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BASELINE STUDY ON THE STATE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT

Improving the quality of management in schools has been identified as an effective strategy for improving the quality of student performance in schools. This paper presents a report on a study which sought to examine management methodology for promoting quality teaching and learning even under adverse conditions and in the face of serious resource constraints in basic schools in Ghana. The study identified ten factors that make the difference between effectively managed and ineffectively managed schools: Instructional leadership skills of the school head, time management, school vision and mission, tradition of performance, commitment and attachment to work of the school, learning environment, community value and support from the district office, school community relations and school location. The study affirms that these ten factors are key determinants of effective school management.

adverse conditions and in the face of serious resource constraints in basic schools in Ghana, especially in the rural areas. The study, which was funded by the IEPA, covered a total of 60 schools selected from nine regions of the country.

The study focused on specific elements of school management such as : managing human resources (teachers and pupils); maintaining discipline in school; communication; managing instructional time; managing co-curricular activities; managing learning resources; managing school funds; managing school intake and attendance; assessing pupil performance; assessing teacher performance; staff development (in-service training) and school-community relations.

Introduction

This paper presents the findings of a 1997 baseline survey carried out by the IEPA on the state of school management in Ghana. The purpose of the study was to examine methodology for promoting quality teaching and learning even under

Background to the Study

Of late, there has been an increasing public concern about the problem of ineffective teaching and poor student performance in basic education. A strategy that has been designed by the Ministry of Education, through its

Basic Education Sector Improvement Project (BESIP) for improving the quality of student performance in our schools is the improvement of the quality of education management to higher levels of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.

Some writers have argued that the whole success of a school is to a large extent shaped by the manner in which the headteacher perceives and performs his role in the school. (Hoyle, 1969, quoted in Grace, 1972, p. 95; Bryan, 1968, p. xiii; Southworth, 1995).

Research has also established that the most important factors relating to the quality of learning are the complex interactions of the student with his family, his peers, the teacher and the head of the school. What the students actually learn and grasp is thus determined by the enabling environment created for them to interact with their teachers and learning materials.

The fact that learning builds on the students' interaction with the peers, teachers and learning materials has serious implications for education management policy formulation. Educational Administrators may be pre-occupied with the provision of school inputs such as buildings, furniture, textbooks and teachers but pay little attention to the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. This situation requires an indepth

research to guide education management policy and development and promote quality teaching and learning. As Heneveld (1993) contends,

- policy is not necessarily an effective instrument for change, and what teachers and school heads do with children are to a large extent independent of national policy.
- selection of the right mix of inputs will not necessarily lead to improved quality of student performance; rather what teachers and school heads do with children contribute significantly to effective teaching and learning.
- resources (facilities, equipment, curriculum, teachers and school head) all come together to form a social system that conditions the learning that takes place in the school.

Research has further revealed that effective school management requires competent leadership, capable teaching force, professional teacher support and supervision, use and care of supplies and equipment and school/community support and interaction. These elements are necessary for effective teaching and learning. The teaching and learning process, i.e. classroom organization, use of resources and materials use of instructional time, teaching methods, practice time/assignments/classwork/homework for students, assessment and feedback, requires effective school

management to provide the conditions necessary for quality student achievement and performance.

It is the foregoing conditions that provide the basis for the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) to research into the current state of school management in the country in order to provide a summary of data/information to guide education management practice that will enhance quality learning.

Method

Since the purpose of the study was to determine the state of school management, the research activities focused on collecting relevant information primarily through observation and discussions, on what teachers and school heads do with the children. A team of researchers visited the selected schools; held discussions with school heads and observed school activities and the physical environment to capture relevant information on key elements of school administration and management. The information captured was transferred to a five point scale indicating the extent or the degree to which the specifics of the key elements are promoting effective school management.

Selection of schools

A total of 60 schools including 30 rural and 30 urban schools were involved in

the study. The schools were selected from nine rural districts and nine urban districts in nine regions, namely, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra, Volta, Western, Upper East and Northern. In each district, one Primary School and one Junior Secondary School (JSS) of Grade A status (from the District's own classification of schools) were selected. Similarly one Primary School and one JSS both Grade C status were selected. The schools included those the District Education Officers classified as 'good' schools and "poor" schools.

Results

Two categories of schools emerged from the study : effectively managed and ineffectively managed schools. The state of management in each of these categories of schools is as follows:

Category I : Effectively Managed Schools

(a) Managing Teacher and Pupil Personnel

The study revealed that headteachers of the effectively managed basic schools involved teachers and pupils in the administration of their schools. Duties were assigned to teachers and pupils towards the attainment of the overall objectives of the school. The schools had functioning duty rosters for both staff and school prefects. Besides, the heads promoted the spirit of team work. There was also evidence of the

headteachers' commitment to individual roleplay in the areas of sports, security and safety, cultural activities, environmental cleanliness and sanitation as well as personal hygiene. Consequently, several committees operated in the effectively managed schools. For example, all the schools classified as "effectively managed schools" had committees on academic, examinations, health and sanitation, sports and culture, guidance and counselling and disciplinary matters which were all found functioning. In most of the schools, prefects conducted morning and closing assemblies under the supervision of the heads and teachers on duty, thus affording the pupils the chance of developing their leadership qualities and skills of public speaking.

On the whole, the heads provided effective instructional leadership that created the needed ambience for teaching and learning.

(b) Discipline

In the area of discipline, the effectively managed schools were found to have established acceptable standards of behaviour for teachers and pupils. Rules on personal hygiene and punctuality were strictly adhered to. In addition, well-defined working systems of authority and responsibility which enforced school rules and regulations had been established. For example, in most of the Junior Secondary Schools, a corps of officers known as

the "school police" had been formed to assist the school prefects in maintaining discipline and ensuring that the rules and regulations of the school were observed.

(c) Communication

The study showed that the effectively managed schools had cordial inter-personal relationships and effective channels of communication within the schools and with the communities. Regular staff meetings were held to plan the term's work, discuss administrative directives, strengthen teaching methods, solve problems that arise within the term and review the term's work. Essential school records on communication (minutes of staff meetings, circulars, school inspection reports, etc.) were properly filed.

(d) Managing Instructional Time

All the schools had drawn up plans for effective time management and utilization by both teachers and pupils. They ensured that class attendance registers and staff attendance books were well kept. In some of the schools, a system had been designed whereby the roll is checked for all classes during assembly to check lateness and absenteeism. Class attendance registers were marked at the close of each day's work rather than in the morning. This ensured the retention of pupils in school during school hours.

Besides, the heads of these schools and the teachers on duty, as well as, prefects

on duty were usually the first to arrive in school to supervise and monitor the activities of pupils and teachers. The teachers signed the attendance register/book under the supervision of the heads. It was also observed that the heads regularly checked to ensure that the teachers and pupils were engaged in teaching/learning activities. They did this by going round the classes to monitor teaching and learning.

Another finding was that the heads had schedules for receiving and vetting lesson notes of teachers. Many of them had devised schemes through which they were able to collect samples of pupils' exercise books to establish the quality and quantity of pupils' work and thereby determine pupils' and teachers' work output.

The organization of special school activities, like open days or speech and prize giving days, was not very common in the schools. In the few schools where these special school activities were organized, committees were formed to plan the programmes for the special days. A remarkable feature of the effectively managed schools was the variety of strategies adopted to control social events that tend to disrupt school work. An innovative example of this situation was a case where the head planned a special time table for market days. By this programme, schools opened earlier (at 7.00 a.m.) instead of the normal 8.00a.m. in order to close by

mid-day to afford the pupils the chance to engage in income generating activities in the market. Another example found was that, where the social event required the participation of all the teachers in activities such as GNAT meetings, funeral celebrations, etc, the heads of some of the well-managed basic schools allowed only few representatives of staff to participate, leaving the rest of the teachers in school to continue with school work.

In moslem dominated areas where Friday prayers have been disrupting school activities at the JSS level, some of the heads had built small mosques on the schools' premises. The pupils worship in these schools' mosques during break and resume academic work thereafter.

(e) Managing Co-curricular Activities

At the primary school level, co-curricular activities such as clubs and societies were virtually non-existent. Similarly special occasions like open days which give publicity to the schools and their activities, were not held. Some of the heads felt that it was the performance of the pupils in examinations that advertise the schools' image but not open days.

At the JSS level, however, the schools had clubs such as debating societies and also had planned time

schedules for the various activities such as debates, quizzes, competitions, etc. Field trips were organized by some of the well managed junior secondary schools. Speech and Prize Giving days and open days were also organized to coincide with cultural festivities during which they invite the rulers of the community to participate.

Generally, current affairs and civic education were not taught exclusively in the well-managed primary schools. In a few of them, however, this was done by way of encouraging the pupils in class six to read newspapers and give oral reports to the class on current issues. At the JSS level, current affairs and civic education were extensively taught in the good schools. Some heads of these good Junior Secondary Schools even invited resource persons to teach or give talks on some current affairs or civic education issues.

(f) Managing Learning Resources

Most of the schools had safe places like stores with secure locks, safe boxes and shelves where books, equipment, tools and their supplies were kept.

It was also observed that, in many of these schools, gravels, stones and boulders were used to check soil erosion. Others used pegs to build bridges in gullies to check erosion. Some schools which were located in low lying areas had constructed water courses to control flooding problems.

In terms of maintaining environmental aesthetic standards, trees, hedges, flowers and grass had been planted on the school compound. The trees and hedges were well trimmed at regular intervals to further enhance the beauty of the schools. In some of the schools, especially the JSS, chiefs were often contacted to draw the attention of the community on the need to control their animals (sheep and goats) from destroying the schools' hedges and flowers. The beating of "gong-gong" was often the medium of communication in such matters.

(g) Managing School Finance

The study revealed that the public basic schools were not collecting school fees; hence the headteachers were not keeping any books of accounts. In a few districts, however, the District Assemblies had imposed some levies for development purposes. Proper accounts on the collection of these levies were kept by the heads of the well-managed schools, sometimes in improvised accounts books.

Some of the schools, especially those with farming lands, undertook income generating activities by planting crops and rearing animals. Proper records were kept on monies raised from those income generating activities. It was observed that the organization of these income generating activities was

much more common in the junior secondary schools, even though few of the effectively managed primary schools also carried out some activities.

(h) Managing School Intake and Attendance

Generally, the well-managed Junior Secondary Schools did not make any special effort towards increasing admission by engaging in enrolment drives. This was because these schools invariably had feeder nursery and primary schools. Furthermore, parents flocked these schools to seek admission for their wards because of the popularity the schools had gained through their high academic performance.

The effectively managed schools, especially at the primary school level, therefore had a problem of how to cope with the high public demand for enrolment.

(i) Assessing Pupil and Teacher Performance

It was observed that the heads of these effectively managed schools carried out pupil and teacher performance assessment concurrently. They performed this duty by first of all going round the classes to monitor teaching and learning. Secondly, they took samples of pupils' exercise books to check the amount and quality of pupils' and teachers' work.

They also checked through the test items of the teachers to find out if they were up to the standard of the class. In addition, they sampled out pupils' test scripts to examine the quality of pupil performance and the accuracy of scoring by the teacher. Individual pupils were also interviewed by the heads to find out their learning and social problems. Using information gathered from these interviews, as well as, information gathered from the pupils' exercises, the heads invited the weak pupils and their parents to discuss with them how best they could help the pupils improve their performance. Just as they did with the pupils, the heads also interviewed teachers on their progress and problems. The teachers confided in the heads and discussed their spiritual, social and even marital problems with them.

Some primary schools had problems of staffing, basically due to maternity leave and sick leave of serving teachers. In solving this problem, some of the heads of schools with more than one stream shared the affected pupils among the other classes. This was done to ensure that pupils do not lose valuable instructional time.

(j) Staff Development/ In-Service Training

It was noted that the level of teacher retention in the effectively managed schools was very high. This situation

did not therefore make it necessary for new teachers to join the staff often. However, whenever new teachers joined the staff, the heads did organize orientation courses for the new teachers on the schools' traditions, values, regulations and administrative systems. Internal workshops or seminars were also occasionally organized by the heads to address issues relating to syllabus changes and teaching methods.

(k) School Community Relations/Support

The survey further revealed that the effectively managed basic schools usually had strong PTAs which met regularly to discuss issues affecting the welfare of the schools. Parents showed concern for the schools and ensured that the schools maintained their high standards of performance.

The schools also actively participated in national activities like independence day celebration. The schools were visited very often by officers from the District Office who played a supportive role in school supervision.

It was further realized that the schools had very good internal supervision schemes and that the external supervisors did not normally engage in serious in-service training programmes for the staff of the schools. Thus, internal supervision played a paramount role in promoting teaching and learning. The implication of this is that if internal

supervision is effectively done, there would not be much need for external supervision.

It is worthy to note that the few effectively managed schools were invariably located in the urban areas and in big towns of the districts visited.

Category II : Ineffectively Managed Schools

(a) Managing Teacher and Pupil Personnel

In the ineffectively managed schools, it was realized that most of them did not have notice boards. No duty rosters existed for both staff and prefects. In extreme cases, there was no prefectural system, especially in the primary schools. They were also characterized by poor sanitation and poor environmental aesthetic standards. There were no committees to see to welfare, sports, culture, discipline etc. Instructional leadership of the heads could best be described as non-existent. Consequently, the schools lacked the enabling environment for teaching and learning.

(b) Discipline

The study revealed that observance and enforcement of school rules and regulations by both teachers and pupils, were not evident in the ineffectively managed schools. There

was no system of authority, responsibility and accountability that enforced school rules and regulations. The schools also lacked established acceptable standards of behaviour, and did not maintain basic standards of personal hygiene. Teaching and learning in these schools were characterized by general aloofness, total indifference and laxity on the part of both teachers and pupils.

(c) Communication

The survey revealed that the ineffectively managed schools did not have well-organized and regular staff meetings to plan and review the term's work, discuss administrative directives and solve problems that arise within the term. It was found, however, that cordial relations existed among the teachers. The cordial relations notwithstanding, the administrative style in the schools created conditions for the teachers to avoid work.

It was further revealed that the schools did not keep essential school records. Most of them had only one file for all forms of correspondence and this was not well kept. Apart from the log book, all the other essential administrative books were not kept. Poor record keeping hampered communication within the schools and with the District Education Offices. The schools also lacked interaction with the community, especially as they did not have any PTAs.

(d) Managing Instructional Time

A common feature of the ineffectively managed schools was that the marking of Class Attendance Registers and the keeping of Staff Attendance Books did not serve any purpose. This was because lateness and absenteeism on the part of both teachers and pupils had been accepted as normal by the heads. In some of the schools, even records on staff and pupil attendance did not exist. The heads did not also have time to supervise teaching and learning in the schools since they claimed they were overburdened with teaching themselves.

At the primary school level, some of the headteachers had schedules for vetting the lesson plans of their teachers. However, they took no action against teachers who defaulted or refused to submit their lesson plans. At the JSS level, the teachers did not prepare any schemes of work and lesson plans but the headteachers took no action against them.

It was also observed that the headteachers had no system for assessing both teachers' and pupils' work output. Consequently, the output of work was sub-standard. In addition, the headteachers gleefully allowed social events, notably market days, funerals, farming and religious functions to

disrupt teaching and learning in the schools. These schools were characterized by general in-effective time management and utilization, and as a result teaching hours were wasted.

(e) Managing Co-curricular Activities

Regarding co-curricular activities, the heads and staff of the schools did not plan or schedule activities for clubs and societies. Similarly, field trips and excursions which could afford the pupils the opportunity of gaining first hand experiences were not organized. The schools did not also organize open-days to make public the achievements and problems of the schools.

Sports and games were also not well-organized. Instructional time was sacrificed for this purpose and there was no supervision from the teachers. Pupils were usually left on the field while the teachers loitered the time away. Other co-curricular activities like health related education, teaching of current affairs and civic education that go to enhance the individuals' social development and healthy citizenship were not taught.

(f) Managing Learning Resources

The survey revealed that the ineffectively managed schools did not observe basic principles of environmental cleanliness properly.

The heads made no effort to carry out minor repairs of school buildings and furniture. They also made no effort to grow and maintain flowers, hedges and trees to enhance the aesthetic standards of the school's environments. Unlike the effectively managed schools, the ineffectively managed schools did not make any serious moves to check soil erosion and flooding. No attention was also paid to the proper disposal of waste.

Furthermore, it was observed that textbooks, library books, equipment, stores and supplies were most often not used to facilitate teaching and learning. Some of these schools did not have offices, or in some instances, the offices and classrooms lacked good doors and locks. Thus, for fear of theft and damage to the items, the textbooks, equipment, etc. were kept untouched in the house of the headteachers, chiefs or Assemblymen. In extreme cases, it was noted that mice, termites and cockroaches had destroyed valuable textbooks and materials.

(g) Managing School Finance

The heads explained that they were not performing this aspect of their work because the payment of all types of fees had been abolished in the basic schools. It was, however, discovered that few districts had instituted their own sports and education levies. In such districts, heads had not evolved any effective methods for collecting the fees and showed no proper records of keeping

school accounts with respect to monies collected.

The findings also showed that where land and other resources were available, the heads failed to organize income generating activities to support the school's development.

(h) Managing School Intake and Attendance

Data collected showed that the urban schools in this category did not carry out any enrolment drives. They were fed from the high population of the urban areas. In the rural areas, however, some efforts were made to increase enrolment but because of the poor performance of the schools, parents were reluctant to send their children to the schools.

It was also observed that lateness and absenteeism were rampant in the schools and the situation worsened during certain seasons and times of the year e.g. farming and fishing seasons, dry season and market days. Apart from lateness and absenteeism, dropout situations still existed. Heads made little efforts to follow up the dropout cases and to check absenteeism and lateness. At the JSS level, it was discovered that majority of the dropout cases of girls were due to teenage pregnancy and early espousment.

(i) Assessing Pupil and Teacher Performance

The study revealed that the heads of the ineffectively managed schools did not carry out any purposeful assessment of pupil and teacher performance. Continuous assessment was not systematically done and teachers "conjured and cooked up" marks for continuous assessment records. Pupils' and teachers' work output could best be described as poor.

Besides, little interest was shown in the individual progress and problems of the pupils. The heads did not interview pupils to ascertain their progress and their individual learning and social problems. Similarly, conditions were not created for heads to observe pupil performance at school level competitions because such competitions were not organized in the schools.

Regular lateness and absenteeism were found to be characteristic of the heads and staff of the schools. The general laxity in management in the schools tended to promote drunkenness and other unacceptable behaviour among the staff.

(j) Staff Development/ In-Service Training

Teacher turn-over in the ineffectively managed basic schools was observed to

be very high. Unfortunately, newly trained teachers posted to the schools were not given any form of orientation to help them adjust and quickly fit into the pattern of community and school life. Heads did not hold any meetings or organize workshop to discuss and explain policy directives. At best, these directives were simply circulated among teachers, leaving the teachers to individually infer and interpret the educational implications of the directives. In addition, the heads did not organize workshops to introduce changes in the syllabus and to improve on teaching methods.

(k) School Community Relations/ Support

It was noted that heads in this category of schools did not draw any plans for activities that would promote school community relations. Consequently, no mutual relationship and co-operation existed between the schools and the communities. For example, the schools did not have PTAs and did not carry out any community support programmes like clean-up campaigns and health

education. The communities therefore made no effort to support the development and management of the schools. It was clear that community feeling of ownership of these schools was a far cry.

It was also observed that circuit supervisors and officers from the District Education office occasionally visited the schools but little support was given to the heads and teachers in terms of teaching/ learning and management. While the heads felt they deserved special support from the District Education Office, the office blamed the heads for ineffectively managing the schools and not providing the right instructional leadership. The effect of the strained relationship between the school and the community and the lack of support to promote teaching/ learning is that the schools perform at sub-standard level.

A summary of the characteristics of both the effective and ineffective managed schools is presented in Table 1 :

Table 1
Summary of the Characteristics of Effectively
and Ineffectively Managed Basic Schools

ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS	
	EFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS	INEFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS
Managing Teacher and Pupil Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active teacher involvement • functional duty roster • team work • effective instructional leadership • committee system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no duty roster • no prefectural system, especially in primary school • no committee system • no committee System
Managing Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • established standards of behaviour • well-defined authority responsibility and accountability systems • enforcement of rules/ regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relaxed rules/ regulations • lacked established standards of behaviour • general aloofness
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective channels of communication • cordial inter-personal relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undefined channels of communication • cordial inter-personal relations

ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS	
	EFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS	INEFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular staff meetings • proper filing system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • irregular & poorly organized staff meetings • poorly kept records
Managing Instructional Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective time management plan • effective time utilization plan • proper keeping of class and staff attendance records • effective supervision and monitoring of teaching/learning activities • effective schedules for receiving and vetting lesson notes • control of social events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no time management plan • ineffective instructional time utilization • unreliable record keeping systems • ineffective supervision and monitoring of teaching/learning activities • frequent disruption of teaching/learning programmes by social events.
Managing Co-curricular Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on academic related activities such as debating and current affairs • utilization of external resource persons' services • less emphasis on clubs and social activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor organization of co-curricular activities • instructional time sacrificed for sports and games

CHARACTERISTICS		
ELEMENT	EFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS	INEFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOL
Managing School Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proper keeping of school accounts • income generating activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor records on monies collected from pupil • no income generating activities
Managing Learning Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure security of textbooks, equipment & tools • check soil erosion • maximum utilization of textbooks and equipments supplied to school • trees, flowers and grass on compound well maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improper keeping of textbooks and school equipment • poor maintenanc of school environment • underutilization of textbook
Managing School Intake and Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no enrolment drives • had feeder nursery/ primary schools • high public demand for enrolment • difficulty in satisfying admission needs of public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no enrolment drives • had feeder nursery/ primary schools • reluctance of parents to send children to school • very high lateness and absenteeism • high dropout rate

CHARACTERISTICS		
ELEMENT	EFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS	INEFFECTIVELY MANAGED SCHOOLS
Assessing Pupil and Teacher Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective monitoring of teaching learning by head • interviewing teacher/pupil on progress and problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no purposeful assessment of teacher and pupil • poor conduct of continuous assessment
Staff Development/ In-service Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high teacher retention rate • new teachers given orientation • internal workshops/ seminars organized on teaching related issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high turnover rate • no orientation for new teachers
School-Community Relations/Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong and functional PTAs • involvement in local/ national social programmes • regular visits from District/ Circuit Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor school-community relations • no orientation for new teachers • irregular visits from District/Circuit Officers
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • predominantly in urban areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • both urban and rural areas

Conclusion

The baseline study was able to ascertain what makes the difference in the management of the good schools and blameworthy schools. The study identified ten important determinants of effective school management. These are :

1. Instructional leadership skills of the school head
2. Time management
3. School vision and mission
4. Tradition of performance
5. Commitment and attachment to work of the school
6. Learning environment
7. Community value and support for education
8. Administrative support from the district office
9. School community relations
10. School location

Leadership of the Headteacher

The headteachers of the few good schools created a functional social system that promoted learning in the schools. Working with the teachers,

the headteachers prepared strategies and activities for providing quality teaching and learning. The effective headteachers guided the teachers to understand and accept their roles. They demonstrated leadership qualities of creativity and innovativeness.

In the blameworthy schools, the headteachers were work-shy and showed virtually no initiative or drive. The teaching and learning process was ineffective due largely to the weak leadership behaviour of the headteachers.

The leadership behaviour of headteachers of our basic schools, therefore, has policy implication for the appointment of school head. Headteachers should :

- have the flair for administration
- be creative and innovative
- be trained to have confidence and authority to supervise the teachers and monitor progress of work in the classroom

Time Management in Basic Schools

Teachers, pupils and headteachers of good schools regard time as a resource and use it beneficially. Teaching hours are used to facilitate learning for the pupils. Teachers

give exercises, assignment and homework to the children. Teachers mark and grade the assignments and give feedback to the pupils.

With the consent of parents, teachers organize remedial and extra teaching to improve learning in the school. The pupils develop learning skills which they use to advantage. Teachers' expectation of pupil performance is very high. All the role players in the school work diligently in order to achieve good results. Co-curricular activities are handled as learning activities and the pupils participate actively in the activities. The headteachers of good schools plan school timetable to take care of special problems in the community. In communities where children engage in economic activities on market days, for example, the headteachers allow classes to start at 7.00 a.m. and close at mid-day to enable the children to go to the market after classes. Similarly in fishing communities, schools could operate from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. during fishing season

The school timetable could also be handled to reduce absenteeism among teachers and pupils. In few effectively managed schools, for example, when social functions require participation of teachers which may disrupt teaching activities, the headteachers allow one or two teachers to represent the school in the social activities.

School Vision and Mission

The tone of a well managed school easily indicates the established purpose of the school. The early headteachers of the few good primary schools established ultimate end for the schools to attain. Some schools have mission statements and the headteachers and staff adhere to the goals of the school.

The good schools work to attain the ultimate goal of excellence in learning achievements. There is a tradition of excellence in pupil and teacher accomplishments. This tradition is sustained from cohort to cohort and headteacher to headteacher. Teachers and pupils show commitment and attachment to the work of the school. However, in poorly managed schools the staff including the headteachers do not stand by any praiseworthy tradition. The schools seem to operate without any ultimate goal. The staff and pupils show virtually no commitment or interest in the work of the school

Learning Environment

The Praiseworthy schools maintain basic aesthetic standards in the school environment by :

- caring for the school compound, buildings and equipment

- planting and maintaining trees, flowers and lawns
- controlling soil erosion and flooding
- maintaining order in the arrangement of furniture and learning materials in classrooms
- observing personal hygiene among staff and pupils

The teachers work diligently and create stimulating learning situation for the pupils.

The poorly managed schools generally do not observe basic rules of environmental cleanliness. The teachers in these schools rarely make their lessons stimulating and interesting to pupils.

The few effectively managed schools are in urban and district capitals.

These schools enjoy better administrative support from the district education office. Communities in the catchment of praiseworthy schools value education of their children and the staff of these schools receive support from the community.

The fruitful school community relations and the administrative support from the district office make teachers develop a strong feeling of attachment and commitment to the work of the schools.

The poorly managed schools are mostly in the rural and educationally underserved areas where community value for education is generally low. The schools enjoy very little administrative support from the district education office.

School Location and School Community Relations

The few effectively managed schools are in urban and district capitals.

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