

Perceived Effectiveness of Current Policies on School Leadership Appointments in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated school leadership appointment policies in Ghana, especially their implementation process and its effect on school leadership effectiveness. Three objectives informed this study. These objectives included investigating current policies regarding the appointment of school leaders, measuring the effectiveness of the process of implementing such policies, and evaluating the effect of these policies on school leadership effectiveness. The positivist research methodology and quantitative research design were utilized in the study. In collecting data, this study used a structured questionnaire that was administered to 120 respondents including both GES staff and selected personnel from basic schools in Ghana. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was utilized in selecting the participants. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regressions using SPSS software. The study results showed that the policy context in which leadership appointment is made in schools is well-developed, easily available, and clear. Nevertheless, problems have been noticed in relation to policy familiarity amongst the actors involved and policy inconsistency in schools. In relation to the relationship between school leadership appointment policies and school leadership effectiveness, the results showed a positive correlation ($R=0.557$). Familiarity with the policy and policy consistency had the strongest correlation with leadership effectiveness. The findings showed that the policy context accounted for 31% of the variability in school leadership effectiveness. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service consider the following actions.

Keywords: School leadership, appointment policies, policy implementation, Ghana Education Service, leadership effectiveness, education governance

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a vital ingredient when it comes to education. In other words, the role of leadership cannot be ignored in any educational establishment as it influences the quality of education received (Ampong et al., 2017). Leaders in the field of education, such as principals, deans, and heads of departments, are supposed to direct students and provide them with conditions that are beneficial for their development. The role of education leaders is not limited to ensuring that learners advance academically but also to help them become good leaders themselves. As pointed out by Toker (2022), effective leadership in schools is important to improve the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, they serve as intermediaries between the school and the society at large, forming partnerships, gaining resources, and aligning schools with broader social and economic objectives (Mohammed et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2023). As emphasized by Opoku (2024), the importance of education is generally acknowledged, and it may influence the success of leadership. Indeed, successful school leaders have been reported to bring about better outcomes from education by creating a favorable and inclusive school climate, applying data-based decision making, supporting professional growth among educators, and establishing effective communications between all parties (Jull et al., 2014; Opoku, 2024). Successful leaders clearly define organizational goals and a vision for the future, inspire faculty members and pupils to reach their peak performance levels, and thus positively influence learning outcomes.

The significant consideration of school leadership in Ghana has been demonstrated through the policies regulating the selection of school leaders. Following the provisions made in section 12 and 13 of the Ghana Education Service (GES) Act 1995; and section 504, the role of recommending the President of the nation in appointing the Director-General of Education (DGE) has been given to the Educational Council. The DGE appoints the Regional and District Directors of Education, who, under the Act, supervise the appointment of qualified basic school head teachers. Research conducted by Afful-Broni and Dampson (2008); Mohammed et al. (2022) and Dampson (2019) revealed that most head teachers were appointed without being prepared for leadership tasks. As a result, there lacks professionalism on the side of school leaders.

The Ghana Education Strategic Plan (ESP) of 2018 tried to respond to these issues through making some changes regarding head teacher appointment. According to Dampson (2019), this reform dictated that head teacher positions could be awarded to only those applicants who held at least the position of Senior Superintendents and had undergone both an interview process as well as one week of in-service training in school leadership. The introduction of this amendment was crucial for the professionalization of the field of school leadership and improvement of the quality of managing basic schools. Despite the fact that this change is a good beginning, Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018) stated that it does not provide enough skills to enable head teachers to exercise effective school management. Therefore, one critical issue is the effect of these reforms on the effectiveness of school leaders. The role of school leadership is fundamental for the development of the culture of continuous improvement, improvement of teacher performance and attainment of higher academic results. If policies of selecting head teachers cannot ensure that the most capable people will occupy these positions, then the result will be low-performing organizations with inefficient leadership and low employee trust.

Moreover, there are some suggestions that political reasons play an important role in selecting candidates for the position of leaders within the Ghanaian schools (Donkor, 2015; Jull et al., 2014; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). Such an approach calls into question the quality of the appointments and their impact on the effectiveness of school leadership. Finally, it can be stated that the current educational policy does not give importance to the criteria of merit in terms of effective school leadership (Ampah-mensah, 2013; Ampong et al., 2017; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). All those organizations believe that the current set of policies do not pay attention to the necessity of taking into account the skills, experiences, and competencies of the members of school leadership and provide an opportunity to employ unqualified and inexperienced individuals to head those schools. As a result, they may negatively affect the performance of those institutions and demotivate teachers, causing negative effects on students. These factors make the current study focused on the examination of the effectiveness of the current policies in terms of appointing leaders of Ghanaian schools.

Statement to the Problem

However, with these policies in place to help develop a standardized process as well as enhance the selection process of educational leaders in Ghana, there are some difficulties faced in regard to what is provided for in the plan compared to what is happening on the ground. The gap between the policy intentions and implementation shows that the current structural approach may be not very effective in helping achieve the set goals, especially regarding creating effective leadership within educational institutions. The difference between the policy plan and its implementation suggests that the current structural approach may be not very effective in helping achieve the desired goals, especially in creating effective leadership in the schools. Therefore, it becomes important to see whether there are any deficiencies in these policies that need to be addressed.

From a study carried out by Nmai (2020), Bruns et al. (2019), and Owusu-Kwarteng et al. (2019), there is a prevailing problem within the appointment process of headteachers in Ghana. It appears that most of the headteachers have been appointed mainly on the grounds of long service and experience, rather than their professional qualifications or leadership competencies. In instances when the position of headteacher had become vacant, owing to retirement or transfer, the teacher with the longest period of service was likely to be selected for the post (Boakye, 2019; Kwaah & Ampiah, 2018). This was especially true of areas remote and underserved in Ghana, whereby basic schools are few and scattered in different locations. There is no research

or documentation done in relation to the processes involved in preparing and appointing headteachers in Ghanaian basic schools. This gap in knowledge regarding this aspect provides another reason why there is a need for more research on the effectiveness of current policies on school leadership appointment in the district.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate Ghana's current policies on school leadership appointments
2. To determine the effectiveness of the implementation process
3. To analyse the impact of these policies on the effectiveness of school leadership

Rationale for the Study

This research is motivated by the importance of school leadership in enhancing the quality of education and promoting national development. School leadership is an important factor in creating a conducive environment for learning and inspiring teachers and students. There are specific policies for appointing school leaders in Ghana; through them, the government ensures that people who are eligible for the job are selected and are capable of running schools effectively. Despite having these policies, however, there have been various complaints about how effective they are and whether they contribute to the quality of education or not. This study is essential as it will attempt to address this issue and enrich the discussion.

The results of this research will reveal areas in which improvements can be made in the current policy-making process, thus making the educational leadership and management better. This research will offer useful insights on the practical ramifications of these policies by examining the extent to which these policies influence the performance of the school leaders, their capacity to establish a positive school environment and ultimately, the impact they have on students. This is because it is vital for relevant stakeholders like policymakers, educational authorities, and school managers, who seek to improve education in Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for this research presents a structured diagram of the relationship between the key components that affect the effectiveness of school leadership in Ghana. These three key variables form the core of the research conceptual model, namely; current policy on school leadership appointments, the effectiveness of school leadership appointment procedures, and the effect of school leadership appointment policy on effectiveness.



Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

The above model is dependent on the following variables: current policies on school leadership appointments. The awareness about the qualifications needed and consistency in implementing the policies should be noted. As asserted by Suaka and Kuranchie (2018), having clear and consistent policies on school leadership appointments is necessary in laying down the foundation for school leadership appointments. Having such a clear and consistent policy framework creates an understanding for everyone involved in knowing what their

duties are and the steps they need to follow in appointing school leadership positions (Ampong et al., 2017). Moreover, the consistency in implementing the policy creates sustainability in being transparent and creating meritocracy in the appointment process. As noted by Kyei and Aboagye (2015), the success in implementing the policy will have effects on school leadership appointments.

The model considers the effectiveness of the appointment process as the mediating variable, emphasizing its importance in translating policies into actions. Mediating variables consist of elements like needs assessment, job analysis, and applications plus screening. The appointment process should ensure that candidates that match the needs and specifications of the job are selected (Sandow, 2024). This implies that the effectiveness of this process is an essential mediating variable that determines the extent to which the goals of the policies can be achieved.

The dependent variable in the model is school leadership effectiveness. The variable focuses on the effects that both the policies and appointment process as well as its implementation have on school leadership effectiveness. In essence, the variable focuses on the ability of leaders to coordinate resources and create a productive school environment. These two elements will enable effective educational activities to take place. The effect on these elements is crucial in achieving desirable results and ensuring the enthusiasm of teachers as well as the learning environment as a whole.

Theory of the Study

The theory behind the study is Transformational Leadership Theory. According to Gomes (2014), the theory was conceptualized by James MacGregor Burns in 1978, and further developed by Bernard Bass in 1985. This theory stresses the importance of leaders who inspire and motivate their followers to move beyond selfishness to achieve organizational or communal objectives. The theory explains that through leaders, a feeling of purposefulness and inspiration can be fostered in order to enable the led work harder and become more dedicated (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013; Tafvelin, 2013). This is because in schools, leadership requires achievement of educational excellence amid a conducive learning environment. The transformational leadership comprises four components.

Idealised influence is the capability of a leader to be a role model that is looked up to, revered, and respected by his followers. It is important for the appointment of head teachers since, in addition to their roles as leaders, head teachers should also set examples in terms of behavior for both their fellow educators and pupils. The example they set needs to have the same core values of the school like commitment to learning, ethics, and dedication towards the betterment of the students. Inspirational motivation relates to developing a clear vision and inspiring commitment among the followers. This type of leadership is extremely vital when it comes to the influence exerted by head teachers.

Intellectual stimulation is about inspiring creativity, breaking traditional conventions, and creating an atmosphere where new ideas and innovative solutions are encouraged. When selecting head teachers, intellectual stimulation can be quite useful in improving the quality of not only the process but also the leadership itself. Individualized consideration means personalizing one's style of management according to each person's strengths, abilities, and needs. Transformational leaders provide personalized guidance to each subordinate and consider his unique needs and capabilities. In school settings, it will be engagement with the faculty in finding strengths and areas where improvement is required and then designing professional growth opportunities for each staff member.

Transformational Leadership Theory fits perfectly into the school environment as it emphasizes the function of a leader in creating such a working environment that includes pursuing excellence in academic studies. This becomes particularly applicable in a country like Ghana, where both quality education and effective leadership are required to overcome various difficulties existing there, as the introduction of this concept will inspire and motivate people in a manner consistent with the duties of a school leader in transforming the learning environment, motivating the teachers, and consequently achieving desired results.

METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy

The study employs positivism as its research philosophy. Positivism refers to a research philosophy that involves the use of scientific approaches and data for conducting research on various phenomena (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It suggests that knowledge can be acquired via systematic observation and measurement, implying that the emphasis is made on quantifiable information. The use of positivism involves using systematic methods to explain the real world and reveal some objective truths through evidence-based practices (Nguyen & Thuy, 2019).

The first research objective of the study is the evaluation of the current policy concerning the appointment of principals. In this case, positivism is quite appropriate, as it allows for making a systematic examination of the policy document with respect to its structure and clarity. It is possible to evaluate the document in question in accordance with measurable criteria such as performance standards and transparency. The benefit of this strategy is that it makes the evaluation an objective one and gives insight into the compatibility between the objectives of the policy and their realization. The second aim of the paper is to explore the efficacy of the process of implementing the policies. In order to achieve this objective, positivism is very useful as it helps make empirical evaluation of the implementation of those policies possible. The third objective of the analysis will be to estimate the effects of the policy on school leadership effectiveness. In this regard, positivism offers great means for analyzing and evaluating the outcome of the policy in question, including the quality of leadership, school performance, and students' achievements.

Research Approach

Quantitative methods of research are appropriate to be used in this study (Greben, 2007). This method refers to collecting and analyzing numeric data in order to find patterns, develop and test hypothesis and make conclusions based on the research results (Berkovich, 2018; Bryman, 2006). It is necessary to make an objective evaluation of the current appointment policies and their content and standards in order to review them. The use of quantitative methodology provides researchers with an ability to systematize the collected data regarding various aspects of these policies (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Tubey et al., 2017). This step is necessary in order to evaluate the extent to which the policies are aligned with their objectives. Another objective that requires the use of this methodology is finding out about the efficiency of the implementation process of the current appointment policies. Finally, the influence of these policies on school leadership effectiveness should also be analyzed through measuring such variables as leadership quality, school and students' achievements.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population for the study is made up of staffs of schools (and the heads of the schools themselves) as well as the staff of the Ghana Education Service. Staff of GES is charged with executing the policies concerning school leadership appointment. School staff includes the school heads as well as other members of staff since this policy directly impacts on them. The reason why we need this varied population is so that we can get an overview of opinions from various quarters about these policies regarding school leadership appointment.

The sample for the study was derived from the above population for purposes of representation of the two groups. These are the people who have an interest in school leadership and policy execution. The sample size was arrived at through the use of proportionate stratified sampling. This way the two groups were properly represented since it is required to have the sample reflect diversity. In all, a sample size of 120 respondents, 15 from the GES staff and 115 from the school staff.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used to collect data in this study is a structured questionnaire. Four sections were created in this questionnaire to capture different issues pertaining to the purpose of the study such as demographic

profile, opinions about current policies, efficiency of the appointment process, and influence on school administration.

Section A: Respondent's Profile

This section collects demographic data and background information from the respondents, including their sex, role, years of experience in the education sector, age, and highest education level.

Section B: Existing Policy Framework Governing the Appointment of Basic Education School Leaders

Part B will examine the views of the respondents towards the current policies that are used for the selection process of the school leaders. Respondents will be asked to respond using a scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree in respect of the various statements provided regarding the presence of the policy framework, knowledge about the qualifications, and the uniformity of the policy implementation.

Section C: Perceptions on the Effectiveness of the Appointment Process

Section C is concerned with the level of effectiveness of the school leaders appointment process using the same scale of agreement. It is divided into three parts: Needs assessment, job analysis, and application and screening. The objective here is to assess the effectiveness and fairness of the entire appointment process to determine where improvements can be made.

Section D: Effectiveness of School Leadership

In the final part of the questionnaire, the effectiveness of school leadership in terms of resource coordination, formation of effective school climate, and educational effectiveness is assessed. The participants are required to rate their opinion on issues related to management processes, teamwork coordination, mutual respect among employees, educational atmosphere, and improvement in students' academic performance based on the 5-point Likert scale.

Data Collection and Analysis

The analysis of the data obtained from the collection in this study was done by quantitative means whereby statistical analysis was done through the use of statistical programs such as SPSS. Data analysis involved the use of several approaches, such as inferential statistics, descriptive statistics, and reliability testing. Each approach was employed in the data analysis because of its specific importance in analyzing the data collected.

Firstly, Descriptive Statistics was used in analyzing the data collected in this research. The method was employed in describing the demographic details collected in section A and those collected about the existing framework in section B. The use of descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages helped in summarizing the characteristics of the respondent such as gender, role, year of service, educational background, and age among others. Also, this method gave some insights as to the knowledge level of the respondent concerning the current policies on school leadership appointment. The means and standard deviation were used in analyzing the current policies on school leadership appointments (objective one) and also to analyze the effectiveness of the implementation process (objective two).

Inferential Statistics were utilized in order to investigate and establish the relationships that exist among the different variables. For example, correlation and regression analysis were utilized to analyze the effects of such policies on school leadership effectiveness (Objective three). Inferential statistics analysis was used to determine the existence of a relationship between perceptions on the selection process and opinions about leadership effectiveness. Inferential statistics analysis went beyond the description of data, providing insight into causative factors and the causes of certain phenomena. Results of data analysis were depicted through the use of tables. Tables provide an easy way of analyzing data and presenting results to the audience.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Profile

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Questions	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	86	71.7
	Female	34	28.3
	Total	120	100
Age	Less than 30 years	21	12.6
	31 – 40 years	47	28.1
	41 – 50 years	70	41.9
	51 – 60 years	29	17.4
	Total	120	100
Highest Educational	Diploma/HND	5	4.2
Level	First Degree	84	70.0
	Masters	31	25.8
	Doctorate/PhD	0	0.0
	Total	120	100.0
Years in education	Less than 5 years	28	23.3
sector	6 – 10 years	45	37.5
	11 – 15 years	25	20.8
	16 – 20 years	7	5.8
	21 years and above	15	12.5
	Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

From Table 1, there is a high percentage of males (71.7%), whereas females only account for 28.3%. As for age distribution, most respondents are middle-aged people. There is 41.9% of the total number who are aged 41-50 years. Moreover, there is a considerable number of respondents (28.1%) who are aged 31-40 years. It should be noted that there are fewer respondents below the age of 30 (12.6%). This could mean that young people have fewer chances to get a job and therefore are less visible within the scope of the research. Also, the percentage of those aged 51-60 years (17.4%) proves the diversity of ages among respondents.

The highest level of education of the respondents reveals that most of the respondents have a First Degree (70.0%), while some have a Master's degree (25.8%). Very few respondents have either a Diploma or HND (4.2%), and no respondent is a Doctorate/PhD holder, indicating that the respondents are educated, with many of them having higher education. In relation to the years of experience in the education sector, it is observed that most of the respondents have experienced moderately, where 37.5% of them have been in the profession for 6-10 years. Another 23.3% of the respondents have experience of less than 5 years, indicating relatively new faces in the profession.

Current Policies on School Leadership Appointments in Ghana

The means and standard deviations were used in analyzing this particular objective in the research study. The mean value reflects how acceptable the respondents feel the policy is in the appointment process. Mean values of four and above represent highly acceptable, a mean between three and four represents moderately acceptable, and mean values below three reflect least acceptable. Standard deviation measures the spread of the responses. It was found out through analysis of the results (Table 2) that the respondents see the existence of clear and easily accessible policy guidelines in the process of school leadership appointment in Ghana. There are however concerns relating to the lack of uniformity in the application and enforcement of the policy, as well as the knowledge level of staff concerning the policy guidelines.

Table 2: Existing Policies Governing the Appointment of Basic Education School Leaders

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
There is a well-established policy framework for school leadership appointments in Ghana	120	3	5	4.30	.805
The policy on school leadership appointments is officially documented and accessible to all stakeholders	120	3	5	4.34	.728
The criteria and requirements for school leadership appointments are clearly defined in the policy framework	120	3	5	4.22	.735
The policy provides clear guidelines on the steps involved in the appointment process for school leaders	120	3	5	4.17	.748
I am familiar with the policy requirements for school leadership appointments in Ghana	120	1	5	3.21	1.236
Staff members are adequately informed about the existing policy on school leadership appointments	120	3	5	4.08	.773
The policy on school leadership appointments is consistently applied across all schools in Ghana	120	1	5	3.03	1.107
There is uniformity in the enforcement of the school leadership appointment policy by relevant authorities	120	2	5	3.57	1.295

Source: Field Data (2024)

The high mean scores (4.30 and 4.34) associated with the existence and accessibility of a robust policy framework point to the fact that the majority of respondents think that the policy concerning the appointment of school leaders in Ghana is both comprehensive and accessible. This indicates a unanimous understanding among respondents that the policy exists and can easily be accessed by relevant parties, an important aspect of transparency and accountability. The mean scores (4.22 and 4.17) obtained from respondents concerning the clarity of the criteria and guidelines involved in the appointment are also relatively high. This indicates that

respondents view the policy framework as having clear guidelines and procedures for the process of appointment.

In contrast to the positive view on the clarity of the policy and the easiness of understanding it, the acceptance of the fact that the respondents understand the policy requirements is relatively moderate (mean value of 3.21). Thus, despite the fact that the policy itself can be well documented and understandable, some of the stakeholders can lack knowledge about it. The higher value of the standard deviation (1.236) shows that there can be considerable disagreement about this matter. At the same time, despite the fact that only 47.8% of respondents find that the staff is properly informed about the policy, the remaining number believes the opposite (mean value of 4.08).

At the same time, one of the key issues with the policy in question is associated with its inconsistent execution and enforcement in different schools, which is supported by the mean values of the two corresponding statements equaling 3.03 and 3.57 correspondingly. It can be seen that the policy is appreciated; however, its execution in some schools can be questionable. High standard deviations, equal to 1.107 and 1.295, also point at such inconsistency.

From the results obtained from the survey conducted in Ghana, there are some areas that should be strengthened as far as the policy framework guiding the appointment of leaders in schools is concerned. There is a need to strengthen policy application and enforcement to promote consistency and uniformity among various schools. Further, communication measures must be put in place to facilitate knowledge of policy framework requirements among all parties involved, especially at the grassroots level.

The study results show agreement with existing literature regarding the significance of clearly articulated and structured policy frameworks in the realm of education and leadership. According to Mohammad et al. (2022) and Dampson (2019), the creation and documentation of policy frameworks provide necessary guidance in the process of appointment of leaders in schools. Further, the results confirm findings of Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018) that clearly defined and guided leadership appointments enhance organizational trust and merit-based selections. Contrary to the findings, Nmai (2020) suggested that well-documented policy frameworks would ensure uniform application and implementation in organizations.

In addition, low levels of stakeholder policy awareness and the existence of variations in response challenge the conclusion of Bruns, Macdonald and Schneider (2019) that the policy awareness level of stakeholders is usually high if there has been effective communication of the policy and training is provided continuously.

Effectiveness of the implementation process

The efficiency was measured through means and standard deviation. In terms of interpreting the data, a mean value of 4 and above is regarded as highly efficient, mean value of 3 to below 4 is regarded as moderately efficient, and mean values of 3 and below are regarded as inefficient. Findings from the analysis are indicated in Table 3

Table 3: Effectiveness of the implementation process

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Needs Assessment					
The current selection process adequately considers the educational qualifications	120	2	5	4.17	1.072
There is sufficient transparency in the selection process	120	1	4	2.67	1.032
The selection process assesses candidates' leadership skills	120	1	5	3.33	1.032

The current selection process adequately considers the cultural and community context of the school	120	1	4	2.42	.866
Stakeholder input play a role in the selection process	120	1	4	2.08	1.120
Overall		1	5	2.93	1.024
Job Analysis					
The appointment process considers the key responsibilities and duties required for the role of a school head	120	2	5	4.19	.823
The current selection process effectively identifies candidates who can effectively manage resources	120	1	5	3.42	1.192
The selection process considers the experience of the teachers	120	1	5	3.91	1.257
The process considers the key competencies and skills needed for successful performance as a school head	120	1	5	3.49	1.195
The process mostly require the unique requirements of the school	120	1	5	2.89	1.011
Overall		1	5	3.58	1.096
Application and Screening					
The application process for selecting heads of schools in Ghana is transparent and fair	120	3	5	4.42	.762
The criteria used for screening applicants for headship positions are clearly defined	120	1	5	3.58	1.192
The screening process effectively evaluates the leadership skills and competencies of applicants for headship positions	120	1	5	3.67	1.183
The application process provides equal opportunities for all qualified individuals to apply for headship positions	120	3	5	4.25	.598
The application and screening processes are conducted in a timely manner	120	2	5	3.75	.833
Overall		1	5	3.93	0.914

Source: Field Data (2024)

The effectiveness of the needs assessment process is seen to be inconsistent. The process scores very high on the issue of educational qualifications (mean = 4.17), demonstrating that educational qualifications play an important role in selecting applicants. However, the process scores relatively lower on issues such as transparency (mean = 2.67) and leadership skills (mean = 3.33). The process scores poorly on issues such as the context of culture/community (mean = 2.42) and stakeholder involvement (mean = 2.08).

The process of job analysis is considered to be moderately effective, with strong results regarding the definition of leadership responsibilities and duties (high mean = 4.19). In terms of effectiveness, the assessment of resource management abilities (mean = 3.42) and required competencies (mean = 3.49) was

considered moderate. In addition, the least effective was the attention to the special needs of the specific school (mean = 2.89). Therefore, the effectiveness of the whole process was rated as moderate (mean = 3.58).

Regarding the process of application and screening, its effectiveness received the highest mean (mean = 3.93) compared to other aspects of the appointing procedure. As a result, respondents agreed that the process was transparent and fair, ensuring equal opportunities for all applicants (means = 4.42 and 4.25). At the same time, the process was not characterized by high effectiveness in terms of screening criteria transparency, leadership competency assessment, and promptness of the process (means = 3.58, 3.67, and 3.75).

The inefficacy of the needs assessment part of the leadership appointment process is similar to the views provided by Owusu-Kwarteng et al. (2019) and Toker (2022) regarding the need to focus on education and formal training when selecting school leaders. Such findings provide a rationale for considering the significance of educational qualifications when making appointments to positions that involve leadership duties. At the same time, the problem of lacking transparency and leadership skills evaluation in the needs assessment part is related to the problems raised by Opoku (2024). The author identifies the lack of transparent candidate evaluation processes as a drawback that impacts the overall quality of the appointment process. The issue of inadequate consideration of cultural and local context during needs assessment can be explained through the findings of Dampson (2019) and Rahman et al. (2023).

Concerning the job analysis aspect, the high average rating concerning the evaluation of important responsibilities concurs with studies by Aryanti and Suhardan (2020) who stated that it is essential to understand well the duties and responsibilities of leaders within educational institutions. Nevertheless, the moderately effective evaluation of competencies and resource management and the least effective evaluation of individual school needs contradict the more positive opinions about this aspect put forward by Munna and Kalam (2021) and Baporikar (2015) who claim that job analysis should be performed on an individual basis to meet the special needs and competencies of particular schools. Finally, the application and screening being the most efficient is consistent with the results obtained by Ampong et al. (2017).

Impact of Leadership Appointments Policies on the Effectiveness of School Leadership

The study adopted the correlation and multiple regression analysis. The variables for school effectiveness were aggregated to constitute the dependent variable which was correlated with policies governing the appointment process examined under four dimension; existence of policy, clarity of policy, familiarity and consistency in policy. Pearson correlation analysis was adopted in the analysis. The result is indicated in Table 4

Table 4: Correlation of Leadership Appointments Policies of School Leadership

		ESL	Existence	Clarity	Familiarity	Consistency
ESL	Pearson Correlation	1	.479**	.323**	.739**	.683**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.181	.008	.002
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Existence	Pearson Correlation	.479**	1	.133	.068	-.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.148	.461	.890
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Clarity	Pearson Correlation	.323**	.133	1	.188*	.125
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.181	.148		.040	.175

	N	120	120	120	120	120
Familiarity	Pearson Correlation	.739**	.068	.188*	1	.139
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.461	.040		.129
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Consistency	Pearson Correlation	.683**	-.013	.125	.139	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.890	.175	.129	
	N	120	120	120	120	120
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

Key: ESL = Effectiveness of School Leadership

Based on the results obtained from the analysis, the presence of a policy has a moderate level of positive correlation with school leadership effectiveness ($r = 0.479$, $p < 0.01$). It clearly shows that having policies regarding appointments to the positions of school leaders can be an important factor leading to the success in school leadership. However, the clarity of policy shows a positive correlation with school leadership effectiveness at a slightly lower level ($r = 0.323$, $p < 0.01$). It means that there is a connection between clear policies and successful school leadership. However, it is slightly weaker compared to the presence of policies. Awareness of policy also demonstrates a high level of positive correlation with school leadership effectiveness ($r = 0.739$, $p < 0.01$). As can be seen, this correlation coefficient is the highest among others. In other words, being aware of the policy and its requirements significantly improves the effectiveness of school leadership. At last, policy implementation consistency demonstrates a high correlation with school leadership effectiveness ($r = 0.683$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 5: Coefficients of Leadership Appointments Policies and School Leadership

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.811	.347		8.094	.000
Existence	.136	.051	.163	2.678	.002
Clarity	.133	.064	.147	2.078	.008
Familiarity	.397	.145	.391	2.740	.000
Consistency	.219	.042	.251	5.215	.000
R-value	.557				
R Square	.310				
F-value	4.205				
Sig.	.003				

a. Dependent Variable: Effectiveness of School Leadership

b. Predictors: (Constant), Consistency, Existence, Familiarity, Clarity

These results provide a correlation value (R-value) of 0.557. The positive value of correlation indicates a positive relationship between leadership appointment policies and effective school leadership. The degree of r-value indicates a moderately positive correlation. This is because of the classification used by the researchers like Sedega, Mishiwo, and Seddoh (2019) and Batola, Frimpong, and Addai-Kyeremeh (2016). The classification done by these researchers include the r-value ranging from 0 – 0.40 as weak; 0.4 – 0.70 as moderate relationship and 0.70 – 1.00 is considered high correlation. The value of R-square is 0.310, this is an indication of the total variation in effective school leadership due to leadership appointment policies.

The coefficient for the presence of the policy ($B = 0.136$, $Beta = 0.163$) is positive and statistically significant ($p = 0.002$). It is important to note that the presence of a good policy framework enhances school leadership effectiveness. The size of the beta effect (0.163) is also moderate. The interpretation of this finding is that whenever there is a unit increase in the presence of policy, there is a corresponding increase of 0.163 in the effectiveness of school leadership when all the other variables are controlled. Similarly, the coefficient for clarity of policy ($B = 0.133$, $Beta = 0.147$) is positive and statistically significant ($p = 0.008$). It can be interpreted that having clearer policies makes school leadership more effective. The size of the effect in the Beta value (0.147) is also moderate.

The coefficient on familiarity ($B = 0.397$, $Beta = 0.391$) has the highest value among all other independent variables and is significant ($p = 0.000$). It signifies that the awareness and familiarity with leadership appointment policies have a strong positive effect on leadership effectiveness. The greater awareness of the school leaders and other stakeholders about the leadership appointment policies improves leadership effectiveness, given that the coefficient Beta (0.391) is moderately high. The coefficient of consistency ($B = 0.219$, $Beta = 0.251$) is positive and significant ($p = 0.000$). This signifies that consistent use of the leadership appointment policies in all schools positively contributes to leadership effectiveness.

The study shows a positive association between the presence of policies and school leadership effectiveness, which corroborates the findings of Donkor (2015) and Opoku (2024). The two scholars underscore the fact that it is important to have a defined policy framework for effective leadership. In this regard, the current study provides evidence in support of this claim because it shows that the presence of the policies has an influence on the results of school leadership. Nevertheless, the findings of the current study contrast the claims of Kum and Buh-Mbi (2020). According to these researchers, the presence of policies is not enough since they need to be effectively implemented as well as the stakeholders engaged to ensure that everything goes as expected. Moreover, the present findings confirm the assertions of Mohammed et al. (2022) and Rahman et al. (2023) that policy clarity is one of the factors that ensure good leadership performance. Specifically, they help stakeholders understand everything concerning the policy and hence act accordingly. Nevertheless, contrary to the findings of the current study, Zame et al. (2008) suggest that while clarity of policies is important, its impact is limited because of several implementation challenges.

CONCLUSION

The research evaluated the level of effectiveness of the existing policies for the selection of principals. The results of the data analysis reveal that the majority of the respondents believe that the existing framework of policies is clear, formalized, and describes the procedures of making an appointment. These opinions are proved by the high mean scores. At the same time, there are some concerns related to the uniformity and consistency in implementing and enforcing the selected policies and the level of awareness about the policies in schools' personnel. In other words, although the policy itself seems to be efficient, its implementation and further dissemination need more work. The effectiveness of the implementation process has been evaluated through analyzing three major aspects: needs assessment, job analysis, and application and screening. According to the results obtained, the aspect of needs assessment can be described as having both advantages and disadvantages. It means that this component has positive points such as consideration of educational

qualifications but lacks openness, involvement of stakeholders, and taking into account the local context. The application and screening process is considered the most efficient because it is transparent, unbiased, and inclusive, even though some improvements can still be made concerning screening procedures and methods of evaluating applications.

Moreover, an effect of leadership appointment policies on the effectiveness of schools has been analyzed using the method of correlation. Such factors as existence, clarity, familiarity, and consistency of leadership policies positively correlated with school leadership effectiveness. Familiarity and consistency have proved to be especially important since they demonstrated a higher degree of correlation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The research showed that there was medium familiarity with the policy demands on the part of the stakeholders. For this reason, the Ministry of Education and related agencies are advised to come up with stronger communication measures such as training programs to sensitize both existing and potential leaders in the schools about the policies.
2. Considering the problems with the varying implementations of the policies in the different schools, there is a need for the Ghana Education Service (GES) to provide standard guidelines for implementation. There should be regular audit inspections to guarantee conformity with the guidelines when implementing the policy.
3. There is evidence of moderate effectiveness when it comes to transparency. Hence, the GES should ensure that there is increased transparency in terms of making the selection criteria and procedures known to everyone. This can be done through public disclosure of the same via various media outlets such as official websites and notice boards.
4. The clarity of the policy demonstrates a moderate relationship with the effectiveness of the school leadership. The ways to improve this would be to make sure that the policies are clear and understandable for everyone through the use of simple language, diagrams, and translations. As familiarity with the policy has the greatest relation to leadership effectiveness, it is suggested to conduct continuous professional development courses to ensure that school leaders are constantly updated about the policy.

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