage	-	-	31%	43%	26%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	5	1	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	83%	17%	100%
Ensure timely supply of teaching/ learning material and library books	Students	Frequency	-	22	54	88	36	200
		Percentage	-	11%	27%	44%	18%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	9	47	24	80
		Percentage	-	-	11%	59%	30%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	2	4	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
Ensures adequate provision of school infrastructure	Students	Frequency	-	14	48	86	52	200
		Percentage	-	7%	24%	43%	26%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	12	31	37	-	80
		Percentage	-	15%	39%	46%	-	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	6	-	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	100%	-	100%
Adopts effective measures to ensure monitoring and supervision	Students	Frequency	-	-	-	94	106	200
		Percentage	-	-	-	47%	53%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	63	17	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	79%	21%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Strongly believes in clear structure and chain of command	Students	Frequency	-	-	44	76	80	200
		Percentage	-	-	22%	38%	40%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	50	30	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	63%	37%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	4	2	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	67%	33%	100%
Puts measures in place to ensure discipline among students	Students	Frequency	-	-	-	64	136	200
		Percentage	-	-	-	32%	68%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	21	59	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	26%	74%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%

**Table 10. Roles and practices of headteachers**

Question	Respondent	Frequency Percentage	Respondents responses					Total
			Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Shows high levels of support and concern	Students	Frequency	-	66	84	28	22	200
		Percentage	-	33%	42%	14%	11%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	19	38	23	80
		Percentage	-	-	24%	47%	29%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	2	4	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
Inspires students and teachers to do their best	Students	Frequency	-	-	28	54	118	200
		Percentage	-	-	14%	27%	59%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	51	29	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	64%	36%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Builds trust through collaborative relationships	Students	Frequency	56	114	22	8	-	200
		Percentage	28%	57%	11%	4%	-	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	--	39	26	15	80
		Percentage	-	-	49%	32%	19%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Uses persuasive and influential tactics to accomplish academic goals	Students	Frequency	-	-	34	126	40	200
		Percentage	-	-	17%	63%	20%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	38	25	17	80
		Percentage	-	-	47%	31%	22%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	4	1	1	6
		Percentage	-	-	66%	17%	17%	100%

Anticipates and deals adroitly with conflicts in the school	Students	Frequency	-	-	28	114	58	200
		Percentage	-	-	14%	57%	29%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	41	39	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	51%	49%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
Percentage		-	-	-	-	100	100%	
Adopts effective measures in soliciting support from influential and powerful people towards academic work	Students	Frequency	-	-	74	52	74	200
		Percentage	-	-	37%	26%	37%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	30	37	13	80
		Percentage	-	-	37%	47%	16%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	2	4	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%

Communicates a strong and challenging sense of vision and mission	Students	Frequency	-	-	52	44	104	200
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	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	26	54	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
Percentage		-	-	-	-	100%	100%	
Sets specific, measureable goals and holds students and teachers accountable for results	Students	Frequency	-	-	16	28	156	200
		Percentage	-	-	8%	14%	78%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	26	54	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
Percentage		-	-	-	-	100%	100%	
Employs listening and receptive skills to ascertain ideas and inputs	Students	Frequency	20	34	86	42	18	200
		Percentage	10%	17%	43%	21%	9%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	25	34	21	80

Employs listening and receptive skills to ascertain ideas and inputs	Students	Frequency	20	34	86	42	18	200
		Percentage	10%	17%	43%	21%	9%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	25	34	21	80
		Percentage	-	-	31%	43%	26%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	5	1	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	83%	17%	100%
Ensure timely supply of teaching/ learning material and library books	Students	Frequency	-	22	54	88	36	200
		Percentage	-	11%	27%	44%	18%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	9	47	24	80
		Percentage	-	-	11%	59%	30%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	2	4	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	33%	67%	100%
Ensures adequate provision of school infrastructure	Students	Frequency	-	14	48	86	52	200
		Percentage	-	7%	24%	43%	26%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	12	31	37	-	80
		Percentage	-	15%	39%	46%	-	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	6	-	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	100%	-	100%
Adopts effective measures to ensure monitoring and supervision	Students	Frequency	-	-	-	94	106	200
		Percentage	-	-	-	47%	53%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	63	17	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	79%	21%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Strongly believes in clear structure and chain of command	Students	Frequency	-	-	44	76	80	200
		Percentage	-	-	22%	38%	40%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	50	30	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	63%	37%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	4	2	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	67%	33%	100%
Puts measures in place to ensure discipline among students	Students	Frequency	-	-	-	64	136	200
		Percentage	-	-	-	32%	68%	100%
	Teachers	Frequency	-	-	-	21	59	80
		Percentage	-	-	-	26%	74%	100%
	Heads	Frequency	-	-	-	-	6	6
		Percentage	-	-	-	-	100%	100%

Source: Field survey 2013

**Table 11 . Perceived Leadership style**

Respondents	Democratic		Autocratic		Laissez-faire	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Students	34	17	156	78	10	5
Teachers	43	54	37	46	-	-

No. Of Students = 200

No. Of Teachers = 80

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Table 12. Preferred leadership style**

Respondents	Democratic		Autocratic		Laissez-faire	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Students	174	87	20	10	6	3
Teachers	78	98	-	-	2	2

No. Of Students = 200

No. Of Teachers = 80

Source: Field Survey, 2013



Table 13. Preferred leadership skills

Skills	Frequency/Percentage	Responses				Total
		4	3	2	1	
Interpersonal	Frequency	6	-	-	-	6
	Percentage	100	-	-	-	100%
Analytical	Frequency	-	6	-	-	6
	Percentage	-	100	-	-	100%
Excite and motivate	Frequency	-	-	6	-	6
	Percentage	-	-	100	-	100%
Political	Frequency	-	-	-	6	6
	Percentage	-	-	-	100	100%
Inspirational	Frequency	6	-	-	-	6
	Percentage	100	-	-	-	100%
Good listener	Frequency	-	6	-	-	6
	Percentage	-	100	-	-	100%
Technical expert	Frequency	-	-	6	-	6
	Percentage	-	-	100	-	100%
<b>Skilled negotiator</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	-	-	-	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	-	-	-	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Ability to make good decisions</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>6</b>	-	-	-	<b>6</b>

Energize and inspire others	Percentage	100	-	-	-	100%
	Frequency	-	6	-	-	6
Ability to coach and develop people	Percentage	-	100	-	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	6	-	6
Build strong alliance and power base	Percentage	-	-	100	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	-	6	6
Concern for people	Percentage	-	-	-	100	100%
	Frequency	6	-	-	-	6
Attention to detail	Percentage	100	-	-	-	100%
	Frequency	-	6	-	-	6
Ability to succeed in the face of conflict and opposition	Percentage	-	100	-	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	6	-	6
Charisma	Percentage	-	-	100	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	-	6	6
Clear, logical thinking	Percentage	-	-	-	100	100%
	Frequency	5	1	-	-	6
Caring & support for others	Percentage	83	17	-	-	100%
	Frequency	1	5	-	-	6
Imagination & creativity	Percentage	17	83	-	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	6	-	6
Toughness & aggressiveness	Percentage	-	-	100	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	-	6	6
Humanist	Percentage	-	-	-	100	100%
	Frequency	3	3	-	-	6
Visionary	Percentage	50	50	-	-	100%
	Frequency	3	3	-	-	6
Analyst	Percentage	50	50	-	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	6	-	6
Politician	Percentage	-	-	100	-	100%
	Frequency	-	-	-	6	6
	Percentage	-	-	-	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The responses indicate that a high percentage of the respondents have the view that leadership styles of school heads play a major role in determining the level of academic performance of the schools.

From table 9, 89% of the students who described their heads as autocratic answered that their schools' academic performance is very good and good, while 11% who described their heads as autocratic answered neutral in connection with their schools' academic performance. Also, 89% of the students who described their heads as democratic answered that their schools' academic performance is very good and good, whereas 11% who described their heads as democratic answered neutral in connection with their schools' academic performance. Furthermore, 89% of the students who described their heads as laissez-faire answered that their schools' academic performance is very good and good whereas 11% who described their heads as laissez-faire answered neutral in connection with their schools' academic performance.

A chi-square test of independence was used to explore the significance of relationship between leadership styles of headteachers and academic performance of schools during WASSCE. From table 9, a p-value of 0.24 ( $\chi^2 = 9.35$ ,  $df = 6$ ) implies that there is no significant association between the leadership style of headteachers and the academic performance of schools during WASSCE examinations. This is because the p-value of 0.24 was higher than the acceptable error margin of 0.05. The implication is that any leadership style could be used to improve academic performance of schools during WASSCE examinations.

This agrees with the finding of Miller and Rowan (2006) that leadership style was not a powerful determinant of student achievement at neither the elementary nor the secondary level. The results could be attributed to the fact that academic performance is influenced by a number of factors ranging from students' brilliance, need for achievement and teacher motivation to academic environment in the school. Miller and Rowan (2006) therefore conclude that once a headteacher establishes good basis for academic activities through his or her leadership style, the remaining relies on students' efforts.

On the question of other factors that students think account for the current academic performance of their schools, they indicated such factors as good teachers, availability of well-furnished libraries, science and computer laboratories and student discipline. Teachers also, in answering the question of other factors that they think account for the current academic performance of their schools, made mention of such factors as good facilities, teacher motivation, student discipline, students' determination and willingness to study and good school tone. The head teachers answered the question by mentioning such factors as student discipline, teacher incentives, qualified teachers, monitoring and supervision of work of teachers, teachers' and students' knowledge of and adherence to the schools' vision and mission and availability of teaching and learning materials and school facilities. The respondents share the opinion expressed by Armstrong (2010), who indicates that other factors such as the size of school, style of teaching and tone of the school, also determine the level of students' academic performance.

### Research Question Two

What roles and practices do headteachers play and employ to improve students' academic performance? This question was also answered using the tables below:

From table 10, on the question of whether the heads show high levels of concern for them, 33% of the students answered

their heads occasionally do, 42% answered their heads sometimes do, 14% answered their heads often do and 11% answered their heads always do that. From the teachers' point of view, 24% of them answered their heads sometimes do that, 47% answered their heads often do that and 29% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the head teachers, 33% answered they often do that whereas 67% answered they always do that.

On the question of whether the head inspires them to do their best academically, 14% of the students answered their heads sometimes do that, 27% answered their heads often do that and 59% answered their heads always do that. From the teachers' point of view, 64% answered their heads often does that while 36% answered their heads always does that. On the part of the heads, all of them (100%) answered they always does that. These encouraging responses from the respondents indicate that they are motivated to work hard to ensure high academic performance as expressed by Waters et al (2004) that head teachers should motivate and encourage all staff members to feel that they are part of a team with common mission of ensuring academic success.

On the question of building trust through open and collaborative relationships with them, 28% of the students answered their heads never do that, 57% answered their heads occasionally do that, 11% answered their heads sometimes do that and 4% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the teachers, 49% of them answered their heads sometimes do that, 33% answered their heads often do that and 18% answered their heads always do that. All the headteachers (100%) answered they always build trust through open and collaborative relationships with students and teachers. Rutherford (2006) is of the view that in schools where headteachers offer collaborative support to the staff and students towards a common goal, the result is phenomenal.

On the question of use of persuasive and influential tactics by head teachers to accomplish academic goals, 17% of the students answered their heads sometimes do that, 63% answered their heads often do that and 20% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the teachers, 47% answered their heads sometimes do that, 31% answered their heads often do that and 22% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the head teachers, 66% of them answered they sometimes do that, 17% answered they often do that and 17% answered they always do that.

On the question of how headteachers anticipated and dealt adroitly with conflicts in the schools, 14% of the students answered their heads sometimes did that, 57% answered their heads often do that and 29% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the teachers, 51% of them answered their heads often do that and 49% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the head teachers, all of them (100%) answered they always do that.

On the issue of how the headteachers adopted effective measures in soliciting support from influential and powerful people toward academic progress, 37% of the students answered their heads sometimes do that, 26% answered their heads often do that and 37% answered their heads always do that. From the teachers' point of view, 37% answered their heads sometimes do that, 47% answered their heads often do that and 16% answered their heads always do that. From the headteachers' point of view, 33% answered they often do that while 67% answered they always do that. Rutherford (2006) indicates that an important role of the school head is to solicit support and opinion from appropriate quarters to promote academic growth.

On the question of how headteachers communicate a strong and challenging sense of vision and mission of the schools to the students and teachers from time to time, 26% of the students answered their heads sometimes do that, 22% answered their heads often do that and 52% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the teachers, 33% of them answered their heads often do that while 67% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the headteachers, all them (100%) answered they always do that. Yukl (2006) indicates that head teachers are required first to improve the management of the schools, and this can be done by setting a clear vision for the schools and communicating this vision to teachers, supporting staff and students as well.

On the question of setting specific, measurable goals and holding students and teachers accountable for results, 8% of the students answered their heads sometimes do that, 14% answered their heads often do that and 78% answered their heads always do that. From the teachers' point of view, 33% answered their heads often do that and 67% answered their heads always do that. All the head teachers (100%) answered they always do that.

On the question of how headteachers employ listening and receptive skills to ascertain ideas and input from students and teachers to improve academic performance, 10% of the students answered their heads never do that, 17% answered their heads occasionally do that, 43% answered their heads sometimes do that, 21% answered their heads often do that and 9% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the teachers, 31% answered their heads sometimes do that, 43% answered their heads often do that and 26% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the head teachers, 83% answered they often do that whereas 17% answered they always do that.

On the question of whether headteachers ensure timely supply of teaching and learning materials and library books, 11% of the students answered their heads occasionally do, 27% answered their heads sometimes do that, 44% answered their heads often do that and 18% answered their heads always do that. From teachers' point of view, 11% answered their heads sometimes do that, 59% answered their heads often do that and 30% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the headteachers, (33%) answered they often do that and 67% answered they always do that. Musungu and Nasongo (2009) are of the view that as part of their roles, the heads of schools secure the appropriate syllabi for their teachers and ensure that timetables, course contents and textbooks are in readiness for use by both teachers and students.

On the question of whether headteachers ensure adequate provision of school infrastructure, 7% of the students answered their heads occasionally do that, 24% answered their heads sometimes do that, 43% answered their heads often do that and 26% answered their heads always do that. From the teachers' point of view, 15% answered their heads occasionally do that, 39% answered their heads sometimes do that and 46% answered their heads often do that. On the part of the headteachers, all of them (100%) answered they often do that. Leithwood (2006) indicates that the headteacher is responsible for provision of physical infrastructure such as school buildings, school grounds and equipment from the appropriate the quarters.

On the question of whether headteachers adopt effective measures to ensure monitoring and supervision, 47% of the students answered their heads often do that and 53% answered their heads always do that. From the teachers' point of view, 79% answered their heads often do that and 21% answered their heads always do that. On the part of the headteachers, all of them (100%) answered they always do that. Sammons et al

(2011) indicate that the head teacher is responsible for evaluating the school's performance to identify the priorities for continuous improvement and raising standards, and monitoring and assessing their progress and maintaining students' records.

In responding to the question on whether headteachers believe in clear structure and a chain of command and expect students and teachers to follow, 22% of the students answered their heads sometimes believe in that, 38% answered their heads often believe in that and 40% answered their heads always believe in that. From the point of view of the teachers, 63% of them answered their heads often believe in that and 37% answered their heads always believe in that. On the part of the headteachers, all of them (100%) answered they often believe in that.

On the question of whether head teachers put measures in place to ensure discipline among students, 32% of the students answered their heads often do that and 68% answered their heads always do that. On the part of teachers, 26% answered their heads often do that and 74% answered their heads always do that. With respect to the headteachers on the discipline question, all of them (100%) answered they always do that. Shushila (2004) indicates that it is the school head's duty to ensure discipline in the school by seeking the cooperation of the students through the Students' Representative Council (SRC) and the Disciplinary Committee.

### **Answer to Research Question Three**

What leadership styles do students, teachers and school administrators in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis prefer?

In this section students and teachers were asked to tell the leadership styles of their heads, state which styles they prefer from their heads and offer reasons for their choices.

From table 11, in responding to the question on what they thought was the leadership style of their heads, 78% of the students answered their heads are autocratic, 17% answered their heads are democratic and 5% answered their heads are laissez-faire in their style of leadership. On the part of the teachers, 46% of them answered their heads are autocratic and 54% answered their heads are democratic.

From table 12, in responding to the question on which leadership style they prefer their headteachers exhibited in their interactions with them, 87% of the students answered they prefer democratic style, 10% answered they prefer autocratic and 3% answered they prefer laissez-faire styles of leadership from their headteachers. On the part of the teachers, 98% answered they prefer democratic style and 2% answered they prefer laissez-faire styles of leadership from their headteachers.

In offering reasons for their choices made on the leadership styles they prefer from their heads, the students gave such reasons for democratic style as getting the opportunity to participate in decisions that concern them and having their grievances well heard and addressed by school authorities. The reasons given by the students for their choice of autocratic style were to obey school rules and regulations and making students learn hard. For the choice of laissez-faire style, the students gave their reason as allowing students to have free will to learn since they are of age, and that they needed not to be coerced to learn. On the part of teachers, they gave such reasons for their choice of democratic style as to participate in decisions that directly involve them and the students, making them feel part of the administration of the schools and getting the opportunity to be groomed to assume leadership roles in the days ahead. The reason given for the choice of laissez-faire style was they wish the headteachers gave them more room to operate to improve the academic performance and tone of the schools. Leithwood

(2006) is of the view that the laissez-faire leadership style is adopted when employees are highly experienced and need little supervision to obtain the expected outcome.

The headteachers were made to answer questions on their preferred leadership skills by imputing numbers to the skills and traits in order of preference, where the higher number represents more preference. These would in turn reveal their preferred leadership styles.

From table 13, in responding to the six (6) set of questions, the head teachers gave the following answers: for the first question; all the heads (100%) answered 4 for the phrase 'interpersonal skills', all of them (100%) answered 3 for the phrase 'analytical skills', all of them (100%) answered 2 for the phrase 'ability to excite and motivate' and all of them (100%) answered 1 for the phrase 'political skills'. According to Bolman and Deal (2010), this pattern of answers indicates a democratic style of leadership. For the second question, all of them (100%) answered 4 for inspirational leader, all of them (100%) answered 3 for good listener, all of them (100%) answered 2 for technical expert and all of them (100%) answered 1 for skilled negotiator. This pattern of answers, according to Bolman and Deal (2010), indicates a democratic style. For the third question, all of them (100%) answered 4 for ability to make good decision, all of them (100%) answered 3 for energise and inspire others, all of them (100%) answered 2 for ability to coach and develop people and all of them (100%) answered 1 for build strong alliances and power base. According to Bolman and Deal (2010), a pattern of answers such as this indicates a democratic style. For the fourth question, all of them (100%) answered 4 for concern for people, all of them (100%) answered 3 for attention to detail, all of them (100%) answered 2 for ability to succeed in the face of conflict and opposition and all of them (100%) answered 1 for charisma. Once again, Bolman and Deal (2010) say a pattern of answers like this indicates a democratic style. For the fifth question, majority of them (83%) answered 4 each for both Clear, logical thinking and Caring and support for others, while 17% answered 3 each for both Clear, logical thinking and Caring and support for others, all of them (100%) answered 2 for imagination and creativity, and all of them (100%) answered 1 for toughness and aggressiveness. This pattern of answers, according to Bolman and Deal (2010), also indicates a democratic style of leadership. For the sixth question, 50% of the headteachers answered 4 each for a humanist and a visionary, while 50% answered 3 each for a humanist and a visionary, all of them (100%) answered 2 for an analyst and all of them (100%) answered 1 for a politician. This pattern of responses, according to Bolman and Deal (2010), indicates a democratic style of leadership.

From Bolman and Deal's (2010) leadership frame, the responses given by the headteachers indicate they all prefer more the democratic style of leadership than the other leadership styles in the performance of their duties as headteachers.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, leadership is vital in raising and maintaining educational standards, providing clear leadership for staff and students, running the school effectively, and helping develop the ethos and vision for the school as a whole. Students and teachers whose headteachers practised democratic leadership style were more satisfied with their schools' leadership than those with autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. The implication is that students and teachers were more satisfied with participatory leadership style, where they can easily approach their heads and have their grievances addressed and offer their inputs into decisions regarding how their schools should be administered.

The study however found that any leadership approach could be used to enhance the academic achievement of senior high schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. The leadership styles adopted by headteachers were dependent on the experiences and perceptions of the headteacher. Conditions in schools therefore influence the style of leadership to be adopted by head teachers. Nevertheless, most students, teachers and headteachers prefer democratic leadership style. The study therefore concludes that leadership styles of headteachers influence the interactions between headteachers and teachers as well as between headteachers and students, which eventually influence school academic outcomes.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The study recommends that headteachers should adopt democratic leadership style. This was because teachers and students were more satisfied with democratic leadership style than other leadership approaches. Similarly, participatory leadership could help improve communication and interaction among headteachers, teachers and students. This would enable headteachers to be more abreast of issues concerning staff and students and address them as early as possible to enhance the academic performance of students. This could be done by inviting suggestions from staff and student leaders in schools' decision-making.
2. It is recommended that the headteachers should continue with their leadership roles and practices such as delegation of work, supervision and monitoring of work of teachers, setting clear, measurable and achievable goals for both staff and students and motivate them to attain them, explain the mission and vision of their schools to the staff and students, make policies that ensure full community participation in school management, timely and adequate supply and provision of teaching and learning materials and school infrastructure and ensure immediate resolution of conflicts and grievances. When all these practices and measures are put in place it would help improve teaching and learning in the schools thereby ensuring high academic performance.
3. The study further recommends that the Ghana Education Service should organise workshops and training programmes for headteachers on leadership from time to time. Headteachers could be taken through the qualities of a good leader, modern trends in educational leadership and academic performance, sharing vision with staff, how to accommodate difficult staff members and involve staff in schools' administration. This would enable the headteachers to practise participatory leadership as head teachers, teachers and students prefer.
4. The study suggests that the headteachers should continue to use their leadership to ensure discipline in the schools. This could be done by stipulating and making clear the rules and regulations of the schools to the students as well as their associated rewards and punishments. Well-behaved and disciplined students should be awarded to motivate others to emulate good behaviour. Similarly, those who disobey school rules should be punished to deter others from doing same.

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