

Perceived Impact of Continuous Professional Development on Performance of Senior High School Heads: Does Gender Matter?

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Abstract

Gender influences the perception of individual about a phenomenon based on the perceived benefits. The purpose of the study was to seek the understanding of the influence of Continuous Professional Development of senior high school heads on their performance as administrators of public SHS/TVET in Greater Accra Region with respect to gender. A descriptive survey method was used. A questionnaire was administered to the Heads (Headmaster, Assistant Head-Administration and Assistant Head-Academic) of SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region. The accessible population for this study comprised the heads of SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region. The target population consisted of all heads of the public SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region. A census was used for the sampling and a self-designed questionnaire with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.85 used to for data collection. Means and Standard Deviations, and independent t test were used to analyze the data. It was found that CPD has positive effect on the performance of the heads. It was also revealed that there was no statistically significant gender difference in effect of CPD on performance of heads of public SHS/TVET. Therefore, recommendation was made to the Ministry of Education to make policies for sponsorships of Continuous Professional Development for senior high school heads in the management of the SHS/TVET.

Keywords

Continuous Professional Development, Gender, School Leadership, School Management, Workload

1. Introduction

Globally, educational institutions are established to provide educational influence among others benefits to the society. To ascertain the achievement of established aim, institutional activities are coordinated by well-regulated goals. The ability to meet institutional goals is the hallmark of every organization. The failure of an institution occurs when the set goals are not met effectively and efficiently. According to Starratt (as cited in Afful-Broni, 2004), the importance of administrators in any institution or organization cannot be underestimated. Thus, effective administrators are needed to pave way for firm and the entire nation's progress.

Starratt (1996) indicated that effective administration is best done in a collective, cooperation and collaboration manner. Implying, administration is getting things done through people. This is an indication that all other functions of administration, planning, staffing, controlling and others are of no importance without people; hence, no organization could achieve its goals without human component of resource. Once people are needed to achieve organizational goals, the latent but necessary and essential resources should be maintained just as the maintenance of tangible assets is principal of the organization and better be updated to meet the requirements of the dynamic world in this 21st century. As a result, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) organizations can ascertain the achievement of set goals. Universally, CPD is important for the operations of every institution in placing employees to meet advancing trends of globalization.

For the purpose of aligning with the demand of 21st century, Goa (2021) opined that, educational institutions should perceive CPD as the sole procedure for maintenance, enhancement and widening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the performance of professional, managerial and technical duties throughout the working life of educational administrators and teachers. Collin, van der Heijden and Lewis (2012) opined that CPD is a life-long study as long as the administrator or teacher is executing duties for the attainment of academic excellence of an institution. Thus, there is execution of expectation by maintaining and improving the human resource for the benefit of members, students and the wider society.

Globally, CPD is said to have a massive impact on high school administrators. A similar case is perceived in Ghana. Many head teachers of senior high school have taken interest in enrolling in programmes that develops and update them through formal and informal sessions of CPD. The study of Odoom, Opoku and Ntiskoh-Ayipah (2016) indicated that classroom teachers should be taken through session of CPD entailing administrative skills of management, organization and supervision of educational institutions. To the authors, these very teachers rise to become potential but hard-working heads of institutions in the future.

Nasreen and Odhiambo (2018) and Odoom, Opoku and Ntiakoh-Ayipah (2016) posited that there is a significant difference in the administrators due to gender. They found in their studies that female administrators tend to perform bet-

ter than male counterparts. It is therefore also true that the performance of the female administrators is influenced by the benefits of CPD. The need to learn for effective administration and managing of senior high schools in Ghana could be achieved with manpower development. Hence, there is the need for CPD for senior high school heads. However, there are limited follow ups on heads to assess the impact of CPD in their managerial capability of these of senior high schools with respect to gender.

A quite number of studies have been done on CPD globally and locally. For instance, [Saleem, Gul and Dogar \(2021\)](#) investigated into CPD of teachers. However, they had interest in only teachers exempting the heads of the schools who manage and create the opportunities in terms of material, fiscal and time resources for the teachers to participate in CPD programs. Again, no attempt was made to establish the effect of gender on perceived effect of CPD on performance. [Alemayehu \(2021\)](#) also investigated into CPD. However, the researcher concentrated on the impacts on teaching staffs only and excluded those of the administrative staffs and the effect of gender.

In Ghana, the purpose of [Yaqub, Owusu-Cole and Ofosua's \(2020\)](#) study was to identify the challenges prohibiting academic staffs' participation in CPD in colleges of education. The study overlooked the senior high schools and landed in the tertiary college. [Adanu \(2007\)](#) studied the environment of professional staffs and the barrier to staffs' participation in CPD. However, the sample was from universities librarians. Another study by [Suaka and Kuranchie \(2018\)](#) aimed to explore the heads of schools' professional needs in school management in educational districts of Ghana. The study established one of the objectives of this current study although with a small sample size to establish the case of the study area used in the Central region of Ghana. All the researchers never looked at the gender effect with respect to the perceived effect of CPD on performance.

Therefore, the need to seek understanding as to whether CPD of senior high school heads contributes to their job performance in administration and management of the schools or not with respect to gender has motivated this study. There seem to be mix-perception as to the influence of CPD on senior high school heads and their performance in managing senior high schools under their care in Ghana particularly Greater Accra region.

2. Literature Review

Meaning and Nature of Continuous Professional Development

The most important activity of every farmer after planting is ensuring continuous cultural practices to increase yields. In the field of the job market, this is referred to as continuous professional development. [Ememe, Ezeh and Ekemezie \(2013\)](#) posited that CPD is the name connoting a continuous means through which individuals in the job build on already acquired knowledge and understanding to sustain up-to-date knowledge required to be successful on their job. A well planned and lifelong ongoing study that last as long as the individual re-

mains on the job. This process terminates only when there is exit on the job. [Guskey \(2000\)](#) added that although CPD activities are designed to improve the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of workers purposely such that there is a polish up in the learning of students. The uninterrupted process of follow up education required after the initial on job training. It purportedly enhances the quality of job performance process ([DSD, 2007](#)).

[Day \(1999\)](#) saw CPD on natural view through his definition. He believed CPD entail “all-natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contribute, through these, to the quality of education” (p. 4). Participating in a CPD program is a requirement although periods and fiscal resources among others might be bored by participants. [Alemayehu \(2021\)](#) confirmed this assertion that, CPD is the “concept that individual teachers strive to enhance their professional competence and knowledge beyond the initial training necessary to do their job” (p. 1).

CPD is also seen as the process of recoding and searching for evidence on the skills, knowledge and experience of portray expertise acquired through formally and informally beyond the initial training on the job. It documents the experience, manner of which it was learnt and should be applied. CPD as a term generally forms a folder or portfolio for documenting development as professionals.

According to [Qiu \(2018\)](#), in CPD learning, professionals are engaged to instill and intensify their abilities. The process uses various methods including seminars, conferences, workshops, training courses. The face-to-face sessions of meeting are mostly employed except in special cases where the e-learning might be necessary. A session of CPD program focuses on its aim of upgrading and updating individual participants to create knowledge banks, skills and competencies to enhance expertise on job performance.

The competence of the participant in a CPD program means the ability to apply novel knowledge, skills, and abilities. It subsumes personal qualities of the participants required for the efficient in accomplishing tasks on the job. This further correlates with attributes that deal with emotional, social, cognitive, intellectual, psychomotor ([Day, 1999](#)) required for success. Obviously, there is improvement in the performance of institutions ([Boam & Weindling, 2006](#)) when there is massive participation of administrators in CPD programs. A regular participating in CPD programs is more of 1) developing a documentary process by oneself excluding any input of the employer, 2) focusing directly on knowledge acquisition that is reflective, reviewed and based on experience, 3) creating goal and objectives for oneself, and 4) subsuming both formal and informal learning processes.

The nature of CPD enables learning to become conscious and proactive rather than passive and reactive. It is the holistic commitment of professionals towards the enhancement of personal skills and proficiency throughout their careers. CPD combines different methodologies of learning, such as training workshops, conferences and events, e-learning programs, best practice techniques and ideas shar-

ing, all focused for an individual to improve and have effective professional development. Engaging in CPD ensures that both academic and practical qualifications do not become out-dated or obsolete; allowing individuals to continually “up skill” or “re-skill” regardless of occupation, age or educational level (Qiu, 2018).

Influence/Functions of Continuous Professional Development

According to Nicholson, Harris-John and Schimmel (2005), CPD for leaders (heads) of educational institutions was crucial for leading schools to meet the demands for increased achievement. Bozak, Karadağ and Bolat (2018) outlined the content relevance topics for CPD that heads of educational institutions receive to include ...

... “educational leadership, developing vision and strategy, school culture, organizational behavior, project management, school management, professional and administrative ethic, quality management at education, time management, protocol rules, conflict and stress management, performance management at education, school environment relations, team work, problem solving technics, running an educational institution, ICT, managing modular personal information systems of Ministry of Education, fiscal management, fiscal laws and regulations, school hostels management, inspection and inquiry, consulting and guiding, management of special education, rules of official correspondence”. (p. 235).

CPD exists for the benefits of both individuals (staffs) as well as lead administrators to take chances in intensifying their skills and abilities on an ongoing basis of their jobs in the labour market. CPD ascertains learning progressed in a structured, practical and relevant ways and creates opportunity for employees and employers to focus on required specified skills and knowledge acquired in short-term periods for confidentiality and expertise attainment; tailored for improvement within their proficiency and skill sets to meet current trend of demands. The benefits as noted by Pedder, Storey and Opfer (2008) can be classified on staffs and institutional bases. The staffs’ benefits include:

- 1) taking the advantage to work with other colleagues within and from other sister institutions.
- 2) intensifying professional abilities and practices to improve performance at work purposely to impress current and prospective employers.
- 3) learning procedures in resolving immediate challenges and needs that arise while at work.
- 4) having a positive and in-depth knowledge on client demand to best level of service possible specially for school improvement and students’ achievement in educational institutions.
- 5) gaining better understanding of job demands or requirement boost self-confidence and expertise at work.
- 6) favouring new recruits’ accreditation as a tool for career development more than experienced colleagues.
- 7) developing and improving on more leadership responsibilities for employ-

ees in the administrative career positions.

8) providing an overview of professional development to date through individual documentation of progress. This tends enhance professional reputation and open doors to excellent future employment opportunities and evidenced based appraisals and promotion by employer.

9) helping identify deficiency in knowledge, skills and capabilities on-the-job demands to develop ambition and commitment to professional self-improvement.

10) promoting independent learning to stay up to date with the latest trends and learn new skills.

Research Question

The research question formulated to guide the study was:

What is the perceived impact of CPD on performance of senior high school head in Greater Accra Region?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:

H₀: There is no statistical difference in gender of senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region on perceived impact of CPD on performance.

H₁: There is a statistical difference in gender of senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region on perceived impact of CPD on performance.

3. Methodology

Research Design

The study employed the descriptive survey with the quantitative approach. “Quantitative research allows researchers to be independent in exploring their ideas on developing proper guidelines for their studies, and it seeks a reality that is objective, singular, and that can clarify existing theories” (Creswell, 2013: p. 123). The method involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of quantitative data (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007; Sarantako, 1988). As explained by Creswell (2013), descriptive survey design is purported to observe, describe and present the situation of an issue as a natural phenomenon. That is to point out, from the collected data what is happening at only a point in time. Considering the nature of the study, the researchers selected this condition for the analysis of the influence of CPD that already exists.

Population of the Study

The population for the study comprises all professional employees of the senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region. The accessible population was all administrative staffs of the public senior high/technical schools out of which the heads of the schools formed the target population. Senior high schools are managed by heads and their two assistants in charge of academic and administration. For the purpose of this study the accessible population was the headmasters/mistresses and their two assistants in charge of academic and administration in each senior high school. The accessible population was 222.

Sampling Procedure and Sampling Size

A census survey procedure was used to select heads and their assistant; academics and administration in all senior high schools of the Greater Accra Region for the study. The total of 156 heads respondent to the questionnaire. According to Cooper and Schindler (2009), census survey involves the use of all members in any population of interest. Data collected through census is more reliable and accurate because every individual forming part of the population is studied for in depth understanding of the influence of CPD for heads of senior high schools (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2005). In addition, census sampling limits biasness in the sampling process therefore using the study results for generalization is more credible. Besides the strengths of census sampling lies the high demands of time, fiscal and other resources to access data from every member of the population (Ary, Jacob, & Sorensen, 2010).

Instrumentation

The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers. The four-point Likert scaled questionnaire was mainly used and have various score values. Statements was scored as Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1. The questionnaire made up of two parts. The first part elicited information on the bio-data on the heads selected for the study. The second part elicited information on the perceived influence CPD on the performance of their duties as administrators of senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach's coefficient alpha and a reliability value of 0.85 was attained.

Data Collection Procedure

The primary researcher sought permission from the heads of the school for support and collaboration during data collection. Two research assistants were trained and used in the data collection. This enabled the researchers to use two weeks to distribute and retrieved the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered by the researchers themselves with the help of the two assistants. The data was collected from heads and the assistants of the senior high schools. The questionnaires were administered to respondents and were given two days for their completion and collection. From the anticipated population of 222, 156 heads were at post at the time of data collection and responded to the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Items of questionnaires were scored accordingly, coded and was analysed using the appropriate statistical tools and SPSS version 23. The analysis employed the computation of descriptive statistics specifically, means and standard deviations to answer the research questions, and inferential statistics; independent sample t-tests to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at .05 significance level.

4. Results

Research question

The purpose of the research question was to find out from the administrators the impact of implementing CPD in their schools. The descriptive statistics of

the results on the perceived effect of CPD by senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region is presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1 shows the results of the perceived effect of CPD by senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region. The results show that generally, the administrators agree with the statements concerning perceived effect of CPD by senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region. It was realized that the mean of means; $M = 3.28$; $SD = 0.878$ is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50 indicating that the administrator agreed with the statement on perceived effect of CPD by senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region. The results revealed that the administrators have a positive perceived effect of CPD by senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region.

The administrators expressed their positive perceived effect on CPD that the CPD change existing administration habits ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.042$), change thinking about administration methods ($M = 3.80$; $SD = 0.402$), improve administration competence ($M = 3.72$; $SD = 0.697$) and develop whole school growth (general development) ($M = 3.38$; $SD = 1.042$). The means of these perceived effects were greater than the mean of means of 3.28.

Analysis of Data on Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in gender of senior high school heads in Greater Accra Region on perceived impact of Continuous Professional Development on performance

The purpose of the research hypothesis was to find out if a significant gender difference exists in the effect of CPD of heads. Independent t test was used to analyse the data. This is because there is one independent variable, gender, with

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the results on the perceived impact of continuous professional development by senior high school heads in greater Accra region (N = 156).

Item	Mean	Std Dev.
1 Contribute to personal development	2.77	0.993
2 Make work life better (support)	3.00	0.899
3 Provide information	3.25	0.435
4 Develop leadership confidence	3.06	0.930
5 Increase skills	3.18	0.757
6 Change existing administration habits	3.38	1.042
7 Change thinking about administration methods	3.80	0.402
8 Improve administration competence	3.72	0.697
9 Develop excellence	3.24	0.780
10 Develop whole school growth (general development)	3.38	1.042
Mean of Means	3.28	0.878
Mean of Standard Deviation		

Source: Field survey (2022).

Table 2. Results of the independent t test.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Df	Sig. (2-t)	Mean Diff
Male	115	48.28	2.425	0.708	154	0.481	0.31
Female	41	47.97	3.064				

Source: Field survey (2022).

two levels (males and females). Also, the dependent variable, effect of CPD, is continuous in nature. The result of the independent t test is presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2 shows the results of the descriptive statistics and comparison of the gender on the effect of CPD in the performance of heads. **Table 2** shows that within the male, $M = 48.28$, $SD = 2.425$ and $N = 115$ and within female, $M = 47.97$, $SD = 3.064$ and $N = 41$. This shows that the male administrators perceive CPD to have high effect on performance than the female administrator and the t test was used to investigate if the difference was significant or not. The results of the independent t test was, $t(154) = 0.708$, $p = 0.481$ (two tailed) and a mean difference of 0.31 in favour of the male administrators. The degree of freedom which is discrete means variances are assumed equal. This shows that there was no statistically significant gender difference in effect of CPD on performance of heads of public SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

5. Discussion

Effects of CPD on Performance of Senior High School Administrators

This study revealed that the heads expressed that their performance is dependent on the perception of professional development and understanding the importance of professional development as a job motivator. Again, the study revealed that there was no statistically significant gender difference in effect of CPD on performance of heads of public SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. That is, there is no difference in perceived effect of CPD program between male and female administrators. This means that irrespective of their gender, the heads expressed that CPD programs influence performance.

The study of [Saleem, Gul and Dogar \(2021\)](#) revealed CPD helped the respondent to perform their job effectively and efficiently. This is the same finding that was revealed in this study. It can be concluded that irrespective of the geographical area, the benefits of CPD programs cannot be relegated to the background and the participants know this. Also, the study of [Alemayehu \(2021\)](#) revealed that CPD improved the staffs' competencies and skills in executing duties to expectations. Similar to the finding of [Saleem, Gul and Dogar \(2021\)](#), this finding of [Alemayehu \(2021\)](#) is confirmed by the study.

Another study which is consistent with this study is [Nasreen and Odhiambo \(2018\)](#). The results of the analyses indicated that heads of secondary schools reported of positive impact of CPD programs on their duties. Even though the methodology of this study differs from that of [Nasreen and Odhiambo \(2018\)](#), the results are similar. Whiles this study used a quantitative approach, [Nasreen](#)

and Odhiambo (2018) adopted a mixed design methodology. The methodology does not affect the findings of the study as far the effect of CPD programs on performance is concern. Similarly, Adanu (2007) added that CPD had positive impact on staffs' job advancement and updated their skills leading to competence. The findings of both the study of Nasreen and Odhiambo (2018) and Adanu are confirmed by this study.

On the effect of CPD programs on performance of public heads of SHS/TVET, Suaka and Kuranchie (2018) reported that CPD programs have affected their managerial skills as well as professional growth and development. Abakah (2019) and Dampson, Anator, and Eshun (2018) did not mix words as their studies revealed that staffs' participation in CPD improved their knowledge and skills content and that heads of schools understood CPD programs are organized to improve their professional competence. It further revealed that learning patterns undertaking during CPD programs had positive influence on heads of schools' administrative practices. All these studies had findings similar to this study. Even though, there are differences in study area and methodology, the results agree with the study on the effect on CPD programs on performance that CPD programs has the potential of positively influencing the performance of the heads of institutions; in this case, heads of public SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region.

Contrary to this study which found that there is no significant different in perceived impact of CPD on their job due to gender, Dilshad, Hussain and Batool (2019) found that among university teachers in Pakistan, there was a significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the importance CPD activities in their careers. The importance attached to CPD by males and females thus might influence by the job of the respondents. While in the case of Dilshad, Hussain and Batool (2019), the respondents were teachers, this study used Heads of public SHS/SHTSs. In relation to this study, gender does not matter with respect to perceived impact of CPD on the performance of the job of heads of public SHS/SHTS in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

6. Recommendations and Conclusion

It is recommended to the Ministry of Education to make policies as to 1) enhancing sponsorships of CPD for senior high school heads and 2) increase the frequency of Continuous Professional Development to be developed for senior high school heads in Ghana. This would help unearth the benefits of CPD in the management of the SHS/TVET in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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