

Improving Basic Schools through Continuous Professional Development: The Case of Amia-Ba Circuit of Ajumako Enyan Essiam District

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Abstract

The study employed the explanatory sequential design. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to sample 10 head teachers and 70 teachers from 10 public basic schools in the Circuit. Questionnaires and semi-structured interview guide were used to collect data from the respondents. The study established that the head teachers and teachers understand continuous professional development as training organised by the school and the Ministry of Education and other opportunities used by teachers and head teachers to improve their professional competence. CPD helps improve teachers' knowledge in the subject area and teaching strategies and enhances teachers' understanding of their students thinking and learning patterns and influence head teachers and teachers administrative and classroom practices. Well planned and executed workshops, seminars, and other short courses will offer structured opportunities for the head teachers and teachers to acquire knowledge and skills.

Keywords: professional development, school improvement, head teacher, teacher, Ajumako Enyan-Essiam District

1. Introduction

The current climate in education, with its emphasis on accountability and highly qualified teachers, is supported by the notion that the professional development of a teacher is critical to improving students' learning. The nature of the teaching profession also makes it expedient and imperative for all teachers to engage in career-long professional training (Essel, Owusu-Boateng & Saah, 2009). According to Guskey (2000), notable improvement in education almost never takes place in the absence of professional development. In view of this, continuous professional development of head teachers and teachers has become a necessity to the development of the school.

Professional development is a comprehensive, ongoing and intensive approach to improving teachers' and head teachers' effectiveness in improving the academic performance of students (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). Research has established that what distinguishes high performing and low performing school is effective professional development for teachers and head teachers. This is because professional development programmes seek to help teachers to gain subject-specific knowledge, use appropriate pedagogical practices, develop positive attitudes towards teaching and ultimately improve the academic performance of students (Dadds, 2001). Empirical evidence exists to show that professional development of teachers and head teachers improves the academic performance of students. For instance, Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss and Shapley (2007) found from their review of experimental evaluations that the academic achievement of students whose teachers participated in professional development programmes increased by 0.54 standard deviations compared to students whose teachers did not participate in professional development programmes.

In USA, Akiba and Liang (2016) found from their study that teacher-driven research activities through professional conference presentation and participation were associated with student achievement growth in mathematics. Similarly, a study conducted in South Africa by Iheanachor (2007) showed a significant positive relationship between teachers' continuous professional development and students' academic performance in mathematics. In Ghana, Essel et al. (2009) found from their study that more than 60% of the teachers are in favour of getting more training, acquiring new attitudes and skills in order to help them excel in their teaching profession and sharing their gained information with other colleagues and pupils/students they teach. Against this background, the researchers sought to find out how schools in the Amia-Ba Circuit can be improved through continuous professional development of the teachers and head teachers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Paaku (2008), the academic performance of students in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) has received much attention in the Ghanaian educational system. When students' results are released annually, various concerns are raised by educational stakeholders (parents) regarding the falling standard of the academic performance of students. Various measures are being implemented to improve the academic performance of the students. In the Ajumako Enyan- Essiam District for instance, the District Education Directorate organizes school Based INSET (SBI) and cluster Based INSET (CBI) for teachers in the

district every term. Despite professional development programme organised with the intention of boosting the academic performance of the students, students' performance continue to decline. The situation is very critical in the Amia-Ba Circuit. From the analysis of the 2013 BECE results of the 19 public schools in the Circuit, twelve (12) schools had below 50% pass with two schools scoring zero percent pass. In 2011, the circuit scored 63.1% pass in the BECE. (Paaku, 2008) Then in 2012 performance fell by 4.1% with the circuit scoring 59%. Results from the previous years were no better. From the comparative analysis of the 2011 and 2013 BECE results for the Central Region, out of the 13 districts that took part in the examination, 9 districts showed fallen standard in performance. The remaining 4 districts which showed improved performances revealed ranges between 1.3% and 32%. Many districts in the Central Region like Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam, Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese, Asikuma-Odoben – Brakwa and Komenda Edina-Eguafo Abirim Districts fell in performance between 20% and 4.1% (Paaku, 2008). Even though teachers in the Amia-Ba Circuit have been undertaken various professional development programmes that are organised by the District Education Office and the head teachers, it appears that little or no empirical studies have been conducted to find out from the teachers and the head teachers on how these programmes affect the academic performance of the students. Besides, studies (Essel, et. Al., 2009; Mensah & Jonathan, 2016) that have been conducted in Ghana on continuous professional development in schools focused on teachers alone without considering the views of school heads or employed only the quantitative paradigm. This means that there is both geographical and methodological gaps that need to be filled. Based on these identified gaps that has motivated this study. Using the mixed method paradigm, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do basic school head teachers and teachers' understand professional development?
2. To what extent does professional development influence head teachers' administrative and teachers' classroom practices?
3. What factors affect basic school head teachers' and teachers' professional development?

2. Literature

2.1 Meaning of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

According to Mekonnen (2014), the concepts of continuous professional development originated from the belief that self-reflection and collaboration are critical ingredients essential for improving teacher competence. Although CPD has been defined differently by various scholars, they basically express the same idea. In the words of Day (1999), the term continuing professional development refers to “all the activities in which teachers hold during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work” (p. 3). Thus, continuous professional developments are developmental activities that one undertakes with the view of enhancing their knowledge and skills with the view of improving their classroom activities. Bubb and Early posit that CPD is an ongoing process that builds on the initial teacher training and induction programmes throughout ones career. In support, Gray (2005) opines that CPD embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job. In essence, CPD can improve the activities of the organization, as well as the professional qualification of teachers. Richardson (2003) published a list of characteristics associated with effective professional development stating that such programmes would optically be: “statewide, long term with follow-up; encourage collegiality; foster agreement among participants on goals and visions; have a supportive administration; have access to adequate funds for materials, outside speakers, substitute teachers, and so on: encourage and develop agreement among participants; acknowledge participants existing beliefs and practices; and make use of outside facilitators / staff development. According to Adagiri (2014), there are six (6) types of CPD activities. These are workshops, mentoring, collaborative activities, action research, conferences and higher education courses/programs. In essence, professional development programmes are formal and informal activities undertaken by teachers to enhance their classroom activities.

2.2 Influence of Professional Development on Head Teachers' Administrative and Teachers' Classroom Practices

Heads of schools play vital roles in the management and administration of schools. In a study of school principals in Texas, Branch, Hanushek, and Rivkin (2009) found out that there was larger variation in the effectiveness of principals in high poverty schools compared with others. They, therefore, concluded that principal ability was most important in those schools. Leithwood and Levin (2008) stated “arriving at a credible estimate of leadership development impacts, especially on students, is a very complex task. It [estimating leadership impact] is a cauldron of conceptual and methodological challenges”. While policy makers and educators need to know if and how professional development can support principals in gaining the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively lead schools and ultimately improve student achievement, that knowledge is not readily available. Nicholson, Harris-John and Schimmel (2005) found that professional development for principals was critical for leading schools to meet the demands for increased student achievement. They found

also that most states had similar requirements for the amount of professional development required of principals: 18 hours per year. Their study further established that the content of professional development was primarily driven by requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. Delivery of professional development was generally found to follow the traditional model of expert led, centralized, short term, workshops.

Teacher quality has a considerable impact on student learning and achievement. Recent studies have shown that student achievement relies predominantly on teacher professionalism (Meister, 2010; Pedder & Opfer, 2011). According to Hattie (2009), out of the 150 factors which influence learning, CPD is ranked 19th. In principle, effective CPD leads to improved teaching and in turn, improving learning.

Participation in professional development is believed to have some impact on the teachers' ability to acquire and critically develop the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, and planning with their students and colleagues through every phase of their teaching lives (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010; Gabriel, Day & Allington, 2011). Engaging in CPD would help to equip teachers with relevant skills for instructional delivery, update their knowledge and expose them to new methods and materials to meet the dictate of modern realities of the job (Bubb & Earley, 2007; Garuba, 2007). This entails building on new pedagogical theories and practices to help teachers develop expertise in their field (Dadds, 2001). Education systems seek to provide teachers with opportunities for in-service professional development in order to maintain a high standard of teaching (OECD, 2009).

According to Powell, Terrell, Furey and Scott-Evans (2003), teachers will experience immediate and long term impacts of professional development. Their research on teachers' perceptions of the impact of continuous development reveals that most of the teachers identified the immediate impact of professional development as having the ability to reflect more deeply in teaching (Powell et al., 2003). It is believed that this ability to reflect has enabled the teachers to better evaluate the effectiveness of their own teaching. In the long-term, teachers also believe that their professional development experiences have helped them developed greater confidence in their teaching (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010; Powell et al., 2003).

2.3 Challenges in Relation to Head Teachers' and Teachers' Professional Development

Headteachers' and teachers' professional development cannot be ascertained without making reference to the contemporary issues, problems and prospects that affect teachers. Issues peculiar to teachers are examined alongside specific issues relating to participation in-service CPD. In Nigeria for example, research suggests that these issues range from pre-service and in-service training which affect teacher quality and their professional development. Some of the issues include; entry requirements into teacher training programmes, wrong reasons for enrolling into teaching, inadequate funding, lack of resources and facilities that enhance teaching and learning, poor salaries, poor quality of training, drop in enrolment and high attrition rates (Akinbote, 2007; Garuba, 2007).

Some of the issues identified directly affect teachers' participation in CPD activities for example time, workload, awareness, accessibility and funding. Teachers are often constrained with time to attend and evaluate the impact of CPD activities (Robinson & Sebba, 2005; Kennedy & McKay, 2011). Time is often required for participation, implementation and consolidation on new initiatives. Workload of teachers is a common barrier to their participation in CPD activities as evidenced from studies (Hustler et al, 2003; OECD, 2009). Pedder and Opfer (2011), also found out that working conditions, school culture and lack of support from management also affect teachers' participation in CPD. The present study aims to find out the impact on school improvement of the continuous professional development of head teachers and teachers in the Amia- Ba Circuit of the Ajumako Enyan-Essiam District. Thus, the research questions are:

3. Methodology

The study employed the explanatory sequential design as the researchers sought to use the qualitative data to help explain or build upon initial quantitative results (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003). With this design, the researchers first collected and analysed the quantitative data. This first phase was followed by the subsequent collection and analysis of the qualitative data. The second, qualitative phase of the study was designed so that it followed from (or connects to) the results of the first quantitative phase. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the 10 head teachers because they were considered to have rich and reliable information on the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programme as a tool for school improvement. The simple random sampling was used to select the schools and the teachers using the lottery method approach. In each case, seven (7) teachers were sampled from each school totaling 70 in all. The instruments used in the study were structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide. The questionnaire was pilot-tested among 20 teachers in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the instrument from the pilot-test was 0.71. Member checking was used to check the consistency of the interview guide. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) assert that "for research purposes, a useful rule of thumb is that reliability should be at .70 and preferably higher" (p.179). The instrument was not modified

since none of the items were found to be misleading. Descriptive statistics, specifically, mean and standard deviations were used to analyse the quantitative data whilst the interviews were transcribed and analysed into themes.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

The gender distribution constituted 70% males and 30% females. The demographic data further indicated that with teaching/administrative experience 77.5% had over 6 years and more while 22.5% had gained 4-6years of teaching/administrative experiences. Their experiences are quite important to this study as it enabled them to provide empirical and valuable suggestions to enrich the study.

4.2 Main Discussions

This section deals with the discussion of the data from the field to address the research questions that were formulated to guide the study. From the analysis, a mean of 1.00-1.49 means the respondents strongly disagree; 1.50-1.99 means disagree; 2.00-2.49 means agree; and 2.50-3.00 means strongly agree. A standard deviation below 1.0 showed that the responses from the respondents were homogeneous and heterogeneous when it was above 1.0.

4.2.1 Research Question One: To what extent do basic school head teachers' and teachers' understand professional development?

Research question one sought to find out the head teachers' and teachers' understanding of professional development. The results are presented in Table 1.

Statements	Head teachers		Teachers	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Training programs organized by the school.	2.80	1.23	2.40	1.36
Attending workshops organized by other head teachers	2.00	.67	2.37	.84
Reading scholarly journal articles about school administration	1.80	1.69	2.34	.86
Searching for new school administration ideas and techniques in books or internet sources	1.80	1.69	2.20	.75
Reflective administration	2.40	.52	2.17	.79
Training programs organized by the Ministry of Education	2.20	.42	2.77	.42
Head teacher action research	2.00	.00	2.74	.41
Mean of Means/Average Standard Deviation	2.14	.88	2.42	.78

Table 1: Head teachers'/Teachers' understanding of professional development

Source: Field Data, 2017

Table 1 presented the results of the data collected from head teachers and teachers regarding their understanding of professional development. As evident from the Table, both the teachers (Mean = 2.40, SD = 1.36) and head teachers (Mean = 2.80, SD = 1.23) shared the view that they understood professional development to be training programs organized by the school. In addition, both the teachers (Mean = 2.37, SD = .84) and head teachers (Mean = 2.0, SD = .67) affirmed that attending workshops organized by other head teachers was indicated to be their understanding of professional development. This means that both the teachers and head teachers are of the view that the various workshops organized by other schools together with training programmes organized by their schools are all geared towards their professional development. It is also clear from the responses of the teachers (Mean = 2.77, SD = .42) and head teachers (Mean = 2.20, SD = .42) that the training programmes may be organized by the Ministry of Education. This presupposes that professional development programmes are not organized only at the micro level of curriculum development. In furtherance, both the head teachers (Mean = 2.0, SD = .00), and teachers (Mean = 2.74, SD = .41) agreed that they recognize their head teachers' action research as professional development.

Head teachers who are involved in research are concerned with ways to improve practice by investigating their own worlds, and understanding their practices within the larger society which leads to improvement of teaching and learning (Villegas-Remiers, 2003; Elliot, 1993). Interestingly, whilst the teachers agreed that reading scholarly journal articles about school administration (Mean = 2.34, SD = .86) and searching for new school administration ideas and techniques in books or internet sources (Mean = 2.20, SD = .75) constitute professional development for teachers, the head teachers held differing views.

The interview transcripts revealed that the head teachers and teachers regarded professional development as a positive administrative changes needed to improve their work. There were varied responses to the question; for example, headteacher #1 noted that:

Ever since I received my first professional development training in my current position, I have realized that I have become more responsible with the documentation of the records of the pupils in the school. I

have also become more stringent with my supervision of the teachers.

Another head teacher #4 recounted:

Professional development training in my current position has made me more meticulous and concerned with the documentation of the records of the pupils in the school. I have also become very concerned with the supervision of my staff.

Professional workshops and other formally related meetings are a part of the professional development experience (Ganser, 2000). According to Villegas–Remiers, (2003) and Garuba (2007), these are non-award bearing interactive practical activities in small or large groups where participants are involved in the learning process. Workshops are coordinated by resource persons from within or outside the school and are aimed at refreshing teachers’ knowledge, skills and innovations in teaching. This finding agrees with Bush and Middlewood (2005), when they indicated that mentoring produces significant benefits for mentees, mentors and the school system. For the mentees it enables them to gain confidence and learn about their new role, whereas for the mentors it encourages reflection and learning partnership and for the school, it ensures a culture of collegiality. Also, Garuba (2007) asserts that through mentoring, knowledge is shared between mentee and mentor which promotes effectiveness in teaching and learning.

4.2.2 Research Question Two: To what extent does professional development influence head teachers’ administrative practices and teachers’ classroom practices?

Research question two was to establish the extent to which teachers and head teachers’ professional development influence their administrative and classroom practices. The views of the head teachers’ in response to this research question is presented in Table 2.

Possible influence	Mean	SD
Documentation of students’ records	2.80	.79
Head teacher attitude and belief.	2.60	.52
Head teacher knowledge in teaching strategies	2.60	1.26
Head teacher approach in consulting teachers and parents	2.40	.52
Head teacher knowledge in effective administrative practices	2.20	.42

Table 2: Head teachers’ view on influence of their professional development on the administrative process

Source: Field Data, 2017

As shown in Table 2, the head teachers’ agreed (Mean = 2.80, SD = .79) that their professional development had influence on their documentation of students records. The management and documentation of students’ records in the 21st Century is done using technology. In view of this, head teachers are expected to use the knowledge and skills they have acquired from the institutions of training and professional development programmes to undertake these exercises. Again, the head teachers agreed that attitude and belief (Mean = 2.60, SD .52), knowledge in teaching strategies (Mean = 2.60, SD = 1.26), approach in consulting teachers and parents (Mean 2.40, SD = .52) and effective administrative practices (Mean 2.40, SD .42) are effects of the professional development programmes on the administrative practices. The findings were re-echoed through the interview. Majority of the head teachers expressed the extent to which professional development programmes influence their administrative practices. For instance, a head teacher #3 indicated:

It has enhanced my way of administering my school more effectively; I am able to supervise my staff very well, manage the finances of the school very well, instill discipline in the staff and pupils and also relate very well with parents of the pupils. As a result of my relationship with the parents, issues of school debts are now a thing of the past.

Another head teacher #7 recounted:

With regards to my own performance, I would say that I have instilled a culture of discipline in the school after embarking on the professional development programmes. All the staff and pupils have been made aware that results in every area of the school are of utmost importance. I can boldly say that this has led to an improvement in the school environment.

The finding of this study aligns with that Davis and Wilson (2000) who found that principals can influence student achievement in two primary ways: (a) through development of effective teachers, and (b) through effective organizational processes. Again, the study agrees with Newman, King, and Youngs (2000) when they stated “we recognize the principal’s leadership as a critical force in the school’s capacity to educate students”. In fact, among school related factors associated with student achievement, leadership is second only to classroom instruction.

Table 3: Teachers' view on influence of their professional development on the teaching and learning process (classroom practices) Source: Field Data, 2017

Possible influence	Mean	SD
Teachers knowledge in subject area	2.80	.99
Teachers knowledge in teaching strategies	2.63	1.18
Teachers' understanding of their students thinking and learning patterns	2.23	.73
Teacher attitude and belief	2.06	1.07
Teachers reflection skills on their classroom work	2.91	1.00
Documentation of students learning records.	2.86	.97
Teachers approach in consulting parents	2.46	.51

The teachers affirmed that professional development programmes impacts on teachers knowledge in the subject area (Mean = 2.80, SD = .99), teaching strategies (Mean = 2.63, SD = 1.18), understanding of their students thinking and learning patterns (Mean = 2.23, SD = .73), attitude and belief (Mean = 2.06, SD = 1.07), reflections on their classroom work (Mean = 2.91, SD = 1.00), approach in consulting parents (Mean = 2.46, SD = .51) and document of students learning records (Mean = 2.86, SD = .97). These responses implies that the professional development programmes equip teachers with relevant skills for instructional delivery, update their knowledge and expose them to new methods and materials to meet the dictate of modern realities of the job. According to Adagiri (2014), CPD is aimed at meeting the professional needs of teachers, enhance their career prospects and support them in preparing for future challenges. Teachers' participation in professional development programmes impact on the teachers' ability to acquire and critically develop the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, and planning with their students and colleagues through every phase of their teaching lives (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010).

4.2.3 Research Question Three: What factors affect teachers and head teachers' professional development?

The third research question sought to identify the factors affecting teachers and head teachers' professional development. The views of the teachers and head teachers are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Participants' view on factors affecting head teachers' and teachers' professional development

Challenges	Mean	Std. dev.
Attempt to be managed by the education office staff or the school board.	3.00	.00
Teachers are not actively involved in planning, setting goal, and selecting activities	3.00	.05
Fail to provide opportunities to understand attitudes regarding race, social class, culture and life experiences and how they affect teaching practice and expectation for student learning behavior	3.00	.00
Lack of attention to site-specific differences	2.20	1.03
Fail to allow sufficient time to plan for and learn new strategies	2.20	1.03
Are common one-shot workshops that lack attention to follow-up activities	2.00	.94
Overload the teacher and their too many competing demands.	2.00	.94
Are evaluated on the basis of their impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning	1.80	1.03
Are ineffective because of teacher turn-over	1.40	.84

Source: Field Data, 2017

Table 4 shows that there are various factors that affect teachers' and head teachers' participation in professional development programmes. For instance, the respondents agreed that attempt by the education office staff or the school board to management professional development programmes (Mean = 3.0, SD = .05), failure to provide opportunities to understand attitudes regarding race, social class, culture and life experiences and how they affect teaching practice and expectation for student learning behaviour (Mean = 3.0, SD = 00), lack of attention to site-specific differences (Mean = 2.20, SD = 1.03), fail to allow sufficient time to plan for and learn new strategies (Mean = 2.20, SD = 1.03), lack of teacher involvement in planning, goal setting, and selecting activities (Mean = 3.0, SD = .00) and competing demands on the teacher (Mean = 2.00, SD = .94). The interview with the respondents corroborated their views on the questionnaire in relation to the factors that affect their professional development. Head teacher #9 expressed:

The Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education service should train more facilitators to do such workshops and provide other resources required such as computers and stationery. I believe that the absence of enough facilitators to handle the professional development means of the teachers is a major problem that needs to be sorted out.

Additionally, the reason that workshops are not frequently administered for teachers is because there are not enough facilitators to hold such workshops and it is the responsibility of the MoE and the Ghana Education service to ensure that facilitators are trained in larger numbers. A head teacher #1 recounted:

The Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education service should make resources available to the

headteachers to be able to organize professional development programmes in the school themselves. It is always a challenge to wait for the MoE and the Education Service before receiving such an important instrument for the development of our schools

Further to the expressions, a head teacher 4 added:

The challenges of teacher professional development in the schools are enormous but I believe that the main challenge is the lack of study leaves to pursue such programmes in higher educational institutions. Also, even if it is organized in the schools, resources are always a daunting challenge; there are no computers, internet access, enough facilitators, among many others I cannot enumerate now.

It is clear that the political climates affect teacher professional development. In fact, Browne (2006) and Evans (1998), incessant changes in government policies have been an issue with many teachers. This has led to lack of creativity and innovation in teaching, as well as an increase in teachers' workload which may be attributed to loss of job satisfaction and early retirement. Workload of teachers is a common barrier to their participation in CPD activities as evidenced from studies (Hustler et al, 2003; OECD, 2009). Pedder and Opfer (2011), also found out that working conditions, school culture and lack of support from management also affect teachers' participation in CPD.

5. Implication to Research and Practice

The findings of the study have shown that the leadership role of the headteacher implies giving teacher's responsibility and developing them is the best possible way through which basic schools in the study area can improve. This implies that for basic schools to improve headteachers should relinquish the idea of structure as control and view structure as the vehicle for empowering teachers through CPD. This goes further to indicate that if school improvement is to be achieved, all stakeholders in the planning of CPD should design appropriate and relevant programmes that suit the needs of teachers and headteachers needs rather than 'one size fits all' programmes.

Additionally, to shift the improvement focus to the classroom level require investing in developmental approaches that make the maximum impact on students and teaching learning. It is therefore important for stakeholders in education to develop a policy where teachers are promoted partly on their teaching and learning capacity in the classrooms rather than to be promoted based on experience.

6. Conclusions

From the on-going discussions, the study concluded from the findings that without relevant continuous professional development programme for teachers and head teachers, the quality of education that the nation seeks to achieve would forever remain elusive. Even though teachers and head teachers possess adequate knowledge on continuous professional development and its place in the teaching and learning process, the success of continuous professional development programmes depends to a large extent on how the challenges confronting teachers and head teachers in its utilisation can be ameliorated.

In view of this, the researchers recommend that there should be more, reliable relevant, planned and executed workshops, seminars, and other short courses which should be organized by the District Educational Directorate in conjunction with qualified resource personnel that can offer structured opportunities for the head teachers and teachers to acquire the needed knowledge and skills. Head teachers and teachers should be encouraged to take part in these as they will make a difference in their knowledge and skills. Headteachers and teachers should be encouraged and supported by the District Educational Directorate in terms of finance, logistics among others, to undertake continuous professional development from accredited higher institutions to better their knowledge base on the general changing trends in education with a resultant impact on school improvement.

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