

**FEMALE LEADERSHIP DISCOURSES: THE DYNAMICS OF TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE UPPER DENKYIRA EAST MUNICIPALITY OF GHANA.**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study sought to explore the leadership styles that female head teachers employ in managing their schools and their teachers job performance in Upper Denkyira East municipality of Ghana. The researchers explored the leadership styles of head teachers to establish if it is helping teachers to perform their teaching and learning jobs well. An exploratory mixed method design was used in the study where a total sample of nineteen head teachers and one hundred and five teachers' were selected. Nineteen female head teachers and one hundred and five teachers were given questionnaires to respond to, ten out of the one hundred and five teachers were picked for observation on teachers' job performance. Later five head teachers were interviewed. The primary data was collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides for teachers and that of heads. The entire questionnaire used in the study had the reliability of 0.81 of interview data helped in establishing the leadership styles and challenges female head teachers experience in their line of duty. Besides independent sample t-test, Chi-square, correlation and One – Way ANOVA were used to test formulated hypotheses on female head teachers' leadership styles and teachers' job performance. The research revealed that the female head teachers perceived that they are employing the situational and democratic leadership styles. Besides, family issues were the major barrier women in leadership face. In addition, teachers who worked under female head teachers who employed situational type of leadership style had the highest level of job performance. Based on these findings, it was recommended that female heads should do away with top down decision-making processes, share responsibility and power for leadership widely throughout the school and take the staff opinions into account.*

**KEYWORDS:** Female Leadership, Discourses, Teacher Performance , Basic Schools , Upper Denkyira, East Municipality , Ghana.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The educational system in Ghana has been going through a lot of changes in seeking good administrative measures in order to offer quality education and in turn produce quality work force.

In view of this, there have been many educational policies in the country, such as school feeding, free uniforms for school children. The issue of good leadership within the educational set up could also be a factor in the attainment of the nation's educational objective, which is producing holistic human beings fit for the job market and society. The issue is what kind of leadership styles pertain in our educational sector and how do these leadership styles impact on the performance of teachers? In particular the researchers are very much interested in female head teachers' leadership styles in the management of basic schools and how the head teachers are employing their leadership styles to help teachers perform their jobs. Is their kind of leadership the type that will create room for quality education in Ghanaian schools? Thus, a leadership style that gives birth to good interpersonal relationships, as well as motivating teachers to perform and influence quality instructional decision in the school that has a rippling positive effect on students by achieving the best results, which will be desirable.

According to Mescon, Albert and Khedour (1988), leadership is simply the ability to influence individuals to work towards attaining organizational goal or objectives. For Mankoe (2007), "leadership is required wherever two or more people with common objectives converge to engage in activities of some sort towards achieving that common objective". Being a leader is the most important position in any institution where goals are being set and these goals are to be achieved by both the leader of the group and his/her subordinates. The leader tries so hard to convince or persuade followers by talking them through the need to attain the vision. House and Baetz (1979) are of the view that leadership takes place in groups of two or more people and most frequently involves influencing group members' behaviour as it relates to the pursuit of the groups' goals. From the above, the leader cannot lead him or herself alone, but there must be two or more people comprising the leader and subordinates to be led in order to attain a common objective for a common good of the organization or school. From the perspective of Mankoe (2007) and House et al (1979), as the leader leads the group, there must be a goal they are interested in and they are striving to achieve. At this point the leader under his/her good leadership acts tries to influence the followers by motivating them in reaching their set goal or target. Motivation in this sense could mean the presence of 'we feeling', guiding followers to make decisions on their own, the leader being there for his/her subordinates in achieving set goals and the leader putting him/herself in their situation to help them maximize their self-confidence and competence.

Musaazi (1982) argues that in all organizations, there must be somebody or group of people to direct resources including employees, money, materials and equipment towards achieving organizational goals and maintaining standards. Leaders are people who are supposed to be 'super-visionary' in their respective organizations. They super - see good things and even other good hidden variables that are not visible to the rest of the people they are with. The leader is like a train head which guides the other coaches to move on the rail. They give direction. If it deflects, the rest of the coaches will also de-rail and the results will be devastating. This could be so bloody that none of the pieces could be retrieved. In the twenty-first century it has become increasingly necessary that in order to be effective and have followers, school leaders will have to create something new (Kellerman, 1999). This will require head teachers to know their followers and

look out for their welfare, training teachers as a team, seeking self-improvement, making sound and timely decisions, seeking responsibility and taking responsibility for their actions.

From what Kellerman (1999) has said that, creativity is a very vital element for a leader if he/she wants to make effective strides. The school has an organization under pressure in the twenty first century where stakeholders and the media hold head teachers and teachers accountable for best results. Stakeholders expect head teachers and teacher to help their students to come out of school as holistic human beings, full of knowledge, skills, good attitudes and above all as critical thinkers and problem solvers. Hence, leadership in our schools is supposed to be creative, by looking at situations on hand and using various styles of leadership to bring teachers and students on board to achieve goals.

Leadership style refers to a leader's behavior. In other words, it is the response of a leader to situations at his or her place of work. It is the result of the philosophy, personality, and experience of the leader. There are many different leadership styles that can be exhibited by leaders in a school, political, business or other fields. Different situations call for different leadership styles. For example; in an emergency when there is little time to converge on an agreement and where a designated authority has significantly more experience or expertise than the rest of the team, an autocratic leadership style may be effective. However, in a highly motivated and aligned team with a homogeneous level of expertise, a democratic or laissez-faire style may be effective. The style adopted should be the one that most effectively achieves the objectives of the group while balancing the interests of its individual members.

Two categories of people emerge in any organizational setting - male and female. Any of these categories of people can be in leadership position with different styles. In spite of the different leadership styles one may use, it definitely has to yield some kind of results which may be good or bad for the organization such as the school. Whether the person uses his masculine or feminine instinct, there are certain behaviours which will show up. Examples of these natural feeling can be communal, softness, and understanding, being strong, assertiveness, individualistic, taking charge, providing answers and exerting control. Most of the above mentioned natural feelings are demonstrated by the basic school head teachers as they go about their normal administrative duties in their schools. This is no different in the leadership styles exhibited by female head teachers in Ghanaian schools. For example, whenever there are meetings, seminars, conferences or courses for teachers, some of the gathered teachers through conversation talk bitterly about their female head teachers and the maltreatment meted out to them. As a result they are not motivated, unhappy and not satisfied in their various schools. This leads to the low performances of teachers in schools, and ultimately with the learners academic performance. Perschel (2009) asserts that, women are communal, soft, understanding and good builders of interpersonal relationship. This is because women are child- bearers and are mostly involved in bringing up children. They tend to exhibit empathetic traits that make them to be good managers of the home. However, it has been observed that, when they are given leadership positions some of them are perceived to behave like men, by exhibiting traits of the “great man” theory, like being strong and assertive so that they can fit into the man’s world by leading themselves and others (men and women).

Undeniably, the end result of education is development as stated in the millennium development goals. These goals seek to achieve universal basic education, because education is development for people; it reduces the burden of poverty and diseases, and gives a stronger voice to members of society. For nations it creates a dynamic workforce and well-informed citizens who are able to compete and cooperate globally, opening doors to economic and social prosperity. From what the millennium goals seek to achieve, if leadership positions held by females in basic schools work towards these goals then Ghana will produce more educated persons. It is therefore, against this backdrop that this work seeks to investigate the leadership styles of female head teachers in managing basic schools in Upper Denkyira East municipality and correlate them with standard leadership norms.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study employed exploratory mixed method approach in the collection and analysing data. According to Cohen & Manion (2001) the mixed method provides greater strengths to researchers, and enhances both the quality and perception of others, involved in the research. Mixed method is also useful in investigating human behaviour. In justifying the case for the use of the mixed approach, Babbie & Mouton (2004) state that using different sources and methods in the research process, the researcher can build on the strengths of each type of data collection and minimize the weaknesses of any single approach and therefore maximize the strength of the qualitative and the quantitative methods used together.

### **Sampling**

For the purpose of this study, respondents were selected by simple random means to get the respondents who could give accurate information for this study. From the teachers target population, a sample of 105 respondents was chosen for the study using simple random sampling. In this vein all the teachers both male and females in each school were given equal chance to pick from folded pieces of paper on which 'YES or NO', was written on them and put on a table. Those who selected 'YES' were taken to represent that school, in addition, 19 female head teachers purposively were chosen from nineteen (19) schools. Thus the total of 124 respondents comprised of 105 teachers and 19 heads were asked to respond to the questionnaire. Furthermore, 5 head teachers were purposively selected from the 19 female head teachers to throw more light on the emerging issues through semi-interview. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2006) purposive sampling is used where the sample is chosen according to the information the researchers need.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used include a questionnaire with 16-items was designed to determine leadership styles used by female heads at Basic school in the study area. Participants were to respond to whether each item was present in their head teacher's leadership behaviour on a 6-item point likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3) Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5), Non-applicable options. Performance of teachers was measured using the Job Performance Observation (TJPO). The instrument was adapted by the researchers from university of Education Intern Record Book. This is a 32-item self-report scale. The researchers observed ten teachers in

their schools and rated the performance accordingly. The researchers purposefully selected five schools out of which two teachers each were selected for observation. It is 5-point scale ranging from Not Performing (0), Below Average (1), Average (2), Above Average (3) and Excellent (4). Indeed, the observation instrument used had higher scorer reliability co-efficient of .866. The researchers interviewed the head teachers by using the interview guide as a research instrument. The guide contained prepared questions which were put to the respondents, and probed further for answers. It was a one on one interview and the conversation was taped and later transcribed by the researcher.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected from the study were analyzed in two ways. Descriptive analysis and inferential statistics were generated to produce overall picture of questionnaire responses. Parametric method was used to answer the researchers' hypotheses. Independent sample t-test, Chi – Square test, Correlation Matrix, and One – Way ANOVA were used to test the formulated hypotheses. The interview data in this study were thus analyzed following the inductive analysis strategies. The analysis of data obtained from interviews was done by identifying common ideas from the interviewees' description of their experiences. All of the study hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0 program developed by Hull and Nie (1986).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Leadership styles of female head teachers of Upper Denkyira East schools**

The research question under this theme is meant to find out the kind of leadership style the female heads in the study area employed in managing their schools. Five female head teachers were interviewed to answer this research question. The following themes were drawn from the interviewees' responses:

- a. Situational leadership, and
- b. Democratic leadership

The respondents who were categorized on the situational emphasized that their school leadership is situational. One of them pointed out that: "I do not employ one specific leadership style, but act on situations". She further claimed that: "Certain situations call for authoritarian, democratic or participative leadership style" (Head teacher1, Interviewed data, 2014). She went on further to give this example:

if I went to the municipal education office and I was asked by the officer in charge of logistics to pick the schools share of logistics the office is distributing, I don't think I have to come back to school to discuss with my teachers on whether to take it or not and also how to get a loan to hire a taxi to bring the items to school, no!! on my own and been autocratic at that material moment, as a head teacher I have to look for a loan to be able to convey all the items to school since a delay will mean that my school will have to wait for the next consignment which may, I said may even not arrive (Head teacher 1, Interviewed data, 2014).

Another female head expressed her opinion that:

Leadership is a process of interpersonal influence from the leader to subordinate(s) in a direction of a goal, where the subordinate(s) subsequently act on their own will in the direction sought for by the leader, therefore specific situation demands specific type of leadership style (Head teacher 2, Interviewed data, 2014).

The respondents who were categorized on the democratic emphasized that their school leadership is democratic. One of them stated that: “I encourage teachers’ participation, rely on teachers’ knowledge for completion of tasks, and depend on teachers respect for influence” (Head teacher 3, Interviewed data, 2014). Another head teacher emphasized that: “I empower my teachers and this allows them to play a significant role in decision making and in controlling their teaching milieu”. Another head boldly pointed out that: “I encourage collaboration amongst staff in order to create a stimulating environment and this had improved teaching and learning in the school” (Head teacher 4, Interviewed data, 2014).

Table 1 (below) describes the leadership practices employed by female heads in basic schools in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality of Ghana.

<b>Leadership Practices</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Enabling	19.41	4.18
Modeling	18.01	5.21
Encouraging	16.98	7.16
Challenging	16.61	7.24
Inspiring	15.92	7.43

Source: Fieldwork (2014).

**Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Leadership Practices Inventory**

Table 1 above shows the means and standard deviation of how the teachers rated their female heads on the five leadership practices. Teachers rated their female heads highest, 19.41 in enabling others to act (e.g., “My head teacher develop cooperative relationships among the people she works with”; “My head teacher actively listens to diverse points of view”; she treats others with dignity and respect”), followed by modelling the way, 18.01 (e.g., :My head teacher sets a personal example of what she expects from others”, “she follows through on the promises and commitments that she makes”, “she asks for feedback on how her actions affect other people’s performance”). The next highest rated leadership practices were encouraging the teachers 16.98%. For example, (“my head teacher praises people for a job well done”; “She makes it a point to let people know about her confidence in their abilities”; “she publicly recognizes people who exemplify commitment to shared values”). This is followed by challenging the process which is subscribed by 16.61% of respondents. They assert that: “my head teacher seeks out challenging opportunities that tests her skills and abilities”; “she challenges people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work”; Another says “She experiments and takes risks, even when there is a chance of failure”. The teachers rated their female heads lowest, that 15.92% in inspiring a shared vision. For example one respondent says “my head teacher talks about future trends that will influence

how our work gets done”. Another says “she describes a compelling image of what our future could be like” And another says “she appeals to others to share an exciting dream of the future”.

### **Women’s Challenges in leadership positions**

The research question that underpins this theme seeks to identify the challenges faced by females in leadership. These challenges contribute to female under representation in higher leadership position. Four themes emerged from the data namely; socio-cultural factors, lack of mentoring, low level of aspiration, and family issues. The respondents who commented on the socio-cultural factors emphasized that: In many societies, girls are confined to their home where they are taught to accept orders from everybody, including brothers. The fact that women are expected to accept men’s decisions without question transfers from household to social and political environments where men continue to be the decision makers. Here in the school the men are not showing it too much, but at times when you ask them to do certain things they will try to challenge you, especially when you need the work urgently, all because a woman is giving the orders (Head teacher 1, Interviewed data, 2014).

Another head commented: “Women tend to lack the confidence and skills necessary for leadership due to earlier minimal access to education and training” (head teacher 4). She further indicated that:

Problem faced by women aspiring to leadership position might be of behavioral double-mind, in which society’s expectation or perception is that, for a woman to be an effective leader she should exhibit masculine behavior, such as tough and authoritative. However, when women exhibit such behaviors, they are portrayed as misfits. (Headteacher 2. Interviewed data, 2014).

With regard to the participants who commented on inadequate mentoring, they indicated that inadequate mentoring was a challenge they faced at their post as female head teachers because most of those who mentored them were male headteachers. One female head teacher suggested that: “women at higher ranks were unwilling to mentor because they did not want to share the limelight with others, and also because competitive feeling toward other women prevented them from filling this role” (Head teacher 4. Interviewed data, 2014). Another female head retorted that: Women refuse to submit themselves to the cross-gender mentoring arrangement because, they prefer women as mentors. They think that women, having gone through some experience can better identify with their problems and sorrows whereas, they suspect that men mentors would misunderstand these problems to be their weaknesses instead of helping them out with those problems’ (Head teacher 3. Interviewed data, 2014).

In addition, the participants who made mention of low level of aspiration hindering their role as female heads emphasized on the inflammatory words from their male subordinates. They believe that such words had changed the leadership behaviours and practices of women. One of the female head teachers reported that:

most of my teachers are males and they some times make comments like, no matter what you do you are a woman and when you go home you are under a man, you will also end up in the kitchen

from here. Some of these comments do discourage me in aspiring to higher heights (Head teacher5. Interview data, 2014).

Another respondent said that: “my kids are very young and I am suppose to take care of them, because of that I am not always able to meet my targets on the job, and also I am not able to develop myself to the height I want to reach” (Head teacher 2. Interview data 2014).

And another respondent claimed that: “some women are not bold, they are suffering inferiority complex, because of this they cannot move on to achieve higher possitions in their profession. They are afraid people will tag them as being too hard” (Head teacher3, Interviewed data 2014). Every leader needs higher level of aspiration in order to get highly motivated so that together with subordinates they can achieve the vision of the school. Women in leadership position should be encouraged to be bold and do away with the spirit of inferiority complex that relegate them to the background so that they can achieve objectives of the schools.

### **Family issues as a challenge to female headteachers**

Commenting on this as a challenge, one head teacher remarked that: many females have reached the pinnacles of their careers to the detriment of their families and their health. A good number of women have problems with juggling roles as mothers, housewives, home-makers and leaders at work. The challenge of maintaining work/life balance when traced to time to meet their various commitments gets them frustrated, and they feel trapped” (Head teacher 5. Interview data, 2014).

Another also said that:

I double as a mother, wife, home maker and above all a leader of a school, because of this I don't even have time for myself let alone having time for social networks with friends and colleagues, which will help me connect to a lot of people in order to advance in career. I am always busy' (Head teacher3 Interviewed data 2014).

### **Testing of the study's hypotheses**

Ho: Teacher performance on the job will not be significantly influenced by the style of leadership.

H1: Teacher performance on the job will be significantly influenced by the style of leadership.

To test this hypothesis, One –Way ANOVA was conducted to compare their means. The test is meant to identify whether the mean for the teachers job performance differ with respect to the kind of leadership styles employed by their heads that is, whether the leadership style is democratic, situational, laissez-faire or autocratic. Table 2 below presents the results of the Levene test.



Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig
1.633	3	101	0.186

Source: Fieldwork (2014).

### Table 2: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Test is the test used to examine the homogeneity of variances. One-way ANOVA assumes that the variances of the groups are all equal. Table 2 (above) displays the result of the Levene test for homogeneity of variances, and the significance value 0.186 exceeds .05. This suggests that the variances for the four groups of subjects, i.e. autocratic, situational, democratic and laissez – faire leadership styles are equal. Therefore, the assumption is justified that the null hypothesis is not rejected on the grounds that the variances are all equal. Since the variances appear to be equal, the ANOVA test is continued.

Female head teachers L/S	Mean	Standard Deviation
Autocratic	2.7	0.36
Situational	3.4	0.50
Democratic	3.1	0.42
Laissez – Faire	1.8	0.40

Source: Fieldwork (2014).

### Table 3: Descriptive statistics of female heads leadership styles and teachers job performance

Table 3 above shows significant differences on the means between the Autocratic (M = 2.7, SD = 0.36) and Situational (M = 3.4, SD= 0.50) of leadership styles, Autocratic and Democratic (M = 3.1, SD= 0.42), Autocratic and Laissez – Faire (M = 1.8, SD = 0.40). In addition, there is significance differences of the mean between the Situational (M = 3.4, SD= 0.50) and Democratic (M = 3.1, SD= 0.42), Situational and Laissez – Faire (M = 1.8, SD = 0.40) and Democratic and Laissez – Faire of the female heads leadership styles. These means and their standard deviations are useful in interpreting the direction of any effect that emerges in the analysis.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	25.837	3	8.612	42.505	0.000
Within Groups	20.465	101	0.203		
Total	46.301	104			

Source: Fieldwork, 2014.

### Table 4: One-Way ANOVA on Female heads Leadership Styles

Table 4 above illustrates results of the analysis of One - Way ANOVA. In One - Way ANOVA, the total variation is partitioned into two components: between groups, and within groups. Between groups represents variation of the group mean around the overall mean. Within Groups represents variation of the individual scores around their respective group mean. Sig indicates the significance level of the F-test (F-test is the test used to determine whether the ANOVA is significant). The significance value  $.000 < .05$  indicates there are significant group differences. The significant level indicates that at least one of the regions differs from the others. Post Hoc comparisons are the method used to determine which group(s) differ. Post-hoc comparisons were conducted using Bonferroni test. The result of the post –hoc analysis is presented in table 5 (below).

Group comparison	Confidence lower bound	Difference between mean	Confidence upper bound
1 – 2	-1.04	-0.77*	-0.49
1 – 3	-0.86	-0.48*	-1.00
1 – 4	0.43	0.92*	1.40
2 – 3	-0.07	0.29	0.64
2 – 4	1.23	1.69*	2.15
3 – 4	0.87	1.40*	1.93

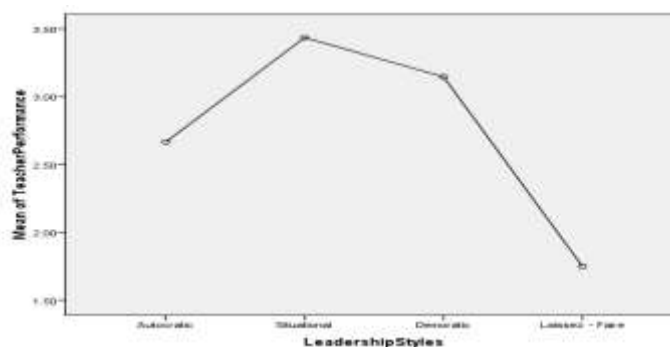
\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Fieldwork, 2014.

**Note:** 1= Autocratic Leadership  
 2 = Situational Leadership  
 3 = Democratic Leadership  
 4 = Laissez – Faire

### Table 5: Post hoc comparison of Female heads leadership styles

Table 5 above lists the pairwise comparisons of the group means for all selected post hoc procedures. Mean difference lists the differences between the sample means. In our example, Bonferroni test procedure was used. Three pairs; 1- 2, 1 – 3, 1 - 4 and 2-3, 2 – 4 and 3 - 4 were the groups that differ in the female heads leadership styles. Figure 1(below) graphically present the teachers' job performance mean that are associated with the four types of leadership styles.



Source: Author, 2014.

**Figure 1: The influence of female heads leadership styles on teachers' job performance**

The above result shows that if female heads that employ situational type of leadership style teachers will put up the highest level of performance. Democratic style showed the second highest mean score, followed by autocratic style while laissez – faire leadership style had the lowest performance mean score.

### **H1: Teacher performance on the job will be significantly influenced by the style of Leadership.**

This hypothesis seeks to determine if there is an association between the views of teachers and heads on female head teachers' leadership styles. A chi-square test was used to analyze the data with leadership styles as one variable and the teachers and heads teachers as the second variable. There was a significant effect, and this is expressed statistically as [ $X^2 (2, N=38) = 19.0, p=0.000$ ].

The table 6 (below) presents teachers and the head teachers' perception of female leadership styles distribution.

	Teachers'	%	Heads	%	Total	%
Autocratic	14	73.7	2	10.5	16	42.1
Situational	2	10.5	14	73.7	16	42.1
Democratic	3	15.8	3	15.8	6	15.8
Total	19	100.0	19	100.0	38	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2014.

### **Table 6: Teachers and heads perception on female head teachers' leadership styles**

Table 6 above indicates that teachers perceived that their female heads employed highest autocratic leadership style (14, 73.7%), while the female heads themselves perceived that they mostly employed situational type of leadership. Equal number of teachers and heads (3, 15.8%) reported that the female heads employed democratic leadership style.

### **Differences in leadership styles by marital status**

To test this hypothesis, Independence t –test was used to analyze the data with female heads leadership styles (autocratic, situational, and democratic) as one variable and marital status (intact and single) as the second variable. The table 4.10 below presents the results of the analysis.

Marital Status	M	SD	N	t	df	Sig.
Single	1.63	0.92	8	-1.986	17	0.041
Married	2.00	0.45	11			

Source: Fieldwork (2014).

### **Table 7: Independent sample t-test of female leadership by marital status**

As can be seen in the table 7 above, the results of the analysis indicates that there is significant difference in the mean between the two groups ( $t = -1.986$ ,  $df = 17$ ,  $p = 0.041$ ). Therefore, the study hypothesises that the leadership styles of female heads are significantly influenced by their marital status.

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The research sought to explore the type of leadership styles that female head teachers' use to manage their schools. The study reveals that the female head teachers are using the situational and democratic leadership style in running their schools. The female head teachers opinions confirm what Afful-Broni (2004) said that leadership is a process where the leader is responsible for mobilizing the various forces and agencies through planned activities towards common set of goals. This implies that female head teachers who exhibited situational leadership style were focused on situations on the ground in the school and not the leader herself. The reason is that different kinds of situations demand different characteristics and behaviours. Chandan (2004) has said that leadership relates to a leader's ability to handle a given situation and based upon the leader's skills in that particular area she is able to act on that situation. Secondly, female head teachers who exhibit democratic style in administering their schools seek discussion and agreement with teachers over issues before a decision is taken.

The next research question seeks to find out female heads teachers' leadership practices. According to Aaker (2003) best leadership practices yields teachers' job satisfaction and its consequences is good job performance. With regards to the barriers hindering the female heads on their positions as heads, the study revealed that family issues were a challenge for the female head teachers. Okafor and Amayo (2006) found that many females have reached the pinnacles of their careers at the detriment of their families and their health. They further emphasized that a good number of women have problems with juggling roles as mothers, housewives, home-makers and managers at work. The first hypothesis was to determine which of the female leadership styles will yield highest teachers job performance. The result shows that female heads who use situational leadership style led to the highest level of teacher had the highest level of teacher performance. This result was consistent with an argument by Mullins (2002) that school heads through their experiences come to terms with the fact that the adoption of a particularly relevant style in a specific situation leads to school effectiveness, rather than relying on a single style of one's choice. The study established that 11 out of 19 female head teachers who participated in the study were from married homes. This has implications on the leadership styles employed by them. Thus female heads from unbroken homes commonly employed situational type of leadership, while those from single homes commonly employed autocratic type of leadership style. Daft (2002) confirms this finding with his claim that younger or heads from divorced or single homes mostly employ more authoritarian leadership style because of the much stress and depression they go through. On the contrary, more mature female head teachers appeared more to be more inclined to democratic leadership approaches and they could even perform well under a situational style of

leadership. Ezenne (2003) found that the perceptions of the leadership styles of the head teacher by the young teachers differed from that of the older ones.

## CONCLUSION

The research concludes from the point of view of literature and data collected on the various leadership styles used by female head teachers in schools. Female head teachers who exhibited situational leadership style had their teacher perform their duties as expected in their schools.

The study again established that there was a relationship between the age of female head teachers and their leadership style. Head teachers tend to become more situational leaders with age, professional maturity and with experience. It was noted that the young head teachers, because of over ambition, tended to be more aggressive which leads to the head teachers adopting a more autocratic leadership style. While noting the many challenges, barriers and demands on the female head teachers' job, the study highlighted the need for management and leadership skills on the part of female head teachers to be more effective and efficient in the achievement of set objectives of the school.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are drawn from the findings outlined above:

- a. Head teachers are to do away with top down decision-making processes, distribute the responsibility and power for leadership widely throughout the school.
- b. Educational authorities must adapt the findings and use it as course manual to train head teachers during their leadership training sections.
- c. Educational authorities will have to train and give head teachers insight on the need for them to vary their leadership styles to maximize teachers' job performance.

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