Professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools

Usman Kojo Abonyi
B.Ed. Primary Education (Cape Coast), M. Phil. Higher Education (Oslo)

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of Canberra

17th November 2016
Abstract
There is an increasing evidence that effective school leadership is vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for students. School leadership development has therefore gained much attention and is high on the agenda in a number of countries. Research in Ghana, however, suggests that educational reforms over the years have ignored the importance of school leadership development as there are currently very few reform initiatives that address the need to develop the leadership proficiencies and skills of school leaders. Basic school leaders in Ghana are appointed without any formal preparatory training and are either appointed or rise to such positions based on rank and teaching experience. The quality of leadership and management in basic schools, therefore, remains generally poor while learning outcomes have fallen far below the targets of the Ministry of Education over the past years. Ironically, the Ghana Education Service has a high expectation of the leaders to make teaching and learning pivotal to all other activities in schools.

This study, therefore, sought to investigate how leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers, and form masters) in Ghanaian basic schools develop their leadership skills following their appointment into leadership roles and the kind of instructional leadership practices they carry out in schools. The study also identified the learning transfer systems that facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of the leaders. A mixed method approach was employed in gathering both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently from the groups of leaders in the basic schools of one educational district in Ghana. The rationale for combining both quantitative and qualitative methods was that of complementarity as it sought to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem.

Results from the study showed that the professional development activities that the leaders employed for their development were mostly informal and self-directed learning methods.
Leaders engaged mostly in personal reading, school meetings, visitations to other schools, workshops, on the job experience, and informal coaching from supervisors and peers for their professional development. The study further showed limited shared instructional leadership aimed at improving instruction in schools while headteachers had entrenched a leadership culture driven by central policies and expectations. Again, the three groups of leaders rated transfer effort – performance expectations, motivation to transfer, performance self-efficacy, peer support, and transfer design as the key factors that facilitate the transfer of their professional learning. Nonetheless, the result showed significant differences among five scales of the LTSI across the three leadership levels.

The study concludes that to strengthen school leadership in Ghanaian basic schools, Ghana would need to learn from international best practice in connection with initiating sustainable professional development programmes while building on the existing informal and self-initiated learning mechanisms to strengthen the leadership capacities of leaders in schools. The study further recommends that the Ghana Education Service revisits policies for school leaders to place greater emphasis on how leaders might improve student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur in schools. Finally, professional development interventions need to incorporate knowledge content of the contemporary conception of instructional leadership and take into account the existing learning transfer systems of leaders to facilitate the effective transfer of their learning.
Acknowledgements

Admittedly, nothing would have been possible without the support and mercy of God. Indeed, I am really grateful to Him for the love and protection He has shown me throughout this academic journey.

I am extremely grateful to a number of individuals without whose help and assistance it would not have been possible to write this dissertation. I am particularly grateful to my primary supervisor, Professor Francesco Sofo, for his guidance, encouragement, and useful suggestions throughout this journey. I am grateful to him for the role he played in securing financial support for me which enabled me to complete the programme successfully. I would also like to thank Professor Ting Wang, my secondary supervisor, for her valuable and insightful suggestions and contributions throughout the work.

In Australia, I came in contact with a number of people whose support made my life comfortable and even made me forget that I was enrolling in a PhD programme without a scholarship from any institution. I owe a debt of gratitude to all these individuals whose names cannot be mentioned for lack of space. However, I would like to make an exception of Mr. Zul Waker Al-Kabir, his wife Mrs. Maliha Rahnuna, and their son Faris Al-Kabir for providing me free accommodation for more than a year during my stay in Canberra.

My appreciation further goes to my past teachers and friends in Ghana who sacrificed immensely to help me rise to this level of education. Special thanks go to Mr. Abdul Aziz Abdul Moomin, Mr. Ibrahim Asane, Mr. Alhassan Ibrahim, Mr. Ahmed Kojo Incoom (deceased), Mr. Dimbie Mumuni Issah, Mr. Emmanuel Obeng Annan, Mr. Mubarak Kojo Ampeaw, Mr. Usman Yaw Baidoo, Mrs. Halima Gyesi, Mr. Robert Mensah, Mr. Sylvester Dadzie, and Mr. Mohammad Frempong. Indeed, your sacrifices and support have brought me this far and you responded to my call at the time I needed you most.
Finally, I owe a large debt of gratitude to all my family members for their prayers, encouragements, and supports. Special thanks to my Mum, Paulina Baffoe, my lovely wife, Rahmat Essel, and daughter, Afia Essumambaa Abonyi, for their patience, understanding, and care.

It is my fervent prayer that God rewards everyone who has contributed in any way to the successful completion of this work.
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<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>Advanced Certificate in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT</td>
<td>Assistant Headteachers</td>
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<td>AL</td>
<td>Action Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>BECE</td>
<td>Basic Education Certificate Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Education Management Information System</td>
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<td>FM</td>
<td>Form Masters</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GES</td>
<td>Ghana Education Service</td>
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<td>GNAT</td>
<td>Ghana National Association of Teachers</td>
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<td>HT</td>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSET</td>
<td>In-Service Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>KESI</td>
<td>Kenya Education Staff Institute</td>
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<td>KIE</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KNUT</td>
<td>Kenya National Union of Teachers</td>
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<td>LEP</td>
<td>Leaders in Education Programme</td>
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<td>LTSI</td>
<td>Learning Transfer System Inventory</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>NCSL</td>
<td>National College for School Leadership</td>
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<td>NEA</td>
<td>National Education Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>PBL</td>
<td>Problem Based Learning</td>
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<td>PDA</td>
<td>Professional Development Activities</td>
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<td>PIMRS</td>
<td>Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale</td>
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<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>SPAM</td>
<td>School Performance Appraisal Meeting</td>
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<td>TALIS</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning International Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEWU</td>
<td>Teachers and Educational Workers Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMSS</td>
<td>Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCC</td>
<td>University of Cape Coast</td>
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<tr>
<td>UEW</td>
<td>University of Education, Winneba</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The role of education in improving welfare and alleviating poverty in Ghana has long been recognized (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Baiden-Amissah, 2006; Senadza, 2012). According to Esia-Donkoh (2014), education forms the foundation for the development of human resource, making it critical for national development. Moreover, the government of Ghana considers education as the bedrock of economic, social, political, environmental and cultural development of the nation (Donkoh, 2013). As a result, the improvement of the education sector has been one of the key issues on Ghana’s development agenda and governments over the years have made various efforts with the view to ensuring that the education sector fulfils the expectations of the individual and the nation as a whole (Baiden-Amissah, 2006) and thus a great deal of human and financial resources is expended to support the public school system (Baffour-Awuah, 2011).

Consequently, Ghana has seen tremendous improvements in access to basic education in all regions, among the poor, by gender and by urban and rural settings (Akyeampong, Djangmah, Seidu, Oduro, & Hunt, 2007; World Bank, 2014). According to the World Bank (2014), enrolment in basic education in Ghana has nearly doubled from around 3.5 million pupils in 1999/2000 to nearly seven million pupils in 2010/2011. This jump in enrolment was presumably the result of governmental efforts such as the introduction of the capitation grant scheme (a national policy which effectively abolished all forms of direct fees), the school feeding programme, and the introduction of free school uniforms (Akyeampong et al., 2007; UNDP, 2012; World Bank, 2010). In addition, the number of schools at kindergarten, primary and junior high school levels has as well increased substantially over the past few years to keep pace with the increase in enrolment (Aheto-Tsegah, 2011).
Moreover, in order to improve the quality of basic education in Ghana, education expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown from four percent to five percent of GDP in the early 2000s to six percent of GDP (Ministry of Education, 2012). The government of Ghana is also making frantic efforts to increase the number of teachers in schools through initiating Best Teacher award schemes for teachers in basic schools, creating special teacher motivation packages for teachers working in hard-to-reach and deprived areas, and for teachers of mathematics and science, as well as those in technical and vocational education (Aheto-Tsegah, 2011). Following these interventions, it is quite clear that the government is taking steps to improve basic education in Ghana. In this vein, Oduro (2009) asserts that if the phenomenon of Education for All (EFA) were restricted to quantitative expansion in pupil enrolment, structural changes, and infrastructural development in schools, Ghana would have had no cause to worry.

Unfortunately, successful school development goes beyond mere expansion in facilities and infrastructure. It is asserted that effective leadership is one of the most important contributors to overall organizational success and that the quality of an organization’s leadership determines the quality of the organization itself (Bush, 2009; Donkoh, 2013; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). According to Oduro and Bosu (2010), it takes effective school leadership to achieve effectiveness and improvement in teaching and learning and that school leadership can make a positive difference in the implementation of quality education initiatives in Ghana. Therefore, schools need leadership that will effectively manage the expansion in enrollment resulting from the access expansion initiatives, facilitate the implementation of change initiatives, create conducive teaching and learning environments and provide the needed professional support for teachers and pupils (Agezo, 2010; Oduro, 2009).
Despite the government’s commitment to improving the basic education sector, Zame, Hope, and Repress (2008) assert that there is no comprehensive reform initiative that addresses the need to develop the leadership proficiencies of school leaders in Ghana. In almost all the educational reforms in Ghana over the years, what is lacking has been an explicit policy towards improving educational quality through improvement in quality leadership at the school level (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Donkoh, 2013; Esia-Donkoh, 2014; Oduro, 2009; Zame et al., 2008). Individuals are promoted to school leadership position without extensive leadership training and there are no educational institutions that focus solely on preparing school leaders to lead basic schools (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Esia-Donkoh, 2014; Kusi & Mensah, 2014; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003).

According to Oduro and MacBeath (2003), school leaders in Ghana are appointed because they have been good teachers, spotted, and persuaded by the authorities to take up the appointment. A study by Zame et al. (2008) revealed that out of the total 224 headteachers who provided information for their research, only 29 percent of headteachers indicated receiving some type of training prior to appointment. Similarly, a survey conducted by Amakyi and Ampah-Mensah (2013) revealed that only seven percent of 350 headteachers randomly sampled across the country in 2013 possessed a graduate degree in educational administration prior to appointment. Thus, it is evidently clear that Ghana faces a leadership challenge with respect to the preparation of school leaders who have experienced rigorous training in leadership (Donkoh, 2013; Zame et al., 2008).

Nonetheless, the Ghana Education Service (GES) emphasizes the need for school leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools by creating a vision of success for the school, organizing and evaluating instructional programmes, improving the quality of learning, building and maintaining relationships, providing a safe school environment,
managing human resources, and managing school finances (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013). Also, the GES expects leaders in Ghanaian basic schools to make learning the pivot around which all other activities revolve in the school by maintaining a focus on learning, creating conditions favourable to learning, creating a dialogue about leadership for learning, practicing shared leadership, and encouraging a shared sense of accountability (Ghana Education Service, 2010; Jull, Swaffield, & MacBeath, 2014). Thus, school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools are expected to serve as instructional leaders by creating an enabling environment conducive to teaching and learning in their schools to improve students’ academic performance. Yet such leaders are appointed into leadership without any prior training. Arguably, these expectations cannot be attained successfully without adequate continuous professional development and training for these leaders.

In this vein, the GES need to ensure that those who are promoted to leadership positions have the knowledge, skills, and disposition through ongoing professional development programmes to enable them to create effective schools and craft educational programmes that will enhance students’ academic achievements. School leaders need to be empowered through sustained capacity-building initiatives and motivated to enable themselves to develop the professional competencies required to meet the complex quality education challenges facing the Ghanaian educational system (Oduro, 2009). There is also the need to ensure that the necessary conditions are put in place to ensure effective transfer of their professional development to improve teaching and learning in schools since learning transfer is complex and is influenced by a variety of factors (Bates & Khasawneh, 2005; Yamkovenko, Holton, & Bates, 2007). Yet what we do not know, however, is how school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools develop their professional competencies following their appointment as leaders and to what extent such learning is transferred to improve teaching and learning in schools.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

The significance of effective leadership in fostering improvement in teaching and learning and hence raising achievement for all students is now attracting greater attention in several countries (Bush, 2008; Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Cohen, 2007; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Huber, 2004; OECD, 2014; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009). Research has shown that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school, accounting for about a quarter of the total school effect (Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, 2004). Moreover, in recent years the context within which school leaders’ work has been characterised by increasing complexity and greater demands for accountability (Ingvarson, Anderson, Gronn, & Jackson, 2006) as a result of globalization and technological advancement (Esia-Donkoh, 2014; Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). This, in turn, has impacted on the roles and responsibilities of school leaders in several countries.

As a result, there is broad international agreement about the need for school leaders to possess the capacities needed in order to improve teaching, learning, and pupils’ development and achievement (Horng & Loeb, 2010; Huber, 2008; Nicolaidou & Petridou, 2011; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2009). Many countries have therefore initiated leadership development programmes to enhance the leadership competencies of their school leaders (Bush, 2012; Lumby, Crow, & Pashiardis, 2008; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2009; Wilson & Xue, 2013; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). Research has shown that in developed countries like the US, England, Sweden and Australia, professional development of school leaders is formally institutionalized with colleges offering training for school leaders before and after appointment to school leadership (Bush, 2009; Ibrahim, 2011).
In Africa, though leadership development opportunities for school leaders is not as pronounced and systematic as they are in the developed countries (Bush & Heystek, 2006; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kitavi & Van Der Westhuizen, 1997), efforts are being made by some countries in coming up with programmes for preparation and development of school leaders (Bush, 2012; Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012). In South Africa, for example, new professional development initiatives for principals and aspiring principals are now covered in the Policy Framework for Leadership Education and Management Development and as a result, the Department of Education has developed Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) in collaboration with 16 universities for all new principals to undertake within three years of their appointment (Bush, Kiggundu, & Moorosi, 2011; Bush, 2012; Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012).

Contrary to the above international trends in leadership development effort across a wide range of countries, research has shown that school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools are either appointed or rise to such positions based on rank and years of service (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Kusi & Mensah, 2014; Oduro, 2009) and are often appointed without any form of preparatory training (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Malakolunthu, McBeath, & Swaffield, 2014). According to Zame et al. (2008), education reform in Ghana has ignored the importance of leadership development for school leaders and there is currently no reform initiative that addresses the need to develop school leaders’ leadership proficiencies. Thus, there has been a lack of focus on developing school leaders’ leadership proficiencies, which according to the literature is integral to the success or failure of educational reforms in Ghana (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Donkoh, 2013; Esia-Donkoh, 2014; Oduro, 2009).
More than a decade ago, Oduro (2003) observed that school leaders in Ghanaian primary schools, especially those in rural schools, were left unsupported once they were appointed as leaders and most of them gained awareness of the nature of their work through their own effort. Quite recently, Donkoh (2013) further bemoaned the fact that educational leadership was not even captured as a course or subject in the curriculum of the teacher training institutions in Ghana, where teachers who eventually become basic school leaders, are trained. He further asserted that the two public universities, the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), that were established with an aim to train teachers for the education sector in Ghana focused on high school administrators and not basic school leaders.

Consequently, results from a number of studies in Ghana over the past years have shown that the quality of leadership and management in basic schools is generally poor (Esia-Donkoh, 2014; Oduro, Dachi, & Fertig, 2008). School leaders in the basic schools in Ghana lack the appropriate leadership skills and hence focus on managerial and administrative duties to the exclusion of leadership functions (Donkoh, 2013; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003; Zame et al., 2008). According to Oduro and Dachi (2010), many school leaders see themselves as custodians who guard resources, such as textbooks, maintain registers of teachers’ attendance and punctuality, and check lesson plans while very few link their roles to pupils’ learning in schools.

Above all, learning outcomes in basic schools in Ghana have fallen far below the targets of the Ministry of Education over the past years (World Bank, 2014) as less than a third of primary school children reach proficiency levels in English or in Mathematics (World Bank, 2010). Moreover, Ghana ranked 47th (out of 47) in 2010 on the international benchmark in Mathematics and 47th (out of 48) in Science, and was last among the four African countries
that participated in the exercise (MacBeath & Swaffield, 2013). These weak results are clearly unsatisfactory given the large investments made in basic education in recent years (Ankomah & Hope, 2011; Baffour-Awuah, 2011) as about 64.2 percent out of Government budget to education in Ghana is allocated to only basic education (Baiden-Amissah, 2006).

Against the background that there is no formal training prior to the appointment of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools, then what formal, nonformal and informal professional development activities do they engage in following their appointment on the job? What kind of instructional leadership practices do they exercise in school following their learning experiences and what factors may explain such transfer? In short, if there is little leadership training and no leadership qualification is required prior to appointment, then how do leaders learn, how do they transfer that learning to their role, and what factors facilitate their transfer? These issues point to the key problem that is the focus of this study.

Unfortunately, none of the recent studies on school leadership in Ghana had addressed these issues. While Zame et al. (2008) investigated the type of preparation and training headteachers had prior to their appointment and the kind of proficiencies headteachers recognized as being required for effective leadership, both Oduro (2003) and Kusi (2008) partly explored the weaknesses associated with the current in-service training (INSET) programmes in Ghana. While school leaders do not only learn through existing formal INSET programmes, none of the past studies in Ghana explored the different avenues through which the leaders developed their leadership skills. Thus, how different levels of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools develop their professional skills following their appointment into leadership positions, the kind of instructional leadership they carry out and the learning transfer system factors that facilitate the transfer of their professional learning have not been a major area of the previous studies reported in the literature.
1.3 Research Aims and Questions

The main aim of the study was to investigate the professional development activities of basic school leaders in Ghana, influences of such learning on leaders’ instructional leadership and the learning transfer system factors that facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of leaders in the basic schools of Ghana.

In view of these research aims, the following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What types of professional development activities do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) in Ghanaian basic schools engage in to develop their instructional leadership practices?

2. What instructional leadership practices do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) carry out in their school as a result of their leadership learning?

3. What learning transfer system factors facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools?

1.4 Significance of the study

An investigation of this nature has both theoretical and practical significance. First, most studies on leadership learning and transfer of learning are carried out in the Western world where the prevailing conditions are quite different from situations in developing countries like Ghana. This limits our understanding of leadership learning and transfer factors that facilitate learning transfer in school settings in Africa. The few past studies on professional development of school leaders in Ghana investigated the weaknesses of the existing INSET
programmes for headteachers (Kusi, 2008; Oduro, 2003) as well as headteacher preparation programmes (Zame et al., 2008) without explicating the different ways school leaders develop their leadership skills following their appointment to the job. It is therefore hoped that lessons from this research can give insights into leaders’ learning, leaders’ actions and the factors facilitating the transfer of leadership learning in a non-Anglo American setting which will broaden our understanding of the literature.

Second, the significance of the research further stems from the fact that its focus goes beyond headteachers (principals) to include assistant headteachers and form masters. An OECD study found that ‘the increased responsibilities and accountability of school leadership are creating the need for leadership distribution both within schools and across schools’ (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008, p.93). The situation is not different in Ghana as Donkoh (2013) posits that the increased responsibilities and accountability of school leadership demands the distribution of leadership within schools. Yet, much of the literature on leadership development examines the work and professional needs of headteachers (Bush & Glover, 2004) though there is an increasing recognition that school leadership is not confined to headteachers and principals but is widespread and ‘distributed’ in most effective organizations (Bush & Jackson, 2002).

The limited work that has been done on leadership professional learning in schools in Africa (Bush et al., 2011; Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandja, 2006; Oduro, 2003) thus paid limited attention to prospective leaders and to those who exercise leadership in a variety of formal and informal ways. Meanwhile, leadership development needs to encompass people in a wide range of roles, including middle-level leaders and teacher leaders, as well as embracing the whole organisation (Bush & Glover, 2004; Spillane, Healey, & Parise, 2009). Spillane et al. (2009) argued quite extensively that, an exclusive focus on the school principal substantially underestimates the school system’s investment in a formally designated school leadership
learning and that effort to understand school leader learning must move beyond an exclusive focus on the school principal to include other formally designated school leaders. This study sought to overcome this limitation in the existing literature since the professional development, instructional leadership, and the learning transfer system elements of headteachers, assistant headteachers, and form masters were investigated concurrently.

Third, it is shown that learning outcomes in basic schools in Ghana as measured by the National Education Assessment (NEA), the World Bank, and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) have fallen far below the targets of the Ministry of Education over the past years (World Bank, 2014). In this vein, the government, parents, and international bodies such as the World Bank and UNESCO, are much concerned and calling for improvements in students’ achievement in Ghana. Meanwhile, improvement in student learning outcome cannot fully be achieved without effective leadership in schools (Agezo, 2010; Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Bush, 2009). But how do leaders develop themselves professionally on the job, taking into account that they were appointed without any formal training, and how effectively do they apply such learning to improve teaching and learning in schools. This study will reveal the nature of professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems that could serve as a catalyst towards a new appreciation of the role of school leaders in Ghana and thus inform policies and reforms on how leadership can be improved in schools.

Finally, given the challenges faced by rural school leaders and the need for more research on their leadership development (Enomoto, 2012) this study would shed a spotlight on the professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems in rural school settings in Africa. According to Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, and Dean (2005), school leaders in rural settings have greater professional development needs than their counterparts.
in urban and suburban school districts. They tend to have less education, are more geographically isolated from their peers, have a wider range of role responsibilities, and have higher turnover rates (Arnold et al., 2005; Howley, Chadwick, & Howley, 2002). Despite their unique geographical features and challenges, few studies on leadership development in rural education exist. With this in mind, this study stands a chance of revealing the perspectives of leaders in a rural setting in Ghana with regard to the issues under investigation.

### 1.5 Research Plan and Method

Patton (2002) advocated that the choice for a particular approach in a study should be pragmatic since some questions lend themselves to numerical answers whiles others do not. This view was supported by Silverman (2010) as he argued that in choosing a method for research, everything depends on what we are trying to find out. This study employed parallel mixed research approach by gathering both quantitative and qualitative data from three groups of leaders. The study employed such approach because it was anticipated that whilst the quantitative method would provide the breadth of coverage, the qualitative method would offer the depth and also useful insights regarding approaches to leadership development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems peculiar to the Ghanaian context. Thus, the purpose was to use responses obtained from both approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research questions investigated.

The study was conducted in the basic schools of one education district in Ghana. The district was relatively a small one with a little over 60 communities and was largely a rural one. Key development issues confronting these types of district in Ghana included poor academic performance of pupils at the basic education level, inadequate health infrastructure, poor housing, rural-urban migration, high level of unemployment among the youth, low access to
information and communication technology (ICT), low participation of women in decision-making and high post-harvest losses. Details of various steps undertaken are provided in the methodology chapter.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

A study of this nature can be explored from various dimensions and thus it is imperative at the outset to clearly define the scope of the study to guide readers as well as future studies. First, the scope of the study was restricted to only public basic school leaders in Ghana and not to other levels of education. Basic education in Ghana refers to the first 11 years of education comprising of two years Kindergarten, six years of primary education and three years of junior high school. It constitutes the compulsory level of education in Ghana. This study limited the selection of schools to basic schools that had all the three sections in place. This group of schools were under one leadership with one headteacher responsible for the administration of the three sections and one assistant headteacher. Additionally, three form masters had been appointed to be responsible for the administration of the three JHS classes.

Second, several studies in Ghana had shown that there exists no formal training requirement prior to appointment for school leaders in Ghana (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kusi, 2008; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003). Against this background, this study was restricted to leaders’ professional development activities on the job and how such learning has influenced their instructional leadership practices in schools.

Third, the study investigated formal, non-formal, and informal learning approaches of school leaders in Ghana. This is because professional development for school leaders takes many formats (Goldring, Preston, & Huff, 2012; Huber, 2011) and ranges from formal training sessions to informal approaches (Quint, Akey, Rappaport, & Willner, 2007).
Fourth, this study concentrated specifically on the influences of leadership professional development on leaders’ instructional leadership practices. It focused on seven dimensions of instructional leadership by Hallinger and Murphy (1985): defining and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, protecting instructional time, providing incentives for teaching and learning and monitoring student progress.

Fifth, the study relied on leaders’ own self-report perceptions of the influences of their professional learning on their own instructional leadership practices and the learning transfer systems that facilitate their professional learning. Thus, the study did not evaluate the impact of the professional learning of leaders on teachers and student learning outcomes but on leaders own self-reported changes in instructional leadership practices as a result of their own formal, non-formal and informal professional development activities.

1.7 Definition of Concepts

**Assistant Headteacher**: A teacher leader appointed to deputize and act for the headteacher at the basic education level of education. They undertake full teaching responsibility in addition to their leadership roles.

**Basic Education**: A minimum period of schooling needed to ensure that children acquire basic literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills as well as skills for creativity and healthy living (Government of Ghana, 2002). Basic education comprises two years of kindergarten, six years of primary school and three years of junior high school.
**Circuit Supervisor:** The education officer in charge of a circuit\(^1\) and he/she is expected to either supervise 20 schools in urban centres, 15 schools in semi-urban centres or 10 schools in rural areas (Government of Ghana, 2002, p. 154).

**Form Master:** A teacher leader appointed by the headteacher to be responsible for the management of a particular class. In this study, it refers to a teacher leader responsible for the management of one class in the Junior High School. They are full-time teachers.

**Headteacher:** Head of school (principal) at the basic education level responsible for the management of the school. They may undertake teaching responsibilities as the need arises but their main responsibility is the management of schools.

**Instructional leadership:** Instructional leadership is grounded in a conceptual framework that proposes three dimensions: Defining the School’s Mission, Managing the Instructional Programme, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. These dimensions are further delineated into 10 instructional leadership functions (Hallinger, 2011).

**Leadership development:** In this study, leadership development, professional development, professional learning, leadership learning were used interchangeably. It refers to the capacity building of leaders where they continually reinvent themselves through the formal and informal experiences of work requirements, training and learning activities (Sofo, 2012).

**Learning Transfer:** The application of new knowledge and skills to improve individual and group performance in an organisation or community (Broad, 2005, p. 87).

**Learning Transfer Systems:** Defined as “all factors in the person, training, and organization that influence transfer of learning to job performance” (Holton, Bates, & Ruona, 2000).

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\(^1\) Politically Ghana as a country is subdivided into ten regions and each region is further divided into districts. To ensure effective supervision in schools, the education directorate further divides each district into circuits while circuit supervisors are appointed by the district education authorities to ensure effective supervision in schools in that particular circuit.
**Professional development activities:** “Activities leading to the acquisition of new knowledge or skills for purposes of personal growth” (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009, p. 452).

### 1.8 Thesis Outline

The organisation of this thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one focuses on the introduction to the study. It presents the background to the study, the problem of the study, the research aims and questions, significance of the study, research plan and method, and delimitations of the study.

Chapter two provides a review of related literature on the professional development of school leaders, instructional leadership, and transfer of learning with the specific aim of highlighting current perspectives on these issues and revealing gaps in existing research that this research hoped to address. The chapter further contextualizes the study by reviewing the institutional context and challenges facing basic school leaders in Ghana.

Chapter three explains the methodological approach used to conduct this research. It discusses the design employed to answer the research questions, research site, sampling and sampling techniques, ethical issues, data collection instruments, techniques for data analysis, and validity and reliability issues.

Chapter four presents the results from both quantitative and qualitative data gathered for the study. Specifically, it presents findings on the professional development activities of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools, influences of the professional development on their instructional leadership practices, and learning transfer system factors perceived to facilitate the transfer of their professional learning.

Chapter five provides a discussion of key findings, research conclusion and study implications for professional practice and further studies.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the related literature on professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems. Situating the study within the Ghanaian context, the chapter begins with a review of the system characteristics and challenges that confront school leaders in the basic schools of Ghana. The section argues that such system characteristics and challenges could play a role in determining the nature of leadership learning, instructional leadership practices and learning transfer systems of school leaders.

This is followed by a review of the related literature on professional development for school leaders. It begins by examining the leadership development (professional development) concept to give an appreciation of how the concept is defined in the literature. The chapter then examines the approaches to professional learning that leaders employ to develop their leadership skills, especially within the international literature. It argues that professional development approaches highlighted in the Western literature do not feature prominently in the literature in developing countries including countries in Africa. It thus reviews the potency of informal learning as well as different informal learning methods the leaders might employ in the workplace.

The next section of the chapter reviews the related literature on instructional leadership. The section explores the meaning of the instructional leadership concept and how it has evolved over the years. Recognizing that a number of different models of instructional leadership are highlighted in the literature, the section focuses attention on the model of Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and reviews the dimensions of the model to frame the study. The section further presents the contrasting positions emerging from the literature regarding the enactment
of instructional leadership by leaders in developing countries to serve as the basis for further exploration of instructional leadership in the Ghanaian context.

The next section of the chapter reviews literature on learning transfer focusing on the definition of learning transfer, Holton’s model of transfer and factors affecting learning transfer in organizations. It presents contrasting results from past studies investigating transfer systems across different contexts and argues from the literature that the extent of transfer, as well as the facilitating factors, varies due to the type of organization and socio-cultural context and thus it is possible that educational leaders from developing countries including Ghana might provide different learning transfer systems.

Finally, a framework which integrates the different strands of the literature together is then presented.

2.1 Institutional Context and Challenges facing Basic School Leaders in Ghana

This section reviews the literature on the challenges facing school leaders and the characteristics of the educational system in Africa and, more importantly, Ghana. Arguably, these challenges and system characteristics could impact on school leaders’ professional development, instructional leadership, and their learning transfer systems. The section examines the bureaucratic and hierarchical structure of the educational system in such contexts (Bush, 2014; Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Oplatka, 2004; Simkins, Sisum, & Momon, 2005), the nature of GES policy guidelines (Baffour–Awuah, 2011), the challenge of headteachers combining management roles with teaching (Government of Ghana, 2002; Kusi, 2008; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003), low academic and professional qualifications of school leaders (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Kusi, 2008; Zame et al., 2008), inadequate supply
of qualified teachers (Akyeampong, 2003; World Bank, 2014), and poor conditions of service for school leaders in Ghana (GNAT/TEWU, 2010; UNDP, 2012).

A widely held view within the educational leadership literature is that context impacts on the theory and practice of school leadership and administration as well as on school leaders’ sets of attitudes, values, and norms of behaviour (Hallinger, 2005; Walker & Dimmock, 2002). A review of the literature on principal effects on school outcomes concluded that it is virtually meaningless to study school leadership without reference to the school context in that “the context of the school is a source of constraints, resources, and opportunities that the principal must understand and address in order to lead” (Hallinger, 2005, p. 14). According to Kusi (2008), African countries have diverse cultural norms and values which impact on the behaviours of leaders in such contexts. Similarly, Oduro (2003) asserted that the management of Ghanaian schools was influenced by the Ghanaian cultural orientation towards the exercise of authority and power. Recognising the influence of context on school leadership practises and taking into account that the problems that school leaders in African settings face are uniquely and typically associated with developing countries and not necessarily problems faced by their counterparts in developed countries (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kitavi & Van Der Westhuizen, 1997; Legotlo & van der Westhuizen, 1996), it is essential that a study which seeks to investigate the professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems of school leaders in Ghana be situated in the socio-cultural and institutional contextual realities in Africa, and more importantly, Ghana.

A number of studies have shown that in most developing countries one of the key challenges that affect effective leadership at the school level lies in the highly bureaucratic and hierarchical structures and rules which govern the school systems (Bush, 2014; Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Oplatka, 2004; Simkins et al., 2005). According to Simkins et al. (2005), much of
the effort for educational improvement in such countries has been focused on top-down, system-wide change rather than change at the level of the individual school. In most cases, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in such educational systems designs a unified national curriculum, syllabus, materials and exams and guides funding and staffing of schools. Consequently, school leaders in such contexts are regarded as “civil servants who function as line managers within the hierarchy of a highly centralized, national system of education” (Hallinger & Lee, 2014, p. 11) and are thus “preoccupied with the satisfaction of basic needs and functions that most principals in western countries, presumably, have never included in their role definition” (Oplatka, 2004, p. 432).

This situation depicts the nature of the educational system that basic school leaders in Ghana are confronted with and this could influence their leadership behaviours. In Ghana, the MoE has overall responsibility for policy development while the policy implementation has been delegated to a range of agencies at national, regional and district level (Agezo, 2010; Bosu, Dare, Dachi, & Fertig, 2011). As a result, the oversight and management of work carried out at the school level has been devolved to the district level, with the district education office having responsibility for issues such as the provision and performance of teaching staff. Nonetheless, while educational management has been decentralised to the district level, key aspects of educational activity and school leadership agency still remain outside the direct control of the school leaders (Baffour–Awuah, 2011; Bosu et al., 2011). Teaching staff, for example, are allocated to schools by officials at the regional and district levels and headteachers often do not get information about staff being transferred from or into their school until shortly before the start of a new year (Bosu et al., 2011). This is an indication that headteachers and other leaders in the basic schools of Ghana are not involved in making major decisions which directly affect the conduct of their instructional practices in their
schools. Clearly, this could have implications for their leadership practices and could reduce their autonomy and authority over key instructional matters and their staff.

The situation becomes much more complex considering that a number of headteachers in mostly primary schools of Ghana have lower academic and professional qualifications generally (Zame et al., 2008) and in even some instances than their teachers (Kusi, 2008; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003). Zame et al. (2008) found that 87 percent of headteachers possessed either two-year certificate “B”, four-year certificate “A”, two-year certificate “A” (Post-Secondary), or three-year certificate “A”\(^2\). Due to their low academic and professional qualifications, it is indicated that some headteachers lack power and control over their teachers, especially in cases where teachers possess higher qualifications, and this could have consequential effect on their leadership practices. As expressed eloquently by one respondent in the study of Kusi (2008) that:

In some of the schools, there are teachers who are more educated than their heads. Sometimes you find graduates in the classroom, while a Certificate ‘A’ holder leads the school. Therefore, winning the cooperation of such teachers is very difficult. The headteachers also lack power to discipline such teachers and do not possess the knowledge and skills required for their roles. Mr Kusi, if you visit some of the schools you will find that the teachers are doing the work of their headteachers for them. This makes such teachers undermine the authority of their headteachers (p. 136).

While one could argue from the above that it could be a form of distributive leadership or delegation of power, it appears the situation is far from that. Oduro and MacBeath (2003) re-affirmed this challenge as they noted that due to their low academic and professional qualifications, headteachers in such situations vetted teachers’ lesson notes simply to confirm that the teacher had written down something, without any rigorous check to ascertain whether

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\(^2\) Two-year certificate “B”, four-year certificate “A”, two-year certificate “A” (Post-Secondary), or three-year certificate “A” are qualifications that are lower than Diploma in Education in Ghana. This suggested that majority of the headteachers sampled in that study did not possess qualifications that were even equivalent to diploma qualification.
the stated objectives were achievable, teaching-learning aids were relevant to the lesson or that stated methods of presentation were suitable for the pupils. Thus, the object of vetting by the headteachers was to make a tick with a red pen to demonstrate to the circuit supervisors that they were in control.

While this could result from the lack of control of headteachers over the teachers as a result of their low academic and professional qualifications, it could also be attributed to other factors including the nature of the policy expectations imposed on the headteachers by educational authorities (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003). According to Baffour-Awuah (2011), most of the supervisory practices contained in the headteachers’ appraisal form (policy guidelines) were found to be routine teaching and teaching-related activities required of teachers which headteachers were expected to monitor. He further noted that the list of activities on the appraisal form did not include many of the contemporary supervisory practices but rather comprised mostly of administrative and managerial duties that heads were expected to perform. Thus, teachers’ and headteachers’ concepts of supervision of instruction were characterised mostly by monitoring and overseeing, which were likely to have been influenced by the policy guidelines on headteachers’ duties and responsibilities. This confirmed the study of Oduro and Macbeath (2003) as they found that the nature of the leadership roles carried out by headteachers were merely routine teaching and learning tasks such as visiting the classrooms to find out whether teachers were teaching and the children were listening to how teachers were delivering lessons and how the children were responding and checking the pupils’ exercise books.

In addition, it is highlighted in the literature that some headteachers in the basic schools of Ghana engage in teaching in addition to their leadership and managerial roles (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Government of Ghana, 2002; Kusi, 2008; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003). Oduro
and MacBeath (2003) asserted that headteachers in rural areas in Ghana were compelled to teach many classes and manage their schools at the same time due to inadequate number of teachers to work with. Kusi (2008) also found that headteachers in the Sunyani Municipality were also classroom teachers, making their workload too difficult to manage. Faced with such a challenge in schools, one could question whether school leaders could have ample time to exercise effective instructional leadership practices as highlighted in the literature (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012) and how far could that stimulate the effective transfer of their learning.

Relatedly, a number of studies have highlighted the challenge of inadequate supply of qualified teachers in Ghanaian basic schools (Government of Ghana, 2002; World Bank, 2014). Providing quality education in Ghana is directly related to the quality of teachers in the system (Ampiah, 2010). Moreover, some studies in Ghana have shown that students who were taught by trained teachers scored significantly better than those who were taught by untrained ones (Ministry of Education, 2012; USAID, 2009). Nonetheless, the supply of qualified teachers in Ghana has regularly been at least 50,000 below the required number (World Bank, 2014). The Government of Ghana (2002) reported that about five percent of primary schools in Ghana had only one or no teacher at all. Other research studies have noted acute teacher shortages in the basic education system (Akyeampong, 2003; Hedges, 2002). Moreover, it has been highlighted that most of these teachers were unqualified (World Bank, 2010). For example, approximately 70,000 unqualified teachers were employed in Ghanaian basic schools in 2007 (World Bank, 2014).

The persistence of unqualified teachers in Ghanaian basic schools implies that pupils in such rural school contexts will not be able to acquire the required competencies in the subject areas they study in school which is likely to increase the failure rate in schools. This is in recognition that teacher effectiveness is one of the most important school-based predictors of
student learning and that several years of teaching by outstanding teachers can offset the learning deficits of disadvantaged students (Smith & Smith, 2015). Nonetheless, it is worthy to note that the Teacher Education Division (TED) has developed a number of programmes to upgrade the qualifications of teachers in Ghana (Aheto-Tsegah, 2011).

Furthermore, the deployment of teachers in Ghana also continues to disadvantage rural areas (Aheto-Tsegah, 2011) as urban and wealthy districts in Ghana have larger numbers of trained teachers per student in comparison to poor, rural and northern districts (World Bank, 2014). According to the World Bank (2014), in the past six years, distribution of primary teachers appears to have become less equitable in Ghana and in comparison to neighbouring countries Ghana’s allocation of teachers is one of the least equitable. An analysis of Education Management Information System (EMIS) data indicated that efficiency in teacher allocation generally decreased between 2005/06 and 2008/09 and seems to have further worsened by 2011 (World Bank, 2014). This is because many trained teachers prefer to work in better endowed urban centres and avoid being deployed to schools in remote and impoverished areas (Aheto-Tsegah, 2011; World Bank, 2010) and those who accept to stay do not stay beyond a year or two and seek transfers to other areas (Akyeampong et al., 2007; UNDP, 2012). This suggests that school leaders in rural areas in Ghana stand a greater risk of improving teaching and learning than their counterparts in urban areas and this might have implications for their leadership.

School leaders in Africa are also confronted with shortages of school equipment and other material and human resources. According to Kitavi and Van Der Westhuizen (1997), in most African countries, it is not possible now for the government to provide adequate funds for the procurement of sufficient equipment, particularly specialized science and technical equipment. Similarly, Owolabi and Edzii (2000) reported that headmasters in Ghana who
participated in their study admitted that they had insufficient quantities of books and stationery. The study by Kusi (2008) in Ghana also revealed that school leaders complained about the late supply of teachers’ notebooks and that this situation put much pressure on the headteachers to mobilise funds to purchase such materials for their staff in a context where resources were limited. Considering these situations in schools, one could question if the government of Ghana and other African countries could better invest in the development of headteachers and other school leaders since they might see the provision of such resources as more pressing than leadership development for the leaders.

Poor conditions of service for teachers, including headteachers, relative to other professions coupled with inadequate teaching materials and poor quality infrastructure also continue to dampen the morale of teachers especially in public schools which tend to undermine the quality of education (UNDP, 2012). A study by the Ghana National Association of Teachers estimated that about 10,000 teachers leave the classroom on an annual basis and that low pay and poor working conditions were identified as the two main critical factors influencing such attrition. The study also found that more than 72 percent of teachers were either “dissatisfied” or very dissatisfied with their job and more than one-third of teachers had plans to leave the classroom after study leave (GNAT/TEWU, 2010).

Teacher absenteeism is another major issue confronting school leadership at the basic school level (Abadzi, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2013; World Bank, 2004, 2014). According to the Ministry of Education (2013), teacher absenteeism continues to be a strong obstacle to quality teaching and learning in Ghana, particularly in public basic schools. According to the Ministry, a preliminary analysis of data from 41 districts in the first term of 2012/13 found that teachers had around 80% attendance on average, thereby suggesting that teachers were absent roughly 20% of the time at all levels of basic education. By their estimation, a 20
percent reduction in teacher absenteeism in Ghana would be the equivalent of hiring 5200 additional new teachers (World Bank, 2014). Similarly, Care International (2003) which focused on deprived rural areas in northern Ghana talks of ‘chronic teacher absenteeism’ which ‘adversely affects the learning environment’ (p. 18). Inefficiencies at the school level, led by teacher absenteeism and teacher delay may account for the loss of more than 50 percent of the available instructional time in many countries (World Bank, 2014). A study by Abadzi (2007) in Ghana further showed that out of 197 school days, teachers were on average absent for 43 days and delayed for 40 days; thus, students were engaged in learning only 39% of the time. Among the main underlying causes of the high rate of absenteeism are lack of supervision, sickness/medical care, collection of salary at a bank located at a distance, frequent funeral attendance, long distances to school, religious practices (for instance, Friday prayers among Muslim teachers), schools lacking facilities such as toilets and potable water, schools located far from lorry/bus stations and healthcare facilities, rural teachers supplementing their income by engaging in activities related to farming (Abadzi, 2007; World Bank 2010).

In sum, the presentation so far illuminates a number formidable challenges and contextual realities in Ghanaian basic schools that are likely to impact on the school leadership roles of leaders. These contextual realities include the bureaucratic and hierarchical structure of the educational system, the nature of the policy guidelines and expectations on leaders, headteachers engaging in teaching in addition to their leadership roles, low academic and professional qualifications of leaders, and poor conditions of service. In acknowledging these shortcomings and cultural realities, Legotlo and van der Westhuizen (1996) stress the need for effective leadership development in Africa as they asserted that “without specific attention to the effective management development programmes for school principals . . . most of the attempts at improving the quality of education in developing countries will remain a
pipedream” (p. 410). However, the available literature in Africa shows that there is rarely any formal training for school leaders and they are appointed on the basis of their teaching record rather than their leadership potentials (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kitavi & Van Der Westhuizen, 1997; Ngcobo, 2012; Oplatka, 2004). Meanwhile, despite the systemic problems and characteristics, school leaders are expected to possess the required competencies to lead their schools to bring about significant changes in student learning outcomes. Therefore, if leaders do not undergo any formal preparatory training, then there is the need to examine their in-service professional development activities.

2.2 Professional Development for School Leaders

This section reviews the literature on the professional development of school leaders. It argues that realizing the critical role that school leaders’ play in promoting student learning outcomes, leadership development has gained much attention by policy makers and increasingly school leaders are expected to engage in formal, non-formal, and informal learning approaches. It argues that while formal leadership development programmes serve as the dominant approach to development, organizations are increasingly realizing the weaknesses of such interventions and shifting more attention to varieties of work-based learning practices. It further argues that while this trend might seem to be a global phenomenon, it appears the dominant approaches to leadership development highlighted in the international literature do not feature prominently in the literature in developing countries including Africa partly due to limited research or that a whole different set of approaches to learning exist in such contexts due to contextual differences.

There is an increasing recognition that effective leadership and management are vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for students (Bush et al., 2011; Bush, 2009; Oplatka, 2004). Evidence suggests that second only to the influences of
classroom instruction, school leadership strongly affects student learning (Davis et al., 2005; Leithwood & Levin, 2008; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009). Huber (2004) claimed that “schools classified as successful possess a competent and sound school leadership” (p. 669) and that for all phases of the school development process, school leadership is considered vital and held responsible for keeping the school as a whole in mind, and for adequately coordinating the individual activities during the improvement processes. Thus, without effective basic school leadership, the chances of systemic educational reform leading to a quality education system will more likely than not remain elusive (Zame et al., 2008).

As a result of the increasing recognition of the critical role of school leaders, the development of school leaders has gained much attention by policy-makers and educational researchers (Brundrett, 2001; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Cowie & Crawford, 2007; Huber, 2011; Walker & Dimmock, 2005; Walker & Qian, 2006), and is high on the agenda in a number of countries (Pegg, 2010; Robertson, 2013; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). It follows that leaders should learn to do their jobs as well as possible so that they may address their school improvement journey and play a key role in serving the needs of their learners. Several countries have thus invested large proportions of education budgets towards the professional development of school leaders and there is an increasing number of school leadership development programmes (Barber, Whelan, & Clark, 2010; Bush, 2009; Leithwood, 2008; Pont et al., 2008).

According to Sofo (2012), leadership development refers to the capacity building of leaders where they continually reinvent themselves and explore their inner talents through the formal and informal experiences of work requirements, training, and learning activities. Guskey (2000) also defined professional development as “those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students” (p. 16). It can also be described as the longitudinal
process of expanding the capacities of individuals, groups, and organizations to increase their effectiveness in leadership roles and processes (Day & Harrison, 2011). From these definitions, leadership development could be summed up as all learning experiences undertaken to equip and improve the knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes of leaders after taking up their leadership roles. Such learning experiences which could be formal, non-formal, or informal (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007) aim at developing and improving the professional competencies of school leaders which would ultimately result in improving student learning and school improvement (Bush, 2012; Goldring et al., 2012; Lumby et al., 2008).

While the argument for the development of school leaders is widely accepted, there is continuing and ongoing debate about the nature of such provision and there is little consensus as to what constitute key features of that professional development (Dempster et al., 2011; Guskey, 2000; Nicolaidou & Petridou, 2011). Nonetheless, successful organizations use a variety of formal, informal and external approaches to development (Bolden, 2007; Burgoyne, Hirsh, & Williams, 2004; Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). While formal learning refers to any learning experience that takes place through structured programme of instruction which is generally recognised by the attainment of a formal qualification or award (Burnes, 2008; Misko, 2008), nonformal professional learning includes all organized educational programmes that take place outside the formal school system and are usually short-term (Schugurensky, 2000; Smith, 2003). On the other hand, informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge, or a skill which occurs without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria (Livingstone, 2001).

Available literature shows that the most common approach to leadership development is the formal classroom programme in which basic principles of leadership are presented, discussed,
and reflected on (Day & Harrison, 2011; Fenwick & Pierce, 2002). Approximately 85 percent of organizations engaged in leadership development efforts uses some version of classroom programmes (Day & Harrison, 2011). This is in recognition that a well-designed classroom learning programmes can create a learning environment where leaders step out of their day-to-day decision-making roles in order to think more broadly and creatively about the organization (Holton & Baldwin, 2003). These classroom environments allow participants to interact and develop social capital through the use of networking (Adey, 2004; Lydon & King, 2009).

These formal programmes further facilitate access to library facilities so that participants can access the research and literature and provides opportunities for networking with peers (Boaden, 2006; Bush, 2008). Besides, they are designed to promote self-insight and enhance self-awareness through the application of leadership principles to participants’ personal experiences. In an international review of school leaders across a range of high performing education systems, Barber, Whelan, and Clark (2010) found that there was good evidence that leaders who engaged in formal leadership development programmes were more effective, particularly when the training they received was of high quality. These formal leadership development programmes are provided by a wide array of sources such as universities, professional associations, governmental agencies, profit and non-profit organizations as well as independent consultants (Davis et al., 2005; Peterson, 2002). They mostly involve institutionally sponsored and endorsed programmes, which include almost all training and development programmes that organizations offer (Manuti, Pastore, Scardigno, Giancaspro, & Morciano, 2015).

In several developing countries, formal leadership programmes for school leaders are mostly designed by the Ministry of Education, take place in a sporadic fashion, and are confined to
short seminars and conferences of a couple of hours’ duration, with no well-articulated mechanism to support the transfer of new knowledge and skills into the workplace (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Ibrahim, 2011; Kusi & Mensah, 2014; Mertkan, 2011; Oduro, 2003; Scott & Rarieya, 2011). In Ghana, Kusi and Mensah (2014) claimed that “some headteachers in Ghana also undertake courses on educational administration and management at some higher educational institutions for their professional growth and development” (p. 5). According to them, the Centre for Educational Policy Studies and the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Education, Winneba, and the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, University of Cape Coast, run Master of Arts and Master of Philosophy programmes in Educational Administration and Management for education professionals and some of these programmes are run on full-time, distance learning or sandwich basis, enabling school leaders to combine them with their work. Ironically, the junior high school headteachers they studied in one educational district in Ghana indicated that they should be sponsored to undertake distance learning courses in leadership and management run by the higher education institutions in the country. Similarly, Okoko, Scott, and Scott (2014) exploring leaders’ perceptions of their leadership preparation and development experiences in Kenya found that the majority of the respondents (87%) reported they wanted formal professional development programmes such as university degrees or certificate/diplomas in leadership and administration from higher education institutions. These seem to suggest that though there might be opportunities for formal leadership development programmes in those contexts, one cannot say with certainty the extent to which basic school leaders are benefiting from and making use of such opportunities.

Indications, however, are that a number of formal classroom-based leadership development programmes are not contributing to sustainable leadership effectiveness in schools (Brundrett & Derring, 2006; Day & Harrison, 2011; Holton & Baldwin, 2003; Huber, 2008). Bjork and
Murphy (2005), drawing on experience in the United States, commented that “most courses are delivered using a lecture format that is viewed as being isolated, passive and sterile knowledge acquisition” (p. 15). Similar accounts emerged from an assessment of the national leadership development programme in South Africa indicating that the programme was not equipping school leaders to deal with challenges facing their schools (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu, & Van Rooyan, 2009; Ngcobo, 2012). Holton and Baldwin, (2003) assert that while big-picture thinking tends to be associated with the classroom-based instruction, such instruction has relevance only to the degree that individuals are given the means to “internalize” the learning through application. It is also argued that in most of these formal professional development programmes, there are few, or no, opportunities for participants to participate in the planning of the learning experiences and involve a large amount of passive participation (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002; Lawler, 2003) and can suffer from transfer of training problems and high cost involvement (Blackman, 2010).

Thus, many organizations are realizing that formal classroom programmes are valuable but not completely adequate for effective leadership development (Bush, 2009; Day & Harrison, 2011; Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). Consequently, it is asserted that while formal classroom-based leadership development may be a necessary element of leadership development, such developmental experiences are likely to have the greatest impact when they are linked to or embedded in a person’s ongoing work and when they are an integrated set of experiences (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). It is argued, therefore, that these formal leadership development programmes need to be linked more fully and coherently with leadership practice in schools (Piggot-Irving, 2011; Walker, Bryant, & Lee, 2013; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). In this vein, certain modifications are under way in the design of formal leadership development programmes across several countries with much of the development
work incorporating work-based learning practices (Bush et al., 2011; Bush, 2009; Michaelidou & Pashiardis, 2009).

These interventions aim to address the provision of authentic leadership experiences for programme participants (Collins & Holton, 2004, Walker et al., 2013). As an example, the national leadership development programmes organized by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in the UK adopts a blended learning approach where “traditional” face-to-face provision is supplemented by on-line support and work-based activities designed to enable participants to develop their leadership qualities and skills in the “real” contexts of their own schools (Bush, 2008; Simkins, 2009). Similar developments are underway in the US (Bush, 2009), China (Wilson & Xue, 2013), Australia (Fluckiger, Lovett, & Dempster, 2014) and South Africa (Bush et al., 2011). The common thread of the development process across these different systems is that leaders are increasingly developed through a range of action modes and support mechanisms, often customised to the specific needs of leaders. Mentoring, coaching, networking, action learning, problem-based learning, and online learning are core components of these experiential learning approaches and have received much attention in the literature (Bolden, 2007; Bush et al., 2011; Bush, 2009; Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004; Simkins, 2009).

Among these interventions is mentoring which has become increasingly popular in recent times (Anderson & Cawsey, 2008; Davis et al., 2005; Dinham, Anderson, Caldwell, & Weldon, 2011; Smith, 2007) and is considered an important component in the provision of leadership development (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Daresh, 2004; Huber, 2013). Hobson (2003) observes that mentoring is “generally used to refer to a process whereby a more experienced individual seeks to assist someone less experienced” (p1) while Bush (2009) defines it as a process where one person provides individual support and challenge to
another professional. Recognizing the value of mentoring, organizations are increasingly looking at ways to formalize these types of relationships as part of their leadership development efforts (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). Thus, it is not surprising that mentoring has increasingly become important as a type of leadership development in many countries, including Australia, England and Wales, France, Singapore, and the USA (Bush & Glover, 2003; Day & Harrison, 2011; Huber, 2008) and been applied as a core element in the induction of school leaders both before they take up their first leadership position and during the first year or so after their appointment (Bush & Middlewood, 2005; Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004; Hansford & Ehrich, 2006).

Following many reports extolling the benefits of mentoring (Anderson & Cawsey, 2008; Ehrich et al., 2004; Hansford & Ehrich, 2006; Mulford, 2003), it has eventually emerged as one of the professional development activities that school leaders engage in to develop their leadership skills (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Crow, 2007; Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012; Michaelidou & Pashiardis, 2009; Smith, 2007). Stroud (2006) investigated the professional learning opportunities for experienced headteachers in England and identified that mentoring was brought up by the headteachers as a key method to assist them in their professional growth. Headteachers studied by Crow (2007) also mentioned the importance of the assistance provided by mentors. According to the headteachers, the mentors provided practical support, helped them to gain self-confidence as leaders and provided assistance in domains such as relationships with governors, performance management, and personnel policies.

Similarly, the cohort members of the Principals’ Excellence Programme in US appreciated the importance of mentoring in assisting them to solve problems and apply critical thinking skills to situations affecting student learning (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004). In South Africa,
Bush et al. (2011) have observed that mentoring is a distinctive and central feature of the Advanced Certification Education (ACE) programme designed to facilitate the transfer of learning to candidates and school practice. Also, Smith (2007) revealed that in New Zealand, many of the mentoring programmes in schools were developed and funded by central government and were mostly designed to meet the needs of those in their initial years of leadership. Though mentoring has emerged prominently in the literature, it appears that most of the mentoring interventions reported about were formal interventions thereby limiting our understanding of the extent to which leaders outside such formal leadership development settings employ mentoring as a means of professional learning.

In addition to mentoring, one form of practice to help develop leadership is the use of coaching (Blackman, 2010; Bush, 2009). According to Anderson and Cawsey (2008), coaching and mentoring appear to be similar in that they both aim to support and develop a protégé. However, it is argued that coaching tends to focus on technical skills, knowledge acquisition, and implementation and having a narrow focus relating to an individual’s job tasks, skills, or capacities (Anderson & Cawsey, 2008; Department for Education and Skills, 2004). Bloom, Castagna, Moir, and Warren (2005) assert that coaches provide continuing support that is safe and confidential and has as its goal the nurturing of significant personal, professional, and institutional growth through a process that unfolds over time. To this end, Holmes (2003) suggests that success in coaching depends on four variables which include the task focus of the coaching, the personal mastery and competencies of the coach, the skills, attitudes and knowledge of the person being coached, and the context or ecology of the school.

Among other things, coaching provides support for the ongoing implementation of school initiatives and relies on the unique characteristics of each leader and the specific school that
he or she serves (Schumacher, 2007), allows for flexible scheduling as it can be arranged around the school leaders’ other school and district obligations and meetings (Peterson & Cosner, 2005), allows for the modelling of behaviours sought after by the individual and the organization (Peterson & Cosner, 2005; Vogel, 2009) and builds important relationships within a job often fraught with isolation and loneliness (Contich, 2006). Nonetheless, for organizations to benefit from coaching relationships, a good fit between the coach and the coached is imperative (Braun & Carlson, 2008) and extensive training of coaches is important in order to prevent coaches from reverting to the role of advising (Schumacher, 2007).

Apart from mentoring and coaching of leaders, which serve as two distinct but important and related leadership development methods, is the use of collaborative networks in schools has been highlighted in the literature (Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012; McCormick, Fox, Carmichael, & Procter, 2011; Scott & Rarieya, 2011). Bush and Glover (2004) advocate networking as one of the four main leadership development approaches while the review of the leadership development literature by Bush, Glover, and Harris (2007) concluded that networking was the most favoured mode of leadership learning. Central to the conception of networking is the learning process that is characterised by shared knowledge and co-constructed knowledge (Jackson & Temperley, 2006; McCormick et al., 2011). Learning in this context is seen as a process of participation that members of the network do voluntarily (Hadfield & Chapman, 2009; Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012; Townsend, 2011) and creating opportunities for leaders to share ideas and resources with their colleagues for their professional growth, personal development and professional practices (Chapman, 2008; Day, 2001; Huber, 2011; Kusi & Mensah, 2014).

Professional learning communities and networks are central components in situated learning opportunities (Huber, 2011) and serve as both a physical and virtual convener of school
leaders and create communities of practice for them to work together to solve real problems and create change in schools to improve learning and teaching (Mathibe, 2007). According to Barber et al. (2010), a number of education systems are increasing the opportunities for school leaders to learn from one another, particularly through networks and clusters. In their review of leaders across high-performing education systems, they found that lateral learning was already common in all the education systems and that almost all principals visited other schools to learn from them at least once a year. In Kenya, Herriot et al. (2002) reported the development of headteachers support groups which, among other things, sought to create a forum for sharing of ideas among school leaders and to address and solve management problems. According to them, there was evidence that the interactions taking place particularly among the headteachers enabled them to learn from each other and then passed on their learning in a rippling mode to other members in the group.

In identifying the content and methods used in the professional and organizational socialization experiences of new English headteachers, Crow (2007) noted that newly appointed headteachers reported they used national funds for headteachers conferences or utilized the local education authority’s learning opportunities, which included headteachers’ meetings and briefings. Headteachers commented on the ways these headteachers meetings enabled their learning including talking through problems, reflective thinking, talking about mistakes, sharing policy documents and other materials, and had contact with experts on topics they had identified. Stroud (2006) also reported that headteachers stressed the need for networking and collaborative work. The headteachers believed that the reflection of their practices and the opportunity to share these with other heads helped their professional improvement. Thus, networking creates a community context that is supportive to those involved in the networks.
In addition to the above work-based learning interventions, action learning (AL) has also emerged as a viable form of leadership development utilized by organizations for developing leaders, building teams and improving corporate capabilities (Marquardt, Leonard, Freedman, & Hill, 2009; Marquardt, 2004; O’Neil & Marsick, 2014). While there have been variations in the concept of AL over the years, “all forms of action learning share the elements of real people resolving and taking action on real problems in real time and learning while doing so” (Marquardt, 2004, p. 1). Thus, action learning is based on the assumption that people learn most effectively when working on real-time organizational problems and devising strategies to effectively resolve the problems in the real work context.

As a result, unlike traditional classroom methods, which are largely passive, action learning puts emphasis on learning through action or during the action itself and it is different from other learning approaches because of its applicability in the problem-solving process (Sofo, Yeo, & Villafañe, 2010). Action learning served as a wonderful vehicle to assist the staff at William Halley Elementary school in solving a number of important problems notably reducing fragmentation which gave teachers more than four hours of uninterrupted teaching time and maintaining positive classroom behavior as well as developing teacher-leaders in the school (Marquardt, 2004). In Africa, while AL has not featured much in the school leadership literature, an approach to leadership development employed by school leaders in Ghana and Tanzania that has some resemblance to the principles of action learning is action research which involved headteachers identifying a specific problems in their school, collecting and analysing data to understand it better, creatively planning and implementing actions to tackle the problems and then evaluating impact (Oduro & Dachi, 2010).

Another experiential learning which has received attention and being integrated into formal leadership development programmes is problem-based learning (PBL). PBL involves
knowledge acquisition in a problem context that is similar in its important features to the problem context learners will face outside the classroom (Hallinger & McCary, 1990). Its activities simulate complex real-world problems and dilemmas, promote the blending of theoretical and practical knowledge, improve problem-solving capacity, and help to enhance candidates’ self-concepts as future school leaders (Davis et al., 2005). By participating in challenging and relevant simulations, students develop new attitudes and skills, experiment with various leadership roles, and, ideally, practice the discipline of self-reflection. PBL methods also provide opportunities for candidates to test newly acquired leadership skills and receive feedback through authentic demonstrations and assessments. Everyday life problems are here seen as stimuli for learning and as offering a learning situation as well as learning material, and not only as the future context in which to apply what has previously been learned. Despite its link to reality, the problem situation in such approach remains constructed and ‘imagined’.

Furthermore, online professional development for school leaders has emerged as a viable alternative to traditional forms of learning (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004; Onguko, Abdella, & Webber, 2008; Zepeda, Parylo, & Bengtson, 2014). Research has shown that technology may be a potential solution for providing professional development to leaders in geographically isolated schools (Arnold et al., 2005; Bizzell, 2011). Onguko et al. (2008) assert that the use of information communication technology in leadership development programmes would provide school leaders with an opportunity to use the technology while achieving the twin objective of leadership development and acquiring more skills and knowledge about the utilisation of technology. Mustafa (2013) further cites examples of e-learning applications like podcasts and virtual classrooms which can enhance learning and reduce costs without compromising quality or learning outcomes. This approach, however, embraces other forms of professional learning since formal classroom based learning,
mentoring, networking and even PBL approaches can be organized through online learning avenues.

Despite the ever-expanding use of the Internet in the development of school leaders, it has not been utilized effectively in developing school leaders in Africa (Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012; Kusi & Mensah, 2014; Kusi, 2008; Scott & Rarieya, 2011). Scott and Rarieya (2011) impressing on professional development organizers in East Africa to embrace innovative ways of reaching leaders in their school context, noted that while the mobile telephone is a technology that is widely used in the region, it is under-utilised as a teaching tool in educational programmes. Similarly, Kusi (2008) expressed the difficulty in learning on a distant basis for particularly school leaders in rural areas because of lack of access to technology in Ghana. According to him, the Internet and other information technology facilities were accessible to only a few people, who were in the urban centres in the country.

In South Africa, Kiggundu and Moorosi (2012) exploring the nature of networks embedded in the ACE programme found that one of the glaring challenges centered on the absence of technology-based communication which made it difficult for leaders to interact in the absence of face-to-face meetings. They hinted that though texting through the mobile phone was a common practice in South Africa and while a number of schools in urban areas were connected through the Internet, such means of interaction together with newer forms of social networking did not seem to be used by leaders for work-based learning purposes. Contrary to this trend in Africa, Pont et al. (2008) highlighted that in countries such as Australia, England, and New Zealand, virtual networks were established as a way for principals to share their practices. This contrasting difference could be attributed to the state of development across the different settings.
Viewing the above experiential learning approaches together in light of the international literature, it appears that while mentoring, networking, coaching, AL, PBL and online learning have emerged as viable means through which leaders in advanced countries develop their professional skills, they have not featured prominently in the literature in the developing countries including Africa partly due to limited research exploring the professional development activities of school leaders (Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandja, 2013). On the other hand, it could also be that a whole different set of professional learning are employed by leaders in such contexts due to contextual differences. This is because the few studies that have specifically explored the views of school leaders regarding their professional development activities in Africa report new sets of professional development opportunities for school leaders which were principally informal and self-directed in nature (Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandja, 2013).

In his study in Namibia, Mushaandja (2013) noted that the predominant self-development strategies employed by the principals were independent reading and learning from doing their work. The study showed that the most popular manual was the Guidelines for School Principals prepared by the Ministry of Education which sought to guide the leaders theoretically how to manage and administer human resources, finances, curriculum, physical facilities, school equipment, and materials. Though one could argue that such manuals intended to ‘coach’ leaders in specific job competencies and skills, the leaders in the study did not mention coaching as a form of professional learning in such contexts. This suggests that new perspectives regarding the professional development of leaders in different cultural contexts may exist and needs to be researched.

Similarly, though the study of Ibrahim (2011) in Kenya did not find reading as a form of professional development activity, as was in the case of Mushaandja (2013), it supported the
view that different set of professional learning experiences might exist. He found that the leaders in the study developed through challenges they faced in schools, and personal initiatives which supported the views of Oduro (2009) in Ghana. Ibrahim (2011) asserted that the day-to-day challenges and problems principals faced in schools and their attempts to solve them provided them with lessons from which they learned and developed. Similarly, Oduro (2009) suggested that headteachers in Ghanaian basic schools gained awareness of their work through observing the activities and experiences of serving headteachers and through personal experience. These suggest that the approaches to professional development that are featuring prominently in the international literature might not necessarily be the ones that are employed in other contexts such as Ghana.

In any case, some studies in England (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010), Georgia (Zepeda et al., 2014) and Virginia (Bizzell, 2011) have equally found that the professional learning of leaders they studied arose out of informal routes such as informal networking, book studies, and group works. Nonetheless, most informal ways of learning are largely overlooked in organizations, and thus, the effects of informal learning remain invisible (de Laat & Schreurs, 2013). Yet there is a large body of literature that convincingly shows that informal learning methods are important drivers for ongoing professional development (Marsick & Watkins, 1999; McCall, 2004; Spillane et al., 2009). In their review, Boud & Hager (2012) asserted that:

Learning is a normal part of working, and indeed [of] most other social activities. It occurs through practice in work settings from addressing the challenges and problems that arise. Most learning takes place not through formalized activities, but through the exigencies of practice with peers and others, drawing on expertise that is accessed in response to need. Problem-solving in which participants tackle challenges which progressively extends their existing capabilities and learn with and from each other appears to be common and frequent form of naturalistic development. (p. 22)
Therefore, it is certain that even in school contexts where formal leadership development interventions are minimal as is in the case of Ghana (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kusi & Mensah, 2014; Oduro & Macbeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003; Zame et al., 2008) and other developing countries (Ibrahim, 2011; Mertkan, 2011; Nicolaidou & Petridou, 2011) there is evidence that the school leaders may still have avenues to develop their leadership skills and this needs to be researched. After all, all educational systems including those in Africa, place high expectations on their leaders to improve teaching and learning in schools which suggest that leaders need to engage in ongoing professional development activities to enhance their competencies to carry out effective leadership practices in schools. It is anticipated that such learning would impact on their leadership practices in schools so as to improve school outcomes.

2.3 Instructional Leadership

Over the past three decades, instructional leadership has come into prominence and gained popularity with the increase in the expectations from schools and the efforts to establish a more accountable school system (Hallinger, 2005; Marishane, 2011; Marks & Printy, 2003; Pont et al., 2008; West & Angel, 2008). Essentially, studies of effective schools have shown that when strong instructional leadership is demonstrated by school leaders, the achievement of the school improves. Bush (2013) contended that instructional leadership is significant because of the increasing recognition that it is one of the most important activities for principals and other school leaders while Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, and Hopkins (2006) explained that school leaders can impact on classroom teaching by adopting a proactive approach and becoming ‘instructional’ leaders.

There is substantial consensus on the importance of instructional leadership to raise and sustain the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood & Jantzi,
There is agreement among researchers that improving schools in the 21st century require that school leaders exhibit strong skills and expertise in instructional leadership (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood & Day, 2008). Equally, Hallinger and Murphy (2012) asserted that “while effective leadership cannot guarantee successful education reform, research affirms that sustainable school improvement is seldom found without active, skilful, instructional leadership from principals and teachers” (p. 6).

In a meta-analysis of 22 published studies, Robinson et al. (2008) found that the mean effect size estimate for instructional leadership was nearly four times as that of transformational leadership and higher than the other theories of leadership. Quite recently, Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, and Brown (2014) comparing the effects of instructional and transformational leadership on student achievement also found that instructional leadership scores explained more of the variance (45.4%) in student achievement than transformational leadership (29.0%). Drawing on data from 23 countries involved in the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), a recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report indicated that greater instructional leadership contributes significantly to a wide range of teacher and school outcomes (OECD, 2009). Thus, “the more leaders focus their relationships, their work, and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater their influence on student outcomes” (Robinson et al., 2008, p. 2).

While broad agreement exists on the importance of instructional leadership in efforts to raise and sustain the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2004; O’Donnell & White, 2005; Robinson et al., 2008; Shatzer et al., 2014), there is lack of consensus on the meaning of instructional leadership (Gurr-Mark, Drysdale-George, &
As a result, instructional leadership as a leadership concept is defined differently by different researchers and there is no single clear definition or specific guideline as to what an instructional leader does in a school.

Nonetheless, there are recurring themes on instructional leadership qualities throughout the literature (Hallinger, 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003). Inherent in the concept of instructional leadership is the notion that learning should be given top priority while everything revolves around the enhancement of learning (Jenkins, 2009; Taole, 2013). Bush and Glover (2004) posited that ‘instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students’ (p. 10). Similarly, Southworth (2002) asserted that “instructional leadership is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth (p. 79). According to Hallinger and Murphy (2012), instructional leadership is an influence process through which leaders identify a direction for the school, motivate staff, and coordinate school and classroom-based strategies aimed at improvements in teaching and learning. All these different perspectives emphasize the influence of school leaders on the teaching and learning process in schools, and, ultimately on learner achievement. Thus, broadly speaking, all leadership activities and actions that directly or indirectly affect student learning can be considered as instructional leadership (Gurr-Mark et al., 2010; Ng et al., 2015; Nguyen & Ng, 2014). Nonetheless, research evidence suggests that in most cases, school leaders will be involved in indirect interventions on instruction that leads to improved student outcomes (Bendikson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012; Gurr, Drysdale, & Mulford, 2007).

Traditionally, formulations of instructional leadership emphasized the principal/headteacher as the main source of educational expertise (Hallinger, 2003; Marks & Printy, 2003; Mitchell
& Castle, 2005). Under this model, the principal was expected to know everything, advise everyone about instruction and curriculum, and guide the general process of the school. There was little discussion of instructional leadership as a distributed characteristic or function to be shared (Bush, 2013; Hallinger, 2005). However, the conception of instructional leadership along this path has been criticised for largely neglecting the voices of teachers and parents as school leaders and for being too directive and principal-centred (Gurr-Mark et al., 2010; Hallinger, 2003; Robinson & Timperley, 2007). It is advocated that considering the expertise needed to lead learning, the normative pressures that draw principals away from classrooms, and the conflicting demands on a principal’s time, it becomes clear that instructional leadership cannot be a solo performance (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012). Consequently, a more recent conception of school leadership has a more inclusive focus with many instructional leadership measures now embracing principals and other stakeholders in the school context (Hallinger, 2003; Marks & Printy, 2003; Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009). Therefore, though the principal remains the educational leader of the school, teachers, who have requisite expertise or information, exercise leadership collaboratively with the principal (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012; Marks & Printy, 2003).

Additionally, instructional leadership conventionally emphasised teaching and learning aspects of school leadership with an emphasis on a directive principal mentoring teachers and visiting classrooms (Hallinger, 2005; Horng & Loeb, 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003). In this tradition, popular images of instructional leadership portrayed principals as exercising active hands-on involvement in the classroom and engaged with curriculum and instruction issues. This approach has been criticized and deemed unsustainable since principals alone do not possess a curriculum knowledge base to mentor all subject teachers, nor do they have time on a daily basis to mentor teachers and observe in their classrooms. Therefore, a more innovative and sustainable approach to instructional leadership has emerged that places primacy on
organizational management for instructional improvement rather than day-to-day teaching and learning (Horng & Loeb, 2010).

With this model, the instructional leadership role of the principal is more appropriately configured as the facilitator of such processes as collaborative inquiry, problem-solving and school development (Horng & Loeb, 2010; Mitchell & Castle, 2005). This means that the instructional leader does not need to be a model or exemplary teacher, but someone possessing the capacity to create the organizational conditions necessary to build pedagogical capacity, expand opportunities for innovation, supply and allocate resources, give instructional direction and support to teachers, and enable teachers to assume individual and collective responsibility for instructional improvement (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, & LaPointe, 2010; Ng et al., 2015). This supports the view that school leaders contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement indirectly through actions they take to influence school and classroom conditions.

Concomitantly, researchers have drawn a number of frameworks on instructional leadership illustrating the roles and responsibilities of school leaders. Among these is the influential model of instructional leadership proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985). Their model is believed to be the most fully tested model of instructional leadership and the most empirically-sound in the field of educational leadership (Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2004; Southworth, 2002). Also, the associated instrument of the model, PIMRS, has been used in at least 22 different countries and more than 175 completed studies (Hallinger, 2011). From their empirical and theoretical analyses, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) proposed three dimensions of instructional leadership: defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school learning climate. These dimensions were further delineated into 10 instructional leadership functions as shown in Table 2.1.
Table 2.1: Instructional Management Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defining the school’s mission</th>
<th>Managing the instructional programme</th>
<th>Developing the school learning climate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frames the school goals</td>
<td>Coordinates the curriculum</td>
<td>Protects instructional time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates the school goals</td>
<td>Supervises and evaluates instruction</td>
<td>Provides incentives for teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors student progress</td>
<td>Provides incentives for learning</td>
<td>Promotes professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintains high visibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hallinger and Murphy, (2009, p. 7)

The first dimension of the model is defining the school’s mission through framing school goals and communicating school goals. This dimension concerns the school leaders’ role in determining the central purposes of the school and focuses on the leaders’ role in working with staff to ensure that the school has clear, measurable, time-based goals focused on the academic progress of students (Hallinger & Lee, 2013, 2014; Hallinger, 2005, 2013; Ng et al., 2015). While the dimension does not assume that the principal defines the school’s mission alone, it does propose that the principal is responsible for ensuring that such a mission exist and is communicated widely to the school’s stakeholders. The bottom line, as suggested by Hallinger (2005), is that the school should have clear, academic goals that staff support and incorporate into their daily practice and thus, goals could be set by the principal or in collaboration with staff. It is further suggested that the goals should be few in number, should be based upon and informed by student achievement data, and should include specific expectations for staff responsibilities designed to achieve the goals (Hallinger & Murphy,
2012). Also, staff and parents input during the development of the school’s goal seem important and it is the principal’s responsibility to communicate these goals so they are widely known and supported throughout the school community (Hallinger, 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003; Nguyen & Ng, 2014; Pan, Nyeu, & Chen, 2015).

Research indicates the importance of goal setting as a powerful leadership tool in the quest for improving valued student outcomes (Latham & Locke, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003; Robinson et al., 2008). It is advocated that improving the overall culture and organisation of a school is closely related to a clear understanding of vision and mission. In their meta-analysis, Robinson et al. (2008) placed vision and goals as the second most significant path through which school leaders contribute to improved learning in classrooms while the meta-analysis of Witziers, Bosker, and Krüger (2003) established that the direction-setting role of the leader had more direct impact on student outcomes than any of the other six dimensions of leadership on which data were available. Therefore, without clear goals, staff effort and initiatives can be dissipated in multiple agendas and conflicting priorities, which, over time, can produce burnout, cynicism, and disengagement (Robinson et al., 2008).

The second dimension of the model is managing the instructional programme by supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, and monitoring student progress. This dimension requires school leaders to be deeply engaged in stimulating, supervising, and monitoring teaching and learning in the school (Hallinger, 2005). Hallinger (2013) asserted that this dimension “focuses on the role of the principal in ‘managing the technical core’ of the school” (p. 15). Not only must instructional leaders visit classrooms regularly to monitor instruction and the delivery of curriculum, they need to also stimulate, engage, and inspire teachers and provide them feedback regarding their practice (Pan et al., 2015; Smith & Smith, 2015). Also, instructional leaders must continually monitor how well students are progressing
toward the achievement of learning goals through the skilful review and interpretation of student achievement data generated from both standardized and criterion-referenced (Hallinger, 2013; Prytula, Noonan, & Hellsten, 2013).

Research indicates the importance of school leaders’ instructional accountabilities in coordinating and supervising instruction and curricular and monitoring students’ learning to ascertain the quality of teaching and learning (Bush, 2013; Hallinger & Murphy, 2012). A number of studies have found that the degree of leaders’ involvement in classroom observation and subsequent feedback is associated with higher performing schools (Bendikson et al., 2012; Hansen & Lárusdóttir, 2014). Instructional leaders need to continually monitor how well students are progressing toward the achievement of learning goals through skilful review and interpretation of student achievement data generated from both standardized and criterion-referenced tests (Hallinger, 2013). In sum, among higher performing schools, leaders work directly with teachers to plan, coordinate, and evaluate teachers and teaching. They are more likely than their counterparts in lower performing schools to provide evaluations that teachers describe as useful and to ensure that student progress is monitored and the results used to improve teaching programmes (Robinson et al., 2008).

The last of the three instructional leadership dimensions is promoting a positive school learning climate. This dimension places primacy on organizational management for instructional improvement rather than day-to-day teaching and learning (Horng & Loeb, 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003). Hallinger (2013) claimed, that “instructionally effective schools develop a culture of continuous improvement in which rewards are aligned with purposes and practices” (p. 16). Similarly, Robinson et al. (2008) pointed out that in an orderly environment, teachers can focus on teaching and students can focus on learning. As a
leadership practice, it is suggested that instructional time needs to be protected from administrative and student disruption (Bendikson et al., 2012; Hallinger & Murphy, 2012; Hallinger, 2005). This is because improved classroom management and instructional skills are not used to the greatest effect if teachers are frequently interrupted by announcements, tardy students, and requests from the office (Glanz, 2006; Hallinger, 2011).

Likewise, the outstanding performance of both students and teachers need to be recognised and rewarded. A six-year study of school leadership conducted by the Wallace Foundation discovered that principals influence student learning by fostering teacher motivation and supportive teaching conditions (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). Similarly, the study by Blase and Blase (2000) found that recognition of efforts significantly affected teacher motivation, self-esteem, and efficacy and fostered teacher reflective behaviour.

Moreover, Fullan (1994) cited in Gupton (2003) noted that nothing motivates a child more than when learning is valued by the school, the family, and the community in partnership. It is, therefore, important that school leaders work together with other stakeholders to recognize the achievement of learners and provide incentives in that regard.

While there is a high expectation of leaders to exercise a high level of instructional leadership to promote quality teaching and learning, some studies have highlighted the difficulty and the lack of leaders in developing countries practicing instructional leadership (Bush, 2014; Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Oplatka, 2004). It is argued that the practice of instructional leadership remains both poorly understood and outside the main job description of the leaders in such contexts (Hallinger & Lee, 2013). Bush (2014) contended that instructional leadership is largely based on research and practice in decentralized contexts, where the demands of the hierarchy are modest and principals have substantial scope to determine how to lead and
manage their schools. Similarly, shedding lights on the context and characteristics of the principalship in developing countries, Oplatka (2004) concluded that:

“To sum up, because of contextual-cultural and organizational determinants in developing countries, functions of instructional leadership gain relatively little attention. Prominently, . . .the issue of instructional leadership has not even been targeted or documented, an omission that may tell us a lot about the insignificant position given to instructional leadership in many developing countries and its scant occurrence” (p. 436).

From South Africa, research conducted by Bush and Heystek (2006) revealed that South African principals were mainly concerned with financial and human resource management and policy issues. It was noted that the management of teaching and learning was ranked seventh of ten leadership activities in a survey taken with more than 500 school principals. Equally, Taole (2013) found that principals in South Africa did not view themselves as instructional leaders and they felt overwhelmed by the amount of pressure put on them and felt that the instructional leadership in schools should be fulfilled by heads of departments.

A similar picture of the lack of instructional leadership in schools is painted by some studies in Ghana (Oduro & Macbeath, 2003; Zame et al., 2008). For example, Oduro and Macbeath (2003) highlighted the disparate tasks of school leaders in Ghana which were likely to limit their effort in focusing on instructional leadership functions and this had resemblance with the challenges highlighted by Taole (2013) in South Africa. Oduro and Macbeath (2003) observed that the supervisory roles of headteachers extended to building projects, monitoring activities of food vendors and ensuring that they maintained hygienic conditions, supervising the process of cleaning and tidying the school campus and administering first-aid treatment. They noted that:
These multifarious tasks are observable in management by ‘walking around’, manifested in the way heads received visitors, supervised teaching, inspected projects, picked something from the storeroom, responded to unexpected sounds or noise in the classroom, visited the school garden, attended to sick pupils, and engaged in many other activities which might be described by an observer as unimportant and time wasting (p. 450).

Zame et al. (2008) equally asserted that headteachers in Ghana were engaged primarily in management and administrative behaviours rather than leadership practices and ranked “managing and organizing the school’s day-to-day” as the primary leadership proficiency required for headteacher effectiveness. Moreover, other studies have claimed that headteachers in Ghana spend large amounts of time and energy in completing bureaucratic tasks that are forwarded to the district or regional level, with little sign of either evaluation or action resulting from this information (Bosu, Dare, Dachi, & Fertig, 2011).

In fact, while it can be inferred that leaders in those studies did not prioritize instructional leadership in their schools, these studies did not investigate instructional leadership practices as enacted by the leaders in their schools and thus, a generalised claim about the lack of instructional leadership ‘in schools in Africa’ cannot be conclusive. Thus, it is not surprising that there exist contrasting findings in the literature (Agezo, 2010; Bhengu & Mkhize, 2013; Mestry, Moonsammy-Koopasammy, & Schmidt, 2013; Naicker, Chikoko, & Mthiyane, 2013; Norviewu-Mortty, Campbell-Evans, & Hackling, 2014) suggesting that instructional leadership is actively practiced by school leaders in certain African contexts.

In Ghana, female principals studied by Agezo (2010) indicated that they had shared written visions for their schools and each school’s vision was well articulated by them and other stakeholders. According to the study, the vision and mission of the principals were all about
providing appropriate learning experiences and educational opportunity for each child to achieve academic excellence and total development to enable them to fit well into the society. Similarly, Norviewu-Mortty (2012) found elements of clear and collective school vision and mission in the two high-achieving schools studied in Northern Ghana. Supporting these findings, Bhengu and Mkhize (2013) found in South Africa that the leaders they studied had created a positive climate through vision creation that enhanced ownership and direction that their schools were taking.

Collectively, these studies from Africa found that the principals they studied ensured that there was little or no disruption to the teaching and learning programme at their schools; engaged in purposeful observation and evaluation of teachers and used data to make recommendations for improvement in classroom instruction; recognized worthy contributions made by both teachers and students; promoted active teacher participation and parental involvement in monitoring and in discussing issues pertaining to assessment of learners; provided sufficient learning and teaching support materials; engaged in multiple teacher supervision activities and regular checks on student learning and promoted professional development opportunities for teachers (Agezo & Hope, 2011; Agezo, 2010; Bhengu & Mkhize, 2013; Mestry et al., 2013; Naicker et al., 2013; Norviewu-Mortty et al., 2014). Certainly, these are the core tenets of instructional leadership highlighted in the international literature (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012).

In this vein, it is clear that contrary to the claims and findings from some studies that school leaders in developing countries including Ghana do not engage in active instructional leadership in schools, there are equally contrasting findings from other studies that the principals they studied in such contexts engaged in instructional leadership as a leadership practice. Nonetheless, specifically in Ghana, while the study of Norviewu-Mortty (2012)
highlighted instructional leadership in only two high-achieving schools purposively selected, Agezo (2010) focused on only six females principals in an Urban municipality in Ghana. As a result, limited conclusions can be drawn from such studies in connection with the instructional leadership practices of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools and thus there is the need for further research into how leaders at different levels of leadership carry out instructional leadership in the basic schools of Ghana.

The contrasting findings, however, raise another question as to what factors might have facilitated some headteachers to exercise instructional leadership and what might have hindered others from exercising instructional leadership in such challenging contexts. Arguably, if the learning experiences of leaders can impact on their leadership competencies and thus the enactment of instructional leadership practices, then, the learning transfer systems in such contexts can play a critical role in influencing the extent the leaders exercise instructional leadership in schools. It is in this vein that the instructional leadership practices of leaders need to be studied in connection with the learning transfer systems.

### 2.4 Learning Transfer Systems

The terms “transfer of training”, “transfer of learning”, “learning transfer”, “training transfer” and “transfer system” are used interchangeably in the field (Chen, Holton, & Bates, 2006) and they refer to the generalization of the skills acquired during the training phase to the work environment and the maintenance of these acquired skills over time (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Broad (2005) refers to it as the “application of new knowledge and skills to improve individual and group performance in an organisation or community” (p. 87). Sofo (1999) cited in Sofo (2007) added an organizational dimension to the definition of transfer of training by noting that it is the extent to which the learning acquired from training sessions is applied and maintained on the job to increase performance and productivity. Thus, transfer of training
involves both the generalization and maintenance of trained or learned skills on the job to improve individual as well as organizational performance.

Throughout the world, organizations invest a significant amount of resources on management and supervisory training programmes (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Cromwell & Kolb, 2004; Kirwan & Birchall, 2006; Van den Bossche, Segers, & Jansen, 2010). As a result, it is anticipated that the skills and behaviours learned and practiced during training by trainees would be transferred to the workplace, maintained over time, and generalized across contexts (Hatala & Fleming, 2007; Holton & Baldwin, 2003; Khasawneh, Bates, & Holton, 2006; Saks & Burke, 2012). Arguably, without the effective transfer of learning from the training context to the work environment, the costs and time spent in training are simply wasted (Velada, Caetano, Michel, Lyons, & Kavanagh, 2007) and thus training efforts may not have an impact on employee as well as organizational effectiveness (Homklin, Takahashi, & Techakanont, 2014; Leberman, McDonald, & Doyle, 2006). It is therefore suggested that organizational decision makers need to prioritize transfer issues for core training programmes and make certain that no obstacles limit trainees from transferring learned skills back to the jobs (Chen et al., 2006).

Nonetheless, research has shown that very little of what is learned in training is applied on the job (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Broad & Newstrom, 1992; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Kirwan & Birchall, 2006; Yamkovenko et al., 2007). It has been reported that only about 10 to 15 percent of employee training results in transfer to the workplace (Broad & Newstrom, 1992; Holton & Baldwin, 2003). Saks (2002) also suggested that about 40% of trainees fail to transfer immediately after training, 70% falter in transfer one year after the programme, and ultimately only 50% of training investments result in organizational or individual improvements. More specifically, a study by Santos and Stuart (2003) also show that 64
percent of managers returned to their previous work styles after training and that managers are even less likely than other staff to immediately apply training at work especially for developmental or soft skills training. It is, therefore, evident that though different estimates of transfer appear in the literature, there is some consensus that learning investments continue to produce deficient results, making training transfer a critical issue for human resource development researchers and practitioners (Khasawneh et al., 2006; Yamnill & McLean, 2005).

Following the fact very little of what is learned transfer to the job, a great deal of progress has been made in understanding the number of factors that can influence learning transfer in the workplace (Chen et al., 2006; Holton et al., 2000; Khasawneh et al., 2006) and thus, a number of models have been put forward in the literature to explain their many and varied influences (Kirwan & Birchall, 2006). From their seminal review of the literature, Baldwin and Ford (1988) proposed that learning transfer was a function of three general factors. These factors included training design, trainee characteristics, and the work environment, all of which influence an individual’s ability to maintain and generalize what they learn during training programmes on the job. Following these dimensions, most transfer research until the late 1990s focused on specific domains while relatively few assessed transfer from a holistic perspective (Chen et al., 2006), thereby leaving researchers with little knowledge base as to how the many variables relate and their possible transfer interactions (Awoniyi, Griego, & Morgan, 2002). Besides, a wide variety of instruments and measures were used, most with either questionable or unknown psychometric properties (Yamkovenko et al., 2007). One of the reasons attributed to this limitation in the literature was the fact that no instrument was available to assess transfer in a comprehensive and holistic manner (Chen et al., 2006; Yamkovenko et al., 2007).
Figure 2:1: Learning Transfer System Inventory: Conceptual Model of Instrument Construct

Source: From Holton et al., 2000, p. 339

Accordingly, Holton et al. (2000) developed the Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) as a diagnostic tool to assess the degree of support in the transfer system defined as “all factors in the person, training, and organization that influence transfer of learning to job performance” (pp. 335-336). The LTSI is a theoretically-based, psychometrically-sound, generalizable instrument used to diagnose an organization’s strengths and weakness for learning transfer (Holton & Baldwin, 2003). The LTSI instrument has been tested and recommended for its ability to identify factors affecting transfer in various training contexts and work environments including Africa (Bates, Kauffeld, & Holton, 2007; Coetsee, Eiselen, & Basson, 2006; Devos, Dumay, Bonami, Bates, & Holton, 2007; Yaghi, Goodman, Holton, & Bates, 2008).
Building on the work of Noe and Schmitt (1986), Holton (1996) hypothesised that learning, individual performance, and organizational performance are primary outcomes of training (See Figure 2.1). Trainees are expected to acquire learning during training and such learning is expected to improve individual as well as organizational performance. Within this model, three classes of factors are believed to be the primary factors that interact to affect the transfer of learning from the training environment to the work environment. These factors are the ability of trainees to use knowledge, skills, attitudes in the job context, motivation to use knowledge and skills learned and work environment factors supporting the use of the knowledge and skills learned. The model further includes secondary influences (trainee characteristics) that affect learning transfer through their influence on motivation. Each of the four domains represents a system of factors important to learning, individual performance, and, ultimately, organizational results (Holton, Bates, Bookter, & Yamkovenko, 2007).

Ability factors include the factors influencing learning transfer through the opportunity to use learning, personal capacity for transfer, perceived content validity, and transfer design. According to Holton et al. (2000), perceived content validity can be enhanced if training contents correspond to job requirements. Accordingly, to enable high training transfer, training courses should deal with work-related topics which ideally showcase the importance of the training contents for the job (Bates, 2003; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Saks & Burke, 2012). Velada et al. (2007) showed that trainees’ assessments of how applicable the learning experience was to the job, or the degree to which training instructions matched job requirements, significantly related to learning transfer.
Table 2.2: Brief Descriptions of the 16 Factors of the LTSI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner Readiness</td>
<td>The extents to which individuals are prepared to enter, participate, and profit from a training programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>An individual’s general belief that he/she is capable of applying new knowledge and skills on the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to Transfer</td>
<td>The direction, intensity, and persistence of effort exerted toward using on the job skills and knowledge learned in training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Effort - Performance</td>
<td>The expectation that effort devoted to transferring new learning will lead to changes in job performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance - Outcomes Expectations</td>
<td>The expectation that changes in job performance will lead to outcomes valued by the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Personal Outcomes</td>
<td>The degree to which applying training on the job leads to positive or desirable outcomes for the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Personal Outcomes</td>
<td>The extent to which individuals believe that if they do not apply new skills and knowledge learned in training it will lead to outcomes that are undesirable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers Support</td>
<td>The extent to which a trainee’s peers reinforce and support the use of learning on-the-job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>The extent to which the trainee’s supervisors/managers support and reinforce the use of learning on the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Sanctions</td>
<td>The extent to which individuals perceive negative responses from managers when applying or attempting to apply newly learned knowledge and skills on the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness/Resistance to Change</td>
<td>The extent to which prevailing workgroup norms resist or discourage the use of new skills and knowledge acquired in training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Coaching</td>
<td>Formal and informal indicators from an organization received by an individual about his/her job performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Capacity for Transfer</td>
<td>The extent to which individuals have the time, energy and mental space in their work lives to make changes required to transfer learning to the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Content Validity</td>
<td>The extent to which the trainees judge the training content to accurately reflect job requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Design</td>
<td>The extent to which training has been designed to give trainees the ability to transfer learning to job application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to Use</td>
<td>The extent to which trainees are provided with or obtain resources and tasks on the job that enable the use of new skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Yamkovenko et al. 2007, p. 383
Also, there are a number of studies exemplifying the positive effects of transfer design on transfer outcomes (Holton, 2005; Saks & Belcourt, 2006; Velada et al., 2007). Velada et al. (2007) in a study of 182 employees in a grocery company found that transfer design was significantly correlated with transfer. Moreover, research has consistently shown that positive transfer is limited when trainees are not provided with opportunities to use new learning in their work setting (Gaudine & Salks, 2004; Lim & Morris, 2006). Thus, trainees need ample opportunities to apply their new skills to the workplace for positive transfer to occur (Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Others have also found limited opportunity to perform skills on the job (Clarke, 2002) and the pressure of heavy workloads and inadequate supply of requisite resources to trainees as the biggest barrier to successful learning transfer (Sofo, 2007; Waller, 2012).

In addition to the ability factors, Holton et al. (2000) categorized motivation factors which included motivation to transfer, transfer effort - performance expectations and performance - outcomes expectations. It is highlighted in the literature that highly motivated individuals will actively strive for possibilities to transfer what they have learned in training into practice (Bates et al., 2007; Gegenfurtner, Veermans, Festner, & Gruber, 2009; Grohmann, Beller, & Kauffeld, 2014). Lim and Johnson (2002) explored factors that were thought to facilitate or hinder transfer and identified motivation to transfer as a primary supporting variable. The meta-analysis by Blume, Ford, Baldwin, and Huang (2010) provides additional evidence of a positive relationship between motivation and transfer. Using one peer rating in addition to three self-ratings of transfer to examine the role of motivation to transfer in mediating the relationship between training characteristics and training transfer, Grohmann et al. (2014) found that motivation to transfer was found to mediate the relationship between transfer design and all training transfer scales. Additionally, employing expectancy in the transfer of learning, it is argued that if an employee believes that an actual benefit is received from
attending a training event and transferring that knowledge, skill, or ability into a tangible individual performance improvement, then the likelihood that transfer will occur is improved.

Moreover, work environment factors included supervisor support, supervisor sanctions, peer support, resistance to change, performance coaching, personal outcomes positive and personal outcomes negative. A number of studies have shown consistent results on the positive impact of peer support on training transfer (Chiaburu & Marinova, 2005; Cromwell & Kolb, 2004; Facteau, Dobbins, Russell, Ladd, & Kudisch, 1995; Hawley & Barnard, 2005). Chiaburu and Marinova (2005) reported that peer support showed a strong, direct relationship with transfer, as well as an indirect influence through its impact on motivation. A meta-analytic review of the transfer literature also established a positive relationship between peer support and the transfer of training (Blume et al., 2010).

Supervisor support has equally been found to be influencing transfer (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Cromwell & Kolb, 2004; Lim & Johnson, 2002), although there are contradictory findings (Cheng & Hampson, 2008; Homklin et al., 2014; Velada et al., 2007). To enhance transfer, Burke and Hutchins (2007) suggest that before the learning experience supervisors should communicate goals regarding the desired performance, the conditions under which the performance will be expected to occur on the job and the criterion of acceptable performance. Also, after the learning experience, trainees should be prompted by their supervisors to set proximal and distal goals for applying newly acquired competencies in the workplace (Taylor, Russ-Eft, & Chan, 2005). Lim and Johnson (2002) identified supervisors’ participation in discussions of new learning, involvement in training and provision of positive feedback as forms of support most recognized by trainees as positively influencing their transfer. Cromwell and Kolb (2004) showed that trainees who received high levels of supervisor support transferred more knowledge and skills 1 year after participating in a training
programme than those who reported lower levels of support. Likewise, trainees cited lack of management support as a significant barrier to the transfer of training.

It is further argued that an organizational environment that is open to new ideas and supports and invests in change may facilitate the transfer process. Examining the relationship between organizational transfer climate and positive transfer of training, Rouiller and Goldstein (1993) concluded that in addition to how much trainees learn in training, the organizational transfer climate of the work situation affects the degree to which learning experiences would be transferred to the actual job. Also, Holton et al. (2000) found that change resistance correlated negatively with motivation to transfer suggesting that the higher the degree of change resistance in the organization the lower the degree of transfer. Feedback concerning the newly acquired knowledge and skills, and how these relate to job performance, increases the probability of its transfer to the workplace (Velada et al., 2007). Also, Van den Bossche et al. (2010) found that the amount of people providing feedback and the helpfulness of this feedback are positively related to the motivation for and actual transfer of training.

While the model of Holton et al. (2000) regarded ability, motivation, and work environment factors as “primary transfer influences” because they directly influence individual transfer performance, individual characteristics were shown to be important factors in the transfer process primarily through their influence on motivation. Because the influence of these factors is mediated through their influence on motivation, they have been termed secondary influences on transfer. These secondary influences include performance self-efficacy and learner readiness. A number of studies support the view that self-efficacy partially contributes to transfer through its influence on motivation (Chiaburu & Lindsay, 2008; Chiaburu & Marinova, 2005; Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000). Chiaburu and Marinova (2005) found in their study that trainees with higher levels of self-efficacy were more motivated to train than
trainees with lower confidence, and as a result of their higher motivation, they reported higher levels of skill transfer. Thus, individuals higher in self-efficacy will be more confident in their ability to learn and apply new things, and thus, will be more likely motivated to transfer training (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Similarly, research suggests that trainees who received information about the training prior to their participation had superior intentions to transfer and apply what they learned back to their respective job settings (Baldwin & Magjuka, 1991; Khasawneh et al., 2006).

Despite the varied transfer system factors, it is observed that transfer is a combination of elements that come together to shape the transfer process and must be understood holistically. In this vein, organizations wishing to enhance return on investment from training investments must understand all the factors that affect the transfer of training and then intervene to eliminate factors inhibiting transfer (Holton et al., 2000). Accordingly, a number have examined the interconnectedness among the learning transfer variables and the fact that they may operate together as a constellation to influence transfer (Holton, Chen, & Naquin, 2003; Kirwan & Birchall, 2006). For example, the study by Waller (2012) found that the characteristics of the individual, whilst critical to transfer, may be influenced by other areas of the transfer system. Thus, the efforts of trainees to transfer their learning are likely to come to nothing if the programme is not relevant to their role, does not nurture their confidence to use their learning, or they do not find support from the work environment to which they return to apply what they have learned. Similarly, without the necessary time, energy or mental space, even the most motivated individual is likely to fail to apply their new skills (Kirwan & Birchall, 2006). Holton et al. (2003) equally concluded that the level of readiness of the trainee was to some degree shaped by the trainee’s perception of how the organization will react to the trainee’s application of training on-the-job. In that respect, if the trainee expected resistance to change, lack of supervisor support, or received negative personal outcomes from
previous attempts to apply training, then the level of readiness for future training is less positive (Antle, Barbee, Sullivan, & Christensen, 2009; Herold, Davis, Fedor, & Parsons, 2002).

Despite the interconnectivity among the learning transfer variables, a number of studies suggest that transfer systems are not uniform and stable but rather vary depending on the type of organization, the socio-cultural and economic contexts of the organization, and the type of training (Donovan & Darcy, 2011; Grossman & Salas, 2011; Holton et al., 2003) and thus attention to the organizational context in researching transfer has gained broad support (Gaudine & Salks, 2004). In this vein, Holton et al. (2003) suggest that not all organizations will or should build the same types of transfer systems. It is on this basis that a number of past studies investigating transfer systems have found contrasting results from different settings and statistically significant differences across organizational types, training types, organizations and demographic characteristics (Chen et al., 2006; Holton et al., 2003; van Zolingen & Gulen, 2007; Yamnill & McLean, 2005).

From these studies, while employees in public organizations experienced peer support, negative personal outcomes, and performance self-efficacy higher than employees in private organizations in the Netherlands (van Zolingen & Gulen, 2007), these same variables were experienced higher by employees in private organizations than public employees in Thailand (Yamnill & McLean, 2005). Yet, there were no significant differences in any of these variables between private and public organization employees in Taiwan (Chen et al., 2006). Again, while employees in private organizations experienced personal positive outcomes higher than employees in public organizations in the Netherlands (van Zolingen & Gulen, 2007), Thailand (Yamnill & McLean, 2005), Taiwan (Chen et al., 2006), there was no
significant difference in such a scale between private and public sector employees in the US (Holton et al., 2003).

Against the backdrop that the extent of transfer and the factors that explain it vary due to type of organization and socio-cultural context (Burke & Hutchins, 2008; Donovan & Darcy, 2011) as well as the evidence of conflicting results from past studies across different contexts (Chen et al., 2006; Holton et al., 2003; van Zolingen & Gulen, 2007; Yamnill & McLean, 2005), it is possible that organizations from developing countries and from rural areas are likely to provide unique training transfer results and implications (Miiro, Mazur, & Matsiko, 2012). Besides, none of the studies reviewed were carried out in educational settings and none was carried out in Ghana thereby given credence to the investigation of the learning transfer systems within the Ghanaian basic schools to determine which factors of transfer are perceived to influence the transfer of their leadership learning.

2.5 Connecting Professional Development, Instructional Leadership, and Learning Transfer Systems

This section connects the three key concepts – professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems – explored in the study. The relationship among the three concepts is illustrated by Figure 2.2.

Increasingly, there is a global recognition that school leaders need to engage in professional development activities to ensure their continuing effectiveness in their leadership role (Bush, 2012; Cowie & Crawford, 2007; Davis et al., 2005; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). This is as a result of the increasing complexity of schools and their communities, and because of the emerging evidence that effective school leadership enhances learner outcomes (Huber, 2011; Leithwood & Levin, 2008; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009). Consequently, school leaders engage
in formal leadership development programmes, work-based learning approaches, and informal learning methods (refer Figure 2.2).

Figure 2:2 Theoretical Framework for the study

When educational leaders engage in the different forms of professional development activities, it is anticipated that their leadership learning would influence their leadership practices (refer Figure 2.1). Thus, it is expected that through their leadership learning, leaders would carry out effective instructional leadership by defining the school’s mission through framing school goals and communicating schools goals; manage the instructional programme
by supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, and monitoring student progress and promoting a positive school learning climate by protecting instructional time, providing incentives for teachers and proving incentives for learning in their schools (Hallinger, 2005).

Nonetheless, this thesis posits that the extent to which the professional learning of leaders could influence their instructional practices in schools could be mediated by the learning transfer systems prevalent in the organizational contexts (refer to Figure 2.2) which is defined as “all factors in the person, training, and organization that influence transfer of learning to job performance” (Holton et al., 2007, pp. 335 - 336). Identifying the learning transfer systems in Ghanaian basic schools, the study employed the LTSI which measures 16 constructs shown by research to be critical catalysts or barriers to effective training and learning transfer. While the LTSI is currently the only validated instrument available that measures a comprehensive set of learning transfer system factors (Holton et al., 2000), and reflects more fully than other models concerning the different factors that affect transfer in the literature (Kirwan & Birchall, 2006), it does not represent all the learning transfer system factors potentially likely to influence transfer. In this vein, the LTSI acts as subsets of factors that are likely to affect the transfer of learning in organizations (see Figure 2.2).

Finally, situating the study within the African and Ghanaian contexts, the study theorized that the professional learning, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems of school leaders in Ghana could be shaped and influenced by the institutional contextual realities in Ghana (Baffour–Awuah, 2011; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kitavi & Van Der Westhuizen, 1997; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003). In this vein, professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems is affected by the institutional context and challenges facing
school leaders in Ghana as shown by the circle surrounding the three key concepts under investigation (see Figure 2.2).

### 2.6 Summary

Chapter 2 presented the literature review on professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems as well as the institutional challenges facing school leaders in Ghana. The literature shows much evidence about the critical role of school leadership in promoting school development and enhancing student learning outcome. As a result, understanding the professional development, instructional leadership practices and learning transfer systems of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools becomes very important.

While the importance of professional development has been highlighted in the literature, the literature reviewed showed that while mentoring, networking, coaching, PBL and online learning have emerged as viable means through which leaders in advanced countries develop their professional skills, they have not featured prominently in the literature in the developing countries including Africa partly due to limited research exploring the professional development activities of school leaders (Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandumja, 2013) or that different sets of leadership learning might exist in such contexts. Besides, while there is a high expectation on leaders to exercise high level of instructional leadership to promote quality teaching and learning, some studies have highlighted the difficulty and the lack of leaders in developing countries practicing instructional leadership (Bush, 2014; Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Oplatka, 2004) although contrasting results exist in the literature (Agezo, 2010; Bhengu & Mkhize, 2013; Mestry et al., 2013; Naicker et al., 2013; Norviewu-Mortty et al., 2014) suggesting that instructional leadership is actively practiced by school leaders in certain African contexts.
Moreover, it emerged from the literature reviewed that learning transfer systems are not uniform and stable but rather vary depending on the type of organization, the socio-cultural and economic contexts of the organization, and the type of training (Donovan & Darcy, 2011; Grossman & Salas, 2011; Holton et al., 2003). Further, there is evidence of contrasting results in the literature pertaining to transfer systems across different settings (Chen et al., 2006; Holton et al., 2003; van Zolingen & Gulen, 2007; Yamnill & McLean, 2005). In this vein, it is possible that organizations from developing countries including Ghana are likely to exhibit different transfer systems (Miiro et al., 2012). These findings from the literature give support to the need to investigate the professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools.

In sum, professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems are related in educational institutions. The relationship among them stems from the fact that the ultimate goal of these key concepts are similar as they all aim at improving student learning outcomes. Further, while the literature emphasizes the need for leaders to engage in leadership learning to improve their leadership competencies, leaders need to translate what they learn to their work and that should result in changes in their leadership practices (instructional leadership). Yet, there need to be facilitating learning transfer systems to enable transfer for such changes to be realized to impact on student learning outcomes. Thus, this study assumes that examining the professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools can enhance our understanding on how the critical roles of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools in improving student learning outcomes can be fully realized. A detailed explanation of the research method employed to conduct the study is presented in Chapter 3.
Chapter 3 : Research Methods

This chapter presents the methodology used in conducting the study. In doing so, the chapter reviews the research questions and provides a detail explanation of the research design adopted to answer the research questions, provides an overview of the research site, sampling and sampling procedure, the data collection instruments, and administration and retrieval of the research instruments. Further, discussions on data analysis, validity and reliability issues and ethical considerations are provided.

3.1 Research Questions

The principal research aim of this study was to investigate the professional development activities of school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers, and form masters) in the basic schools of Ghana, examine the instructional leadership practices these leaders carry out in schools, and to identify the transfer system elements that facilitate the transfer of their professional learning. Subsequently, the study proposed three research questions:

1. What types of professional development activities do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) in Ghanaian basic schools engage in to develop their instructional leadership practices?

2. What instructional leadership practices do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) carry out in their school as a result of their leadership learning?

3. What learning transfer system factors facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools?
3.2 Research Design

According to Guba (1990) cited in Cameron (2009) the struggle for the primacy of one research strategy over others is irrelevant as each strategy is an alternate offering with its own merits. It is on that basis that the pragmatists argue against a false dichotomy between the qualitative and quantitative research strategies and call for the efficient use of both approaches. Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) examining the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research approaches asserted that:

Because quantitative data procedures . . . tend to be standardized, they are usually easy to replicate. However, while dissemination of analytical techniques is a strength of numerically oriented research studies, interpretation of findings is a relative weakness….Quantitative researchers in the social and behavioural sciences tend to emphasize figures over figures of speech, tables over tableaux, graphs over graphical accounts, visual over verbal and measurement over meaning. On the other hand, a strength of qualitative research reports is that they typically represent an attempt to ensure that the results are meaningful as possible. Moreover, qualitative researchers tend to discuss their findings in a sociocultural context to a greater degree than do their quantitative counterparts. However . . . delineating information about the analytical techniques used and major features of the analysis is a weakness (p. 360)

The above quotation underscores the need for integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques in a single study since “neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient, by themselves, to capture the trends and details of a situation” (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006, p. 3). Thus, when used in combination, both quantitative and qualitative data yield a complete analysis, and they complement each other (Creswell, Fetters, & Ivankova, 2004; Creswell, 2003; Laura, 2011).

Being embedded in pragmatism worldview, this research employed mixed research methods. Mixed methods research is an approach to knowledge that attempts to consider multiple
viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner (2007). It provides a framework for conducting a study that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative approach (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). In other words, a mixed methods study involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and/or qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003; Creswell, 2003). It is a flexible approach, where the research design is determined by what we want to find out rather than by any predetermined epistemological position (Muijs, 2011).

One of the benefits of using mixed methods design is that researchers could employ a number of perspectives, theories, and educational research methods to strengthen their research, thus producing “a study that is superior to one produced by either quantitative research or qualitative research alone” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 443). It thus permits researchers to address more complicated research questions and collect a wealthier and stronger array of evidence than might be accomplished by a single method (Yin, 2009). The multiple sources and/or methods of data gathering increase the credibility and dependability of the data since the strengths of one source compensate for the potential weaknesses of the other (Johnson et al., 2007; Johnson & Turner, 2003). Finally, mixed method approaches can also answer a broader and more complete range of research questions because the researcher is not confined to a single method or approach (Johnson & Turner, 2003; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Despite its popularity and benefits, mixed methods research faces a number of criticisms. While some critics argue that it is inappropriate to mix QUAL and QUAN methods in the same study due to the epistemological differences between the paradigms that are purportedly related to them (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2013), others allege that mixed methods favours
postpositivist thinking over more interpretive approaches and thus subordinates qualitative methods to a secondary position (Creswell, 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2013). Some researchers have even questioned the degree to which mixed methods researchers analyse, interpret, and write up their research in such a way that the quantitative and qualitative components are mutually illuminating (Bryman, 2007). It is also asserted that undertaking mixed method research can be difficult for a single researcher to carry out especially if two or more approaches are expected to be used concurrently (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Moreover, the researcher has to learn about multiple methods and approaches and understand how to mix them appropriately. In spite of these criticisms, this study employed mixed methods research in anticipation that it would serve as a valuable approach and provide a better understanding of the research problem under investigation than either quantitative or qualitative method alone.

The integration of both approaches in a study calls for collecting quantitative and qualitative data sequentially or concurrently (Creswell, 2005; Laura, 2011). The sequential mixed methods are done by elaborating on or expanding on the findings of one method with another method. Using this approach, either the qualitative or the quantitative approach may be gathered first, but the sequence relates to the objectives being sought by the researcher in the mixed methods study. When qualitative data collection precedes quantitative data collection, the intent is to first explore the problem under study and then follow up on this exploration with quantitative data that are amenable to studying a large sample so that results might be inferred to a population (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). However, when quantitative data precede qualitative data, the intent is to explore with a large sample first to test variables and then to explore in more depth with a few cases during the qualitative phase. Creswell (2008) observes that the sequential approach is ideal when one phase can contribute to the next phase and enhance the entire study.
In contrast, quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same time and are brought together in the results or interpretation of the results in the concurrent mixed research approach. This means that the quantitative and qualitative data are collected, analysed, and interpreted at (approximately) the same time (Creswell, 2003). To Creswell et al. (2003), this approach is advantageous because it is familiar to most researchers and can result in a well validated and substantiated findings. Besides, the concurrent data collection procedure results in a shorter data collection time period compared with that of sequential designs. However, the limitations of this approach are that it requires great effort and expertise to adequately study phenomenon with two separate methods and may be unclear to a researcher how to resolve discrepancies that arise from the results.

In this study, the rationale for combining both quantitative and qualitative methods was that of complementarity as it sought to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem. The results obtained from the qualitative analysis were interpreted to enhance, expand, illustrate, and clarify findings derived from the quantitative results. In addition, the researcher collected both forms of data (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews) at the same time during the study and then integrated them into the interpretation of the overall results. The purpose of using the parallel mixed method design was to use both the responses obtained from the questionnaire and those from the interviews to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research questions asked.

A secondary reason was the possibility of using the results from one instrument to confirm or corroborate findings from the other. According to Patton (2002), the intent of using this design is to bring together the differing strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of quantitative methods with those of qualitative methods. Also, it is used when a researcher wants to directly compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings.
or to validate or expand quantitative results with qualitative data. Furthermore, the concurrent approach was used because the data gathering was carried out in Ghana and the researcher had to complete the data collection before leaving for Australia to commence the studies. So coupled with financial and time constraints the researcher could not have administered one of the instruments and used the results to construct and administer the other instrument later on (sequential approach) considering the time that was available to me.

3.3 Research Site

In Ghana, there are three types of assemblies, which are the highest levels of local government: metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies. There were 216 assemblies comprising of 6 Metropolitan Assemblies, 49 Municipalities, and 161 District Assemblies. This study was conducted in one of the 161 districts assemblies in Ghana. This district was selected for the study due to convenience because the district educational authorities granted the researcher permission to conduct the study in their schools. The District was relatively a small one with a little over 60 communities. Most of the communities typical of this district were without pipe borne water supply and communities rather depended on water from the streams and rivers which were also polluted. Main economic activity for the people in the district was peasant farming and pineapple production was the main farming activity in the district. Overall, key development issues confronting those types of districts included the poor academic performance of pupils at basic education level, inadequate health infrastructure, poor housing, rural-urban migration, high level of unemployment among the youth, low access to ICT, low participation of women in decision-making and high post-harvest losses.

Moreover, the study was carried out in the public basic schools in Ghana. In Ghana, basic education refers to the “minimum period of schooling needed to ensure that children acquire basic literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills as well as skills for creativity and healthy
living” (Government of Ghana, 2002, p. 23). Basic education comprises two years kindergarten, six years primary education and three years junior high school (JHS). Basic education in Ghana is centralized and all students are exposed to the same curriculum (Agezo, 2010). It was estimated that there were 19,277 kindergarten schools, 19,854 primary schools, and 12,436 junior high schools representing the basic education in Ghana (Minister of Education 2014). The different figures presented across the three sections of basic education is an indication that not all basic schools had all the three sections in place implying that there were some basic schools with only kindergarten and primary school without JHS or vice versa.

Since the study’s focus was on basic schools (kindergarten, primary, and junior high school), the researcher restricted the selection of schools to only the basic schools with all the three sections in place. Those schools were all organized under one leadership. This meant that those schools had one headteacher and one assistant headteacher responsible for all the three sections (kindergarten, primary and the JHS). Besides, three teachers had been appointed to serve as form masters responsible for the management of the three JHS classes. Thus, leaders in those schools (headteacher, assistant headteacher, and form masters) formed the sample for the study. This relatively constrained sample might not be large enough to generalise the findings of the study to other districts in Ghana. However, the district was selected because while some districts in Ghana were generally urban, the selected district was rural considering the characteristics as pointed out already. Thus, the study captured the perspectives of those school leaders, shedding a spotlight on their professional learning activities, instructional leadership practices, and learning transfer systems in such school settings in Africa.
3.4 Sampling and Sampling Technique

There are two main types of sampling: probability or random sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling emphasises selection procedures that can prevent the occurrence of systematic bias in the selection of the subset (Scott & Morrison, 2007). According to Babbie (2008), the fundamental idea behind probability sampling is that in order to provide useful descriptions of the total population, a sample of individuals from a population must contain essentially the same variations that exist in the population. In contrast, non-probability sampling occurs when a person or an item to be sampled from a larger population does not have an equal chance to be selected (Scott & Morrison, 2007). Non-probability sampling is commonly associated with qualitative approaches. According to Ritchie (2001), statistical methods of determining sample size are irrelevant when the purpose is a deep understanding of a particular, nominated phenomenon. What is chosen to be studied is done so, purposefully, in the expectation that the selected item(s) will provide the greatest chance of revealing interesting information to answer the research problem under investigation. Consequently, a larger sample may be made up of very few individuals but in-depth interviews with these few may produce very rich and revealing results. In a sense, the size of the sample can be viewed as inversely proportional to the depth and detail of the findings (Ritchie, 2001).

Considering the fact that this study employed mixed research strategy, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed in the study. First, for the qualitative part of the research, purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting respondents for the interviews. According to Patton (2002) in purposive sampling, cases are selected because they are information - rich and illuminative, that is, they offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest. He adds that the power and logic of purposeful sampling derive from
the emphasis on in-depth understanding and this leads to selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. On his part, Bryman (2008) indicates that the goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed.

Table 3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of Years in Leadership</th>
<th>Educational Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HT-1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT-2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT-3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Cert. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT-4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT-5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT-6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cert. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT-7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cert. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHT-7</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cert. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>WASCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>WASCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM-7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HT = Headteacher, AHT = Assistant Headteacher, FM = Form Master

In this study, the selection of respondents for the qualitative part was done in consultation with the circuit supervisors. Circuit Supervisors in Ghana are the officers at the district education offices assigned for the supervision of schools in a particular circuit. They are
assigned to either supervise 20 schools in urban centres, 15 in semi-urban centres or 10 schools in rural areas (Government of Ghana, 2002, p. 154). They were asked to select one school with the most experienced headteacher from their circuit taking into consideration the number of years served as a head and other professional experiences. In those selected schools, both the headteacher and the assistant headteacher were interviewed. Further, the headteachers of the selected schools were asked to nominate the most experienced form master among the three form masters in the junior high school to be interviewed. This was also done taking into account the level of experience and the number of years served as a form master. Overall, 21 interviews were conducted comprising seven headteachers, seven assistant headteachers, and seven form masters through the process. Table 3.1 displays the demographic characteristics of the interviewees. Out of the 21 leaders interviewed, 12 were males and nine were females, 16 had served five or more years in their leadership positions, 19 of them were either 30 or more years of age, and the majority had obtained a diploma, bachelor, or masters’ degree.

With regards to the quantitative part of the research, respondents for the research were selected using both population sampling and purposive sampling methods. As already pointed out, though the selected district for this study had a little over 60 basic schools, the researcher restricted the selection of schools to only basic schools with all the three sections of basic school (kindergarten, primary school, and JHS). As a result, 50 schools qualified for the study and thus leaders in those 50 basic schools formed the sample for the study making a targeted population for the study to be 50 headteachers, 50 assistant headteachers, and 150 form masters. Considering the small number of schools ($N=50$), all headteachers and assistant headteachers were the targeted respondents. However, purposive sampling was employed in selecting the form masters. In each school, headteachers were asked to nominate the most experienced form master in their school to participate in the study. Thus, respondents for the
quantitative part were 150 school leaders comprising 50 headteachers, 50 assistant headteachers, and 50 form masters.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Coupling with the fact that this study employed mixed methods research approach, it used both qualitative and quantitative instruments for the data collection. Specifically, this study used semi-structured interview and questionnaire for the data collection.

3.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

When researchers are interested in understanding the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and opinions of participants or learning how participants come to attach certain meanings to phenomenon or events, interviewing provides a useful means of success (Ritchie, 2001). In semi-structured interviews, the researcher employs an interview guide with specific questions that are organized by topics but are not necessarily asked in a specified order (Bailey, 2007) since the interviewer has more freedom to arrange the order of the questions or even rephrase them (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenssen, 2006). In other words, they consist of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence of issues by asking them the same questions using essentially the same words to minimise variation in the questions being posed (Patton, 2002). O’Leary (2004) indicates that:

Semi-structured interviews are neither fully fixed nor fully free and are perhaps best seen as flexible. Interviews generally start with some defined questioning plan, but pursue a more conversational style of interview that may see questions answered in an order natural to the flow of the conversation. They may also start with a few defined questions but be ready to pursue any interesting tangents that may develop. (p. 164).
Furthermore, Galletta (2013) asserts that semi-structured interviews incorporate both open-ended and more theoretically driven questions, eliciting data grounded in the experiences of participants as well as data guided by existing constructs in a particular discipline of study within which the study is carried out. Accordingly, each question in the interview schedule should be clearly related to the purpose of the study and should reflect the researcher’s deliberate progression toward a fully in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under study. Among other things, this approach to interviewing creates openings for narrative to emerge, while also keeping to issues informed by theoretical orientations and leaves a space through which the researcher can explore with participants the contextual influences evident in their narratives (Galletta, 2013).

This study employed semi-structured interviews because the researcher had specific questions in mind and wanted to take each respondent through the same questions in order to avoid digression from the main focus of the study. Guided by the research questions and the key theoretical concepts, an interview guide was developed for the study (see Appendix 4). The interview guide had four sections. While section 1 asked questions about the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, the number of years served in the leadership position and educational qualification of respondents, Section 2 explored the professional development of school leaders in the Ghanaian basic schools. Section 3 explored the influences of the professional learning of leaders on their instructional leadership practices in their schools while section 4 investigated the learning transfer systems of the leaders.

The researcher personally conducted face-to-face interviews with all the 21 school leaders and used an audio recorder to record each interview with the participants. Each interview lasted between 1 hour and 1 hour 30 minutes. Before the actual data collection for the study, the interview guide was submitted to the informal advisor of the researcher, who eventually
became the primary supervisor, for inspection after which it was pilot tested with two school headteachers in the Asikuma Odoben Brakwa District. The field testing of the interview guide allowed the suitability of the instrument to be determined and also exposed the researcher to the practical realities of interviews. This went a long way to sharpen the interview skills and boosted the confidence of the researcher in the actual data collection process.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire sought to investigate the professional learning activities of school leaders, the impact of the professional learning on their instructional leadership practices, and the learning transfer system factors that facilitated the transfer of their professional learning. The questionnaire was divided into four parts: items relating to the background information (demographics) of respondents, professional development activities of leaders, instructional leadership practices, and learning transfer systems.

The researcher pilot tested the questionnaire in five basic schools in the Asikuma Odoben Brakwa District of Ghana. In all 15 school leaders from the five schools participated in the pilot test. Those who took part in the pilot test had similar characteristics to the study participants as recommended by Ary et al. (2006). Surveys are pilot tested to avoid misleading, inappropriate, or redundant questions and it ensures that a research instrument can be used properly. Besides, it can give in advance warning regarding weaknesses in a proposed study. In this study, the aim of the pilot testing was to check that the instructions were comprehensible, check the wording of the questions and to determine the average time period required to complete the questionnaire. The process revealed that some professional learning activities in the questionnaire were alien to respondents while others they use were not included. Thus, a revision of the professional learning activities was made by removing those professional learning activities they complained about and added the new ones. Quite apart
from this no further changes were made to the instruments. The remaining part of this section reports on the various parts of the questionnaire in the study.

- **Demographic Questions**

A section on the demographic characteristics of respondents was included as part of the survey instrument to obtain key demographic characteristics of the school leaders who participated in the study. In particular, the demographic questions asked were the respondent’s leadership position, the number of years served in the leadership position, gender, age group, and highest educational qualification (see Appendix 3). A detailed result on the demographic characteristics of respondents is presented in chapter 4.

- **Professional Development Activities**

Part two of the questionnaire investigated the professional development activities that school leaders engaged in to develop their instructional leadership practices.

The professional development activities included in the survey were items that emerged from extensive literature review, consultation with my supervisor, personal experience as a teacher and a Personnel Officer in the Ghana Education Service and discussions with other experts and educational authorities in Ghana. The respondents were asked to indicate how often they engaged in such development activities to develop their instructional leadership practices in their school using a “1 to 5” response scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = frequently, and 5 = very frequently (see Appendix 3). List of professional development activities included in the questionnaire is presented in Table 3.2.
Table 3.2 List of Professional Development Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coaching by supervisors, peers and/or subordinates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging job assignments or projects completed on the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a committee or working party/taskforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-building retreats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor programmes - formal and informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (books, newspapers, articles, magazines, manuals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured &amp; non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondments at same grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting in a more senior position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal university-based leadership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation to other schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom training - short-term or longerterm courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops, Seminars, and forums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences of school leaders (regional and national levels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal or external 'knowledge networks' or communities of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line learning via the Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360-degree feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings of school leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based/Cluster based In-service training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS)**

The third part of the survey instrument asked the respondents to rate the extent to which a specified professional learning experience had affected their instructional leadership practices in their school. The instrument used in this part was the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) which was developed by Hallinger (1983). The use of the instrument in the study was discussed with its creator and permission was granted (Appendix 2).

The entire PIMRS assesses school leaders’ instructional leadership behaviours through a Likert-type, 50 item survey containing three dimensions of instructional leadership: defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger, 2005). These dimensions were further delineated into 10 instructional leadership job functions, each of which was measured by behaviorally anchored
items. The first dimension is defining the mission through framing school goals and communicating school goals. The second dimension is managing instructional programme by supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, and monitoring student progress. The third dimension is promoting school climate through protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for students (Hallinger, 2005). Hallinger (1999) outlined the steps taken to construct the scale items for the PIMRS:

First, an extensive analysis of research on the role of school leaders as instructional managers was carried out. The research reviewed was largely based on effective schools research which students were able to succeed beyond what would be expected given their socioeconomic background. From this, ten job functions were finally developed which reflected the areas of responsibility of the school leader.

Next, expert opinions were derived from district level administrators and school site leaders to generate a list of critical job behaviours within each of the job functions. The list created from the previous step was then supplemented with research findings by the author within each of the job functions. These lists of critical job-related behaviours, containing behavioural statements concerning the school leader’s role as instructional manager, were rewritten to describe discrete behaviour for use as questionnaire items.

Finally, each of the behavioural statements was adjusted grammatically so it would fit the following stem and response category of a “1 to 5” response scale: 1 = almost never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = frequently, and 5 = almost always.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher explored seven subscales of the PIMRS: framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, providing incentives for teachers, and
providing incentives for learning. One reason for this was to reduce the number of items in the questionnaire. It was realized that the PIMRS alone contained 50 questions and that of the LTSI was 48 together with additional 20 professional development items. Thus, the researcher limited the focus to seven of the scales of the PIMRS and thus reduced its questions to 35 instead of 50. Also, considering the fact that the system of basic education in Ghana is centralized where the curriculum is developed at the national level for all schools in the country, the researcher felt that the job functions of coordinating the curriculum and promoting professional development might not really be under the remit of the leaders in such context and thus limited insights could be drawn from such exploration. Respondents were asked to specify the frequency with which the specific behaviour was practiced as a result of their learning experiences on a continuum ranging from 1 to 5: 1 = almost never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = frequently and 5 = almost always (see Appendix 3).

- **Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI)**

The last part of the questionnaire used the 4th version of LTSI instrument upon seeking approval from the author’s representative, Professor R. A. Bates of Louisiana State University, USA. The Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) has four constructs: ability, motivation, environment, and secondary influence for learning and organizational outcomes (Holton et al., 2000). The condition for using the instrument in the study as indicated by the authors was that the scoring algorithms be retained by them and that the data collected with the LTSI be sent to them for scoring. Consequently, the raw data pertaining to the learning transfer systems was sent to the authors for scoring.

The 4th version of the instrument is 48-item self-report measuring 16 constructs likely to influence transfer consisting of 11 specific constructs and five general constructs. The constructs are Learner readiness, Motivation to transfer, Positive personal outcomes, Negative
personal outcomes, Personal capacity for transfer, Peer support, Supervisor support, Supervisor sanctions, Perceived content validity, Transfer design, Opportunity to use learning, Transfer effort - performance expectations, Performance - outcome expectations, Resistance or openness to change, Performance Self-Efficacy, Performance coaching (Holton et al., 2007). Answer scales in the LTSI were Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (see Appendix 3).

3.6 Administration and Retrieval of Instruments

The data collection took place in one district education directorate in Ghana from 14th January 2014 to 30th May 2014. Prior to the commencement of the data collection process, the researcher sent a permission letter to the District Education Office of the District to seek their approval and authorization to conduct the study in their schools and consequently a permission letter was issued dated 13th January 2014 (see Appendix 1).

Following this, the Directorate invited the researcher to attend the usual monthly meeting of the headteachers in the district at the District Capital. The District Director of Education then introduced the researcher to the headteachers and briefed them about the research and the fact that permission had officially been sought from the directorate. The district director created an opportunity for the researcher to interact with the headteachers and the researcher took the time to explain to them the objectives of the study and the part they would be playing as respondents. The headteachers asked questions after the submission and the researcher responded to their questions. Three copies of the permission letter received from the District Education Office was then distributed to each of the headteachers. The headteachers were to keep one of the permission letter and give the other two to their assistant headteacher and the nominated form master.
A week later, the researcher began visiting the schools to distribute the questionnaires to the participants personally. In each school, he took some time to interact with them on the purpose of the study and other social and educational issues in order to establish rapport with them. Their consent for participating in the study was also sought and this was expressed verbally by the school leaders. The questionnaires were then distributed to the leaders upon seeking their verbal consents. In all cases, the researcher returned to the schools at an agreed date to collect the completed questionnaires. However, he visited some schools more than once before he could retrieve the completed questionnaires.

During the same period, the schools selected for the interviews were contacted for their consent to be interviewed. Upon expressing the consent to be interviewed, a date convenient to the interviewees was fixed. All interviews took place at the headteachers’ offices and after school hours. The intention of fixing the interviews after school hours was in order not to interrupt with their official school duties and also to have a quiet place and avoid any interruption during the interview sessions. Prior to each interview session, in line with advice offered by Creswell (2005), the researcher re-introduced himself, described the research, its purpose, category of interviewees, steps being taking to maintain confidentiality and their anonymity, and notified them about the duration of the interview. The researcher sought their permission to record the interviews to capture the responses. This contributed to a more relaxed atmosphere during the interview session because the researcher was freed from the distraction of note taking and rather concentrated on interacting with the participants and allowed an accurate and verbatim transcription of the interview (Whiting, 2008).

Whenever a respondent misinterpreted a question, the researcher tried to paraphrase it to make the question clearer and put the participant on track in order for him/her to provide straightforward responses. Intermittently, the researcher probed further for more detailed
information when interviewees provided responses which were deemed to be incomplete. At the end of each session, the recorded conversation was played back to the interviewees to make sure they agreed to what had been shared. The researcher used this approach because he felt it would be difficult to send the transcripts back to the interviewees in Ghana for cross-checking while in Australia.

### 3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity and reliability are the two qualities most central to the assessment of the “goodness” of a measurement (Hunter & Brewer, 2003; Shenton, 2004). While validity refers to the question of whether or not one’s measurement of a phenomenon is true and whether it purports to measure what it seeks to measure, reliability refers to the degree to which a measurement can be replicated; that is the extent to which repeated measurement of the same phenomenon produce consistent results from one time to the next (Hunter & Brewer, 2003).

Data quality in mixed research is generally determined by the separate standards for assessing data quality in the qualitative and quantitative strands (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The following section outlines the validity/credibility and reliability/dependability issues in the study.

- **Validity/Credibility**

This study used the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) to investigate the instructional leadership practices of school leaders in the basic schools of Ghana. Studies have tested the PIMRS for face validity, content validity, and discriminant validity (Hallinger, 2011). Content validity of this instrument was initially established by Hallinger (1999) through a panel of three principals and one vice principal who had not been involved in the procedures to generate the job behaviours. A minimum average agreement of 80% among the
group was set. Each panel member was asked to assign each item to the category in which they felt it belonged. If a panel member felt any item did not fit in any of the categories, it was left unassigned. After the process was complete, the items were reviewed by another educational management expert. Selected items were discarded to decrease the number of items in certain categories and the length of the questionnaire overall. Thus, the credibility of the PIMRS instrument used in the study was ensured.

Also, the study used the LTSI to identify the learning transfer systems of the school leaders (Holton, Bates, Seyler, & Carvalho, 1997). Holton et al. (2000) assert that “without minimally validated measures, the chance for substantive misspecification of models, misinterpretation of findings and measurement error is significantly increased” (p. 6). Thus, validated learning transfer instruments are critical in learning transfer research, as ‘many researchers generalise their studies to other samples using minimally validated instruments’ (Holton et al., 2007, p. 414).

In the development of the learning transfer system inventory, Holton et al. (2000) used exploratory common factor analysis to reveal a clean interpretable factor structure of 16 transfer system constructs. Eleven of the 16 constructs represent factors affecting a specific training programme and five of the 16 constructs are classified as general factors affecting all training programmes. The LTSI has been tested with strong evidence of construct validity (Holton et al., 2000) and initial evidence of criterion-related validity (Bates, Holton, & Seyler, 1998). Also, convergent and divergent validities of the LTSI have been studied with the results indicating mostly divergent relationships (Yamkovenko et al., 2007). In addition, the LTSI has shown evidence of cross-cultural construct validity in both Thailand (Yamnill & McLean, 2005) and Taiwan (Chen, 2003). A study in Jordan by Khasawneh et al. (2006) showed a latent factor structure that was highly consistent with the LTSI. Similarly, a cross-
cultural study in Ireland indicated that the LTSI adequately represent the effects of its factors although a slightly revised model was presented (Kirwan & Birchall, 2006). Furthermore, Coetsee, Reiselen, and Basson (2006) validated the Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) in the South African context. Using an exploratory factor analysis to determine if an interpretable factor structure of latent transfer system constructs could be identified, the authors concluded that:

“. . . the LTSI has been applied to the South African context and the results can be applied and used in practice as follows . . . the questionnaire can enable an organisation to identify those variables that inhibit learning transfer (within South African context) and to compile an organisationally-specific learning transfer system in accordance with the results. The foregoing can serve as management mechanisms to manage learning transfer effectively”. (p. 54)

Thus, overall, “the LTSI instrument provides the most comprehensive and most extensively validated instrument to assess dimensions of the learning transfer climate that has been developed to date” (Holton et al., 2007, p. 414) as it measures unique constructs with the potential to add significantly to our understanding of learning transfer climates and systems in organizations.

Furthermore, with regards to the qualitative part of the study the credibility of the instrument and thus the findings from the study was also safeguarded. Patton (2002) points out that in qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument and thus the credibility of qualitative methods, therefore, hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing the fieldwork. Consequently, in order to indicate the extent to which the qualitative research is credible some acceptable processes have been developed in qualitative research practice: triangulation, prolonged engagement and persistent observation, providing an audit
trail, and member checking. For the purposes of the qualitative component of this study, the researcher employed member checking to safeguard the credibility of the results. According to Creswell (2007), member checking involves taking the data, analysis, interpretations, and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account. Lincoln & Guba (1985) see this as the critical technique for establishing credibility, though its inherent challenges have been pointed out in the literature (Silverman, 2010). In the case of this study, at the end of each interview session, the researcher played back the recorded conversation to the interviewees to make sure they agreed to what had been shared. Also, the credibility of the qualitative data was ensured in the sense that interview sessions were all audio-recorded thus capturing the views of respondents in its original form.

- **Reliability/Dependability**

Reliability refers to the degree to which the rating scales measure the targeted phenomenon consistently. In other words, it refers to whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object yields the same result each time (Babbie, 2008). Several different approaches may be employed for assessing the reliability of a test instrument: test-retest, parallel forms, and internal consistency (Kerlinger, 1996 cited in Hallinger, 2013). According to Hallinger (2013), establishing reliability is especially important when an instrument is being used in a setting that differs in meaningful ways from the original validation site(s). However, contrary to common belief, there is no single standard for assessing the reliability of a research instrument (Latham & Wexley, 1981) as the appropriate standard should be based on the intended use of the data (Hallinger, 2013). In this study, the internal consistency of the instrument was chosen as the appropriate form of reliability. Internal consistency refers to the degree to which items that have been grouped together conceptually as subscales correlate with each other (Hallinger, 2013).
In establishing internal consistency reliability of the LTSI instrument, the Cronbach alpha reliability scores for this study are compared against the Cronbach alpha reliability scores from Version 3 of the LTSI (Holton et al., 2000) as shown in Table 3.3. Overall, the internal consistency reliability of LTSI for the current study ranges from .54 to .80 and is considered acceptable for research purposes. This is because the use of the LTSI instrument in other cross-cultural settings had yielded quite similar internal consistency reliability values: .53 to .87 in Jordan (Khasawneh et al., 2006); .58 to .87 in Germany (Bates et al. 2007); .62 to .87 in Ukraine (Yamkovenko et al., 2007).

Table 3.3 Cronbach Alpha Reliability Scores of the LTSI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Holton et al. 2000</th>
<th>Current Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Version 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Transfer Effort – Performance Expectations</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Motivation to Transfer Learning</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Performance Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transfer Design</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Performance – Outcomes Expectations</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Opportunity to Use Learning</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Perceived Content Validity</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Personal Outcomes Positive</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Performance Coaching</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Learner Readiness</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Personal Outcome Negatives</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Resistance/Openness to Change</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Personal Capacity to Transfer</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Supervisor Opposition</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concerning the reliability of the PIMRS, Hallinger (1999) showed that all the ten subscales alpha coefficients fell within a low of .78 to a high of .90 using Cronbach’s test of internal consistency, or homogeneity. According to Hallinger (1999), the reliability of the PIMRS instrument as a whole was not measured since the individual subscales were developed to represent related but discrete job functions. The reliability coefficients of the 7 subscales of the PIMRS employed in this study were further tested using the data collected in the study. The alpha coefficients fell within the range of .67 to .82. Table 3.4 contains the reliability coefficients for the subscales of the PIMRS used in the study using the Cronbach’s Alpha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frame Goals</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communicate Goals</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Supervision/Evaluation</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Monitors Student Progress</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Protects Instructional Time</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Incentives For Teachers</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Incentives For Learning</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In qualitative research, Lincoln & Guba (1985) used “dependability”, which closely corresponds to the notion of reliability in quantitative research. In order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results (Krefting, 1991). The exact methods of data gathering, analysis, and interpretation in qualitative research must be described. In determining dependability of this study, thick
description of the research process was provided detailing the sampling procedure, the research instrument, the data collection procedure, and the systematic steps in the data analysis. Also, dependability can also be enhanced through triangulation to ensure that the weaknesses of one method of data collection are compensated by the use of alternative data-gathering methods. In this study, multiple data sources (data triangulation) of questionnaire and interviews were used to understand a single phenomenon. Finally, in ensuring the dependability of the study, the research plan, and its implementation were thoroughly checked and discussed with the primary supervisor.

3.8 Data Analysis

Because this study employed mixed research methods by using both qualitative and quantitative sources of data, analysis of data was performed using qualitative data analysis as well as descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

3.8.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis occurs alongside data collection (Galletta, 2013). According to Bailey (2010), qualitative data analysis requires that the researcher makes sense of the data by breaking it down, studying its components, investigating its importance, and interpreting its meanings. Dey (1993) also defined qualitative data analysis as the process of resolving data into its constituent components to reveal its characteristic elements and structure. According to him, the researcher goes beyond just description of the data but leading to interpretation, explanation, understanding, and perhaps even predicting. To Patton (2002), ‘qualitative data analysis involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal’ (p. 432). Thus, qualitative data analysis
consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, etc. so that researchers can offer an interpretation in light of their own views or views of perspectives in the literature (Creswell, 2007).

In this study, the analysis of the qualitative data began with the transcription of the raw data generated from the interviewees. Responses to each of the questionnaires were written in a separate booklet to facilitate easy reading. The researcher transcribed sentences and phrases directly to avoid misinterpretation of the sense or meaning of information participants provided. This was to enable the researcher capture the views expressed by respondents in their own words. The transcription also involved listening to each tape several times to immerse myself in the data.

The transcribed material was then read through several times with close attention being given to emerging themes in the data. As pointed out by Agar (1980) cited in Creswell (2007), “researchers read the transcripts in their entirety several times trying to get a sense of the interview as a whole before breaking it into parts” (p. 150). Upon reading through several times, the multiple pages of text was broken down into more manageable segments with reference to the research questions and the literature review. For each interview item, the researcher looked for common phrases or statements and organised them under the pre-determined themes based on the literature. Each theme emerging from the reading was considered and re-examined in relation to the original data to check against contradictions and possible oversight. After the categorization process, the data was presented through respondents’ perspectives and in light of the existing literature.
3.8.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics 21 was used to organize and analyse the quantitative data. Since methods of data analysis are basically determined by the nature of the research questions under study, the quantitative data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 3.5 shows the overview of the research questions and the quantitative data analysis employed.

Table 3.5 Overview of Research Questions & Quantitative Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Quantitative Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What types of professional development activities do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) in Ghanaian basic schools engage in to develop their instructional leadership practices?</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics – Means and Standard Deviations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What instructional leadership practices do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) carry out in their school as a result of their leadership learning?</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics – Means and Standard Deviations One-Way between groups ANOVA to examine if statistically significant differences exist among instructional leadership practices across leadership levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What learning transfer system factors facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools?</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics – Means and Standard Deviations One-Way between groups ANOVA to examine if statistically significant differences exist between transfer systems and leadership levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question one was analysed through descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency (means) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). This was because the
question was descriptive in nature and hence the use of descriptive statistics for the analysis was quite appropriate to provide valuable information about the extent to which the leaders engaged in the types of the professional development activities used in the study. However, research questions two and three were analysed using both descriptive statistics and One-Way between groups Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This enabled the researcher to further to investigate whether there were significant differences between instructional leadership practices and learning transfer systems across leadership levels. In cases where significant differences were found at p < .05, post hoc analysis was conducted to discover which particular means differed significantly at p < .05.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Every research endeavour requires strict adherence to research ethics. Bryman (2008) asserts that ethical issues cannot be ignored as it relates directly to the integrity of a piece of research and of the disciplines that are involved. Also, ethical considerations help to define what is and is not legitimate to do, or what ‘moral’ research procedures involve (Neuman, 2007). The principle that researchers have to abide by is that they will protect the interests of participants in their research because they may be involved in collecting information which is sensitive or has potential to do harm to that participant or group of participants (Lichtman, 2010; Scott & Morrison, 2007). Silverman (2010) is of the view that while these ethical principles may vary across disciplines and national boundaries, there are a number of general principles that most researchers would agree with. Consequently, there are several measures that researchers can undertake to ensure that the research conducted is ethical for the sake of research participants.

Most prominent among these as outlined by Babbie (2008) are:
• Voluntary participation - Social research represents an intrusion into people’s lives and requires that people reveal personal information about themselves. Thus, a major tenet is that participation must be voluntary. No one should be forced to participate.

• No harm to participants – Social research should never injure the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study.

• Informed Consent – This norm means that participants base their voluntary participation in research projects in full understanding of the possible risks involved.

• Anonymity and Confidentiality – Anonymity is guaranteed in a research study when neither the researcher nor the readers of the findings can identify a given respondent. Also, confidentiality is guaranteed when the researcher can identify a given person’s response but essentially promises not to do so publicly.

In line with the above guidelines, the following steps were undertaken in the research process to ensure that the study was carried out in accordance with appropriate ethical principles and requirements:

• Permission was sought and granted in writing from the District Education Directorate of the District where data were collected. This was in recognition that the data were collected prior to my formal application for enrolment at a University. Hence, the researcher could not have applied for ethics approval from a University.

• The researcher sought the verbal consents of all respondents involved in the study and they willingly offered themselves for the study. The researcher informed them about the nature and purpose of the research and the value of their contribution to the research as well as their right to participate or withdraw at any stage of the data collection process.
• For every digitally-recorded interview, the researcher obtained permission from respondents before the use of the recording device and hence interviewees had every right to decline from being recorded. Bailey (2010) contends that tape-recoding an interview without explicit permission is unethical.

• The identity and the information given by individual participants were kept confidential and anonymous. The data collected were kept securely and only the researcher had access to the data. Further to this, the name of the educational district in question would not be revealed in the work or in any published work that would emerge from the study. This is to keep the respondents unidentifiable as far as possible. The rationale behind this option was that all headteachers and deputies (but not all form masters) were included in the data collection. A mention of the name of the district where the data were collected could expose some identities. For the purposes of this study, it was the case that a ‘pre-existing data set’ was used. The data set was not identifiable to any specific district of the more than 161 districts that existed in Ghana.

• For the need of data identification and analysis, the researcher developed coding methods to ensure that the data did not reveal the identity of individual participants but only the characteristics needed in data analysis.

3.10 Summary

The chapter identified the research questions and explained the methodology used in the study as well as giving a rationale for the approach. Among other things, it discusses the research design by giving a justification for the use of the parallel mixed methods in this study. Besides, the chapter gives some basic characteristics of the chosen district as well as the
sampling techniques employed in the study. This was followed by discussions on the data collection instruments and data collection procedure, reliability and validity issues, data analysis procedures, and ethical issues. The next chapter will present the findings of the study.
Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the professional development activities of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools, examine the instructional leadership practices exercised by the leaders and to identify the perceived learning transfer systems that facilitate the transfer of their professional learning. The study employed parallel mixed research design thereby gathering both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously. This chapter presents the results from both the quantitative and qualitative parts of the study. The chapter is divided into four sections. Section one presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the quantitative part of the study. The remaining sections present the findings on the professional development activities, instructional leadership practices, and learning transfer systems of leaders respectively.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in the Survey

The demographics sought in the quantitative part of study were gender, leadership position, the number of years served in the current leadership position, age group, and educational qualifications. The demographic data are presented in Table 4.1. In all, 150 leaders comprising 50 headteachers, 50 assistant headteachers and 50 form masters constituted the respondents for the quantitative part of the study. Consequently, 150 questionnaires were distributed and all of these were retrieved for analysis thereby giving a response rate of 100%.

As noted in the methodology chapter, this remarkable response rate could be attributed to the procedure employed in the data collection process. First and foremost, the high response rate could be attributed to the fact that the District Director of Education for the selected district introduced the researcher to all the headteachers in the district in one general meeting and requested them to give me the needed assistance. This could have contributed to the high response rate because, within the Ghanaian society, subordinates in organizations generally
do have high regard and respect for the directives of their superiors and would comply with such directives partly for fear of victimization. So to show their respect and compliance to the request made by the District Director, headteachers might have ensured that their assistant headteachers and form masters filled out the questionnaires on time. Second, frequent visitation to all the schools by the researcher personally collect the filled out questionnaires from the respondents also contributed to the high response rate. The researcher had to visit some schools more than once to collect the questionnaires.

Table 4.1 Demographics of Respondents for the Survey Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>*FM</th>
<th>*AHT</th>
<th>*HT</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Served</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or Less</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 +</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>SSCE/WASSCE</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERT A</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*FM = Form Masters; AHT = Assistant Headteachers; HT = Headteachers

The result showed that overall the majority of respondents (77.3%) were males while females formed the minority across the three leadership levels. This showed that there was low representation of females in school leadership in such a rural district of Ghana. Research in
Ghana suggests that female teachers are interested in taking up postings in more urbanised areas as they perceive urban living a much easier life and having access to a number of benefits that are not available in rural areas such as credit, markets, better social services and access to income generating activities, electricity and potable water (Casely-Hayford, 2007). Thus the deprived nature of rural communities and the lack of opportunities in those communities lead to the low presence of female teachers serving in schools in deprived rural areas which would eventually result in the low representation of female in leadership.

The result also showed that a small majority (55.3%) of respondents had served five or less years in their current leadership position. However, the data showed that while the majority of form masters (68%) and assistant headteachers (58%) had served 5 or less years in their current leadership positions, a good majority of headteachers (60%) had served more than 5 years in their leadership position. This suggested that majority of the headteachers had accumulated more experience in their leadership roles than assistant headteachers and form masters. Thus, though more than half of all leaders had less than five years’ experience, variation existed across the three leadership levels. The data further showed that more than half of the respondents (68%) were less than 40 years of age. However, a look at the age group across the different leadership levels showed that while the vast majority of form masters (94%) and assistant headteachers (72%) were below 40 years, a clear majority of headteachers (62%) were above 40 years.

Regarding the educational qualification of leaders, the analysis showed that only 5 (3%) of all the leaders held master’s degree. However, nearly all the respondents held the required qualification for teaching in Ghanaian basic schools as 88.7% had either obtained Certificate A, diploma in basic education, bachelor’s degree or master’s degree. These were all professional qualifications that allowed them to teach in the basic schools of Ghana. The
remaining 11.3% either held SSCE or WASSCE which were not professional qualifications and below the minimum qualifications for one to serve as a teacher in Ghanaian basic schools. However, a good number of teachers with such qualifications are currently in the teaching service due to shortage of qualified teachers. Also, it should be noted that attention was paid to teaching qualifications in the analysis as there was no formal qualification for individuals to be appointed to school leadership positions.

To summarise, there appear to be two notable differences among the levels of leadership (form masters and assistant headteachers being one group and headteachers being the second group) in the 50 schools in terms of years of experience and age. First, the result showed that majority of form masters and assistant headteachers were below 40 years while the majority of headteachers were above 40 years of age. Second, while the majority of form masters and assistant headteachers had less than five years’ experience, the majority of headteachers had more than five years’ experience. Moreover, the data suggested that school leadership in the basic schools of Ghana was male dominated and those in leadership positions possessed low qualifications as only 3% of leaders held master’s degree with the majority (79 %) possessing either Certificate A or Diploma qualifications.

Given the above profile of Ghanaian basic school leaders and the pattern of differences that emerged in both length of leadership experience and quality of formal qualifications to execute the leadership duties, it will be instructive to examine individual requirements for maintaining currency of leadership skills and improving leadership engagement with the staff, students and school community. To achieve a depth of appreciation some key questions were asked of the school leaders related to their ongoing professional learning.
4.2 Professional Development Activities of School Leaders

Research question 1 was: What types of professional development activities do leaders in Ghanaian basic schools (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) engage in to develop their instructional leadership practices? The purpose of this question was to ascertain from leaders the type/category of professional development activities they employ to develop their professional skills following appointment into leadership positions in their schools. The next sections present in turn the quantitative and qualitative research findings regarding the professional development activities of the leaders in the study.

4.2.1 Quantitative Results on Professional Development Activities of Leaders

In the leaders’ survey, research question one consisted of a list of 20 categorial professional development activities that was developed through a review of the related literature. Respondents were asked to rate how often they employed the various types of professional development activities to develop their instructional leadership skills in their school. The rating scale consisted of five descriptors ranging from “1 to 5”: 1 = not at all, 2 = rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = frequently, 5 = very frequently. The quantitative data relating to this research question was analysed through descriptive statistical analysis by computing the mean score and standard deviations for the different leadership levels in response to the frequency with which they engaged in each of the professional development activities.

The frequency that headteachers engaged in each of the 20 professional development activities is shown in Table 4.2. The data showed that headteachers frequently engaged in four professional development activities to develop their instructional leadership practices (ratings of 4+) as shown in Table 4.2. It is worthy to note that three out of the four professional
development activities that headteachers reported they frequently engage in were informal learning activities.

Table 4.2 Mean Frequencies of Engaging in Professional Development Activities by Headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development Activities of Headteachers (n = 50)</th>
<th>*M</th>
<th>*SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings of school leaders</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops, Seminars, and forums</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured &amp; non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (books, newspapers, articles, magazines, etc.)</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching by supervisors, peers, and/or subordinates</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation to other schools</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences of school leaders (regional and national levels)</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisals</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a committee or working party/taskforce</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom training - short-term or longer term courses</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging job assignments or projects completed on-the-job</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-building retreats</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based/Cluster based In-service training</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal and informal mentoring</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 degree feedback</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal and external ‘knowledge networks’ or communities of learning</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting in a more senior position</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondment at same grade</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line learning via Internet</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal university-based leadership development</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation

In addition, there were 13 other professional development activities that headteachers “occasionally” engaged in to develop their instructional practices. Seven of these were allocated an average rating of 3.5 or more. On the other hand, three professional development activities obtained the lowest mean scores (score of 2) which were “rarely” engaged in by headteachers to develop their instructional leadership skills. Among the three lowest scored professional development activities was undertaking a “formal university-based leadership
development” qualification, which was the only formal development activity in the list of the 20 professional development activities used in the study.

The mean frequencies that assistant headteachers reported to engage in each of the 20 professional development activities are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Mean Frequencies of Engaging in Professional Development Activities by Assistant Headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development Activities of Assistant Headteachers (n = 50)</th>
<th>*M</th>
<th>*SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading (books, newspapers, articles, magazines, etc.)</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured &amp; non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops, Seminars, and forums</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching by supervisors, peers, and/or subordinates</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation to other schools</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting in a more senior position</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings of school leaders</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisals</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a committee or working party/taskforce</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom training - short-term or longer term courses</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging job assignments or projects completed on-the-job</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based/Cluster based in-service training</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal and external ‘knowledge networks’ or communities of learning</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 degree feedback</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal and informal mentoring</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-building retreats</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences of school leaders (regional and national levels)</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal university-based leadership development</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondment at same grade</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line learning via Internet</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation

The result showed that two professional development activities were “frequently” engaged in by assistant headteachers to develop their instructional leadership practices. Further to this, the result showed that they also “occasionally” engaged in 13 other professional development...
activities and of these four professional development activities attracted an average rating of 3.5 or more. Moreover, five professional development activities attracted the lowest mean scores, which were “rarely” undertaken by assistant headteachers to develop their instructional leadership practices.

Finally, the frequencies that form masters engaged in each of the 20 professional development activities are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Mean Frequencies of Engaging in Professional Development Activities by Form Masters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development Activities for Form Masters (n = 50)</th>
<th>*M</th>
<th>*SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading (books, newspapers, articles, magazines, online resources, etc.)</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured &amp; non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops, Seminars, forums</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitations to other schools</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings of school leaders</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching by supervisors, peers, and/or subordinates</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging job assignments</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based/Cluster based in-service training</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 degree feedback</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisals</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal and external ‘knowledge networks’ or communities of learning</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom training - short-term or longer term courses</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a committee or working party/taskforce</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting in a more senior position</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building retreats</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondment at same grade</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal and informal mentoring</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences of school leaders</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line learning via Internet</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal university-based leadership development</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The result showed that form masters “frequently” engaged in the reading of books, newspapers, articles, etc. and unstructured and non-intentional experiences resulting from
daily work to develop their instructional leadership practices. Further to this, they “occasionally” engaged in six other professional development activities and all of these items attracted an average rating of below 3.5. Finally, 12 professional development activities were rated as activities that were “rarely” engaged in by form masters to develop their instructional leadership practices and of these online learning through the Internet and formal university-based leadership development attracted the lowest ratings.

In sum, results from the quantitative data showed that while headteachers ‘frequently’ engaged in meetings of school leaders, workshops, seminars, and forums, unstructured and non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work, and reading of books, newspapers, magazines, both assistant headteachers and form masters reported that they frequently engaged in unstructured and non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work, and reading of books, newspapers, magazines. Nonetheless, it emerged that the highly ranked professional development activities across the three leadership levels were similar and those activities were meetings of school leaders, workshops, seminars, and forums, unstructured and non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work, and reading of books, newspapers, magazines, visitations to schools, and coaching by supervisors, peers, and/or subordinates. Further, online learning through the Internet and formal university-based leadership development attracted the lowest ratings across the three leadership levels.

4.2.2 Qualitative Data on Professional Development Activities of Leaders

This section presents the various types of professional development activities that leaders in Ghanaian basic schools engaged in to develop their professional competencies as generated through the interview data. The interview data revealed a number of ways the various leaders employed for their professional development within the Ghanaian context and these were presented under the following broad themes: independent personal reading; meetings;
visitation to schools; coaching; workshops; formal university courses; appraisal; and on-the-job experience. These categorizations had been used in presenting the findings as it assisted in merging several professional development activities under each broad theme. Also, views expressed by the different levels of leaders were presented under the same broad themes and the similarities and differences in their views highlighted in the presentation. Finally, the sequence used in presenting the professional development activities was done randomly and had nothing to do with the relative importance of the activity perceived by the interviewees.

- **Independent Personal Reading**

One professional development activity that all the three groups of leaders interviewed reported as a means through which they developed their professional skills was independent personal reading. On the whole, there was a general agreement by the interviewees of the benefit they derived from the regular reading of materials relating to their work. Leaders were generally of the view that in order for them to develop themselves, they needed to read materials pertaining to the work they do. When respondents were asked about the kind of reading materials they read to develop their leadership skills in their schools, the different levels of leaders enumerated different materials that they relied on to develop their leadership skills.

According to all the headteachers interviewed, the Headteachers’ Handbook served as a valuable source through which they developed their instructional leadership skills. They reported that the manual had been provided by the Ghana Education Service and served as a fundamental book that touched on the various aspects of their work as school leaders. For example, HT-4 commented that “I constantly read the headteachers manual. I go through to know how I should go about my work”. Similarly, HT-2 echoed that “I regard the headteachers’ manual as a Holy Bible as far as my daily routine as a headteacher is
concerned”. Thus, the headteachers indicated that they had copies of the headteachers’ manual which they consulted in doing their work.

In addition to the headteachers’ manual, the headteachers interviewed did mention other materials they read to develop themselves. However, it emerged from the interview data that those additional materials were mainly pamphlets that the headteachers had either obtained from workshops they had attended or lecture notes they had obtained by enrolling in higher education programmes. Some of them also made mention of magazines which were supplied to them by the Ghana Education Service from time to time as well as newspapers which some of them said they bought on their own. For instance, HT-7 commenting on some of the other materials he read indicated that “we have Adupong for headteachers. Then we also have INSET textbook. They also give us a lot of knowledge on school leadership”. Similarly, HT-5 underscored the importance of newspapers to their professional development in recent times as she commented that:

\[
\text{At times too we have to be current so we buy papers, that is, newspapers. Nowadays, newspapers are full of educational issues, our shortfalls and then our progress. So these are some of the things we fall on.}
\]

Meanwhile, not all the headteachers admitted reading newspapers to develop their instructional leadership skills as they hinted that they were unable to buy the newspapers considering their meagre salaries.

In addition, all assistant headteachers indicated that they had some educational books that they read to develop their professional skills. Similar to the views expressed by the headteachers, it was evident from their responses that those materials were in the form of pamphlets they had either obtained from attending workshops or by enrolling in higher
educational programmes mainly through distance learning. For example, AHT-1 commenting on the kind of material she read to develop her instructional leadership skills commented that:

_Well, I have one book which is School Report Card. So I use to read. It talks about the school report and information about pupils and the school. It is about basic roles that we have to carry out in school._

A similar comment was made by AHT-5 in relation to the kind of reading materials he relied on as he noted that:

_I read psychology books from teacher training colleges and also educational leadership books through distance learning from the universities. Through that, I have gained much on how to go about things._

When Assistant headteachers were asked if they read the headteachers manual to develop their instructional skills in the school, all the seven assistant headteachers interviewed reported that though they were aware of the availability of the book in their school offices, they had not gotten time to read. Thus, unlike headteachers who reported using the headteachers’ manual as their reading material, assistant headteachers rather depended on other reading materials.

This situation was not different for form masters as they also noted that they rather depended on other reading materials rather than the headteachers’ manual. Similarly, the form masters said that they had sighted the headteachers manual in their school offices but they had not been able to read. All the seven form masters said that they had some educational books that they consulted from time to time to enrich their knowledge. Commenting on reading as a learning activity, FM-5 indicated that, “[. . .] we also learn outside the school. We read, go through our educational leadership books for information that help us to do our work”.

Further to this, FM-7 citing a particular textbook which according to him details the responsibilities of a form master commented that:
I can mention of ‘trends in management of education’, the role of a school leader, the role of form masters is stated in those books. So through reading we acquire knowledge about the role of a leader, what the leader must do in order to achieve a successful outcome is spelt out. By so doing we add more information to the practical knowledge we acquire from our leaders.

When the leaders were asked whether they engaged in further reading on the Internet to develop their instructional leadership practices, there were mixed reactions from the interviewees across the different leadership levels. Out of the seven headteachers interviewed, only one (HT-7) indicated that he engaged in further reading on school leadership issues on the Internet. He stated that “At times I also do research on the internet. This helps me to obtain current information on school leadership even beyond Ghana”. This particular headteacher happened to head a school at the district capital of the study district and besides he indicated that he was pursuing a master’s degree in educational administration by distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba. However, there was no substantial evidence from the interview data to suggest that his location and educational qualification might have contributed to his ability to access issues pertaining to school leadership on the Internet.

While none of the assistant headteachers indicated that further reading on the internet was carried out, two form masters indicated that they did further reading on the Internet to update their knowledge on educational leadership. The two form masters who indicated that they did further reading on the Internet, commented that they search for information on school leadership to update their knowledge using their mobile phones. For example, FM-3 expressed that:

We have so many ways of acquiring knowledge. Initially, I said through consultation of books. In the olden days, this Internet was not common compared to the present time. But nowadays, Internet is here with us and I fall on it frequently. As I am sitting here, if something bothers me regarding my task as a form master, I can consult my

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phone and within the shortest possible time, I can access it. So Internet has been of much help to me.

In contrast, the remaining leaders cited the unavailability of certain devices that would enable them to access the Internet and the deprived nature of their school environments as the factors impeding their effort to engage in further reading on the Internet. This was eloquently expressed by FM-5 as she pointed out that:

What I will say is that there are certain devices we use to access information on the Internet and they are not common here. As you are aware, here is a deprived area and we find it difficult getting access to the Internet. Then also the environment in which some of us find ourselves is a problem. As we sit here, there is no access to electricity in this area. So in case your phone even runs down how do you recharge it? Thus, it restricts our effort to search for information on the Internet.

Thus, lack of facilities and the deprived nature of the environment could explain this variation. It could also mean that those leaders lacked the necessary technical know-how to search for information on the Internet. From the presentation so far, it appears that though the three groups of leaders engaged in reading as a means of professional development, they lacked access to adequate resources in their school context. With the exception of the Headteachers’ Manual cited by the headteachers as a valuable resource material provided by the Ghana Education Service, it appears the school leaders did not have any other relevant reading material they relied on. It also emerged that Assistant headteachers and Form Masters did not have copies of the Manual and that might explain their lack of attention given to such material though they indicated that they were aware of its existence in their school. Again, there was no mention of library facilities in their communities or schools that they could rely on and obtain current educational leadership books to develop their leadership skills. Similarly, they had no access to computer laboratories with Internet connectivity in their schools where they could equally access online journals or current materials on school
leadership. Thus, on the whole leaders in this study engaged in personal reading as a means of professional development but there appears to be a resource challenge which could constrain them from undertaking any meaningful reading to develop their professional skills.

- **Meetings**

Another theme that emerged through the interviews as a form of professional development activity was school meetings. Overall, it emerged that there were a series of meetings held at the school, circuit, and district levels and such meetings served as a good platform for them to develop their professional competencies. According to the headteachers interviewed, they engaged in headteachers meetings at the circuit and the district levels. According to them, at the circuit level all headteachers in that particular circuit met twice in a term whilst all headteachers in the whole district met once every month. All the seven headteachers noted that the regular headteachers’ meetings served as a good platform for them to share experiences and learn from each other. Commenting on how they used such meetings to develop their instructional leadership skills, HT-6 expressed that:

> When we go for headteachers meetings, we share ideas. When I have a problem, I enquire from other headteachers to seek their advice on what to do. Besides, each time we meet we have something we call situational report. Every headteacher tells the group what is happening in his or her school. Through that we learn a lot from each other.

The headteachers also indicated that the meeting served as a way in which the new headteachers learned from the experienced ones. Sharing her personal experience on how the headteachers’ meeting contributed to her development, HT-2 said that:

> When I was appointed, everything about the job was new to me. I was not officially inducted into the job and yet I was expected to perform. One way that I used to know
more about the job was through the headteachers meetings. I learned a lot from the experienced headteachers about how to go about things in my school.

They further reported that during the district level headteachers’ meetings, they invite the district director and other education officers to address them on some educational issues and they present to them the challenges they face. Commenting on this, HT-6 said that:

*In such meetings, we normally invite the District Director of Education and other officers to attend. Our district is scattered and communication network is also bad that is why we invite them and they take this opportunity to convey information to the headteachers during the meeting.*

This meant that such meetings were organized and initiated by the headteachers themselves and not the district education directorate.

In addition to the headteachers circuit and district meetings, the three groups of leaders expressed the view that they developed themselves through the regular internal staff meetings they organized in their individual schools. Generally, the three groups of leaders indicated that the internal staff meetings were organized twice a term and they served as a platform where they engaged in discussions on how to improve teaching and learning in their schools. For example, HT-7 sharing his personal experience on how the internal staff meetings have added to his learning commented that:

*We organized a second mock examination for the JHS 3 pupils. The performance wasn’t good so we were disturbed. Then in one of our staff meetings, my curriculum leader came out with an idea. He said we must demystify the examination. Let discuss the whole examination with them . . . When that is done, let us re-examine them to see the effect. When we did that the result was fantastic and in fact I was impressed... So this is how ideas that emerge from my staff meetings are used to help my administration.*
Other headteachers recounted similar incidents suggesting that such internal staff meetings created opportunities for the teachers to contribute meaningfully to school improvement and thus a source of learning for them. HT-2 commented on how the contribution of his teachers in such meetings has created a congenial atmosphere in the school which was impacting positively on teaching and learning. He noted that:

*In one of these meetings, one of my teachers suggested that this time there is peace among the teachers so we should show that unity by, may be, having the same Friday wear and so on. So now during Fridays, we all have the same type of dress we wear. So this time if there is anything that a teacher sees wrong in the school, he or she comes to me to tell me what is wrong and we sit down to talk about it to devise plans to solve them.*

Similarly, both assistant headteachers and form masters were of the view that during staff meetings both their strengths and weaknesses in the course of the term were made known to them by their headteachers and they developed themselves through that. Also, they indicated that they learn from their colleagues during the meetings. FM-2 talking about the means through which she learned from the staff meetings observed that:

*It does in so many ways because during staff meetings, that is where we take decisions which concern the school. The headteacher tells the staff what he wants to achieve. So per the target of the head, then it is the duty of the form master to make sure the target is achieved [...] so through the staff meetings we get to know the general goals of the school and the moment we get the general goal, we have to deduce the class goal as well. So the staff meetings help. It gives idea about how we should go about our duties.*

Besides, assistant headteachers and form masters indicated that they had the opportunity to ask questions and put before members what their challenges were and the headteacher and colleague staff took time to address their concerns. This was expressed eloquently by AHT-6 as he remarked that:
I learn through the meetings in the school. In our meetings there is time for other matters where we put before members what confronts us in carrying out our work and the ideas colleague teachers and the headteacher may put across may help you to resolve these issues.

Thus, while headteachers benefited from circuit and district headteachers meetings, all the three groups of leaders learnt from the internal staff meetings. This meant that headteachers might have the opportunity to network and share experiences with colleagues from other schools than the assistant headteachers and form masters who benefited only from internal staff meetings.

- **Visitation to Schools**

Visitation to schools emerged as one of the means through which the different groups of leaders interviewed indicated they employed to develop their professional skills. Eleven leaders comprising of five headteachers, three assistant headteachers, and three form masters indicated that they did visit other schools to observe what goes on in those schools and interact with colleagues to learn from each other. They added that their prime objective for visiting those schools was to seek advice from other headteachers and to see how they organized their schools. HT-6 enumerating the schools he has visited over the past years and the intention for the visits observed that:

*Yes I have been visiting schools like [...]. I think that I shouldn’t sit alone so if I feel like knowing much about the work I do, I go to my colleague head and share my challenges and they help me to solve them. If I call and they say I should go, then I go and consult them.*

The remaining headteachers indicated that they were constrained by the contact hours and their work in school and hence they were unable to engage in visitation to other schools. For example, HT-1 commented that “I don’t leave my school for visiting other schools. What
about somebody comes here in my absence? It emerged from the headteachers that visitation as a learning strategy was self-initiated by the headteachers themselves.

The three assistant headteachers also explained that they made some of these visits with their headteachers to nearby schools and that they had benefited from such visits. As pointed out by AHT-2:

*Of course, I do visit other schools. I quite remember last month or so, I visited a sister school [. . .] and we learnt something from the headteacher over there. That is how to prepare lesson notes chart, how to improve supervision in our school and how to gather and keep basic records about pupils and teachers in the school.*

Similarly, the three form masters indicated that when they had the opportunity to be in other schools they observed what was happening in those schools, interact with their colleagues to learn more from each other and tried to implement some of the things they learnt in their school. According to FM-5, “sometimes you will be in another school and whatever you see there you just observe and when you come to your school, you try to apply some of them”. Thus, school leaders interviewed indicated that they also developed their professional skills through visitation to other schools.

- **Coaching**

Coaching also emerged as a form of professional development activity for the school leaders interviewed. All the headteachers interviewed in the study cited coaching from circuit supervisors and other educational officers as one other means that they developed their professional skills on the job. According to the headteachers, circuit supervisors, and other educational officers visited their school at least once a week to do monitoring. During those visits, they hold meeting sessions with them and inform them about their observations and general impressions about how they are organizing their schools and what need to be done to
improve teaching and learning in their schools. Thus, they talked about their strengths as well as weaknesses and according to them those interactions served as a learning platform for them. For example, HT-2 indicated that:

For our circuit supervisors, we are always with them. Normally they use to come and interview the pupils about how we are carrying out our work and do their own observations as well. Based on their findings they give us guidelines on how things should be done.

Other headteachers made similar comments in relation to how circuit supervisors were helping to develop their professional skills. They also observed that they had the opportunity to raise issues that confronted them to the officers to seek their guidance on how such issues could be addressed. HT-5 recounting how she went about this commented that:

We learn a lot from officers who come here. When they come around, anything bothering me I put before them and they guide me on what to do. I am always ready to learn from our circuit supervisors.

On their part, assistant headteachers and form masters indicated that they received informal coaching, advice, and guidance from their headteachers. Assistant headteachers were of the view that headteachers coached them on how they should carry out their work especially when they were leaving out for a meeting or any programme outside the school. They regarded that as a mini in-service training (INSET) organized for them by the headteachers. AHT-7 commented that:

I constantly receive coaching from my headteacher and it is helping me a lot. It is in the form of an INSET to boost your work you are into. In case he is not around so that you stand in for him. When he is not around or before he will go, he will guide me on how I should carry out my work.

Similar comments emerged from other assistant headteachers in support of the guidance they received from their headteachers. The emerging theme that was common in their views was
that in all situations headteachers gave specific directives and instructions as to how they should go about things especially in their absence. This was eloquently expressed by AHT-4 as he reported that:

\[\text{Before he leaves the entirety of the school to me, he normally takes me to the office and guides me. 'If I am not here and this and that person comes here, this is what you have to do'. So at times, he takes me to the office and gives me what I will say 'a little tuition' about the work so that when he is not there I will be able to do exactly what he asked me to do.}\]

On the part of form masters, they indicated that they developed their instructional leadership practices through direct coaching from their headteachers. All the form masters interviewed claimed that they had benefited professionally from guidance/coaching from their headteachers. They noted that since their appointment, their headteachers had formally invited them to their offices to ascertain from them the challenges they faced regarding carrying out their duties as form masters. In addition to the formal encounters, they had informally been coached on several occasions and according to them, that had really assisted them to understand their roles. FM-1 recounting her experience that it was the first time she was appointed to such a position and how the headteacher coached her noted that:

\[\text{I am now a form master in JHS 1. Some of us we have not been in such position before. So we need to pass through some orientation in order to carry out our task as it is expected of us. We don’t have in-depth knowledge about the responsibility being given to us. What goes into it? Being a form master what is exactly my role? But through constant advice and guidance from my headteacher, I can now say confidently that I know what it takes to be a form master and I am going along with the work smoothly.}\]

Thus, while the headteachers interviewed indicated that they received coaching and guidance from circuit supervisors and other education officers, assistant headteachers and form masters reported that they received coaching and guidance from their headteachers.
Another professional development activity that basic school leaders interviewed employed to develop their leadership skills was workshops. All the leaders recounted a number of leadership training workshops they had attended and they indicated that those workshops were generally organized by the Ghana Education Service, NGO’s and other international organizations. Giving a hint on the organizers of these workshops, HT-3 reported that:

We do often attend workshops. . . It was a joint programme between the British commission and the Ghana Education Service... Apart from that too we were at Windy Bay, Winneba. This one was organized by PLAN GHANA, an NGO.

Respondents indicated that they found those workshops very useful as they helped them to improve teaching and learning in their schools and built on their leadership experiences. For instance, HT-6 emphasizing the importance of those workshops and how it has built on his administrative style in his school indicated that:

It gives you how you are going to run your administration. I learnt that being the head you shouldn’t be authoritative. You have to be distributive in order to make your work easier. If you refuse to distribute some of your responsibilities to other teachers, you find yourself in a difficult manner.

Similarly, HT-3 commented that:

They organized that programme to enhance our leadership skills. We learnt that as leaders we should try to succeed in whatever we are doing. How we can manage the school so that at the end of the day the students will benefit a lot.
HT-6 echoed that:

*I remember we attended a leadership training workshop at Manna Heights Hotel. In fact it was very educative programme. And we learnt how to run the schools as headteachers. We really discussed a lot.*

These comments suggested that headteachers perceived their workshops as beneficial and effective.

While assistant headteachers and form masters commented that they had attended series of workshops, it emerged that such training workshops were not specifically designed for their roles as assistant headteachers or form masters. It appeared that they attended such workshops by virtue of the fact that they held other school leadership positions. For example, AHT-5 commented that:

*I have attended a lot of leadership training workshops. Courtesy Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), they have sponsored me to attend several of them. I am the local GNAT secretary.*

A similar comment was made by AHT-6 as she noted:

*I am the patron of the children club in the school and courtesy PLAN GHANA, they take us out a lot for programmes. Through these programmes, we are trained in leadership skills and children rights. They train us to train the kids well to know their rights and attain leadership roles.*

In much the same vein, three form masters commented that while they have been developing their leadership skills through attending workshops, they did not attend such workshop in their capacity as form masters. However, they indicated that they have benefited from a
number of such training events. Commenting on how she has benefited from those workshops, FM-1 indicated that:

*I have also gained and developed my leadership skills through workshops. In these workshops, we are sometimes taught how we can carry out our roles successfully as leaders.*

However, all the respondents hinted that the workshops were not regularly organized in the district. HT-5 remarked that “oh that one, we do attend but I think it is not regular . . . so I will be more grateful if it keeps on going”. Besides, interviewees indicated that most of these workshops were organized for selected schools and hence not all leaders had the opportunity to take part. Additionally, four form masters were of the view that, in most cases they were sidelined and not involved in leadership training workshops in the district. Commenting on the fact that form masters had been sidelined in training workshops, FM-5 commented that:

*For me in my ten years’ experience as a teacher, I have not seen the education office taking steps to involve the form masters in their planning. All that we see always is workshops for the headteachers. They forget that the headteachers are also having managers in the classrooms who are managing the classes for them. At a point in time, they have to organize those workshops and learning activities for form masters.*

These revelations suggested that while workshops, in general, were not regular as all the three groups of leaders recounted, it appeared headteachers had greater training programmes in the district than assistant headteachers and form masters. Besides, schools as well as participants were selected and thus not all leaders had the opportunity to take part in such training programmes.
• *Formal University Courses*

Ten school leaders interviewed indicated that they developed their leadership skills by enrolling in formal university courses. Of the ten leaders, six of them indicated that they were appointed into leadership when they held ‘Certificate A’ qualification and within the period they had served as school leaders they had enrolled in diploma in education as well as degree programmes to upgrade themselves professionally. They indicated that they enrolled in those programmes through distance learning at the University of Education, Winneba and the University of Cape Coast. For instance, HT-6 commented that:

*I have been here for almost ten years and the idea of staying here for that ten years was to upgrade myself. Before then I was holding Cert. A. So when I was here, I took the Diploma course and then later the degree. So now I am a degree holder and I have learnt a lot from these programmes which is helping my work.*

A similar comment was made by AHT-7 as she noted that “I was at the university of Cape Coast last year. I went to do a postgraduate diploma in education”. Also, FM-2 made a similar observation as she indicated that “then we also do further courses in the form of distance learning. So these are the areas that I acquire knowledge to build my leadership skills. They are all teaching me about how to be in leadership position”. However, with the exception of one headteacher who reported that he was enrolling in a Master’s degree in Educational Administration, the courses reported about by the remaining leaders were not specifically school leadership programmes but rather general educational programmes in other disciplines.

• *On - the – Job Experience*

On the job experience also emerged as a form of professional learning for the various leaders interviewed. All headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters indicated that they
learnt on the job through their day to day experiences. This was eloquently expressed by HT-1 as he pointed out that “as a matter of fact I learn a lot through experience …I gain a lot of knowledge and skills through doing my work”. Similarly, HT-4 echoed that “I have headed the school for about 20 years, so I have learnt a lot on the job and from experience”.

Respondents noted that as they practice their work they come across several challenges and the approach they adopt to remedy such challenges served as a learning platform for them when they encounter similar problems in the school. They further noted that as they carried out their daily work as leaders, they constantly reflected on what they encountered and through such reflections they developed their leadership competencies. HT-4 commented that:

*There are instances you try out a programme and it works perfectly; others too don’t work. So from time to time you begin to engage in deeper reflections on why some programmes worked and others didn’t. By so doing you learn from practice on what path to take next time as a leader.*

Assistant headteachers and form masters made similar comments to indicate that they learnt from experience on the job. For instance, AHT-6 was of the view that ‘I develop myself based on experience on the job. I have been in service for 26 years’. Similarly, FM-2 indicated that, ‘[…] you face several challenges on the job from time to time dealing with pupils, parents, and staff. Out of this encounter, you modify your ways of doing things so that you don’t commit the same mistake again’. Thus on the whole leaders admitted that they also learnt their professional skills on the job as they encountered challenges from time to time and the approach to solve those challenges served as a learning platform for them.

In addition, assistant headteachers interviewed reported that they developed their instructional leadership skills by acting in the absence of their headteachers in their respective schools. All
the assistant headteachers in the study reported that they had gotten the opportunity to act as the next in command during the absence of their heads and they claimed that such opportunity had helped built their leadership skills. They indicated that when their headteachers attended any meeting, travel to the district education office, or if for any other reason the headteacher was not in school, the whole school was entrusted to their care and they exercised supervisory roles during those periods. Thus, the experience they gained by acting on behalf of the headteachers helped built their leadership skills.

- **Appraisal**

Appraisal emerged as another professional development activity for headteachers and form masters to develop their professional skills. While headteachers said they learnt through the appraisal made by teachers, and the community, form masters were of the view that they learnt through the appraisals made by pupils in their various classes. Generally, headteachers noted that in each term they subject themselves for assessment by teachers and parents and this guided them on how they should exercise their instructional leadership skills to improve teaching and learning in their schools. For example, HT-3 expressed that:

*In fact, I am not an autocratic leader so I allow my teachers to assess me from time to time. Whenever I take a decision I put before them to seek their views and where they think it is a harsh decision they advise me and I learn a lot from that.*

Similarly, HT-5 expressing how her teachers evaluated her decisions in the school before implementation noted that:

*Whenever I take any decision and the decision is yet to be implemented, I normally call teachers and ascertain from them their views. Because of this, it makes the teachers express their feelings and act as a source of learning for me.*
Headteachers also noted that they organized School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM) with students, teachers, parents, and community leaders and this created opportunities for all stakeholders to express their views on how their schools can be managed efficiently and effectively.

On the part of the form masters, they revealed that once a week they held meetings with their pupils and in those meetings they allowed the pupils to comment on how they were going about their work. FM-7 commenting on how such meetings reshaped his leadership style remarked that:

\[
[...\text{So sometimes they may say certain things that will prompt me that certain things are not going well. So I become alert and know what to do next time. In short, I allow the pupils to appraise my work and through that it reshapes how I carry out my duties.}]\]

Thus, while headteachers learned through the appraisal of their teachers and community members, form masters learnt from the appraisal by their pupils.

In sum, it emerged from the interview data that the school leaders developed their instructional leadership skills through personal reading, school, circuit, and district level meetings, visitations to schools, coaching, workshops, on-the-job experience, formal university courses, and appraisals. Details of the professional development activities as obtained through the interview data across the three leadership levels are presented in Table 4.5.
Table 4.5 Summary of Qualitative Results on the Professional Development Activities of School Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PDA</th>
<th>Headteachers</th>
<th>Assistant Headteachers</th>
<th>Form Masters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Personal Reading</strong></td>
<td>Reading headteachers manuals, other individual reading materials such as pamphlets obtained from workshops or courses attended, magazines, and newspapers. Limited reading on the Internet due to unavailability of ICT facilities and deprived nature of school environment.</td>
<td>Individual reading materials mostly pamphlets</td>
<td>Individual reading materials mostly pamphlets Limited reading on the Internet due to unavailability of ICT facilities and deprived nature of school environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meetings</strong></td>
<td>Circuit and district level headteachers meetings Sharing ideas and learning from experiences and networking with headteachers from other schools. District education officers invited to such meetings. Internal school staff meetings</td>
<td>Internal school staff meetings - strengths and weaknesses made known by headteachers Opportunity to ask questions</td>
<td>Internal school staff meetings – strengths and weaknesses made known by headteachers Opportunity to ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visitation to schools</strong></td>
<td>Visits schools to share challenges and find solutions Self-initiated Proximity as a key factor considered</td>
<td>Visits schools to share challenges and find solutions Self-initiated Proximity as a key factor considered</td>
<td>Visits schools to share challenges and find solutions Self-initiated Proximity as a key factor considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coaching</strong></td>
<td>Informal coaching from circuit supervisors and other education district officers</td>
<td>Informal coaching from headteachers Limited coaching circuit supervisors</td>
<td>Informal coaching from headteachers Limited coaching circuit supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workshops/Seminars</strong></td>
<td>Organized by GES, NGO’s and other international organizations Not regularly organized Schools/participants selection</td>
<td>Organized by GES, NGO’s and other international organizations Not regularly organized Schools/participants selection</td>
<td>Organized by GES, NGO’s and other international organizations Not regularly organized Schools/participants selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On the job experience</strong></td>
<td>Learning from practice and through reflections</td>
<td>Learning from practice and through reflections Acting in the absence of the headteachers</td>
<td>Learning from practice and through reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal University courses</strong></td>
<td>Pursuing diploma, degree, and master’s degree courses. Mostly not programmes in school leadership but other disciplines</td>
<td>Pursuing diploma and degree courses. Mostly not programmes in school leadership but other disciplines</td>
<td>Pursuing diploma and degree courses. Mostly not programmes in school leadership but other disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appraisal</strong></td>
<td>Appraisal given by teachers and community members in meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Appraisal given by students through regular weekly form meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.3 Summary of Results on Professional Development Activities

In sum, this study has identified a number of professional development activities engaged in by leaders in the basic schools of Ghana. The key findings gathered through both sets of data are shown in Figure 4.1. From both quantitative and qualitative data, the results showed that headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters engaged in a series of professional development activities which were mostly informal and self-directed learning methods. Across the three leadership levels, leaders top-ranked meetings of school leaders, workshops, seminars and forums, unstructured and unintentional experiences resulting from work, reading of books, newspapers and articles, visitation to schools and coaching from supervisors, peers, and/or subordinates to develop their instructional leadership skills.

Some key insights drawn from the interview data which offered deeper meaning to the quantitative results were that while headteachers mostly relied on the Headteachers’ Handbook, all the three groups of leaders relied on other reading materials such as pamphlets from workshops and courses, magazines and newspapers. Again, there were circuit and district headteachers meetings for headteachers as well as internal school staff meetings for all leaders. While leaders engaged in workshops which were organized by the GES, NGO’s and other international organizations, they were not regularly organized and not all headteachers or schools had the opportunity to attend. While headteachers benefited from coaching/guidance from circuit supervisors and other education officers, both assistant headteachers and form masters benefited from coaching/guidance from their headteachers. On the other hand, the study revealed that leaders rarely engaged in formal university-based leadership learning and online learning via the Internet. Leaders cited the unavailability of ICT devices and the nature of their school environment as the key factors that hindered their effort to engage in online professional learning.
Following the professional learning experiences of leaders presented above, it was pertinent to ascertain how leaders enacted and practiced leadership to promote effective teaching and learning in their schools. This was informed by the fact that the Ghana Education Service recognises the need for school leaders to focus more on improving quality teaching and learning in schools (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2014). Also, in the forward to the Ghana Education Service Headteachers’ Handbook, the role of school leaders as instructional leaders is clearly targeted as school leaders “are reminded to make learning the pivot around which all other activities evolve in the school” (Jull, Swaffield, & MacBeath, 2014, p. 80). The next section, therefore, presents findings relating to the perceived impact of leaders’ professional learning on their instructional leadership practices.
4.3 Instructional Leadership Practices of School Leaders

Research question 2 was: What instructional leadership practices do school leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters) carry out in their school as a result of their leadership learning? The purpose of this question was to assess the degree to which school leaders in the basic schools of Ghana were providing instructional leadership in their school as a result of their professional learning. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to answer research question two.

4.3.1 Quantitative Results on Instructional Leadership Practices of Leaders

In the leaders’ survey, the instrument used in this part was the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (see Appendix 2). Respondents were asked to specify the frequency with which the specific instructional leadership behaviour was practised as a result of their professional development experiences on a continuum ranging from 1 to 5: 1 = Almost never, 2 = Seldom, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Frequently and 5 = Almost always. The quantitative data relating to this question were first analysed through descriptive statistical analysis by computing the grand means for each of the seven instructional leadership job functions and the means for each of the five behaviors associated with the specific instructional leadership job function across the three groups of leaders. In addition, a One-Way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in the mean scores obtained by the different groups of leaders to each of the seven instructional leadership job functions.
First, Table 4.6 displays the overall mean of ‘framing the school goals’ and the means of its five associated behaviours for the three groups of leaders.

Table 4.6 Mean Frequencies of Framing School Goals across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practice</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Framing the School Goals</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Frame the school’s goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use data on student performance when developing the school’s academic goals</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the result showed that headteachers “frequently” engaged in framing school goals following their professional learning experience while assistant headteachers and form masters reported they “sometimes” engaged in framing school goals following their professional development experiences. Regarding the five behaviours associated with framing the school goals, with the exception of ‘develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals’ (item one), headteachers “frequently” engaged in all the other behaviours following their professional development activities. On the other hand, assistant headteachers and form masters “sometimes” engaged in all the five associated behaviours of framing the school goals.

Second, the mean scores for communicating the school goals for the three different groups of leaders are presented in Table 4.7. Overall, while headteachers “frequently” engaged in communicating school goals in their schools, both assistant headteachers and form masters “sometimes” engaged in communicating school goals following their professional learning
experiences. In addition, headteachers “frequently” engaged in nearly all the five associated behaviours of this job function with ‘discuss the school’s academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings’ (item seven) attracting the highest rating. On the other hand, the result showed that all the five behaviours associated with communicating the school goals were “sometimes” engaged in by both assistant headteachers and form masters.

Table 4.7 Mean Frequencies for Communicating School Goals across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Communicate the school Goals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Communicate the school’s mission effectively to members of the school community</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Discuss the school’s academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Refer to the school’s academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Ensure that the school’s academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress)</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Refer to the school’s goals or mission in forums with students (e.g., in assemblies or discussions)</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, Table 4.8 presents the findings regarding how school leaders carried out the instructional leadership function of supervision and evaluation of instruction following their learning experiences. The result showed that headteachers “frequently” engaged in the supervision and evaluation of instruction in their school while assistant headteachers and form masters were “sometimes” engaged in supervision and evaluation of instruction in their schools.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Supervise and Evaluate Instruction</strong></td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the goals and direction of the school</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Review student work products when evaluating classroom instruction</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conduct informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference)</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Point out specific strengths in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Point out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result further showed that headteachers frequently engaged in nearly all the five behaviors associated with this job function with items 11 and 13 which were concerned with ensuring that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the goals and direction of the school and conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis obtaining the highest mean scores. On the other hand, the mean scores for the five behaviours within this job function for both assistant headteachers and form masters were all within the “sometimes” range. The result further showed that ‘pointing out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)’ (item 15) attracted the lowest mean score across the three leadership levels.
Fourth, the overall mean score for monitoring student progress and its five associated behaviours for the various groups of leaders are presented in Table 4.9. The data showed that the three levels of leaders “frequently” engaged in monitoring student progress. Regarding the five specific behaviours for this job function, the result showed that the item that obtained the highest mean score for the three groups of leaders was concerned with using tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals (item 18). On the other hand, the behaviour that attracted the lowest mean score for all the three levels of leaders was concerned with informing teachers of the school’s performance results in written form (item 19).

Table 4.9 Mean Frequencies of Monitoring Student Progress across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Monitor Students Progress</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Discuss academic performance results with the faculty to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Use tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Inform teachers of the school’s performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Inform students of school’s academic progress</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifth, the overall mean score for protecting instructional time and the mean scores for its five associated behaviours for the three groups of leaders are presented in Table 4.10. The result showed that while headteachers “frequently” engaged in protecting instructional time, assistant headteachers, and form masters “sometimes” engaged in protecting instructional
time in their school due to their professional learning experiences. Regarding the five specific behaviours within this job function, the behaviour that attracted the highest mean frequencies for headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters was item 24, ‘encouraging teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts’. While the behaviour with the lowest mean frequency for headteachers and assistant headteachers was ‘ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time’ (item 23), the behaviour with the lowest mean score for the form masters was to ‘limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements’.

Table 4.10 Mean Frequencies of Protecting Instructional Time across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. Protecting Instructional Time</strong></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Ensure that students are not called to the office during instructional time.</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Ensure that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities on instructional time.</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six, Table 4.11 presents the grand mean for providing incentives for teachers and the mean scores of the five associated behaviours within that job function. Overall, the result showed that headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters “sometimes” engaged in providing incentives for teachers in their schools. Regarding the five specific behaviours of this job
function, the result showed that reinforcing superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos (item 26) and ‘complimenting teachers privately for their efforts or performance’ (item 27) attracted the highest mean scores for all the three groups of leaders.

Table 4.11 Mean Frequencies of Providing Incentives for Teachers across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI. Provide Incentives for Teachers</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Acknowledge teachers’ exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Reward special efforts by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seventh, the overall mean frequency score for providing incentives for learning and the mean frequency scores for the five specific associated behaviours for the three groups of leaders are provided in Table 4.12. The result showed that overall the three groups of leaders reported that they “sometimes” engaged in providing incentives for learning following their learning experiences. Regarding the five specific behaviours, the result showed that while headteachers “sometimes” engaged in four behaviours, they “frequently” engaged in using assemblies to honour students for academic accomplishments or for behaviour or citizenship. However, assistant headteachers and form masters “sometimes” engaged in all of the five associated behaviours of this job function.
Table 4.12 Mean Frequencies of Providing Incentives for Learning across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VII. Provide Incentives for Learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honour roll or mention in the principal’s newsletter</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Use assemblies to honour students for academic accomplishments or for behaviour or citizenship</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Recognize superior student achievement or improvement by seeing in the office the students with their work</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions to and accomplishments in class</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further to the above descriptive analysis, a One-Way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in the mean scores obtained by the three groups of leaders to each of the seven instructional leadership job functions. In other words, the purpose of the ANOVA was to ascertain whether there were significant differences among the frequencies with which leaders engaged in each of the seven instructional leadership practices following their professional learning experiences. An inspection of the skewness and kurtosis statistics indicated that the assumption of normality was supported in each case. Also, Levene’s test for equality of variances was performed to determine whether the assumption of homogeneity of variances was satisfied in each of the
seven dependent variables (see Table 4.13). The Levene’s test showed that of the seven dependent variables, three (framing the school goals, communicating the school goals, and providing incentives for teachers) violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Consequently, Brown-Forsythe F-ratio were reported in such cases while Games-Howell Post-hoc analysis was utilized as it does not assume that population variances are equal or that sample sizes are equal.

Table 4.13 Results for Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Framing the school goals</td>
<td>5.938</td>
<td>0.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating the school goals</td>
<td>5.883</td>
<td>0.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision and Evaluation of instruction</td>
<td>2.413</td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring student progress</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td>0.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting instructional time</td>
<td>0.363</td>
<td>0.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing incentives for teachers</td>
<td>3.922</td>
<td>0.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing incentives for learning</td>
<td>1.296</td>
<td>0.277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05

The ANOVA result showed that there were significant differences among five out of the seven instructional leadership job functions across the three leadership levels (see Table 4.14). Overall, the results from the ANOVA showed that the mean frequency scores of headteachers were significantly different from those of assistant headteachers and form masters in framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervision and evaluation of instruction, and protecting instructional time, and providing incentives for teachers. This suggested that headteachers engaged in those instructional leadership job functions more frequently than
both assistant headteachers and form masters. In contrast, there were no significant differences among the mean scores of assistant headteachers and form masters.

Table 4.14 ANOVA Results for the Comparison of Mean Scores for Instructional Leadership across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Leadership Practices</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>AHT</th>
<th>FM</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Framing the school goals</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>10.639</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating the school goals</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>10.635</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision and Evaluation of instruction</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>6.125</td>
<td>0.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring student progress</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>1.306</td>
<td>0.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting instructional time</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>10.129</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing incentives for teachers</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>27.661</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing incentives for learning</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1.442</td>
<td>0.240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05

In sum, results from the quantitative data showed that due to their professional learning experiences, headteachers “frequently” engaged in framing school goals, communicating schools goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, protecting instructional time, and monitoring student progress. However, they “sometimes” engaged in providing incentives for teachers and providing incentives for learning. For assistant headteachers and form masters, they both frequently engaged in monitoring student progress and sometimes engaged in the other six instructional leadership functions. The result further showed that the mean frequency scores of headteachers were significantly different from those of assistant headteachers and form masters in framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervision and evaluation of instruction, and protecting instructional time, and
providing incentives for teachers. In contrast, there were no significant differences in the mean scores of assistant headteachers and form masters in any of the instructional leadership functions investigated.

4.3.2 Qualitative Data on Instructional Leadership Practices of Leaders

This section presents the findings relating to the instructional leadership practices of the three groups of leaders as gathered through the interviews. Being guided by the instructional leadership model of Hallinger and Murphy (1985), the study sought to elicit from interviewees how their learning experiences had influenced the following dimensions of instructional leadership: framing the school goals, communicating the school goals, supervision and evaluation of instruction, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for learning. More specifically respondents were asked to relate specific initiatives they had implemented in their school relating to these dimensions of instructional leadership practices.

- **Framing and communicating the School Goals**

School leaders interviewed indicated that their professional development activities had influenced them to set specific goals in their schools. Generally, it was evident from the interviews that while the goals set by headteachers were meant for the whole school, assistant headteachers and form masters reported that they had set goals for the specific classes they taught. This could be attributed to the fact that unlike headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters in Ghanaian basic schools were full-time teachers who were assigned to specific classes.

First, the three groups of leaders indicated that following their learning experiences they had set specific goals aimed at improving the reading abilities of their pupils. According to the
leaders, when pupils master reading they could do well in other subjects. Hence, the goals they had set were to ensure that all pupils improve upon their reading abilities. For example, HT-7 who underscored the importance of reading in student achievement and setting a specific target in his school remarked that:

My target is that about 95 percent of the children should be able to read. Because of the DEAR which we have introduced, [. . .] it is helping us to achieve such target. Actually, with us, if the child is not able to read, he or she cannot do anything. Because of that, I am focusing on the reading more than other areas because reading does everything. Even mathematics, which requires calculation, there is the need for you to read. If the children are able to read, I am sure their problems are solved.

This headteacher explaining the origin of the DEAR and what it meant noted that he introduced DEAR in his school following his learning experience in the Master’s degree in Education. He observed that ‘I have introduced DEAR. D stands for Drop, E stands for Everything, A stands for And, and R stands for Read’. According to him after 7:15am of each school day, the bell had to be ranged and that “whatever you are doing you have to stop and rush to class because the DEAR means Drop Everything And Read”. He added that “so the moment they enter their classrooms whatever the child prefers to read, he or she will do that before the normal classes begin”.

Four assistant headteachers made similar comments that were related to the views expressed by the headteachers. Coincidentally those assistant headteachers interviewed cited improving reading as the goals they had set resulting from their learning experiences. For example, AHT-5 commenting on her reading goal observed that:

I have set reading goals. In that in the lower primary especially the foundation, that is class one, there should be much concentration on the reading and the writing. Because if the pupil does not know how to write or read one or two letter words, the pupil will find it difficult when he is moved to the next stage. So what I am doing is to
concentrate on their reading and writing so that it will help them as they climb the academic ladder. So my goal is that I should help the children to be able to read and write.

Similar comments emerged from form masters regarding improving reading in schools. The key difference that emerged through the interviews was that assistant headteachers and form masters limited their views to the class they taught and not the entire school. This seems to suggest that assistant headteachers and form masters might have collaborated with the headteachers in framing the goals and were, therefore, well-informed about the existing school goals. Nonetheless, it could also mean that reading may be seen as a challenge in the study district and consequently schools in the district were being directed by their educational authorities to incorporate the improvement of reading into their school-based visions.

Second, five of the headteachers interviewed indicated that they had set specific goals towards the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). For instance, while HT-4 was emphatic that “our goal is that we should get at least 85 percent passes in our BECE”, HT-1 was a bit liberal as he noted that “from my learning experience, each year I set a target for my JHS students. As we are here, our goal is to attain between 70 to 80 percent pass in our BECE”.

When respondents were asked if specific initiatives had been implemented towards the attainment of those goals formulated in their schools, the headteachers indicated that they had instituted extra classes conducted after the normal classes for pupils. Yet, other headteachers indicated that they were camping\(^3\) the students in the school so that they could have ample time to prepare them towards the BECE. HT-6 who had instituted extra classes in his school intimated that “we have started extra classes with the aim of achieving our goal set. That is after the normal classes, we ask them to stay for an extra one hour”. Meanwhile, HT-5 who

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\(^3\) Respondents explained that ‘camping’ meant that the final year students now pass the night at the school premises. Before these interventions, the pupils did not stay on the school premises after the normal closing. According to them this was to enable the teachers to teach them during the night and monitor their studies so that they could achieve the percentage passes that they had set as school goals.
was camping the students gave the rationale behind such an initiative by commenting that “we feel that parents use these children in household activities so they don’t get much time for studies. That is why we are camping them”. Similarly, HT-3 echoed that:

> When we camp them, we think we can get the attention of all of them. We have resolved that even the weakest in class can do something on his or her own. The teachers too have responded positively to this and they are ever ready to team up with me so that we can achieve the target that we have set.

Again, three form masters indicated that they noticed that there was lack of unity in their class as boys and girls were not coexisting peacefully in class. According to them, the goal set for their classes was to ensure cooperation among the opposite sexes. For example, FM-2 commenting on how she had achieved this in her class remarked that:

> For instance, I am the form master for Form 1. The goal that I have initiated for my class is to bring cooperation in the class. In other words, there shouldn’t be any gender disparity in the class.

When the researcher probed further about how such a goal was achieved, they indicated that they had formed study groups made up of both sexes in the same group and the groups were given a project in the form of assignment to work on. Regarding this, HT-5 commented that “during every Thursday morning the groups present their assignment and in each group a girl and a boy do the presentation for the group and that is now helping them to learn from each other”. FM-1 was rather of the view that she had instituted quiz competition among the groups and that was taking place once a month. She remarked that:

> I have also initiated quiz competition among the groups in order to promote a healthy coexistence among the opposite sexes. Once a month, I randomly select two pupils, a boy, and a girl, from each group to compete. This is to enhance the unity that we want.
Further to the above, two assistant headteachers set goals in their classes to inculcate in pupils how they could learn independently. They stated that the challenge facing their classes and also their school was that the students always expected teachers to be with them. According to them, students were unable to utilize their time effectively during the absence of teachers and that attitude was not helping them academically. For example, AHT-3 recounted his experience as follows:

*My brother you know that in the school system much is expected from the pupils. When teachers come to teach and they don’t study nothing will be achieved. Yet our students always expect masters to teach. Much is not coming from their side.*

Realizing this challenge from the pupils, he had initiated a goal to inculcate in them the culture of independent learning. He stated that:

*In fact, when I go to the class I talk to them. So I have given them a plan on how to learn and I have asked each student to prepare his or her own timetable. Have time before they sleep and early in the morning.*

When respondents were asked about how they communicated these goals to the different stakeholders of the school community, headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters reported that they communicated schools goals to teachers through staff meetings. They added that goals were communicated to parents through PTA meetings, School Performance Appraisal Meetings, and school durbars. For pupils, they said that they communicated to them through general assemblies and posters that were pasted in the school and their classes. Finally, form masters added that they communicated the goals to pupils through their weekly class meetings.
School leaders indicated that their professional development activities had influenced their supervision and evaluation of instruction in their schools and classes. This took several forms including vetting of lesson notes of teachers, direct/indirect lesson observation, and monitoring output of work of teachers. First, all headteachers indicated that as a result of their professional learning experiences, they supervised the lesson notes of teachers regularly. According to them, the lesson notes detailed what the teacher had planned for the week so there was the need for close supervision and monitoring to enable them gain insight into what the teachers’ intended to teach during the week. For instance, HT-1 responding to how his learning experience had influenced his supervisory role in his school recounted that when he was marking the lesson notes of his teachers, he ensured that there was a link between the objectives set and the kind of questions students were asked after the lesson. HT-3 gave a similar comment as she noted that “every Tuesday, before closing your lesson notes should be here. If your lesson note is not here, I won’t mark. On the chart, blue means early submission”. According to her, the teachers were cooperating and it was influencing teaching and learning in the school. In my visit to the schools, I personally observed from the offices of some of the headteachers charts showing the performance of teachers regarding their lesson notes preparation and submission.

Second, all headteachers indicated that they carried out observations in classrooms to supervise the teachers during lessons. According to them, they carried out class observations without giving prior notice to the teachers and besides when they noticed any shortfall in the performance of teachers they invited them to the office after the lesson and interacted with them. For instance, while HT-5 indicated that she had designed an assessment tool used in assessing the teachers following her professional learning experiences, HT-7 was of the view
when he went round for supervision and noticed a shortfall in the delivery of the teacher, he did not comment instantly but rather “invite the teacher later to the office and quietly have an interaction with him”. Further to these, HT-4 commented on how his supervision was shaping the conduct of teachers in class echoed that:

*I look at the timetable and go round to check if indeed they are following the timetable. I normally go round every 25 to 30 minutes. This has alerted the teachers that master will be in at any time. Because of that let me follow what I am expected to teach.*

Third, headteachers also commented that their professional learning has influenced them to supervise and evaluate the work output of their teachers. According to them, this was done by tabulating the number of exercises teachers gave to pupils weekly to determine how the teachers were performing. They added that the performance of teachers was then recorded on work output charts they had designed and pasted on the notice boards in their offices. For instance, HT-3 recounting how she carries out this in her school observed that:

*Every Monday I go round to see the number of exercises that they gave the previous week. Recordings are then done on the chart on the wall. I normally don’t tell them when I am picking those books from the pupils. Teachers who fail to meet my expectations are called immediately and talked to.*

HT-6 went further to claim how the introduction of the work output chart had inculcated discipline in teachers by stating that:

*At the end of every week, I have to tabulate the exercises that have been given to the children. I see to it that the exercises are marked before I will count it. And because of this all the teachers are serious. Since they don’t want to be found to have given limited exercises to the children, they are putting their maximum effort in order for the children to capture a lot.*
So on the whole headteachers interviewed indicated that their professional development activities had influenced their supervision and evaluation of instruction and this was done through the inspection of lesson notes, work output of teachers and direct observation of lessons.

With regards to the assistant headteachers, the interview data revealed that only one of them carried out direct supervision and evaluation of instruction by either inspecting lesson notes or observing lesson when teachers were teaching. Explaining how he was directly engaging in direct supervision, AHT-2 recounted that:

> *When I occupy my class then I go round to check whether the teachers are teaching or not. Sometimes If I observe something which is not all that good, I just approach the teacher and remind him of my observation. When I go round and a teacher is not there sometimes what I do is that I will give the class some exercises for them to do. So when the teacher comes, I find out from him or her why he was not in school.*

The remaining six assistant headteachers rather reported that they carried out supervision and evaluation of instruction indirectly by sending prompts to the teachers to occupy the pupils rather than approaching them or visiting their classes directly. For example, AHT-4 clearly expressed that:

> *I send prompt such as ‘oh who is having a lesson in JHS2’ or ‘the form 2 are making noise so much’. Indirectly, I am prompting the teacher that he/she is supposed to be with the pupils in question.*

In much the same way, all the form masters indicated that they indirectly ensured that teachers attended to their lessons promptly. They indicated that it was within their mandate to ensure that their assigned classes were taught and to see to it that teachers went to class. But it appeared that they don’t possess authority over their colleague teachers and thus they
indirectly prompted them to engage their classes. Expressing how she ensured that teachers attended classes, FM-5 indicated that:

_Sometimes you go to the class and you realize that the pupils are disturbing so you go there and ask them what they have and they will tell you the subject they have. You ask the class prefect to go and call the teacher and indirectly you ensure that the teacher comes to the class._

A similar observation was made by FM-3 as he noted that:

_I quite remember last week, for instance, they had English and I think Madam was marking and she was expecting that during the period the kids will come and call her or something like that. The concentration was on the marking and as usual, I found out from the class. Because it has become my habit of wanting to find out what subject they have. So I just asked ‘Eh what do you have’. ‘We have English’. Then Madam said ‘Oh you have English and you have not called me’. So it’s a way of prompting and ensuring that the colleagues attend their lessons in our classes._

These observations suggested that in as much as form masters and assistant headteachers were aware that they were responsible for their assigned classes to be taught, their leadership role was not carried out effectively as they were unable to call their colleagues to order. Furthermore, some of the form masters indicated that they quietly stood in the corridors to observe the lessons of their colleague teachers and where they discovered some shortfalls they reported them to the headteachers. FM-4 remarked that “instances where certain things do not go well in the delivery, I report him or her to the headteacher”. Four form masters were also of the view that they evaluated the performance of their colleague teachers by allowing the pupils to assess them and where the assessment was below expectation they reported to the headteacher rather than calling those teachers directly. They indicated that they didn’t want to offend their colleagues that was why they rather reported any concerns about teachers’ performance to the headteachers. For example, the FM-3 commented that:
Thus, form masters indicated that based on their learning experiences, they supervise and evaluate instruction by indirectly giving prompts to ensure that colleague teachers attend to their lessons, observing lessons indirectly by standing through corridors and creating opportunities for pupils to appraise the performance of teachers. The findings from the interviews show that headteachers carried out much supervision and evaluation of instruction in schools compared to assistant headteachers and form masters who mostly carried out such function informally. This could be explained by the fact that assistant headteachers and form masters were full-time teachers and might be constrained by time to effectively carry out supervisory roles. Besides, they could also lack the authority over their colleagues thereby unable to carry out such a function directly.

- **Protecting Instructional Time**

Respondents interviewed reported that their professional development activities had influenced them to protect instructional time in their school. School leaders explained that in order to ensure that school instructional hours were not wasted several measures had been instituted in their school. First, both the headteachers and the assistant headteachers indicated that they ensured that the daily activities on the school timetable were followed accordingly to avoid time wastage. They ensured that students reported to school on time, completed their grounds work, and went to class on time for teaching and learning to take place. Commenting on how students activities were regulated in his school, HT-6 commented that:

> As soon as it is 8 o’clock, the bell is ranged for assembly. After assembly students move to their classroom and registers are marked immediately. Pupils are monitored
to return from break promptly. In fact as soon as it is break over, the bell is ranged for them to come in. Time is not wasted at all.

Similarly, the assistant headteachers indicated that they ensured that the pupils were in school early and ensured that students adhered strictly to time in all school activities. For instance, AHT-5 commented that:

*I also ensure the students come to school early. By 7.00am, I ensure that all pupils are in school. When we go for break, I make sure the bell monitor is being monitored in such a way that instructional time is not wasted.*

Equally, all the headteachers were emphatic about how the activities of teachers were regulated to safeguard instructional time in their schools. Generally, they were of the view that they ensured teachers reported to school on time and engaged the pupils in class. Accordingly, they had in place the attendance register which each teacher had to sign to indicate the time he or she reported to school. For example, HT-2 expressed this eloquently as she indicated that:

*Every teacher is supposed to report to school latest by 7:30am. The teacher on duty is to ensure that the children complete their grounds work on time. Also, I make sure that when it is time for them to do whatever they are expected to do, they do that on time.*

HT-5 also echoed that:

*I ensure that every teacher reports the exact time he/she comes to school. The attendance register is a school document that every educational officer visiting the school can easily glance through to check on teachers’ attendance to school and the time they report. So I always insist that they indicate the exact time.*

In addition, the headteachers reported that they had in place the movement book which was used to indicate when a teacher left the school during school sessions. HT-7 eloquently explained the rationale behind having the movement book in his school and commented that:
Sometimes you find out that a teacher would come to school and all of a sudden he or she is nowhere to be found. So we have the movement book for teachers to sign and indicate the time they are leaving and the time they will come back.

When the headteachers were asked whether they had instituted sanctions for teachers who failed to follow those procedures, four headteachers noted that in such circumstances they gave the teachers concerned queries. HT-6 observed that “I ensure that teachers come to school early but when they absent themselves without permission, I normally query them and they have to respond in writing”. They observed that when this continued then they reported them to the circuit supervisors. Thus, the headteachers could not directly reprimand teachers from absenting themselves from school or engaging in any act that could disrupt instructional time.

Second, the headteachers and the assistant headteachers indicated that in order to protect the instructional time in their schools, they had reduced the frequency of events that may interrupt instructional time. The headteachers reported that they had reduced the rate at which they engaged pupils in income generating activities in their schools and even when they had to engage pupils in income generating activities, they ensured that it was done in such a manner that it would not conflict with classes. It emerged that they involved the pupils in some form of income generating activities such as carrying stones which were meant to be sold to generate income for the school. However, they reported that in order not to disrupt instructional time, they engaged in such activities after school hours. HT-5, for example, commented that:

*I will not say we do not carry stones over here. But what I have done, in order not to disrupt classes is for them to do it on Friday after school. We do not want to interrupt classes. So we believe from Monday you gather small and put it somewhere and by the time it gets to Friday then you would have accumulated a lot. So every Friday, we ask them to gather the stones and just about 30 minutes to closing or after closing they
send the stones to the person in need of the stones in town and then proceed to their various homes. So we are protecting pupils from interruptions of all kinds.

On the part of assistant headteachers, they indicated that they were ensuring that the frequency of meetings organized in their schools was reduced and also meetings of students held after school hours. They said that in most cases meeting for pupils interrupted classes and hence they had initiated programmes to reduce their frequency. AHT-6 narrated that she had helped to reduce the frequency of meetings organized by the headteacher in the school. She commented that:

Many at times, as soon as the headteacher attends one headteachers’ meeting, he organizes staff meeting in the school and that takes a lot of contact hours. I suggested to him that he can compile the minutes of three or four meetings then he put everything together and then have one meeting. So that is the initiative I have put in place and since the headteacher began doing that it is helping us all.

AHT-3 also commented that:

As I already made it clear to you, we have clubs in the school. In order to protect instructional time in the school, I decided that all club meetings should be held after school.

Third, all the three group of leaders indicated that they had instituted punishment for students who fail to adhere to instructional time in their schools. According to them, students who refuse to come to school, being late to school or late from break were punished to deter other students. When I enquired from the leaders the kind of punishment they meted out to students in such situations, they cited punishments such as weeding, scrubbing of washrooms, caning and also asking them to kneel down. HT-7 commenting on what was prevailing in his school observed that “when break is over you are to rush to your classroom for classes to continue. Students who don’t want to respect the bell are punished”. Also, assistant headteachers were very vocal in their views about the kind of punishment they have instituted. For instance,
AHT-2 was of the view that “I have instituted punishment for pupils who come to school late. Punishment such as weeding and scrubbing of urinal are in place for such pupils”. Similarly, AHT-3 intimated that “when you are late to class, either you will be caned or be given a different punishment to do”. Moreover, the case of form masters was not different as they also noted that they had instituted similar form of punishments in their respective classes. FM-7 hinted that:

*I have made a policy that if you absent yourself from school you will receive seven lashes. Meanwhile our headteacher had made a general rule that if you don’t come to school you will receive five canes. But in my case as a way of ensuring that pupils come to school I have made it seven. I made them aware that headteacher’s own is a general rule and we have our rule in Form one.*

A similar comment was made by FM-5 as she noted that “if you are found contrary to the specific time that you are supposed to perform a specific task, you are given a punishment. And those who are time alert, we award them by way of commending them”. These comments from leaders were not strange considering the context in which the study was carried out where the cultural values allow teachers and school authorities to punish pupils if they violate school rules.

Finally, assistant headteachers and form masters indicated they had been protecting instructional time in their class through the regular marking of the class attendance register which according to them since students were aware that it would be marked at any point in time, remained in class. For example, FM-1 recounting how her engagement in a Diploma in Basic Education has modified how she goes about marking the attendance register in her class observed that:

*By applying my learning experience on the need to keep proper records on students, I don’t have a specific time I mark the register. The pupils in my class are aware that I*
can come at any time to mark the register and several instances more than once. This has gone a long way to reduce truancy and absenteeism in my class.

Similarly, AHT-4 commented that the constant marking of the attendance register had enhanced punctuality and regularity in his class. He added that “since the pupils are aware that soon after assembly the register would be marked and if he is not there he would be marked absent, it makes them punctual all the time and protects the instructional time”. Thus leaders had undertaken a number of initiatives in their schools to protect instructional time.

- Monitoring Students Progress

All the three groups of leaders indicated that their learning experiences had affected how they monitored students’ progress in their schools. They recounted various initiatives they had implemented in their school to monitor students’ progress. First, school leaders interviewed were of the view that they monitored students’ progress by frequently picking their exercise books and exam sheets to go through to see how they were performing. Commenting on the rationale behind this practice, the three groups of leaders were of the view that as they picked pupils’ exercise books and exam sheets, they compiled their performances to ascertain whether they were improving in their performance or not and those who were not performing to their expectation they invited them to counsel them. For example, HT-6 observed that:

Every term exams are conducted. So in order to know whether there is a progress or retrogression, I call for the exam sheets… I assess them and call those who are not able to get the average mark. As a form of guidance and counselling, I will warn them that if they don’t perform they will not be promoted to the next class. So they are also putting in their maximum best to learn.

FM-3 also echoed that “pupils’ academic progress is monitored in my class. I pick pupils exercise books at random to monitor their class work. I do this weekly to check whether the
pupils’ work have been marked and also to have a general picture on the performance of pupils.

The headteachers pointed out as they recorded students’ marks, they presented them on charts and pasted them on the school notice boards. Regarding this, HT-2 said that “their performance in the various subjects is displayed on a chart and pasted weekly on the notice board in the class to motivate them to learn”. Thus, headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters were of the view that they monitored student progress by randomly selecting their exercise books and by doing that they were able to track their performance.

In addition to randomly selecting pupils their exercise books and recording their scores, headteachers and form masters reported that they went to class to test the pupils themselves to determine if they had really absorbed what they had been taught. According to them, they did this by visiting the class after the teacher had presented the lesson and took the notes of the students and then asked them series of questions from the book to test their understanding. HT-7 commented that:

\begin{quote}
When the teacher is done with the teaching I visit the class and ask the children at random some questions specific to what he or she was teaching. Then the children will answer and that will tell me the progress of pupils in the lesson.
\end{quote}

Using a different approach, FM-1 echoed that:

\begin{quote}
Though I don’t teach social studies, in the process of teaching my subject in the class, I will intentionally go through their notes in social studies and ask them questions to test them. I have an in-depth knowledge in technical skills, even though I am not the technical skills teacher over here. So I go to the extent of asking them questions in the area and also going through their notes to check the extent they have covered.
\end{quote}

Moreover, four headteachers indicated that they had instituted regular (weekly and monthly) test in all classes in their schools and that was used to monitor their progress. Commenting on
the rationale for this form of assessment, HT-1 indicated that “I have initiated monthly and midterm class tests and the results are compiled to see their academic performance”. Similarly, HT-5 added that “I always ensure that each week class tests are conducted. This is done to know whether what they have been taught during the week is understood by them”. According to these headteachers, they thought that when pupils were allowed without being assessed at the end of the week they could forget what they had learnt during the week and that was why they had instituted the regular test in their respective schools. Thus, school leaders interviewed reported that they monitored student learning progress by picking pupils exercise books and recording their marks, visiting classes to test pupils and instituting regular weekly and monthly tests in their schools to determine the extent pupils had mastered what they were taught. Nonetheless, there was little evidence of leaders using student achievement scores for instructional improvement.

- Providing Incentives for Learning

School leaders interviewed indicated that through their leadership learning they had created incentives for pupils in their schools. Overall, the various leaders interviewed expressed the importance and the need to recognise and appreciate outstanding performance of pupils in their schools. Of the seven headteachers interviewed, only two of them indicated that they had instituted award schemes in their school to award outstanding students each term to serve as motivation to other students. They noted that students in their schools were awarded based on their academic performance in class, performance in the end of term examinations, and their conducts. For example, HT-2 commented that:

For students we try to motivate them so that they can put up their best. What we normally do is, at the end of the term, based on the performance of the children in the exams and personal observations on their conducts we give them awards such as
exercise books, pens, mathematical sets, and pencils so that it will motivate them to learn.

HT-5 echoed that:

_In my school, students who demonstrate outstanding performance are awarded to motivate others. Pupils who emerge as first to third positions in exams in all classes are given awards in the form of books, pens, erasers, and in some cases small amounts of money._

When enquired from those leaders how the awards were presented to the deserving students, the response was that they gave to them during school gatherings where all students and teachers were present and even in some instances they invited parents as well. Thus, two headteachers claimed that based on their learning experiences they had initiated award schemes for pupils to motivate them to learn.

Apart from the views expressed by the two headteachers who offered rewards in tangible forms to deserving pupils in their schools, all the leaders interviewed indicated that they created incentives in the form of commendations and praises. This means that majority of the leaders interviewed provided incentives for learning through verbal rewards. On their parts, assistant headteachers and form masters noted that when their pupils showed outstanding performance in class, they called them in class as well as general assemblies and they would ask the pupils to clap for such students. Additionally, they pointed out they rewarded pupils by writing good comments in their exercise books when they were marking their work. Generally, they said that they wrote such good comments in their books to motivate them and consequently make them happy. This was eloquently expressed by FM-1 as she noted that:

_As a form master, you have to motivate your pupils to learn so I give them commendations. Even when you get your report card and it has been written ‘good’ or_
‘well done’ then you know that its good performance. This by way is to encourage the other pupils to also put up their best.

When assistant headteachers and form masters, as well as the five headteachers, were asked the reasons behind their inability to provide physical rewards to pupils, they revealed that they were trying everything possible to reward those students who were performing creditably but they were handicapped. They attributed that to the deprived nature of their school environment and the fact that parents in such environment did not show much commitment towards the performance of their wards. Thus, on the whole only a few of the leaders interviewed in the study had instituted incentive packages in the form of physical rewards in their schools while the majority provided intrinsic rewards in the form of praises and commendations to reinforce academic excellence and good behaviour in pupils.

- **Providing Incentives for Teachers**

Respondents were asked to explain how their professional development activities had influenced them to create incentives for teachers to promote teaching and learning in their schools. Out of the 21 leaders interviewed, only three headteachers indicated that they had instituted specific programmes to award teachers in their school. The three headteachers reported that they assessed the lessons of teachers as well as their output of work and based on the outcome, they awarded those who performed creditably. For example, according to HT-6 based on the knowledge he gained from a training programme dubbed ‘Lesson Observation Sheet’ which involved how to evaluate teachers’ current teaching skills, he observed the lessons of teachers in his school and those who gained high marks were given incentives. He pointed out that “through the use of the ‘Lesson Observation Sheet’ teachers are scored out of 100. Those who gain the highest scores are given incentives”. Similarly, HT-3 echoed that:
As you are teaching I rate your performance by looking at your objectives and how you present your methods. I do this and give them marks. So at the end of the term, I tabulate all these scores and award them. Either I buy a shirt or whatever that suit me I do that.

When I enquired from the three headteachers about the sources of funding for this they indicated that they raised funds from parents and at times too through their own sponsorship.

In contrast, the remaining leaders indicated that they awarded teachers by given praises and commendations to boost them up. HT-2 commented that:

*I commend my teachers when they work hard, those who are regular and come to school on time. At times, I commend them that ‘my friend you are working hard, I am proud of you’. At times too, I congratulate them by mentioning their names during staff meetings and that motivate them.*

The leaders claimed that they don’t give physical rewards as they didn’t have the needed financial support to do so. For example, HT-7 commented that “as I said, apart from selling stones and the small collections from worship, we do not have anything. Even I have told them that the collections are not for teachers, they are for the pupils”. Thus, while three headteachers adopted both extrinsic and intrinsic forms of reward, the remaining leaders interviewed reported that they rewarded teachers through praises and commendations.

### 4.3.3 Summary of Results on Instructional Leadership Practices

This study has identified the instructional leadership practices carried out by leaders in the basic schools of Ghana. The key findings gathered through both sets of data are shown in Figure 4.2. Results from the quantitative data showed that due to their professional learning experiences, headteachers “frequently” engaged in framing school goals, communicating schools goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, protecting instructional time, and monitoring student progress.
Incentives for teachers

- Both AHT and FM frequently engaged in monitoring student progress and sometimes engaged in the other six instructional leadership functions.
- HT’s were significantly different in rating framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervision and evaluation of instruction, protecting instructional time, and providing incentives for teachers than both AHT’s and FM’s.

Incentives for learning

- HT’s set goals for entire school while AHT’s and FM’s set goals for the classes they teach; Goals set include improving reading in schools
- Communicating school goals - Frequently engaged in by HT’s while it was sometimes engaged in by both AHT and FM’s. Goals were communicated to pupils, teachers, and parents through staff meetings, SPAM, PTA meetings, class meetings, general assemblies
- Supervision and evaluation of instruction - Frequently engaged in by HT’s while it was sometimes engaged in by both AHT’s and FM’s. HT’s carried out direct supervision and evaluation of instruction by vetting lesson notes, observing lessons, monitoring output of work of teachers, while both AHT’s and FM’s indirectly engaged in supervision and evaluation of instruction by sending prompts to teachers to engage pupils, ensuring class prefects call teachers to engage them in class and standing in corridors to quietly observe lessons.
- Protecting instructional time – Strictly following school Timetable, ensuring pupils and teachers report to school on time, rescheduled school programmes that could disrupt instructional time to after school hours, and instituting forms of punishment.
- Monitoring student progress - Randomly picking pupils exercise books, recorded student marks and pasted the results on notice boards, and instituted weekly and monthly tests in schools.
- Incentives for learning and for teachers - Majority of leaders created incentives through verbal rewards (praises and commendations) rather than offering physical rewards.

Mixed Data

- Framing school goals – Frequently engaged in by HT’s while it was sometimes engaged in by both AHT and FM’s. HT’s set goals for entire school while AHT’s and FM’s set goals for the classes they teach; Goals set include improving reading in schools
- Communicating school goals - Frequently engaged in by HT’s while it was sometimes engaged in by both AHT and FM’s. Goals were communicated to pupils, teachers, and parents through staff meetings, SPAM, PTA meetings, class meetings, general assemblies
- Supervision and evaluation of instruction - Frequently engaged in by HT’s while it was sometimes engaged in by both AHT’s and FM’s. HT’s carried out direct supervision and evaluation of instruction by vetting lesson notes, observing lessons, monitoring output of work of teachers, while both AHT’s and FM’s indirectly engaged in supervision and evaluation of instruction by sending prompts to teachers to engage pupils, ensuring class prefects call teachers to engage them in class and standing in corridors to quietly observe lessons.
- Protecting instructional time – Frequently engaged in by HT’s while it was sometimes engaged in by both AHT’s and FM’s. Strictly following school Timetable, ensuring pupils and teachers report to school on time, rescheduled school programmes that could disrupt instructional time to after school hours, and instituting forms of punishment.
- Monitoring student progress – Frequently engaged in by all leaders. They monitored student progress by randomly picking pupils exercise books, recorded student marks and pasted the results on notice boards, and instituted weekly and monthly tests in schools.
- Incentives for learning – Sometimes engaged in by all leaders. Few HT’s had instituted award schemes in their schools. Majority of leaders created incentives in the form of praises and commendations.
- Incentives for teachers - Sometimes engaged in by all leaders. Few headteachers had instituted award schemes for teachers. Majority of leaders created incentives in the form of praises and commendations.

Figure 4.2 Findings on Instructional Leadership Practices of School Leaders

However, they “sometimes” engaged in providing incentives for teachers and providing incentives for learning. For assistant headteachers and form masters, they both frequently engaged in monitoring student progress and sometimes engaged in the other six instructional leadership functions. The result further showed that the mean frequency scores of headteachers were significantly different from those of assistant headteachers and form masters in framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervision and evaluation of instruction, and protecting instructional time, and providing incentives for teachers. In contrast, there were no significant differences in the mean scores of assistant headteachers and form masters in any of the instructional leadership functions investigated in the study.
With regards to the specific instructional leadership practices carried out by the leaders, the leaders interviewed had set goals aimed at improving reading and BECE results and they communicated their goals to students, teachers, and parents through staff meetings, SPAM, PTA meetings, class meetings, and general school assemblies. Headteachers carried out direct supervision and evaluation of instruction by vetting lesson notes, observing lessons, monitoring output of work of teachers, while both assistant headteachers and form masters indirectly engaged in supervision and evaluation of instruction by sending prompts to teachers to engage pupils, ensuring class prefects call teachers to engage them in class and standing in corridors to quietly observe lessons. School leaders protected instructional time by ensuring that school timetable was followed strictly, ensured that pupils and teachers reported to school on time, rescheduled school programmes that could disrupt instructional time to after school hours, and instituted varied forms of punishment for pupils who failed to follow instructional time. They monitored student academic progress by randomly picking their exercise books, recorded student marks and pasted the results on notice boards, and instituted weekly and monthly tests in schools. Finally, the majority of the leaders created incentives for learning and incentives for teachers through verbal rewards (praises and commendations) rather than offering physical rewards.

From the above analysis, it appears that overall the leaders had the potentials in carrying out some instructional leadership functions than others. Besides, the headteachers generally had the capacity to engage in instructional leadership in their schools than assistant headteachers and form masters. Finally, leaders in the study engaged in mostly managerial functions than leadership functions. Following the sort of leadership practices carried by the leaders, the third research question of this study attempted to know from leaders the factors that they perceived to facilitate the transfer of their professional learning.
4.4 Learning Transfer Systems of School Leaders

Research Question 3 was: *What learning transfer system factors facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools?* The purpose of this research question was to investigate from leaders what they perceived as the most likely learning transfer system factors that facilitate the transfer of their professional learning. Both quantitative and qualitative data were simultaneously gathered to answer this question.

4.4.1 Quantitative Results on Learning Transfer Systems

In the leaders’ survey, the 4th version of Learning Transfer System Inventory instrument was used. Answer scales in the LTSI were Likert-type scales ranging from 1 to 5: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The quantitative data was first analysed through descriptive statistical analysis by computing the means and standard deviations for each of the 16 LTSI factors across the three leadership levels. This was followed by a One-Way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA).

First, the descriptive statistics of the 16 LTSI factors for the headteachers are presented in Table 4.15. The 16 items are listed in rank order. The analysis showed some notable results regarding the learning transfer of headteachers. The result showed that the top two scales with the highest mean scores for headteachers were all motivational variables (Transfer Effort – performance expectations, and motivation to transfer). Headteachers also reported that they were confident in their ability to transfer their learning (performance self-efficacy). Further to these, it is evident from the result that while headteachers reported strong peer support, there was weak supervisor support and performance coaching. Also, headteachers rated training design relatively higher than perceived content validity while learner readiness was rated as one of the lowest scales.
Second, the descriptive statistics of the transfer scores calculated from the LTSI for the assistant headteachers are presented in Table 4.16. The 16 items are listed in rank order. The result showed that for assistant headteachers, the top two scales with the highest mean scores (all > 4) were all motivational variables (Transfer effort- performance expectations, motivation to transfer). The result also showed that assistant headteachers were confident in their ability to transfer their learning (performance self-efficacy). Further to these, while assistant headteachers rated peer support relatively high, supervisor support and performance coaching were rated relatively low. Also, transfer design was rated relatively higher than content validity and learner readiness was among the scales with the lowest mean score.
Table 4.16 Descriptive Statistics for the LTSI for Assistant Headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>LTSI Factors</th>
<th>*M</th>
<th>*SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Transfer Effort – Performance Expectations</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Motivation to transfer</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Performance Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transfer Design</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Performance - Outcome Expectations</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Content Validity</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Personal Outcomes Positive</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Opportunity to Use</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Learner Readiness</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Performance Coaching</td>
<td>3.48</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Personal Outcomes Negatives</td>
<td>2.71</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>2.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Personal Capacity for Transfer</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Supervisor Opposition</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation

Third, the descriptive statistics of the transfer scores calculated from the LTSI for the form masters are presented in Table 4.17. The 16 items are listed in rank order. For form masters, the result showed that out of the top three scales with the highest mean scores, two of them were motivational variables (transfer effort – performance expectations, motivation to transfer). In addition, form masters were equally confident in their ability to transfer their learning (performance self-efficacy). However, although transfer design was relatively high, the mean score for content validity was relatively low. Similarly, the mean score for peer support was relatively high but the mean scores for performance coaching and supervisor support was relatively weak.
Table 4.17 Descriptive Statistics for the LTSI for Form Masters (n = 50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>LTSI Factors</th>
<th>*M</th>
<th>*SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Transfer Effort – Performance Expectations</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Performance Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Motivation to transfer</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transfer Design</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Performance - Outcome Expectations</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Performance Coaching</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Opportunity to Use</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Content Validity</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Learner Readiness</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Personal Outcomes Positive</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Personal Outcomes Negatives</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Supervisor Opposition</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Personal Capacity to Transfer</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation

Further to the above descriptive analysis, a One-Way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences among the 16 learning transfer factors across the three leadership levels. An inspection of the skewness and kurtosis statistics indicated that the assumption of normality was supported in each case. Also, Levene’s test for equality of variances was performed to ascertain whether the assumption of homogeneity of variance was satisfied in each of the 16 LTSI scales (see Table 4.18). The Levene’s test conducted showed that of the 16 LTSI factors, one scale (supervisor opposition) violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. As a result, Welch and Brown-Forsythe F-ratio were reported in the case of that scale and Games-Howell Post-hoc
analysis was utilized as it does not assume that population variances are equal or that sample sizes are equal.

Table 4.18 Levene's Test for Equality of Variance Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LTSI Factors</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Effort – Performance Expectations</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to transfer</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>0.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Design</td>
<td>1.688</td>
<td>0.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance - Outcome Expectations</td>
<td>0.507</td>
<td>0.603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Coaching</td>
<td>0.642</td>
<td>0.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to Use</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Validity</td>
<td>0.483</td>
<td>0.618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner Readiness</td>
<td>0.645</td>
<td>0.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Outcomes Positive</td>
<td>1.285</td>
<td>0.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>1.028</td>
<td>0.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Outcomes Negatives</td>
<td>0.567</td>
<td>0.568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>0.453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Opposition</td>
<td>5.017</td>
<td>0.008*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Capacity to Transfer</td>
<td>0.464</td>
<td>0.630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05; Items violating the assumption of homogeneity of variances

The result for the three independent samples is shown in Table 4.19. The result showed that there were significant differences between five LTSI factors across the three leadership levels.
Table 4.19 ANOVA Results for the Comparison of Scores Among the three Leadership Levels in Relation to their Perceived Transfer Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LTSI Factors</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to transfer</td>
<td>[2, 147]</td>
<td>5.940</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to Use</td>
<td>[2, 147]</td>
<td>4.850</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Outcomes Positive</td>
<td>[2, 147]</td>
<td>4.334</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>[2, 147]</td>
<td>6.427</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Opposition</td>
<td>[2, 147]</td>
<td>12.381</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.20 presents the mean scores and groupings of the Learning Transfer System factors that showed statistically significant differences across the three leadership levels. The Post-hoc comparisons revealed four notable patterns among the five LTSI factors that disclosed significant differences across the leadership levels. First, the analysis showed that for the LTSI scales ‘opportunity to use learning and motivation to transfer’, the mean scores of headteachers in each case were significantly different from both assistant headteachers and form masters. Second, for supervisor support, the mean scores of both headteachers and assistant headteachers were significantly different from form masters. On the other hand, the mean score of form masters for supervisor opposition was significantly different from headteachers and assistant headteachers. Finally, the mean score of headteachers was significantly different from form masters for personal outcome positive.
Table 4.20 Comparison of Means for the LTSI across Leadership Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LTSI FACTORS</th>
<th>Leadership Levels</th>
<th>Groupings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HT</td>
<td>AHT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to use learning</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to Transfer</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Outcomes Positive</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Opposition</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sum, results from the study showed the LTSI factors that were highly ranked across the three leadership levels were transfer effort – performance expectations, motivation to transfer, performance self-efficacy, peer support, and transfer design. Also, the three groups of leaders rated transfer design higher than content validity and the learner readiness variables. Further, peer support was highly rated than supervisor support. Finally, the result showed statistical differences in five learning transfer system factors across the three leadership levels.

4.4.2 Qualitative Result on Learning Transfer Systems

This section presents the results on the perceived learning transfer systems that facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools as gathered through the interviews. First, school leaders interviewed indicated that they were internally motivated to transfer their professional learning. For instance, HT-2 commented that “I have the interest to transfer what is learnt to others”. HT-5 added that “we are always told that a teacher’s reward is in heaven and that I am always intrinsically motivated that if I do the work well I would be rewarded in the near future”. In addition to these, HT-3 remarked that “as far
as I have chosen teaching as a profession, I am always self-disciplined, internally motivated and that I am always ready to deliver”. HT-1 equally commented that “what urges me to transfer my professional learning is self-motivation. Without this, I can’t transfer any knowledge”. Similar comments were made by assistant headteachers as they were of the view that they were individually motivated to transfer what they learned to “transform the lives of pupils” that they teach. As eloquently expressed by AHT-4 as he commented that:

I love to impart knowledge and skills onto both young and old. By doing this I will be able to help to transform the lives of the pupils I teach and help them to acquire knowledge and skill to become responsible citizens in future.

Form masters were also of the view that they were internally motivated to transfer their learning experiences to improve teaching and learning in their schools. According to three form masters, they were internally motivated when pupils pass out successfully from the basic school onto senior high school and that urged them on to transfer what they learned to help the pupils to pass out successfully. For example, FM-1 commented that “good result is one of the characteristics of a good school. Thus, I am personally motivated to see my students passing into senior high school”. Thus, according to the leaders interviewed, internal motivation was one of the key factors that facilitated their learning transfer in their schools.

Second, school leaders highlighted the influence of the training design as another key factor that influenced their learning transfer. Recounting the training programmes they had attended, headteachers commented on the ‘use of suitable and meaningful teaching methods’, ‘continuous use of general principles or techniques’, orderly and organized’ presentation of the training programme, ‘quality of resource persons’, and ‘encouragement and motivational messages’ from resource persons which influenced their learning and ultimately their transfer. Assistant headteachers also pointed out that they were influenced by the resource personnel
who handled the professional learning programmes they had attended. According to them, the resource persons were ‘well equipped’ and had a good mastery of the subject matter. Besides, they commented on the ‘systematic presentation’ or ‘systematic delivery’ of the training sessions, ‘effective use of teaching aids’, ‘good interpersonal relations between instructors and participants’ during training sessions and the use of ‘group work approaches’ and the ‘creative and practical nature which characterized the training sessions’. Lastly, form masters made mention of the various “teaching methods demonstrated by trainers”, “experiences shared by the trainers” and the “experiences shared by other participants”. For example, FM-5 commented that “the discussion method used by the facilitators on teaching philosophy and others enabled me to deeply understand various competencies and that facilitated my transfer”. Similarly, FM-7 echoed that “the training session was characterized by brainstorming to give ideas and the ideas expressed were discussed with us. As such it had a high transfer value on my part”.

Nonetheless, eleven leaders were much critical about the training programmes that they had attended. Key issues that emerged were about their preparedness towards training programmes that they have attended and the relevance of the contents of some of the training programmes. They complained that normally their views were not sought prior to the training programmes and that they were informed on short notice for attending the programmes. For example, FM-1 commented that “I think the organizers of these training programmes need to seek our views and make us part of the design of the programme”. AHT-7 also noted that

*Before organizing the training programmes, we need to be well-informed in advance so that we can prepare for the programme. At times, we are told on short notice and it’s just that they are mandatory but you see that you are not prepared for such training.*
HT-5 further echoed that:

> Before the training programme, they should sensitize us enough concerning the need or importance of such programme. Short notices are given and in most cases you don’t even know what the training programme is all about. What we are only told is that headteachers are having INSET without any idea about the focus of such training.

The eleven leaders equally commented about the relevance of the contents of some of the training programmes they had attended. Generally, they were of the view that some of the training programmes they had attended did not focus on school leadership and management. In connection to this, HT-7 commented that:

> The last training programme we attended was on HIV/AIDS. The workshop was to make the pupils aware that AIDS is real. The workshop focused on the effect and the prevention. This workshop took three days. These kinds of workshops do not directly impact on my leadership skills as a headteacher.

AHT-2 echoed that “the workshop took one day to talk to us about malaria prevention and also took another day for the tree planting. Their primary aim for the planting of the trees was to beautify the environment”. Clearly, these comments suggested that while the leaders commented about the usefulness of the design, they were critical about the content and their preparedness to some of the programmes.

Third, the three groups of leaders interviewed highlighted peer support as another factor that influenced the transfer of their learning. According to headteachers, encouragement from their colleague headteachers influenced them to transfer their professional learning. HT-6 remarked that “peers encourage me to put in more effort and also the supervision of officers makes me alert on what I do”. Similarly, HT-3 added that the “cooperation from other staff members encourage me to transfer my learning”. On the part of assistant headteachers and form masters, they cited peer support as a factor influencing their transfer rather than supervisor
support. For instance, AHT-1 commented that “peers also assist me to find solutions to challenges pertaining to the knowledge acquired and that encourage me to transfer what I learn”. Also, AHT-7 who laid emphasis on teamwork among staff was of the view that “teamwork on the part of peers by sharing ideas, skills, and knowledge among ourselves create the opportunity for me to transfer my professional learning experiences”. Similar comments emerged from form masters as they noted that as peers they encouraged themselves a lot in their work and that facilitated the transfer of what they learned to improve teaching and learning in their schools. FM-2 commented that the “congenial atmosphere in the school, as well as the good interpersonal relationship, create room for my peers to advise, encourage, and assist me in my work and that assist me to transfer my learning”. FM-1 echoed that “I was highly encouraged to transfer my professional learning because of the cordial teacher-teacher relationship that exists in my school”. Thus, on the whole, the different leaders cited support from their peers as a facilitating factor to the transfer of their learning.

Fourth, the school leaders interviewed were of the view that when they put into practice their leadership learning, their performance would improve and that influence them to transfer what they learn. First, five headteachers indicated that they would like to see improvement in their BECE results and so they need to transfer what they learn. They hinted that each time the BECE results are released, all the schools in the district were ranked based on their performance in the examination and because of this, they were always eager to apply what they learned to maintain a good image for their school. This suggested that the headteachers believed that when they took the effort to transfer what they learned, it would result in improvement in school (BECE) result. For example, HT-5 commented that:
Academic competition exists among the various schools in the district and this induces me to transfer what I learn. I think that if I constantly put into practice what I learn, my school will not lag behind its competitors.

Also, HT-3 who was optimistic that transferring what was learnt would enable them to resolve the challenges they faced in their school commented that:

*We face a lot of challenges in our school. Some pupils and teachers are always late to school and poor school-community relationship exists over here. How do I tackle these issues [...] I think that the way forward is by constantly putting into practice the new things I learn and initiating programmes resulting from my learning.*

Similarly, the assistant headteachers indicated that as they learn and transfer such learning, it would result in the improvement of their performance. For example, AHT-2 commented that:

*I had no training before being appointed as an assistant headteacher so I believe that if I learn and transfer what I learn my performance will improve greatly. In that way, I will work effectively and be able to meet the demands of the job.*

Also, AHT-6 had a similar view as she noted that “much is expected from me by my pupils and the headteacher. They expect excellent performance from me. To meet my expectation, I must put into practice what I learn”. On their part, form masters also gave similar comments which meant they had the belief that when they transfer their professional learning, it would lead to changes in their performance. FM-1 remarked that:

*Our ultimate goal as teachers is to improve student learning. I believe that if I work hard and transfer my learning that dream will become a reality. The more I learn and transfer such learning, student learning will improve.*
Also, FM-6 added that:

*Some people have this erroneous impression that as teachers we know everything. That is never true. I don’t think so... We learn much on the job to improve our own performance and that of the children we teach. I believe that the more I learn and put into practice, I improve my own performance and that of the pupils.*

Thus, the three groups of leaders were clear in their views that when they transfer learning it would result in school improvement and improvement in their own performance.

Fifth, self-efficacy emerged as an influencing factor for headteachers as they deemed themselves capable of transferring their learning experiences to improve teaching and learning in their schools. Comments such as “I always try to bring out what is in me” (HT-4), “I always want to make things happen” (HT-7) and “I have the feeling that I can make someone learn” (HT-2) were used by respondents to show that they were capable of transferring what they learned in their school.

Sixth, four headteachers and three form masters highlighted ‘moral and religious duty’ as a factor that facilitated their learning transfer. They indicated that they were morally and religiously obliged to transfer what they learn. For instance, HT-3 observed that “I feel it is my religious duty to make children know what they are expected to”. HT-5 echoed that “I have been helped by somebody to become what I am. I must also help somebody to fit in the society”. In much the same way, form masters made similar comments. For example, FM-1 observed that “I am self-disciplined and that I always think about the welfare of the children. Similarly, FM-5 added that “I always believe in doing the right thing so the moment I had the chance to learn something new, I decide to share with students to improve the learning process”. These comments do have moral as well as religious implications.
4.4.3 Summary of Results on Learning Transfer Systems

In sum, this study has identified the learning transfer systems factors that facilitate the transfer of the professional development activities of school leaders. The key findings gathered through both sets of data are shown in Figure 4.3. The analysis showed that the highly ranked LTSI factors with the highest mean scores across the three leadership levels were similar.

Figure 4:3 Findings on the Learning Transfer Systems of School Leaders

Results from the study showed that the strongest LTSI factors perceived to facilitate the transfer of the professional learning of the three level of leaders studied in this study were common and those factors were transfer effort – performance expectations, motivation to
transfer, performance self-efficacy, peer support, and transfer design. In addition, all the three level of leaders rated transfer design relatively higher than content validity. Also, peer support in each case was rated relatively higher than performance coaching and supervisor support. Furthermore, personal outcomes negative and learner readiness were among the scales with the lowest means across the three leadership levels. Finally, the result displayed significant differences among five scales of the LTSI across leadership levels. Insights drawn from the interview data confirmed and offered more details to the results from the quantitative data.

4.5. Summary

This chapter presented the findings concerning the professional development activities, instructional leadership and learning transfer system factors of headteachers, assistant headteachers and form masters in Ghanaian basic schools. In each of the three research questions investigated in the study, both the quantitative and the qualitative findings were presented in turn. In addition, key findings emerging from each research question from both the quantitative and the qualitative data sets are integrated into a summary of findings in each section. The next chapter discusses the major findings emerging from the study.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the professional development activities of leaders (headteachers, assistant headteachers, and form masters) in Ghanaian basic schools, examine their instructional leadership practices and identify the learning transfer system factors that the school leaders perceive as facilitating the transfer of their professional learning. The study was instigated because a number of studies in Ghana have shown that educational reforms in Ghana have ignored the importance of leadership development for school leaders as there is currently no reform initiative that addresses the need to develop the leadership proficiencies and skills of school leaders (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Oduro, 2003; Zame et al., 2008). Past research has also shown that school leaders in Ghana are often appointed without any formal preparatory training (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Malakolunthu et al., 2014; Oduro, 2003) and are either appointed or rise to such positions based on rank and years of teaching service (Baffour–Awuah, 2011; Kusi & Mensah, 2014; Oduro, 2003). It is even asserted that leaders in the basic schools, especially those in rural schools, are left unsupported once they are appointed as leaders and most of them gain awareness of the nature of the job through their own efforts (Oduro, 2003).

On account of this situation, it is claimed that the quality of leadership and management in basic schools in Ghana is generally poor (Donkoh, 2013; Oduro et al., 2008) as leaders lack the appropriate leadership skills and hence focus on managerial and administrative duties to the exclusion of leadership functions in schools (Donkoh, 2013; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003; Zame et al., 2008). This has been a major contributing factor to learning outcomes in basic schools falling far below the targets of the Ministry of Education over the past years (World Bank, 2014) as less than a third of primary school children reach proficiency levels in English or in Mathematics (World Bank, 2010).
Against the background that no formal or non-formal leadership training and qualification are required for the appointment of basic school leaders, this study sought to investigate how the leaders develop their leadership skills following their appointment into leadership roles and positions, how they carry out instructional leadership in their schools as a result of their learning as well as identifying the learning transfer system factors that facilitate the transfer of their learning. A study of this nature was deemed valuable in the sense that no study has investigated these interrelated issues in Ghana. Additionally, though the Ghana Education Service (GES) stresses the need for basic school leaders to make teaching and learning pivotal to all other activities in schools (Ghana Education Service, 2010), little is known about how these leaders develop their professional skills as well as the kind of instructional leadership practices they exercise in schools. Furthermore, past studies on school leadership in Ghana tend to focus on only headteachers (Agezo, 2010; Oduro, 2003; Kusi, 2008; Zame et al. 2008), thus, issues related to assistant headteachers and form masters have received little attention in the Ghanaian educational leadership literature. This study sought the views of other designated school leaders (assistant headteachers and form masters) in addition to headteachers (principals) in a single study.

The study employed parallel mixed research where quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously. The rationale for employing this approach in the study was that of triangulation as it sought to obtain different but complementary data on the same problematic issue (Creswell, 2003; Scott & Morrison, 2007) to better understand all the relevant factors impacting the research problem. One of the key observations that emerged from the data triangulation of this study was the apparent widespread consensus between the two sets of data. Findings from the study showed that the qualitative data did not only confirm the survey results but also gave a deeper understanding of the details related to the questionnaire. This is
an indication that the methodological approach adopted was useful by ascribing a deeper meaning to the issues explored in the Ghanaian context.

As a result, the nature and how the educational issues under study were perceived and applied by leaders in the study context were more powerfully illuminated through the interview data. The significance resulting from this is that as we focus on these issues in light of the international literature and existing theories, the realities within the Ghanaian context and thus the contextual differences are brought to bear simultaneously. These contextual realities and differences could provide useful information when building a realistic profile of leadership learning content, improving the instructional leadership practices and learning transfer systems for leaders in the basic schools of Ghana.

This chapter discusses the data with reference to relevant literature in an attempt to explore the deeper meanings of the results and understand the phenomenon under investigation. The discussion of the study is presented around the three thematic areas that align with the three research questions explored in the study. The chapter concludes with recommendations for practice and future research based on the results and discussions presented.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the results of the study with reference to the international literature on professional development for school leaders, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems as well as the local contextual realities in Ghana.

5.1.1 Professional Development Activities of School Leaders

Overall, there were commonalities among the highly ranked professional development activities across the three leadership positions as illustrated in the quantitative data (see
Tables 4.2, 4.3, & 4.4). Though variation existed in the rankings, the professional development activities that attracted the highest mean ratings across the three leadership levels were the same. These top ranked professional development activities across the three groups of leaders equally emerged as professional development activities (PDA) that the various leaders reported they engaged in from the interview data (see section 4.2.2). Thus, it appears that the type of professional development activities that leaders in the study district engaged in were similar across the different leadership levels though the reported frequency of engagement in such activities fluctuated. This could be explained by the fact that there were limited formal developmental initiatives specifically designed for different levels of leaders in the selected district. Leaders in this study mostly learned through their own efforts and initiatives and there was a high possibility that those approaches would be common across different leadership teams in that particular district. It also emerged from the study that the two least rated professional development activities across the leadership teams were formal university-based leadership learning and online learning via the internet. In line with these patterns, the discussion of the perspectives of participants regarding their professional development activities is categorised into ‘frequently engaged professional development activities’ and ‘least engaged professional development activities’. The discussion further explores the nature of PDA as well as informal learning as a promising learning method for the leaders in Ghanaian basic schools.

- **Frequently Engaged Professional Development Activities**

Across the three leadership levels, personal reading of books, newspapers, and magazines emerged as one of the frequently engaged professional development activities in the study. This supports findings from the study conducted by Mushaandja (2013) in Namibia who found that the most predominant self-development strategy employed by school leaders was
personal reading and that the popular manual was ‘Guidelines for School Principals’ provided by the Ministry of Education. The convergence of the findings of this study with that of Mushaandja (2013) could be attributed to the similarity in context as both studies were conducted in Africa where school leaders face relatively similar challenges (Bush & Oduro, 2006).

While headteachers in this study relied mainly on the headteachers’ handbook together with their individual reading materials, assistant headteachers and form masters depended on their own individual pamphlets and reading materials obtained from attending workshops (see section 4.2.2). The provision of the Headteachers’ Handbook for headteachers by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the GES could be an indication and recognition on the part of the educational authorities in Ghana of the critical role headteachers play in school development and the need for them to constantly develop their professional skills so as to effectively lead their schools. In the forward to the Headteachers’ Handbook, it is indicated that:

The ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service recognize the critical leadership role that the headteacher must play in ensuring that learning takes place in the classroom . . . The MOE and GES have approved of the use of the handbook as a source book for guidance in the training and retraining of headteachers of all basic schools in the country (Ghana Education Service, 2010, p. iii)

It is thus envisaged that as headteachers and possibly other school leaders continuously read the handbook, it could provide information to improve their competencies and knowledge to help them in the day-to-day management of their schools.

Nonetheless, it is possible that school leaders might not have the time to read, reflect, and apply information from the handbook as required taking into account the complex duties and workloads they are confronted with in schools. In his study in Namibia, Mushaandja (2013) found that the principals had a lot of work to do and they seldom made time to read and
reflect on what they read. Similarly, past studies have found that some headteachers in Ghana were even obliged to teach and handle subjects on the school timetable alongside their administrative and management tasks (Kusi, 2008; Oduro & Macbeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003). It has also been shown that in cases where schools lack the required number of teachers or where some teachers are absent from school, headteachers have to engage the affected classes by teaching. Besides, assistant headteachers and form masters are full-time teachers who are concerned with their teaching responsibilities. Judging from these realities and circumstances, it is very unlikely that the leaders will have ample time to read, reflect, and apply ideas from the handbook as expected of them by the educational authorities.

Another interpretation that could be drawn from the reliance on the headteachers’ manual, individual pamphlets and newspapers by the leaders in the study is that the leaders in the study district lacked access to adequate, current and varied reading materials to enhance their professional skills. It was evident from the study that school leaders did not have libraries that were stocked with recent books on school leadership and they equally did not have access to online journals and database where they could easily access current literature on school leadership. This confirms findings from the study by Akuoko, Dwumah, and Baba (2012) who found the unavailability of library facility as one of the key challenges facing Ghanaian basic schools. Their study revealed that of the 20 basic schools in one educational district visited, 17 schools had no library facilities. Arguably, the fact that leaders in this study had limited access to relevant literature on school leadership suggests that they may be limited in their effort to gather updated knowledge pertaining to their job as school leaders. The implication is that as leaders rely on only the headteachers’ manual as well as pamphlets, they may not be exposed to current trends in school leadership which may limit their efforts to lead their schools effectively and efficiently and that could impact on the nature of instructional leadership they might exercise in school.
Similarly, assistant headteachers and form masters indicated that they had not been provided with copies of the Ghana Education Service Headteachers’ Handbook and similarly they did not have the opportunity to read through such material (see section 4.2.2). The fact that these ‘teacher leaders’ admitted that they were aware of the existence of the handbook in their school offices but had not been able to read through could be explained by their workloads and busy schedules. In the Ghanaian context, all assistant headteachers and form masters in basic schools are full-time teachers who only hold leadership roles as additional responsibilities. Thus, these teacher leaders may tend to focus more on their teaching functions which primarily serve as the basis for their promotions. It could also mean that they felt reluctant in taking these handbooks from the headteachers since they may not see the relevance of the Handbook in carrying out their leadership responsibilities. Additionally, they may perceive the Handbook to be intended for headteachers only as the title of the manual seems to suggest. Nonetheless, these leaders are expected to support headteachers in school leadership in Ghana and thus need adequate support and resources to be able to carry out their roles effectively.

In addition to personal reading, meetings of school leaders emerged as one of the frequently engaged professional development activities across the three leadership teams. The use of meetings as a professional learning activity in the context of this study supports the findings of studies in other contexts. In England, Crow (2007) found that headteachers utilized the local education authority’s learning opportunities which included headteachers’ meetings and that headteachers’ meetings enabled their learning including talking through problems, reflective thinking, talking about mistakes, sharing policy documents and other materials, and had contact with experts on topics they had identified. Similarly, Bizzell (2011) found principals’ meetings as a valued form of professional development while Zepeda, Parylo, & Bengtson (2014) found that across the four school systems they studied in Georgia, both
assistant principals and principals benefitted from regular meetings with the superintendent and other central office leaders. In view of these similar findings from other contexts, the regular meetings of leaders in this study could be a laudable step for leaders to build their professional skills to lead their schools effectively.

According to the school leaders in this study, such meetings served as a good platform for them to share experiences and learn from each other (see section 4.2.2). They noted that in such meetings, leaders from different schools presented a ‘situational report’ which centred on what was happening in their respective schools and through the different accounts they shared experiences and learnt from each other. This was consistent with the findings of Ibrahim (2011) that meetings of headteachers in Kenya enabled them to socialize, share and exchange ideas on their experiences on how they run their schools, challenges they face and their efforts in solving them. That study further found that the leaders learned from “case studies” presented by their colleagues about their successes and this was similar to the ‘situational report’ recounted by the participants in my study. Zhang and Brundrett (2010) argued that headteachers help to fulfil the learning needs of their colleagues by offering practical advice and real-world examples of experiential learning. In that respect, as headteachers presented situational reports in their meetings it would serve as a guide to colleagues and they can apply the knowledge they learn when they face similar challenges in their schools.

In spite of the perceived benefits, while other studies found that both headteachers and assistant headteachers benefited from regular meetings with superintendent and other central education officers (Bizzell, 2011; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010), findings from this study showed that only headteachers participated in external circuit and district levels meetings while assistant headteachers and form masters participated in only internal staff meetings organized
at the school level. This may limit the effort of assistant headteachers and form masters to learn from their peers from other schools and this may limit their professional growth. Thus, the establishment of regular circuit and district level meetings for them could be taken into consideration so that these teacher leaders can network with their peers from other schools. That could go a long way in creating opportunities for them to build their knowledge, develop important leadership skills, increase their professional confidence, and expose them to fresh ideas and problem-solving strategies from peers (Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012). Additionally, while the study of Crow (2007) showed that the headteachers’ meetings were part of the local education authority’s learning opportunities, the headteachers’ meeting in my case was initiated by the headteachers themselves and thus lacked focus and coordination by the district educational authorities.

Apart from personal reading and meetings, unstructured and non-intentional experiences resulting from daily work emerged as another top-ranked professional development activity engaged in by the school leaders. The study found that as the leaders carried out their roles, they came across various challenges and the approach they adopted in remedying such challenges served as a learning platform for them when they encountered similar problems in the school (see section 4.2.2). This finding supports that of Ibrahim (2011) who found that the day-to-day challenges and problems school leaders in Kenya faced in schools and their attempts to solve them provided them with lessons from which they learned and developed. He noted that the challenges made the principals to be resilient and prepared them on how to solve future problems of the same nature. Hartley and Hinksman (2003) equally posited that people learn most effectively when working on real-time organizational problems and devising plans to effectively resolve the problems in the real work context. Thus, since the literature reviewed showed that school leaders in Ghana were confronted with a number of
challenges within the school context (see section 2.1), it is envisaged that as leaders attempt to create contextual solutions to these problems, they would learn in the process.

Additionally, the participants in this study expressed that as they carried out their daily work as school leaders, they constantly reflected on what they encountered and through those reflections they learned (see section 4.2.2). This finding aligns with the views expressed by the leaders studied by Mushaandja (2013) in Namibia as they noted that they reflected on what they did so that they could create workable knowledge and solutions to challenges they faced. The implication is that these reflections on their practice as leaders will enhance their awareness of their strengths and limitations and will thus serve as a learning platform for them. This is because successful learning experiences occur when participants have the opportunity to reflect on their own practice (Bush et al., 2007).

Another form of professional development activity that emerged as one of the top-ranked professional development activities across the leadership levels was workshops and seminars. The emergence of workshops and seminars as one of the regular means through which school leaders in this study develop their professional skills aligns with the findings of a number of studies in Africa (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1993; Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandja, 2013; Scott & Webber, 2008). A study by Mushaandja (2013) found that workshops and courses were organized at school, regional and national levels and mostly by the Ministry of Education in Kenya. Similarly, Kusi and Mensah (2014) posited that workshops in Ghana were designed to equip school leaders with the requisite knowledge and skills, enabling them to manage their schools more effectively and efficiently. This claim was supported by participants in this study as they noted that such programmes were organized to enhance their leadership skills and to help them improve teaching and learning in their schools. As echoed by one headteacher: “I remember we attended a leadership training workshop at Manna Heights
Hotel. In fact, it was a very educative programme. And we learnt how to run the schools as headteachers. We learnt that as headteachers we should try to succeed in whatever we are doing”. This suggested that the leaders in this study found the workshops useful and contributed to their leadership learning.

However, some weaknesses with this learning strategy were identified. For example, it was evident from the study that the workshops were not regularly organized and were organized in an ad hoc manner (see section 2.2.2). As expressed by one respondent who remarked that “Oh that one, we do attend but I think it is not regular . . . so I will be more grateful if it keeps on going” (p. 15). This contradicts the views held in the professional development literature that professional development programmes need to be ongoing (Fluckiger et al., 2014; Zepeda et al., 2014; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). Besides, respondents pointed out that not all leaders had the opportunity to attend those workshops since schools as well as participants were selected by the organizers. Past studies in Ghana have shown that workshops were usually provided by international agencies for selected schools and mostly drawn from urban and semi-urban areas and that the organizing bodies often determined the number and category of schools to be involved (Oduro, 2003). This was confirmed by the respondents in this study as they noted that it was not all the workshops which they had the opportunity to participate in due to selection criteria employed by the organizers.

The selection procedure and the ad hoc manner in which workshops and seminars were organized could be attributed to the lack of systemic coordination of the workshops organized for the school leaders and the fact that different agencies organized those workshops. The overall effect of this weakness in the learning strategy produces a lack of uniformity in the workshops and the different organizers are likely to focus on different issues which may not necessarily be connected to the professional needs of participants. So it was not surprising
that most of the workshops and seminars reported by assistant headteachers and form masters and even headteachers did not centre on school leadership issues and did not focus on their main roles of ensuring effective teaching and learning in schools. A limitation of this nature was also highlighted by respondents in the study of Kusi and Mensah (2014) in Ghana, Wanzare and Ward (2000) in Kenya, and Borden (2002) in Latin America. For example, Kusi and Mensah (2014) observed that the contents of some of the training programmes had no bearing on school management and did not address the needs of school leaders.

Moreover, headteachers, assistant headteachers, and form masters rated coaching by supervisors, peers, and/or subordinates as one of the top-ranked professional development activities in the survey data. The study found that as circuit supervisors and other education officers visited schools, they held meeting sessions with headteachers to offer them coaching by way of guidance and advice on how things should be done. This aligns with the findings from the study of Mushaandja (2013) who found that principals learned from the feedback and interactions with their superiors such as inspectors of education when they visited their schools. Similarly, both assistant headteachers and form masters received constant advice and guidance from headteachers. This aligns with the study of Ibrahim (2011) who found that principals’ support to the teacher leaders played a big role in the development of teacher leaders in Kenya. According to him, such support came through teacher leaders being given an enabling environment, delegation of duties, internal appointment, and advice given by principals. By the same token, assistant headteachers and form masters reported that they received guidance and support from their headteachers on how they should carry out their assigned duties.

Interestingly, while headteachers in the study reported that they received coaching from circuit supervisors and other education officers, assistant headteachers and form masters
received their coaching from headteachers. On the one hand, this stood contrary to the findings of Mushaandja (2013) that headteachers equally relied on their staff members to share with them how things should be in their respective schools in Namibia. The question is why were assistant headteachers and form masters not receiving “guidance and advice” directly from circuit supervisors? This situation could be attributed to these leaders being full-time teachers and because of that, it appears the district educational authorities did not recognize them as legitimate school leaders. Thus, protocol demands that any information would need to be passed on to them through their headteachers who are held accountable for school progress. In much the same vein, the headteachers may deem themselves as those in control and feel that they are mainly responsible for whatever happens in their schools and may thus fail to dialogue with the teachers on leadership matters. Again, this could depict the centralized system of education practiced in Ghana where decision making largely seems to be top-down rather than collegial (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Oplatka, 2004). According to Bush (2014), in centralized educational systems where power is concentrated, leadership is likely to be hierarchical and this is likely to influence the nature of leadership development which may emphasize control rather than participation.

Finally, visitation to schools was among the highly ranked professional development activities across the three leadership levels. Bush (2009) highlighted that visiting similar school contexts appears to be particularly valuable and may lead to powerful leadership learning. Accordingly, leaders in this study ranked visitation to schools as one of their regularly engaged professional development activities in the survey data (see Table 4.2, 4.3, 4.4). From the interview data, eleven leaders indicated that they had visited other schools to observe what goes on in those schools and interact with colleagues to learn from them. These leaders indicated that in their visits they shared their challenges with their colleagues and they sought solutions from them. As echoed by one of the respondents: “I think that I shouldn’t sit alone
so if I feel like knowing much about the work I do, I go to my colleague head and share my challenges and they help me to solve them. If I call and they say I should go, then I go and consult them” (HT-6). Thus, there was a claim by these leaders interviewed that visitation to other schools was valuable and undertaken to solve immediate problems. According to Mushaandja (2013) visitations to schools would enable leaders to engage with their colleagues in order to share, advise, and support each other managerially.

Nonetheless, the remaining ten respondents in my study reported they did not have enough time to engage in such activities and even those who indicated that they undertake school visits reported that they normally visit other schools that were very close to their schools. On the one hand, this seems to suggest that visitation to schools was not a formalized activity and not regularized across schools and thus only interested leaders engaged in such activity at their own convenient time. Therefore, visitation as a PDA lacked the support and coordination from the district education officers and this meant that visitation in such a context may lack focus or be problem-centred.

In addition, one question that could be posed in relation to such an activity concerns with the kind of factors that the leaders took into consideration before visiting schools. Did they visit schools because those schools were deemed to be the most successful ones in the district or that such schools were managed by experienced leaders? Although this question was not a focus of this study, it is reasonable to deduce from the findings presented that proximity was the key factor that was taken into consideration. This is contrary to the findings of Wilson and Xue (2013) who found that the school leaders they studied in China made visits to outstanding and elite schools and such visits were seen as a means of learning best practice at first hand. In the case of this study, while it might be possible for the leaders to learn as they engage in interactions and conversations with colleagues through their visits, they may not
gain much and learn new practices if such schools are not outstanding and successful. Thus, it would be instructive and useful to school leaders if educational authorities were to coordinate the visitations and identify schools with a track record of outstanding performance for leaders to visit in order to learn best practice for school improvement.

- **Least Engaged Professional Development Activities**

Apart from the fact the top ranked PDA were common across the three leadership levels, two least ranked PDA which were common across the three leadership levels were formal university-based leadership learning and online professional learning (see Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4). Although the leaders interviewed indicated that they developed their professional skills through formal university courses, it emerged from the data that those programmes were not university-based leadership development programmes. Hence, it was not surprising that ‘formal university-based leadership development programmes’ was rated among the lowest professional development activities in the survey data across the three leadership levels. The interview data revealed that leaders enrolled in distance learning programmes at higher education institutions in Ghana to pursue a Diploma in Education and degree programmes in other fields where educational leadership and management was taken only as a course in one semester.

In a study by Kusi and Mensah (2014) in one educational district in Ghana, the basic school leaders in their study requested that they should be sponsored to undertake distance learning courses in leadership and management run by the higher education institutions in the country. In a related study in Kenya, Okoko, Scott, and Scott (2014) found that the majority of the school leaders they studied reported they wanted formal professional development programmes such as university degrees or certificate/diplomas in leadership and administration from higher education institutions. Similarly, other studies that have
investigated the professional learning experiences in some countries in Africa (Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandja, 2013) did not highlight formal university-based development programmes as one of the regular means through which leaders develop their leadership skills in those contexts. These findings seem to suggest that basic school leaders in Ghana and some other African countries are not provided the opportunity to enrol in formal university-based leadership development programmes to enhance their professional skills and competencies.

Considering that school leaders in Ghana were appointed primarily on the basis of their teaching record (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Bush & Oduro, 2006) without any formal preparatory training (Oduro, 2003; Zame et al., 2008), it is surprising that formal university-based leadership development remains as one of the rarely engaged development activities across the three leadership levels. The implication is that, leaders in the basic schools may lack the requisite expertise to lead their schools effectively and efficiently. But could this situation be attributed to a lack of existing formal university-based leadership programmes in Ghana? Literature in Ghana has shown that opportunities to enrol in university-based leadership development programmes exist in Ghana (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Kusi & Mensah, 2014). According to these authors, the Centre for Educational Policy Studies and the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Education, Winneba, and the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, University of Cape Coast, run Master of Arts and Master of Philosophy programmes in Educational Administration and Management for education professionals in Ghana through full-time, distance learning or on a sandwich basis. Thus, it might be the expectation of educational authorities in Ghana that leaders in basic schools would enrol in these programmes to develop their leadership competencies.
Nonetheless, despite the existing opportunities university-based leadership development was among the least-rated PDA across the three leadership levels. It could then be argued that different factors could serve as impediments for leaders to engage in such programmes. On the one hand, it needs to be highlighted that the existing university-based professional development programmes are not mandatory and leaders may choose not to enrol especially when there are no sponsorship packages attached to them and they have to bear the full cost on their own. Thus, if it is the expectation of educational authorities in Ghana that leaders in the basic schools enrol in these university-based programmes to develop their leadership skills, sponsorship packages could be instituted to motivate them to enrol in such programmes. A study by Crow (2007) in England found a number of national programmes and funding opportunities available that motivated headteachers to patronize the existing leadership programmes.

On the other hand, literature in Ghana points out that the university-based leadership development programmes that are currently run by the universities in Ghana are master level programmes (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Kusi & Mensah, 2014) which means that candidates need to possess at least bachelor degree qualifications to enrol. Unfortunately, this study (see section 4.1, Table 4.1) and even that of Zame et al. (2008) showed that the majority of the leaders in the selected districts possessed certificate A and Diploma qualifications which would not qualify them to enrol in such programmes. This could partly explain why university-based leadership development opportunities exist in Ghana yet it was one of the least ranked professional development activities by the leaders in this study.

In addition to formal university-based leadership development programmes, online learning via the Internet also emerged as one of the least ranked professional development activities from the survey data across the three leadership levels. Across the three leadership levels,
only three out of the 21 leaders interviewed indicated that they engaged in online learning or use the Internet to engage in further reading or search for information on school leadership (See section 4.2.2). This finding confirms findings from a number of studies in Africa (Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012; Kusi, 2008; Scott & Rarieya, 2011) and in the United States (Bizzell, 2011) which found limited use of the Internet in the development of school leaders. Bizzell (2011) found that professional development opportunities utilizing technologies were seldom accessed by school leaders with more than 50 percent of respondents describing no use of technology for professional development while the remaining describing only minimal use.

In this study, lack of facilities such as computers and lack of access to the Internet emerged as the factors that impeded the leaders’ effort in engaging in online learning. Kusi (2008) highlighted the difficulty of learning on a distant basis particularly for school leaders in rural areas in Ghana because of a lack of access to technology. According to him, the Internet and other information technology facilities were accessible to only a few people, who were in the urban centres in the country. These observations were confirmed in this study as none of the basic schools in the study district had a computer laboratory or had access to the Internet. There were even several communities in the study district with no electricity and these factors could serve as the basis why leaders did not engage in online leadership learning. Yet, Bickmore (2012) asserted that networking with other school leaders via the Internet could be a way school leaders may enhance their professional learning experiences and similarly, Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, and Dean (2005) argued that technology may be a potential solution for providing professional development to school leaders in geographically isolated schools.
Findings from this study showed that the leaders engaged in a number of individually initiated PD activities to develop their instructional skills with little formal PDA organized by the district education directorate as well as the Ghana Education Service. The study found that leaders in this educational district engaged in personal reading, meetings, workshops, coaching by supervisors, peers and subordinates, on the job experience, and visitations to schools. This finding confirms earlier assertions that leaders in Ghanaian primary schools, especially those in rural schools, were left unsupported after appointment and mostly gained awareness of the nature of their leadership tasks through their own efforts (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Oduro, 2003).

Yet, findings from this study have helped to provide nuanced images of leadership development practices from different cultural contexts. According to Mertkan (2011) “understanding of leadership development is confined mainly to western contexts, which often present a unidimensional scenario following a similar trajectory and conceal the multidimensional and multifaceted nature of such developments” (p. 79). Yet a different set of circumstances exists in developing countries and leaders mostly adopt a pragmatic approach to development (Bush, 2008). Thus, it is imperative that professional development activities in challenging contexts be researched to broaden our understanding of the professional development activities of school leaders across geographical and cultural contexts.

It seems evident that the nature of the professional learning of the leaders in the context of this study, to a great extent, is in tune with the principles of adult learning. It is widely argued in the adult learning literature (Chen, 2014; Gravani, 2007; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005; Zepeda et al., 2014) that adults learn what they perceive as relevant to their personal
and professional needs and that they want to be the origins of their own learning by being actively involved in the learning process. Additionally, adults learn when they are ready to learn, when they have a need to learn, are internally motivated and would like to work on immediate problems or learning that is applicable to their work or other responsibilities of value to them (Knowles et al., 2005; Merriam et al., 2007; Merriam, 2001).

As reported in this study, the leaders engaged in self-directed learning because they took full responsibility for their own learning based on their professional needs at hand, and the result would appear to have been an immediate application of what was learnt. The leaders in this study of their own volition and based on their operational needs determined the frequency they engaged in activities such as the reading of manuals, circuit and district leadership meetings, visitations to schools, seeking advice and counselling from peers and supervisors, and experiences and reflections on their jobs. The significance of this is that their learning was centred on their current problems being experienced and there was the immediate utility of their learning. When leaders encountered management challenges that needed to be solved they read their manual, consulted colleagues, and engaged in meetings. Also, they were internally motivated to learn and their past experiences on the job served as useful learning avenues for them.

In spite of these, the professional development of school leaders in the selected district was faced with some limitations that call for attention. The literature on school leadership development emphasizes the need for “a fine balance” between people taking responsibility for their own learning, that is, being autonomous and self-directed learners (Knowles et al., 2005) and concurrently, the system making available opportunities for individuals to make sense of the leadership challenges they face (Demster, Lovett, & Fluckiger, 2011; Dinham et al., 2011; Mabey, 2002). As found in the study, there were no formal leadership development
programmes designed specifically for the different levels of leaders in the study. Yet, a number of studies acknowledge the essential role of theory in promoting professional development and improvement (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013; Bush, 2009; Huber, 2008).

Again, the data have provided clear evidence that the PDA of leaders had a strong managerial focus rather than leadership focus. It emerged that leaders engaged in those professional development activities to tackle and solve immediate problems and to carry out their day-to-day managerial duties in their schools. The leaders reported that when they encountered challenges that needed attention they read their manuals and other reading materials, consulted colleagues, and undertook visitations to other schools. Similarly, when circuit supervisors visited schools, they guided/coached them on how things should be done in their schools. Nonetheless, Pont et al. (2008) assert that the key focus of professional development activities is bringing about improvement in schools and not limited to immediate problems or challenges. This could be attributed to the role definition of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools who were largely expected to carry out a managerial role with limited autonomy to make major decisions at the school level. This might have influenced the focus of professional development activities of the leaders to be problem-centred in such context. Research posits that in countries where schools and principals have a low degree of autonomy, PDA approaches may concentrate on practical aspects of the job. In contrast, where countries place a higher degree of autonomy and accountability at the school level, PDA may be broader in scope or focus on the wider concept of leadership (Pont et al., 2008; Smith & Smith, 2015).

- Informal Learning as a Promising Learning Method for Leaders

Findings from this study showed that the majority of the professional development activities that were frequently engaged in by leaders were informal learning methods such as the reading of manuals and books, learning from colleagues through meetings, learning from
experience on the job, as well as visitations to schools. This confirms findings from other studies in Africa (Ibrahim, 2011; Mushaandja, 2013), England (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010), and US (Bizzell, 2011). For example, Zhang and Brundrett (2010) found that the professional learning of leaders in their study arose out of informal routes and involved a combination of learning from colleagues and learning from experience. Elmore (2004) stated that successful school leaders’ professional learning begins from the inside out with school staff, not with external mandates while Southworth (2002) posited that headteachers learn most and develop their leadership practices by ‘doing’ the job.

The predominant engagement of leaders in informal learning methods could be explained by the fact that the chosen district for this study was generally rural and those leaders had limited access to formal developmental programmes. A number of studies in Ghana have shown that leaders in rural schools in Ghana were left unsupported after appointment and mostly gained awareness of the nature of their leadership tasks through their own efforts (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Oduro & Dachi, 2010; Oduro, 2003). It, therefore, appears that few formal developmental programmes exist in that context and these leaders are left to devise their own individual strategies to develop their instructional leadership practices. It could also be that even in cases where formal training programmes are organized sporadically, it is likely that many of these leaders might not be selected for ongoing professional development since they find themselves in a rural context. Oduro (2003) found that professional development programmes for school leaders in Ghana were usually provided by international agencies for selected schools mostly drawn from urban and semi-urban areas and that such agencies often determined the number and category of schools to be involved. These findings were confirmed by the leaders in this study as they reported that it was not all training programmes that they had the opportunity to attend as schools were selected for such training programmes.
In view of these inherent contextual realities and challenges, informal/on-the-job learning methods remain a viable alternative form of learning for the leaders of basic schools in Ghana, especially those in rural contexts. As highlighted in the literature review, the most common approach to leadership development is the formal classroom-based programme (Day & Harrison, 2011; Fenwick & Pierce, 2002) as approximately 85 percent of organizations engaged in leadership development efforts use some version of classroom programmes (Day & Harrison, 2011). Nonetheless, a major clear trend in recent years has been the increasing use and recognition of the potency of a variety of developmental experiences. While more spontaneous and informal ways of learning are largely overlooked in organizations (de Laat & Schreurs, 2013), there is a large body of literature that convincingly shows that these forms of spontaneous work-related learning are important drivers for ongoing professional development and that such learning does not occur in isolation (Eraut, 2000; Lave, 2012; Spillane et al., 2009). Research shows that workplace learning is deeply connected with the work that people carry out and their collaborations with colleagues and peers and that professional development is effectively realized and organized by professionals through their own social networks and communities (Cross & Parker, 2004; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Similarly, it is argued that changes in the way people learn within the contemporary work setting ‘means providing people opportunities to learn from their work rather than taking them away from their work to learn’ (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004, p. 27).

Nonetheless, to the researcher’s knowledge, no study on school leadership development in Ghana has explored the potential use of informal/on-the-job learning methods for leaders in Ghanaian basic schools. This situation exists although contemporary learning within workplaces now utilises a range of informal learning experiences to develop leadership capability other than training interventions. Meanwhile, as shown in the study, there were a number of notable informal/on-the-job learning approaches that could be optimized to
facilitate the learning experiences of leaders in Ghana. The key challenge is that the numerous informal learning activities remain individualistic and uncoordinated in such context and may thus fail to equip the leaders with the requisite knowledge and skills to exercise effective leadership in schools.

The key issue then lies in how to restructure and coordinate these informal learning activities in the district to make them viable for the leaders. For example, while the leaders in the study reported learning through staff, circuit, and district level meetings, such meetings were not explicitly meant for professional learning but served more as administrative meetings. Similarly, while leaders had been provided with manuals to aid their school leadership, there was no system in place to engage leaders in dialogues, discussions, and practical assignments emerging from their readings. Again, there was no coordinating body initiating the visitations of leaders to schools in such context to enable them use such visitations to create visions for their schools and learn best practices from outstanding schools. Moreover, it was only when circuit supervisors conducted evaluation and supervision in schools and found a shortfall in the work of leaders that they met and guided/coached headteachers on how things needed to be done. These strongly suggest that while on-the-job professional learning existed in the study context, it appears they have not been embraced by the educational authorities as a viable learning avenues and need to be appreciated and developed to make their impact felt by the leaders for school improvements.

A number of education systems, for example, are increasing the opportunities for school leaders to learn from one another, particularly through networks and clusters (Barber et al., 2010). Pont et al. (2008) revealed that leaders in Swedish public schools belonged to a professional network in their municipality where they are coached and supervised by a director of education, who has the task of supporting and developing school leaders in their
professional role. According to them, in many municipalities, school leaders have regular meetings to discuss problems at their schools or to test new ideas and through these regular meetings, principals strengthen their identity as school leaders, support each other and feel the support of the director of education. In much the same way, leaders in this study can engage in valuable learning experiences on-the-job through their existing school, circuit, and headteachers meetings if it is well coordinated by the district educational authorities. Through such meetings, professional learning communities can be formed at school, circuit, and district levels and district education officers can be appointed to serve as facilitators and set the agenda and topics for discussions.

5.1.2 Instructional Leadership Practices

The following section discusses the identified practices of instructional leadership reported by school leaders in this study. The main findings are discussed around the three dimensions of the instructional leadership model employed in the study: defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive learning climate.

- Defining the School’s Mission

Two job functions, framing and communicating school goals fall under this dimension of instructional leadership. Goal setting is a powerful leadership tool in the quest for improving valued student outcomes because it signals to staff that even though everything is important, some activities and outcomes are more important than others (Latham & Locke, 2006; Robinson et al., 2008). Findings from this study showed that headteachers frequently engaged in framing and communicating school goals while assistant headteachers and form masters sometimes engaged in such job functions. Research has shown that mission and goals provide people with a sense of purpose as it increases their mental focus on tasks (Hallinger &
Murphy, 2012; Latham & Locke, 2006). Similarly, in schools with higher achievement gains, academic goal focus is both a property of leadership and a quality of school organization (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Marks & Printy, 2003; Robinson et al., 2008). These suggest that successful schools should be guided by clearly stated goals. In that respect, the fact that leaders in this study had crafted specific school goals, it could be argued that those goals would shape and guide their day-to-day leadership in their schools which would ultimately help improve students’ learning outcome. It is likely that leaders would focus and redirect their resources and energy towards the attainment of the goals they had formulated towards school improvement.

Research has shown that school goals should be based on and informed by student achievement data (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012) and should be learning-focused (Hallinger, 2011, 2013; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Robinson et al., 2008). Taking into account their school context, school leaders in this study set specific goals considering the key challenges confronting academic achievement in their schools (see section 4.3.2). School leaders realized that one of the key challenges facing the academic achievement of pupils in their context was their inability to read correctly. In addition, they also noted that result from the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) for the past years had not been successful in their schools. Consequently, they had set goals aimed at improving students reading abilities as well as improving BECE result in their schools. Participants in the study believed that improvements in pupils’ reading abilities and skills would result in improvements in other subject areas. This strongly suggests that the goals set by the leaders in such contexts were informed by the prevailing academic conditions in their schools which support the existing literature (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Robinson et al., 2008). The result of this study aligns with findings from studies in Ghana which found that school leaders of high-achieving disadvantaged rural schools in the Saboba locality in Ghana crafted concise
school goals that acknowledged the prevailing academic context of the school with their teachers, students and parents (Norviewu-Mortty et al., 2014; Norviewu-Mortty, 2012).

Interestingly, it emerged from the study that there were similarities among the goals reported by headteachers and that of assistant headteachers and form masters in each of the schools. What really distinguished the goals across the leadership levels was that while the goals set by headteachers were formulated for the entire school that of assistant headteachers and form masters were crafted and limited to the specific classes they taught. This suggests that there was a consensus about the school goals across the leadership levels within schools. This meant that the assistant headteachers and form masters collectively participated in the creation of the goals and were well-informed about existing goals in their schools (see Table 4.6). Consequently, they had reformulated these goals to suit the classes they taught. As this was the case, then it is argued that all parties in the school pooled their insights, ideas, and resources towards the attainment of the goals. According to Latham and Locke (2006) staff participation and involvement in goal formulation is important to the extent that it leads to the discovery of effective task strategies and hence increases a person’s self-efficacy that the goal is attainable. Similarly, Hallinger and Heck (2002) noted that through joining a collective effort to formulate goals, people may come to realize new aspirations and achieve higher levels of performance.

Moreover, the leaders in this study had devised and initiated a number of strategies aimed at achieving the goals that had been set for their schools (see section 4.3.2). According to Robinson et al. (2008), if goals are to function as influential coordinating mechanisms, they need to be embedded in school and classroom routines and procedures. In actual fact, goals can never be achieved without practical steps undertaken towards their achievement. In that case, there need to be specific programmes designed to assist in achieving the goals. The
execution and accomplishment of such programmes will then enable the leaders to identify the needed resources for the attainment of the goals. According to Robinson et al. (2008), resourcing goal pursuit is one of the conditions required for goal achievement. In this vein, an attempt made by the school leaders in such a context to initiate programmes towards the achievement of the goals showed their commitment towards the achievement of the formulated goals.

Finally, with respect to communicating schools goals, leaders in this study had created several avenues through which they used to communicate the school goals to other stakeholders – students, teachers, and parents. While some of these platforms were within the school community, they employed other external community avenues as well. As leaders employed these avenues to communicate the school goals to students, teachers, parents, and community members, it was hoped that they could win their support and cooperation towards the achievement of such goals. In such processes, they explained the significance of the goals and strategies they had undertaken to achieve the goals so that they secure their support. Hallinger and Murphy (2012) argued that it is school leaders’ responsibility to communicate school goals so they are widely known and supported throughout the school community and that both formal and informal communication channels need to be used to communicate the school’s primary purpose.

In sum, there was enough robust evidence presented in the previous chapter to suggest that school leaders in the study district were exercising the first dimension of the instructional leadership model, defining the school mission, through framing school goals taking into consideration the prevailing academic conditions in their schools and communicating such goals to stakeholders through internal and external avenues. The nature of how this role was exercised in the context of this study supports the existing literature to a large extent in that
the goals formulated were guided and informed by the prevailing academic conditions in the schools, acknowledged staff inputs and involvements during their formulation, communicated throughout the school, and evidence of practical strategies/programmes carried out towards the attainment of the goals (Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Hallinger & Murphy, 2012; Ng et al., 2015; Robinson et al., 2008).

- **Managing the Instructional Programme**

This section discusses the leadership practice of managing the instructional programme under supervision and evaluation of instruction and monitoring students’ progress. Overall, headteachers frequently engaged in supervision and evaluation of instruction while both assistant headteachers and form masters sometimes engaged in supervision and evaluation of instruction. This finding aligns with that of Ankomah and Hope (2011) who found that headteachers in the basic schools in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana exercised instructional supervisory practices to a large extent. Similarly, it confirms the study findings of Amina (2015) that the majority of teachers she studied in the Wa Municipality of Ghana agreed that their headteachers supervised all aspects of their work in their schools.

Over the years, one of the major causes attributed to the falling standard of education in Ghanaian public basic schools and the student achievement disparity between public and private basic schools in Ghana has been weak supervision of teachers in schools (Amina, 2015; Ankomah & Hope, 2011; Oduro et al., 2008; Oduro & Dachi, 2010). If headteachers in this study were frequently engaging in supervision and evaluation of instruction in their schools, then a claim can be made that schools in the study district would realize effective teaching and learning which would ultimately improve students’ learning outcomes. This is in recognition that in schools where effective school-based supervision exists, there is the likelihood that teacher competence levels are being elevated, which results in improvement in
student academic performance (Glickman, Gorden, & Ross-Gordon, 2004; Robinson et al., 2008; Sackney, Walker, & Hajnal, 1998). Additionally, leaders in higher performing schools were distinguished from their counterparts in otherwise similar lower performing schools by their personal involvement in planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and teachers (Robinson et al., 2008).

A caution, however, is that this study depended only on self-report ratings by school leaders and their ratings might be subjected to inflation. Past studies that had used the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) had consistently concluded that principal self-report ratings yielded scores that were significantly and substantially higher than ratings obtained from teachers (Hallinger, 2011). Similarly, Ankomah and Hope (2011) found that teachers’ responses to their headteachers’ instructional supervisory practices in Ghana were slightly lower than the ratings of the headteachers themselves. Against this backdrop, one cannot conclude with certainty the effectiveness of the supervision and evaluation of instruction carried out by headteachers in this study, but one can at least conclude that there is widespread knowledge and acceptance of its importance.

As a practice of supervision and evaluation of instruction, headteachers in the study directly supervised the lesson notes for teachers. The rationale for this practice was to gain insight into what the teachers intended to teach on a weekly basis. Headteachers in this study strongly emphasised such a practice in such a manner that they marked the lesson notes of every single teacher in their school every week. This seems to suggest that the educational authorities in Ghana perhaps associate effective instruction of teachers with effective lesson notes planning and preparation. In essence, a good lesson plan is both the genesis and the structure, or blueprint, for what happens in the classroom (Coppola, Scricca, & Connors, 2004; Glanz, 2006) and is an important aspect of effective teaching (Stronge, 2002). According to these
researchers, teachers who carefully and methodically plan and prepare for instruction are more effective than those who do not. If headteachers regularly review lesson plans of all teachers, it is possible that they could identify strengths and make suggestions for improvement and that would encourage teachers to have good preparation prior to their lessons and that can impact positively on their classroom instruction.

Nonetheless, lesson notes preparation is a mandatory activity in Ghanaian basic schools and teachers are even aware that they are likely to lose their job if they fail to prepare lesson plans (Baffour–Awuah, 2011). So in a typical basic school in Ghana, about 17 teachers are expected to submit their lesson notes weekly for headteachers to review and offer suggestions for improvement. The expectation would be that headteachers should have deep knowledge in all the subjects taught in basic schools in Ghana to enable them to review the lesson notes effectively. But, are headteachers well equipped to have that deep knowledge to play such a role effectively? Though colleges of education in Ghana train teachers in almost all subjects taught in basic schools, it is likely that these headteachers who are likely to have served as teachers before becoming headteachers had subject areas that they were competent in and areas in which they fell short. Research has shown that instructional supervision and curriculum leadership require skill sets that typically go beyond those possessed by any one individual in the school (Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Spillane, Camburn, & Stitziel Pareja, 2007). So it is very unlikely that headteachers will be competent enough to review the lesson notes of all teachers effectively.

In addition, an average Ghanaian basic school headteacher discharging other administrative responsibilities such as receiving visitors and attending meetings may not have enough time to thoroughly review lesson notes of all teachers. The literature reviewed showed that there were even instances where headteachers in Ghana had to teach in addition to carrying out
their leadership roles (Oduro & Macbeath, 2003). On the basis of these inherent challenges, headteachers in this study might carry out such activity just to meet system requirement rather than engaging in any meaningful review which can promote instructional improvement in their schools. As an illustration, one headteacher noted that: “Every Tuesday your lesson notes should be here. If your lesson note is not here, I won’t mark. On the chart, blue means early submission”. Though this is from one respondent, it seems to suggest that their emphasis could be on ensuring submission and simple marking, and recording submission outcomes for onward submission to the district educational authorities. This challenge has been highlighted in a past study in Ghana where it was found that the object of vetting lesson notes by headteachers was to make a tick with red pen to demonstrate to circuit supervisors that they were in control (Oduro & Macbeath, 2003; Oduro, 2003). This may limit the effort of headteachers to engage teachers in discussions, reflections, and supporting cooperative instructional growth efforts among teachers (Coppola et al., 2004; Glanz, 2006).

In addition to the review of lesson notes of teachers, headteachers in this study reported that they carried out supervision and evaluation of instruction by directly engaging in classroom observation. This finding supports international research findings that headteachers in primary schools are more directly involved in classroom observations (Hallinger, 2011; Mestry et al., 2013; Nguyen & Ng, 2014; Robinson et al., 2008). O’Sullivan (2006) stresses that educational quality can only be improved if there is a systematic observation of what is happening in the classroom. Similarly, Robinson et al. (2008) pinpointed that ‘the degree of leader involvement in classroom observation and subsequent feedback was […] associated with higher performing schools’ (p. 662) and these observations helped teachers to improve their teaching. In this study, the headteachers themselves engaged in classroom observation without shifting such a responsibility to assistant headteachers or form masters. This could be explained by the contextual characteristics within Ghanaian basic schools. A typical basic
school in Ghana, especially in small communities or rural areas consists of 11 classes of about 17 teachers assigned to various classes in the primary and subjects in the JHS. Taking the number of classes and the number of teachers in each school into consideration, it is not surprising that headteachers in this study carried out brief observations in classes.

The study, however, revealed that while headteachers reported that they observed lessons of the teachers in their schools, they did not provide feedback on teachers’ performance. Thus there was limited post-observation conferencing following lesson observations. This contradicts findings from the study of Pansiri (2008) in Botswana who reported that 70 percent of public primary school teachers in Botswana who participated in his study indicated their supervisors provided them with constructive feedback about classroom observation. This seem to suggest that the purpose of the classroom observation carried out by the leaders in this study was not really aimed at improving teacher performance and student learning but probably to ensure that teachers were in class and the timetable was followed. Thus, the focus of classroom observation by leaders was on compliance rather than for instructional improvement. Yet, Blasé and Blasé (2004) argue that feedback following classroom observations should serve as a guide for instructional improvement when it is given genuinely. Similarly, Blasé and Blasé (2000) asserted that feedback resulting from classroom observation increased teacher reflection, innovation/creativity, instructional variety, risk-taking, better planning for instruction, and improved teacher motivation, efficacy, sense of security, and self-esteem.

Another key finding concerning the supervision and evaluation of instruction was how assistant headteachers and form masters carried out such a function in the study. Unlike headteachers, this study showed that assistant headteachers and form masters carried out such a function indirectly rather than directly. They carried out their supervisory role by indirectly
giving prompts to teachers to occupy pupils, quietly observing classes by standing in corridors and assessing the performance of teachers by interrogating the pupils about the teachers’ performance. These findings could be explained by a number of contextual factors in Ghanaian basic schools. First, assistant headteachers and form masters in Ghanaian basic schools are all full-time teachers who are either assigned to classes in the primary or subjects in the junior high schools and thus they will not have the time to engage actively in instructional supervisory practices. Second, they are on the same level of employment with other teachers so they may lack the control over their colleagues and wouldn’t want to offend them. They are equally expected to have their lessons observed by headteachers just like every other teacher in the school.

The second practice of managing the instructional programme explored in this study was monitoring student progress. Overall, the three leadership levels frequently engaged in monitoring student progress as an instructional leadership function in the study district. This could be explained by the fact that assistant headteachers and form masters are classroom teachers and would equally monitor the progress of the pupils they teach. Thus, while headteachers might focus on gathering data on student performance across classes and for the entire school, assistant headteachers and form masters might be focusing on specific classes they teach. The fact that school leaders in this study frequently engaged in monitoring student progress corroborates the study findings of Norviewu-Mortty (2012) and Agezo and Hope (2011) who found that effective school leaders in Ghana demonstrated instructional leadership through regular checks on student learning and encouraged systematic monitoring of student’s academic progress by staff. Similarly, research has shown that monitoring of student performance data is required for an informed leader to maintain awareness of students’ learning progress, and achievements (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Hallinger, 2013; Robinson et al., 2008).
Studies have shown that effective school leaders collect and review assessment data with the intention of using their findings to improve the school instructional programme as well as to inform their leadership practices (Blase, & Phillips, 2010; Glanz, 2006; Robinson et al., 2008). Though leaders in this study reported that they regularly collected exercise books and exam sheets of pupils, instituted weekly and monthly test in schools and reviewed the results of these assessments to monitor how they were performing, there was, however, no evidence of leaders using the data on student outcomes to initiate programmes for instructional improvement in their schools. This confirms the study findings of Mestry et al. (2013) who found that school leaders they studied in South Africa collected and reviewed relevant assessment data but failed to use their findings to improve school instructional programme. Nonetheless, it is asserted that upon collecting student assessment data, highly effective leaders together with their teachers develop “a convergence of meaning by making critical sense of it, and then relating this information to how they are teaching in order to make continuous improvements” (Smith & Smith, 2015, p. 69). This suggests that student assessment data should not be collected for its own sake but to serve as a compelling basis for initiating programmes for improvement.

At best, this study found that some of the headteachers invited students that were not performing to standard to counsel and warn them to learn hard if they were to be promoted to the next class. As a matter of fact, though such warnings could serve as a threat to students and possibly motivate them to learn, it may not result in improvement of teaching and learning in schools if appropriate instructional changes are not made in schools. Similarly, such warnings on their own may not identify the reasons behind the low performance of such students and neither can that improve upon the instructional practices of teachers. Possible interpretations of the lack of leaders using student test results to design programmes for instructional improvement could be that the leaders lacked the technical know-how in data
analysis or didn’t have the required resources that could be used to effectively analyse the results of students for instructional improvement. Nonetheless, the methodical monitoring and use of student performance data to drive continuous programme improvement are essential for ensuring quality teaching in schools (Smith & Smith, 2015).

- Promoting a Positive Learning Climate

This section discusses the practices of promoting a positive learning climate, the third dimension of the instructional leadership model employed in this study. Three sub-themes or practices, namely protecting instructional time, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for learning will be discussed in relationship to this dimension.

The first practice of promoting positive learning climate is protecting instructional time. Overall, this study found that while headteachers in the study district reported that they frequently engaged in protecting instructional time in their schools, assistant headteachers and form masters reported engaging in protecting instructional time only sometimes. Smith and Smith (2015) argue that the human resource capacity in the school will be wasted if instructional time within a school is not treated as an important strategic resource. Similarly, school leaders have a role to play in preserving teachers’ instructional time and buffering teachers from undue pressure from outside influences that might distract them from a coherent course of improvement (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Easton, & Luppescu, 2010; Glanz, 2006). Leithwood (2006) equally suggests that principal leadership that “buffers teachers from disruptions” (p. 18) has a strong influence on teachers’ self-efficacy as well as increasing their organizational commitment.

As a practice of protecting instructional time in their schools, respondents in this study maintained that they made significant efforts to ensure compliance with the school timetable to optimise time usage. This was carried out by ensuring that both pupils and teachers
reported to school on time and completed their grounds work to remain in class at the correct time for effective teaching and learning to take place. The aim of these practices was to ensure that enough time was devoted to classroom instruction and adequate time was spent on learning tasks. All schools in Ghana are governed by timetables which specify the daily routine of activities that are to be carried out and the time allotted for each activity. Without adequate adherence to the planned activities in the school, time could be wasted and that can affect teaching and learning negatively. According to the World Bank (2014), inefficiencies at the school level, led by teacher absenteeism and teacher delay may account for the loss of more than 50 percent of the available instructional time in many countries. Similarly, a study by Abadzi (2007) in Ghana showed that out of 197 school days, teachers were on average absent for 43 days and delayed for 40 days and thus, students were engaged in learning only 39 percent of the time. In this regard, if school leaders were ensuring that the planned programme of activities in their schools was duly followed to avoid delay and unnecessary time wastage then instructional time could be protected.

In addition, the three groups of leaders in this study protected instructional time by rescheduling school programmes such as staff meetings and using pupils to engage in income generating activities that might interrupt instructional time into after school hours. In Ghana, until recently, it was very common to find schools that engaged pupils in some activities meant to generate income for schools. These income generating activities could take various forms including carrying of sand, cocoa, bamboo, and engaging in farming activities. Though there are directives by educational authorities for schools to desist from engaging pupils in such income generating activities in recent times, some schools in rural communities still engage pupils in such activities as evident in this study. However, the different groups of leaders reported that in order not to disrupt instructional time all income generating activities were carried out after school closing time. Besides, school programmes such as meetings for
pupils and staff were conducted after closing so that they could concentrate on teaching and learning. According to Glanz (2006), learning time can be protected if interruptions and disruptions which compromise teaching and learning are kept to a minimum.

Moreover, this study found that all the leaders instituted various forms of punishment in their schools to reprimand pupils who failed to adhere to school rules which resulted in the disruption of instructional time. Some key information that emerged from interviews gave a detailed appreciation of the learning climate in schools. For example, it was reported that it was common in Ghanaian rural communities to have a number of students absent from school without permission. Some pupils also report to school late and are often found returning home even when school is still in session. In addition, some parents who do not understand the need for education during farming seasons or fishing periods prefer to send their children to farm or for fishing. All these are forms of behaviours that can adversely affect instructional time and ultimately teaching and learning in any school. In an effort to minimize these behaviours, school leaders needed to institute measures that could ensure that pupils were in school and remained in class till closing so as to protect instructional time. Consequently, all leaders in this study reported that they had instituted punishments such as weeding, scrubbing, kneeling, and caning in their schools to punish pupils who became victims of these behaviours. As expressed eloquently by FM-7 that “I have made a policy that if you absent yourself from school you will receive seven lashes. Meanwhile, our headteacher had made a general rule that if you do not come to school you will receive five lashes. But in my case as a way of ensuring that pupils come to school I have made it seven”.

The fact that leaders in this study had instituted specific measures and rules to minimize behaviours that could disrupt instructional time in their school supports the scenarios and opinions reported in existing literature. According to Glanz (2006), to protect instructional
time, schools should have a system of rules and procedures that deal effectively with disciplinary problems and other disruptions. Nonetheless, what cannot be said is whether a safe learning environment could be created considering the nature of punishment instituted by leaders in this study. Agbenyega (2006) asserts that corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools may impose hostile environmental conditions on students and may lead to exclusion from education. It has also been argued that although indiscipline remains one of the most common problems for educators, corporal punishment should not be used because no evidence suggests that it has produced better results academically, morally or that it improves school discipline (Canter, 2000). While this study did not investigate the potential effects of the forms of punishment meted out to students who were indiscipline students in such contexts, it is likely that such forms of punishment may instil fear and aggressive behaviour in pupils and might not solve the problems of lateness and absenteeism in their schools.

The second practice of promoting a positive learning climate was providing incentives for teachers. It has been argued in the literature that instructionally effective schools develop a culture of continuous improvement in which rewards are aligned with purposes and practices in schools (Hallinger, 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003). All the three levels of leaders reported that they sometimes engaged in providing incentives for teachers in their schools. There was limited evidence of monetary or physical incentives or award schemes instituted in the schools studied. This could be explained by the contextual characteristics of the study district. All leaders in the study highlighted the lack of support by parents in recognizing the efforts of teachers in their schools which limit their efforts in mobilizing resources to motivate teachers.

The majority of leaders also complained about limited sources of funds in their schools as well as the communities. As put by one respondent: “As I said, apart from selling stones and the small collections from worship, we do not have anything. Even I have told them that the
collections are not for teachers, they are for the pupils”. This contradicts the study findings of Norviewu-Mortty (2012) who found that principals in rural high-achieving schools in Saboba locality in Ghana had instituted both short term and long term award schemes to motivate teachers in their schools.

Instead, leaders in this study restricted themselves to praising and commending teachers to show their acknowledgement of teachers’ effort. Arguably, as leaders step up their effort in praising and commending teachers in public gatherings such as assemblies, PTA meetings, and staff meetings it can serve as a good source of motivation for teachers. This is because some studies found that praises significantly affected teacher motivation, self-esteem, and efficacy and fostered teacher reflective behavior, including reinforcement of effective teaching strategies, risk-taking, and creativity (Blase & Blase, 2000). Also, research has shown that proper recognition of employees in the workplace can and does reap significant benefits to the organization by engaging employees towards the fulfilment of business objectives (Trumpolt, 2008).

The third practice of promoting a positive climate is providing incentives for learning. According to Hallinger (2011), school leaders need to create a school learning climate in which academic achievement is highly valued by providing frequent opportunities for students to be rewarded and recognized for their academic achievement and improvement. This study found that the three levels of leaders sometimes engaged in providing incentives for learning. Overall, the leaders expressed the importance and the need to recognise pupils’ outstanding performance in their schools. The high recognition on their part to create incentive systems in their schools could be attributed to the fact that these leaders are trained as professional teachers and they might have been exposed to theoretical issues pertaining to the effects of positive reinforcement in promoting student learning.
The key issue was that majority of the leaders in the study reported that they provided incentives through verbal reward such as offering praises and commendations to outstanding students. The leaders attributed their inability to reward students through tangible rewards to the deprived nature of their school environment and the fact that parents in such an environment do not show much commitment towards the performance of their children. Writing from UK, Patton (2009) claimed that some large schools were believed to be spending up to £30,000 a year on rewards to keep order in the classroom and cut truancy and that, in some cases, children could win items such plasma televisions, games consoles, iPods, laptops and even flights abroad for turning up on time and working hard. The nature of reward systems as found in this study was contrary to the reward schemes in those contexts. This could be explained by contextual differences. In the case of this study, the selected district was relatively a rural one and majority of the population were poor peasant farmers so they might be unable to support the school leaders in creating effective reward systems in tangible forms in their schools. Another possible explanation could be that the Government of Ghana has abolished all forms of fees in public basic schools and thus the leaders might find it difficult to levy the parents to raise funds to finance such interventions.

Moreover, within the schools, it appeared the leaders had limited access to funds that could be used in creating adequate incentives for pupils. While basic schools in Ghana have access to capitation grant, it cannot be said whether such a grant has adequate component meant for providing incentives in the form of providing tangible rewards for outstanding pupils in schools. According to the Ghana Education Service (2005), the funds provided by the a Capitation Grant to schools are supposed to be channelled towards the provision of teaching and learning materials, school management (including travel and transportation, stationery and sanitation), community and school relationship, support to needy pupils, school-based in-service training, minor repairs and the payment of sports and culture levies. Based on these, it
is not clear whether the headteachers are mandated to use part of the funds to create rewards in tangible forms for pupils and even if there is, whether that could be enough to create meaningful reward systems for pupils.

Nonetheless, the fact that leaders in the study employed verbal/intangible rewards to motivate pupils could equally serve as a potential factor in promoting student learning. Research indicates that verbal rewards contain explicit positive performance feedback, and they are likely to enhance perceived competence and enhance intrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001). Besides, some studies have shown that the use of rewards caused pupils to lose motivation and had little effect on overall school performance (Patton, 2009).

- **Nature of Instructional Leadership in Ghanaian basic schools**

While there is little agreement in the literature regarding the conception of instructional leadership, there seems to be a distinction between the conventional and recent conceptions and practices of instructional leadership (Bendikson et al., 2012; Hallinger & Murphy, 2012; Hallinger, 2005; Horng & Loeb, 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003; Mitchell & Castle, 2005). Conventionally, successful instructional leaders were characterized as “hands-on” leaders, engaged with curriculum and instruction issues, unafraid to work directly with teachers, and often present in classrooms (Horng & Loeb, 2010).

In contrast, the contemporary view of instructional leadership emphasizes organizational management for instructional improvement rather than day-to-day teaching and learning. Within this conception, strong organizational managers consequently are able to support classroom instruction without providing that support directly to individual teachers. Instead, they develop a working environment in which teachers have access to the support they need (Bendikson et al., 2012; Horng & Loeb, 2010). Another aspect of the new conception of instructional leadership is the notion of ‘shared instructional leadership’ which involves the
active collaboration of principal and teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment and where the “principal seeks out the ideas, insights, and expertise of teachers in these areas and works with teachers for school improvement” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p.371).

While it might be difficult to clearly and fully connect the nature of instructional leadership exercised by the leaders in this study to any of the two broad conceptions of instructional leadership concept (especially taking into account the interview data), it appears that the instructional leadership practised by leaders in this study has a closer resemblance to the conventional conception than it has to the recent conception. This is in recognition that most of the instructional leadership functions were directly related to teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005; Horng & Loeb, 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003) while headteachers (principals) emerged as the centre of power and authority (Hallinger, 2003) and significantly engaged in more instructional leadership functions investigated in the study than both assistant headteachers and form masters (see section 4.3.1). The leadership practices carried out by the headteachers in the study were more direct instructional leadership than indirect and more managerial functions than leadership functions. Nonetheless, research has shown that effective instructional leaders are able to support classroom instruction without providing that support directly to individual teachers. Instead, they develop a working environment in which teachers have access to the support they need. Similarly, school leaders have an impact on student achievement primarily through their influence on teachers’ motivation and working conditions and that their influence on teachers’ knowledge and skills produces less impact on student achievement (Louis et al., 2010).

While this study did not investigate why the leaders carried out the sort of instructional leadership functions found in the study, a number of contextual characteristics might illuminate the nature of the instructional leadership they carried out and why it would be
difficult for them to exercise the new conceptions of instructional leadership highlighted in the literature. This then brings in the importance of studying school leadership practices with reference to the context. Past research has shown that the school context has an effect on the type of instructional leadership exercised by principals (Mulford & Sillins, 2003). Likewise, Hallinger (2005) argued that it is virtually meaningless to study school leadership without reference to the school context since “leaders’ behaviours are shaped by the school context” (p. 15). As a result, it appears that some of the socio-cultural characteristics highlighted in Chapter 2 (see section 2.1) might offer some possible explanations to the type of instructional leadership enacted by leaders in this study.

It is argued in the international literature, for example, that school leaders can have a significant influence on student learning through the teachers they hire, how they assign those teachers to classrooms, how they retain teachers, and how they create opportunities for teachers to improve (Bendikson et al., 2012; Horng & Loeb, 2010). The fact remains that school systems in most advanced countries where these conceptualizations emerge are decentralized and practice site-based management (Marks & Printy, 2003) and thus leaders possess the autonomy to hire and fire teachers in their schools. On the contrary, school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools do not play any role with respect to the recruitment and hiring of teachers and do not possess any control over which teacher is posted to their schools. As a centralized system of education, both teaching and non-teaching staff are posted to the basic schools by the GES and thus headteachers have no choice but to accept the staff posted to the schools (Esia-Donkoh, 2014).

Nonetheless, in the recent global economy, success is no longer measured against national standards alone, but against the best performing and most rapidly improving education systems (Pang & Wang, 2016). More countries and education systems are looking beyond
their borders for evidence of the most successful and efficient educational policies and practices (OECD, 2013). In this regard, the educational district in which the study was conducted could have a lot to learn from high-performing educational systems with reference to effective instructional leadership practices that can improve schools taking into account its contextual realities. This is in recognition that international benchmarking of best educational practices has become an increasingly valuable tool for policy making in recent years (Asia Society, 2012).

While it is recognised that there were a number of notable instructional leadership practices executed by the leaders in the study that seem to be relevant to the Ghanaian context such as formulation of goals taking into account the prevailing academic conditions in schools and taking steps in protecting instructional time to promote effective teaching and learning, results from the study showed that there was limited shared instructional leadership aimed at improving instruction in schools. The study results showed that in all the schools, only headteachers marked lesson notes of teachers, checked the work output of teachers, engaged in classroom/lesson observations. The teacher leaders were rarely involved in these core instructional matters.

Nonetheless, it is advocated that considering the expertise needed to lead learning, the normative pressures that draw principals away from classrooms, and the conflicting demands on a principal’s time, it becomes clear that instructional leadership cannot be a solo performance (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012). Hallinger (2005) argue that the type of leadership that is suitable to a certain stage of the school journey may become a limiting or even counterproductive force as the school develops. Therefore, as basic schools in Ghana develop and become much more complex, it is unlikely that headteachers can continue to tread the path of executing these instructional leadership functions alone.
Research has also shown that accomplishing workplace responsibility depends on the reciprocal actions of a number of people (Gronn, 2003; Harris & Spillane, 2008). An association of stronger collaborative leadership with a positive change in school learning results over time is confirmed in the literature (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Thus, any realistic strategy for promoting learning in schools must expand the leadership role of the headteacher (Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Spillane et al., 2007). In this regard, headteachers in the basic schools of Ghana need to work with teachers in joint enquiry and provide opportunities for teachers to take on a range of leadership roles related to bringing about changes in teaching and learning. It is, therefore, essential for instructional leadership in Ghanaian basic schools be reformulated both as a collective identity and in terms of a set of shared functional responsibilities in schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012).

Another key finding from the study was that assistant headteachers and form masters could not directly engage in supervisory roles as they could not observe the lessons of their colleague teachers nor offer direct advice to them. The few of them that reported that they carried out supervision of instruction in their schools indicated that they stood in corridors to secretly observe the lessons and even when they found something wrong they could not approach those teachers directly but rather reported them to the headteachers (see section 4.3.2). Thus, these teacher leaders who were equally full-time teachers could not directly provide support for their colleague teachers to enhance their development. This is an indication that there was a limited peer and collegial learning in the schools studied. Nonetheless, schools are recognizing that teachers should be working together in teams as opposed to working individually in isolation in their classrooms (Lunenburg, 2010; Wang, 2016) and that peer-led learning and development within and across schools is increasingly popular, and is identified as a feature of the world’s most successful improving school systems (Barber et al., 2010).
Accumulative research evidence consistently highlights the importance of interdependent learning and teacher collaboration as the cornerstone of school improvement and effective professional development (Harris & Jones, 2010; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). Increasing research evidence shows that professional teachers will become more effective in supporting their students’ learning when working collaboratively with their colleagues to improve their practices (Louis & Marks, 1998; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). If the current situation as found in the study continues to persist in schools, it would be extremely difficult for teachers to learn from each other to contribute to their personal development and bring about sustainable change in schools through collaborative efforts. Thus, teachers in the basic schools of Ghana need to trust each other and be open to dialogue, discussion, and collective enquiry which would serve as a means through which they can enhance their individual and collective competencies to improve student learning. A number of studies have shown that in high-performing education systems, school-based collective learning activities have been institutionalized into teachers’ daily practices and thus teachers regularly open their classrooms for observation by peers and engage in collaborative discussions about teaching and learning (Paine, Fang, & Wilson, 2003; Sargent & Hannum, 2009; Wong, 2010). Again, teachers meet regularly and observe one another to provide feedback on instructional practice (Wang, 2016).

5.1.3 Learning Transfer Systems for Leaders in Ghanaian Basic Schools

The previous two sections discussed the views of leaders in relation to their professional development activities and instructional leadership practices within a framework constructed from recent literature. This section discusses the responses of leaders in relation to the key learning transfer factors that they perceived to be facilitating the transfer of their professional learning. Overall, results from this study indicated that the learning transfer system factors
with the highest mean scores across the three leadership levels attracted similar responses. This suggests that though variations existed in the order of ranking, the key factors that facilitated the learning transfer of the leaders in the study district were similar. The top transfer systems with the highest mean score across the three leadership levels were transfer effort – performance expectations, motivation to transfer, performance self-efficacy, peer support, and transfer design.

While transfer effort – performance expectations emerged as the factor with the highest mean score across the three leadership levels, motivation to transfer was rated second by headteachers and assistant headteachers and third by the form masters. According to Devos, Dumay, Bonami, Bates, & Holton, (2007), transfer effort – performance expectations refers to the extent to which individuals believe that applying skills and knowledge learned in training will improve their performance. This includes whether individuals believe that investing effort in utilising new skills has made a difference in the past or will affect future productivity and effectiveness. Similarly, motivation to transfer refers to the direction, intensity, and persistence of effort towards utilizing knowledge and skills learned in the work context (Devos et al., 2007; Holton & Baldwin, 2003; Velada et al., 2007). Research has shown that highly motivated individuals will actively strive for possibilities to transfer what they have learned in training into practice (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009).

Findings from this study suggest that there was general agreement on the part of respondents that when they transfer their professional learning, improvement in their performance was likely to occur and they were well motivated to learn and use their learning at work. While some respondents believed that their learning transfer would result in improvement in their own performance, others felt that applying their learning would result in improvement in student learning as well as solving the challenges they face in their schools. Similarly, they
were ‘personally motivated’, ‘intrinsically motivated’, ‘internally motivated’, ‘self-disciplined’, and ‘had the interest to transfer what is learnt to others’. These findings align with studies that have found motivation to transfer as a key factor that facilitates transfer of learning (Bates, Kauffeld, & Holton, 2007; Chiaburu & Lindsay, 2008; Grohmann, Beller, & Kauffeld, 2014; Lim & Johnson, 2002) and other motivation studies that intrinsic motivation is more powerful than extrinsic motivation to drive improvement (Blume et al., 2010).

The fact that leaders in this study highly rated motivation to transfer and transfer effort – performance expectation could be attributed to the nature of the professional development activities they predominantly engaged in. It has already been pointed out that the leaders in this study learned mostly through informal means and through their own efforts. This means that in most instances the leaders in the study would not learn for the sake of learning but would rather learn in order to be able to perform a task, solve a problem, or live in a more satisfying way (Knowles et al., 2005). It could, therefore, be argued that the relevancy of their learning drives their effort to learn, and they would equally have in their minds the potential outcome of the learning which would include improvement in their job performance as well as other school outcomes. It, therefore, appears that such leaders would be highly motivated to transfer such learning and would have strong conviction that such learning would result in the improvement of their job performance or solve the problems they face in schools.

Another learning transfer system factor that was highly rated by the three groups of leaders in the study as facilitating the transfer of their professional learning was performance self-efficacy (see Tables 4.15, 4.16, 4.17). According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy alludes to an individual’s beliefs in his/her capabilities to meet task-specific demands and to successfully carry out a particular course of action. Research has shown that when trainees feel confident in their ability to perform, the more likely they are to transfer such learning and
skill on the job (Velada et al., 2007). Findings from this study indicated that the different levels of leaders were confident in their ability to transfer their learning. They had a strong belief that they were capable of transferring their learning to their job context. This finding supports the findings of Bernard (2005) who investigated the potential learning transfer systems that could have an impact on the successful transfer of learning within the financial services sector in South Africa and found that one of the factors with the highest mean score was performance self-efficacy. In this study, it could be argued that as leaders reported that they were motivated to learn and transfer their learning, it was also reasonable that they rated self-efficacy as one of the scales with a high mean score. This is because self-efficacy partially contributes to transfer through its influence on motivation (Chiaburu & Lindsay, 2008; Chiaburu & Marinova, 2005; Colquitt et al., 2000). Thus, individuals who are high in self-efficacy will be more likely motivated to training transfer (Grossman & Salas, 2011).

Moreover, the leaders in this study rated peer support as one of the key factors that facilitate their learning transfer. According to Holton et al. (2000), peer support variable measures the extent to which peers reinforce and support the use of learning on the job. Factors that affect the transfer of training through peer support include setting learning goals, giving assistance or offering positive feedback (Van den Bossche, Segers, & Jansen, 2010). While headteachers reported that they were supported by their colleague headteachers, assistant headteacher and form masters were of the view that they also received support from their colleague teachers. Across the leadership levels, they indicated that they received encouragement from their peers, and they shared ideas, skills and knowledge among themselves and these facilitated their transfer. This result suggests that the leaders in this study had cordial relationships with their peers rather than their supervisors in the workplace since supervisor support was rated relatively lower than peer support across all leadership levels.
Nonetheless, the role of supervisors in influencing and supporting trainee transfer has been widely supported in a number of studies (Clarke, 2002; Cromwell & Kolb, 2004). Lim and Johnson (2002) identified supervisors’ participation in discussions of new learning, involvement in training and provision of positive feedback as forms of support most recognized by trainees as positively influencing their transfer. As a result, after training programmes circuit supervisors and other educational officers need to support school leaders by providing recognition, encouragement and rewards, communicate goals regarding desired performance, the conditions under which the performance will be expected to occur on the job and the criterion of acceptable performance to promote the transfer of leadership learning in schools.

Another key factor that facilitated the transfer of the professional learning for the three groups of leaders was transfer design. Transfer design is defined as the degree to which training has been designed and delivered to give trainees the ability to transfer learning to the job and how training instructions match job requirements (Bates & Holton, 2004; Chen, 2003; Holton et al., 2000; Holton, 2005) By ranking, all the three levels of leaders in this study rated transfer design as the fifth factor signifying that the leaders believed that their training programmes were taught in ways that made it easy to transfer their learning to the job. Holton (2005) observed that trainees were more likely to transfer the training content to the work context when they perceived that the development programme was designed and delivered in such a way that maximized the trainee’s ability to transfer the training to the job. This perspective was supported by the respondents in this study as they commented on the use of suitable and meaningful teaching methods, continuous use of general principles or techniques, orderly and organized presentation of the training programme, quality of resource persons, effective use of teaching aids, good interpersonal relations between instructors and participants during
training sessions and the use of group work approaches which enhanced their learning and ultimately their transfer (see section 4.4.2).

Nonetheless, though training design was rated highly across the three leadership levels, scales such as the ‘perceived content validity’ and ‘learner readiness’ were relatively low for the three leadership levels in the study. These results could mean that from the perspectives of the leaders the training programmes they reported about were not seen as particularly relevant to their role as school leaders and similarly, they had little knowledge of the training and how it was supposed to benefit them before the training sessions. These confirm the findings of past studies that had investigated the weaknesses of existing training programmes in Ghana (Kusi, 2008; Oduro, 2003). Some of the headteachers studied by Oduro (2003) reported that some of their training programmes were skewed towards the acquisition of pedagogic knowledge and not on school administration and leadership and similarly the headteachers in the study of Kusi (2008) complained that the programmes were organised at short notice and they were therefore always ill-prepared for attending them.

In much the same way, findings from this study indicated that the views of participants were not sought in the design process and they were usually notified on short notice and thus they were not fully prepared for the training. As echoed by one headteacher: “Before the training programme, they should sensitize us enough concerning the need or importance of such programme. Short notices are given and in most cases you don’t even know what the training programme is all about. What we are only told is that headteachers are having INSET without any idea about the focus of such training”. As a result of this shortfall, though the leaders in this study rated the transfer design scale as one of the key factors that facilitated their transfer, it is possible that meaningful transfer would not occur if the relevance of the training content did not match their job role and also their readiness for the learning events was low.
Arguably, if trainees are pre-informed about the training programme and they are asked to make input towards the organization process, they can easily develop goals that they would hope to achieve in the learning process. Similarly, they would know beforehand what to expect from the training session and they can easily assess their learning gaps and expect to fill these gaps during the training.

Finally, although the top-ranked learning transfer systems were similar in minor respects across the three leadership levels, the study found significant differences among six transfer systems across the leadership levels. Past studies have found that transfer systems differ significantly across organizational types, training types, organizations, and demographic characteristics such as gender, age, educational levels, and work experience (Holton, Chen, & Naquin, 2003; van Zolingen & Gulen, 2007; Yamnill & McLean, 2005). This study reinforces the findings of these studies by adding that transfer systems differ significantly across different leadership levels within the same organization such as the basic education sector.

Overall, the study found that those in high authority (headteachers) differed significantly from those in low leadership positions (assistant headteachers and form masters) in a number of learning transfer factors.

The findings of the study suggested that headteachers had more opportunity to use their learning, were more motivated in using their leadership learning, and were more likely to have positive personal outcomes than assistant headteachers and form masters in the study district (see Table 4.14). These results could be explained by the differences in the roles and responsibilities of these leaders in the Ghanaian basic school context. In Ghanaian basic schools, headteachers remain as the only formal leaders entrusted with school administration tasks while assistant headteachers and form masters are full-time teachers. Headteachers only add teaching responsibilities when their schools experience teacher shortages and even in
such situations they would regard the teaching as an additional responsibility. Thus, headteachers are mainly concerned with administrative matters in their schools and are accountable to the educational authorities for school administration. In contrast, assistant headteachers and form masters are full-time teachers and are mostly concerned with their teaching responsibilities as they are accountable to headteachers and educational authorities for how they carry out their teaching responsibilities. Thus, they regard their leadership roles as an additional responsibility. Thus, headteachers would have at their disposal the necessary resources, time, and facilities to carry out their administrative roles in their schools and therefore possess more opportunity to transfer their learning than the other leaders. Besides, headteachers in Ghanaian basic schools receive a responsibility allowance for the leadership roles they occupy while assistant headteachers and form masters do not receive any allowance for the leadership roles they hold. This could explain why headteachers reported that they were more motivated and perceived positive personal outcomes than the other two leaders.

5.2 Conclusion

Following the results of the study and the discussions presented so far, the following conclusions are made.

First, while informal/on-the-job learning remains dominant among school leaders in the study context, such a learning method has not been fully realized as a viable means of learning thereby remaining individualist, uncoordinated, and not structured. Majority of the professional development activities that were frequently engaged in by leaders were informal learning methods such as the reading of manuals and books, learning from colleagues through meetings, learning from experience on the job, as well as visitations to schools. Nonetheless, while the leaders in the study reported learning through staff, circuit, and district level meetings, such meetings were not explicitly meant for professional learning but served more
as administrative meetings. Similarly, while leaders had been provided with manuals to aid their school leadership, there was no system in place to engage leaders in dialogues, discussions, and practical assignments emanating from their readings. Again, there was no coordinating body initiating the visitations of leaders to schools in such context to enable them to use such visitations to create visions for their schools and learn best practices from outstanding schools. Moreover, it was only when circuit supervisors conducted evaluation and supervision in schools and found a shortfall in the work of leaders that they met and guided/coached headteachers on how things needed to be done. These strongly suggest that while on-the-job professional learning existed in the study context, it appears they have not been embraced by the educational authorities as a viable learning avenue for leaders.

Second, professional development activities of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools are mainly focused on solving immediate challenges they face in their work and meeting the day-to-day routines and procedures. When leaders encounter challenges that need immediate attention they read their manuals and other reading materials, consulted colleagues, and undertook visitations to other schools. Similarly, when circuit supervisors visit schools, they guide leaders on how things should be done in their schools. Thus, the focus of professional development activities in the study context was not about bringing about sustainable improvement in schools but limited to immediate problem solving.

Third, school leaders lack access to varied and relevant reading materials in the study context and thus relied mostly on the headteachers’ manual as the main reading material. School leaders do not have libraries that were stocked with recent books on school leadership and they equally do not have access to online journals and database where they could easily access current literature on school leadership. Leaders lack access to facilities such as computers and access to the Internet which restrict their effort in engaging in online learning.
Fourth, contextual factors constrain school leaders in undertaking formal university-based leadership development programmes. While universities in Ghana run courses in educational leadership and administration, university-based leadership development programme was among the least engaged PDA by the leaders which suggest that other factors may be responsible for their non-engagement. It appears that the low educational qualification of the school leaders in the basic schools serves as an impediment to enable them to enrol in the existing formal university-based leadership development programmes.

Fifth, headteachers have access to more learning opportunities than assistant headteachers and form masters suggesting that the development of teacher leaders has not received much attention in Ghanaian basic schools. The study suggested that only headteachers had access to circuit and district level leadership meetings. Again, both AHT and FM did not have copies of the headteachers’ manual and they had limited access to leadership workshops designed specifically for them. Further, because they were full-time teachers, they rarely made time for visitation to schools. This may limit the leadership potentials of the teacher leaders who will eventually emerge as future leaders in schools.

Sixth, the instructional leadership practices of leaders in the basic schools of Ghana are more inclined to managerial functions suggesting that the concept of ‘instructional leadership’ is yet to be adopted. Leadership practices in schools are directly connected to teaching and learning with little emphasis on creating the necessary conditions to promote teaching and learning in schools. School leaders’ managerial functions are in compliance with system requirement and expectations imposed on them by the GES. Thus school leaders directly monitor teachers’ teaching-related duties such as teachers’ lesson plan preparation, pupils’ output of work (the number of exercises teachers give to pupils, mark, and on which corrections are made), and teachers keeping continuous assessment records, and ensuring that teachers and pupils are in
school and class. Headmasters deliberately prioritise their instructional leadership functions and activities to comply with directives from educational authorities.

Seventh, top-down and hierarchical approach to leadership is dominant in the study district as little evidence of ‘shared instructional leadership’ for instructional improvement existed. The study results revealed that in all the schools investigated only headteachers marked lesson notes of teachers, checked the work output of teachers, engaged in classroom/lesson observations while the teacher leaders were rarely involved in these core instructional matters. This approach really discourages the involvement of teacher leaders in the Ghanaian basic schools context in key instructional matters that could bring about collective improvement in schools.

Eight, learning transfer systems in Ghanaian basic schools are not uniform across different leadership levels. Across the leadership levels, headteachers have more opportunity to use their learning, are more motivated in using their leadership learning, and are more likely to have positive personal outcomes than assistant headteachers and form masters in Ghanaian basic schools. These suggest that schools need to build different transfer systems across the different leadership levels to optimize outcomes from learning interventions.

Furthermore, insights drawn from the study suggest that while the theoretical framework guiding the study to a large extent was relevant, it was not fully applicable to the Ghanaian context (see Figure 2.2). Its relevance stems from the culture and context dimension incorporated into the framework. The framework guiding the study theorized that the professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems of school leaders in Ghana could be shaped and influenced by the socio-cultural and institutional contextual realities in Ghana (Baffour–Awuah, 2011; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Kitavi & Van Der Westhuizen, 1997; Oduro & Macbeath, 2003). Clearly, findings from the study have
illuminated the impact of culture and institutional characteristics of the Ghanaian educational sector on leadership learning, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems of basic school leaders. While the theoretical framework posited that school leaders engage in formal leadership development programmes, non-formal learning approaches, and informal learning methods, the result from the study showed that the leaders did not utilize the three modes in their development but predominantly employed informal learning methods.

Finally, while it was theorized that the engagement in the different forms of professional development activities would influence their leadership practices by carrying out effective instructional leadership through defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger, 2005), it turned out through their learning experiences leaders in the study engaged predominantly in managerial functions which were mostly in compliance with policy expectations and thus not serving as effective instructional leaders as conceived in the international literature. Thus, while the theoretical framework was relevant to the study, the key lesson drawn from this is that context impacts on the theory and practice of school leadership and thus it is important to study school leadership with reference to the school context (Hallinger, 2005; Oduro, 2003; Walker & Dimmock, 2005).

5.3 Limitations to the Study

Despite the potential contribution of this study to knowledge and professional practice, the study has the following limitations. The first limitation of this study stems from the fact that it relied solely on the self-reported perceptions of school leaders. School leaders in the study self-reported the frequency of the professional learning activities they engage in and the instructional leadership practices they exercise in schools. Since this is self-reported data, it is possible that leaders would have rated themselves higher than the actual instructional
leadership practices they exhibit in their various schools. Thus, a step to have explored the perspectives of teachers and even circuit supervisors on how they rate the leadership practices of these leaders would have added more value and nuances to the findings of the study. Besides, their views would have served as a triangulation to the views expressed by these leaders. However, Velada et al. (2007) posit that despite the fact that some argue against the use of self-report ratings of performance, it is likely that the learners are the most important and valid source of the measurement of job performance as their perceptions will drive their motivation and performance.

Secondly, the relatively defined sample might not be large enough to warrant a broader generalisation of the result of this study to other districts in Ghana. As already indicated, this study collected data from one district education directorate out of 216 districts across the ten regions of Ghana. However, the selected district is generally a rural one and thus, its findings can be applicable to districts with similar characteristics.

The third limitation of this study emanates from the use of data collection instruments that were developed from different cultural backgrounds in a different sociocultural setting. Both the LTSI and the PIMRS have Western orientation and hence their applicability in the Ghanaian context could be questioned. Harber (1993) argues that “these two contexts are often very different from each other and it cannot be assumed that models and principles that apply in ‘developed’ countries necessarily apply elsewhere” (p. 485). Nonetheless, both instruments were validated before use in the study.

Notwithstanding, these limitations linked to the study may not seriously affect the findings. This is because a mixed methods approach was used to collect data from multiple sources including surveys and interviews on professional learning activities, instructional leadership practices and learning transfer of leaders. Both sources of data collection complemented and
provided corroboration for one another by providing explanations and confirmation of the responses in each section. Thus, this study created room for the testing of existing instruments/theories outside Ghanaian orientation coupled with the generation of new insights and perspectives from leaders through the mixed method methodology employed. Consequently, the instructional leadership model used as a basis for analysing leadership in rural district Ghana seemed to capture relevant and appropriate information consonant with Ghanaian educational leadership practices in schools. It seemed to engage leaders productively and profoundly in the interviews and seemed to produce valid scenarios of the state of instructional leadership in Ghana.

5.4 Recommendations for Practice

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made to guide practice and policy in connection with the professional development, instructional leadership, and learning transfer systems of school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools.

First, it was concluded that while informal learning remains as the dominant form of learning by leaders of Ghanaian basic schools, such learning has not been fully realized and thus remains individualistic and uncoordinated. It is, therefore, recommended that the existing informal/on-the-job learning be further supported, developed and strengthened to make it more vibrant and useful. This could be done by employing the services of circuit supervisors and district INSET coordinators. Currently, each district in Ghana has in place a district educational directorate with officers who are responsible for the educational administration of the district. Each educational district is further subdivided into circuits with an appointed circuit supervisor who is responsible for the supervision of schools in the circuit. The circuit Supervisor is expected to supervise 20 schools in urban centres, 15 in semi-urban centres and 10 in rural areas (Government of Ghana, 2002). It is suggested that the roles of the circuit
supervisors be re-examined and encouraged to focus more on the professional growth of school leaders. If we have effective school leaders in the basic schools, the burden on circuit supervisors would reduce tremendously.

They could specifically be assigned to coordinate the PDA of school leaders by leading their readings and assigning projects that are connected to the challenges of their individual schools, facilitating the meetings of headteachers and setting topics for discussions, and stimulating networking among them. In this case, action learning could be explored as viable form learning for leadership development. Action learning is based on the assumption that people learn most effectively when working on real-time organizational problems and devising strategies to effectively resolve the problems in the real work context (Marquardt, 2004; Sofo et al. 2010). Further, the district education directorate needs to take an active role in school leadership development.

Second, it emerged that the PDA of school leaders focused on solving immediate challenges they faced in their work. It is therefore recommended that school leaders require learning opportunities to enable them to become leaders with critical insight, strategic vision and the ability to engage and energize teachers and other stakeholders in pursuit of achieving that vision. It is advised that future professional development activities for school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools could broaden leaders’ knowledge in the distinction between management and leadership functions of school leadership.

Third, leaders in the study had limited access to varied and relevant reading materials thereby relying mainly on the headteachers manual and individual pamphlets for their professional growth and development. The study, therefore, recommends that leaders be provided with varied and relevant reading materials to enable them to keep abreast with the current leadership practices that can impact on students’ academic achievement and school
improvement. The government of Ghana could establish an ICT centre at the district capital where school leaders can visit to access online journals on school leadership. Alternatively, circuit supervisors and district INSET coordinators can search for relevant and latest educational leadership literature and supply them to the leaders. Again, the supply of such educational literature to leaders is not a guarantee that leaders will have the time to read or that they will understand the content and apply them in their leadership. In that respect, it is suggested that the contents of the materials to be provided should be discussed at circuit and district headteachers meetings being led by the district training coordinators or circuit supervisors. Also, the headteachers’ handbook should be reviewed periodically to keep abreast with modern trends and changing needs of the leaders.

Fourth, it was concluded that certain contextual constraints limited leaders in undertaking existing formal university-based leadership development programmes. It appeared that opportunities for formal university-based professional development exist in Ghana but some contextual challenges deprive school leaders from pursuing such programmes. Since the leaders in the study possessed low academic qualifications, which could not qualify them to enrol in the existing master level leadership development programmes, it is suggested that educational authorities partner with higher educational institutions to introduce certificate and diploma courses in educational leadership in Ghana. This will equip the leaders with the theoretical knowledge in the field of school leadership which would ultimately improve their professional competence to enable them to lead their schools effectively. This is in recognition of the fact that “theoretical knowledge in educational administration and on-the-job experience are both required for practitioners” (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013, p. 157). Also, it is suggested that the government of Ghana could offer sponsorship packages to motivate the leaders to engage in such programmes and upon successful completion, it should lead to substantial improvement in the remuneration and other working conditions of leaders.
Fifth, headteachers in the study district had access to more learning opportunities compared to assistant headteachers and form masters. It is, therefore, recommended that district educational authorities design specific professional development programmes to develop the leadership skills of teacher leaders in Ghanaian basic schools. Assistant headteachers and form masters could be provided with copies of the headteachers’ manual or specific manuals designed to suit their leadership roles in schools. Also, headteachers could be specifically assigned to mentor these teacher leaders in their schools while the district educational authorities monitor and evaluate such interventions. While this could develop the leadership skills of the teacher leaders, headteachers could as well improve their competencies through the process. Further, similar circuit and district level meetings/professional learning communities could be organized for assistant headteachers and form masters. Research has shown that the top performing schools and education systems around the world invest in collective capacity rather than individual expertise (Sahlberg, 2011) and they ensure that their teachers continue to learn and are deeply engaged in collaborative professional learning (Harris, 2014).

Sixth, the conclusion that leaders focused more on managerial functions rather than leadership functions has implications for school improvement in Ghanaian basic schools. Clearly, much of the managerial functions carried out by the headteachers were in compliance with system requirement and expectations of them by the GES. According to Baffour–Awuah (2011), per the GES policy guideline, headteachers are expected to monitor teachers’ teaching-related duties such as teachers’ lesson plan preparation, pupils’ output of work (the number of exercises teachers give to pupils, mark, and on which corrections are made), and teachers keeping continuous assessment records. It, therefore, appears that the existing policy guidelines which serve as the basis upon which headteachers are evaluated impact profoundly on the kind of instructional leadership they exercise in schools which are predominantly
managerial functions. It is therefore recommended that the GES revisit the policy expectation on school leaders to place greater emphasis on how leaders could improve student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur in schools. School leaders should have an explicit mandate to focus on leadership practices that are most conducive to improve school and student outcomes. This will also demand that leaders be granted much greater autonomy to make major decisions to improve teaching and learning. This is because, in practice, school leaders can only have an impact on student outcomes if they have enough autonomy and support to make important decisions and if their major responsibilities are well-defined and focused on teaching and learning (Pont et al., 2008).

Seventh, giving that a top-down and hierarchical approach to leadership is dominant in the study district, it is suggested that school leaders create conditions to support shared instructional leadership in schools. This could be done by headteachers creating strong collaborative teams or professional development communities where leadership is naturally and authentically distributed (Harris, 2014) and connected to changing the technical core of teaching and learning. Unlike headteachers carrying the burden alone, well-organized professional collaborative teams in schools would collectively discuss lesson plans of teachers, observe lessons and provide feedback to each other, and dialogue on student test results for instructional improvement. According to Smith and Smith (2015), purposeful collaboration reinforces the school’s focus, builds coherence in otherwise fragmented systems, and underpins the idea that working together toward a common purpose is a valuable enterprise because of its contribution to building trust, collective responsibility, and a schoolwide focus on learning.

Eight, the study result showed that while transfer design variable remained highly rated, content validity and learner readiness remained low. It is, therefore, recommended that
organizers of training programmes ensure that the training has appropriate content, is relevant and provides practice in congruence to the actual job situation of school leaders. This can be stimulated when needs analysis is conducted prior to training programmes to identify leadership skill and knowledge gaps of leaders as well as school needs so that the leadership development intervention is targeted at meeting the specific needs of schools. Davis (2013) maintains that conducting a thorough and objective needs analysis helps the organization invest in leadership in a strategic way that maximises the value of the initiative to the organization. Also, school leaders should be included in the planning, design, and production of professional development programmes to bolster their preparedness since addressing learner readiness prior to training interventions can increase the effectiveness of learning transfer by as much as 70% (Leimbach, 2010).

Finally, the integral role of motivational factors in facilitating the transfer of learning was supported in this study and thus educational authorities and training organizers in Ghana need to put in place interventions to sustain the motivation of leaders to enhance the application of their learning. Educational authorities need to ensure both that intrinsic motivation is sustained and that extrinsic incentives are provided to maintain a highly motivated school leadership workforce.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the results of the study, a number of areas for further research are suggested. First, there has been a longstanding debate concerning the achievement gap between private and public basic schools in Ghana. The argument has been that there is a greater number of trained teachers in Ghanaian public schools than in private schools and yet student achievement result in private basic schools is significantly higher than that of public schools. With the insight drawn from the nature of professional development activities and
instructional leadership practices in public basic schools which are mostly informal learning methods and managerial functions, further studies could carry out a comparative study on the PDA and instructional leadership practices across private and public basic schools. It is anticipated that such comparative studies could help offer possible explanations to the existing achievement gaps.

Second, the study found that by protecting instructional time in schools, leaders had instituted various forms of punishment such as caning/lashing, weeding, scrubbing of washrooms and kneeling. In reality, these forms of punishment meted out to students are alien to the views expressed in the international literature and in high-performing educational systems. Agbenyega (2006) claims that corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools may impose unfriendly environmental conditions on students and may lead to exclusion from education. Yet in such rural contexts, schools leaders were optimistic that such kinds of punishment meted out to students would help protect instructional time in schools. With this, it is suggested that further studies explore the effect of these measures on students and school improvement.

Third, findings from this study are valuable in the sense that they reveal the nature of professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems which could promote debate on the nature of school leadership practice in the basic schools. Nonetheless, generalizations of the findings of the study are limited as only one educational district out of the over 200 educational districts in Ghana was selected out of convenience. To stimulate a national debate and policy reformulation in connection to the issues explored in the study, it is suggested that future research replicate the study in other educational districts by drawing on a larger sample so that generalizations to the basic schools in Ghana can be made.
Fourth, since the study found no systematic leadership development programme in the study district, it would worthwhile if pilot studies could be organized with local universities and school leaders to measure the impact in schools and across the system.

Finally, this study found that females in leadership positions formed the minority across the three leadership levels. It would be worthwhile if future studies explore the differences between professional development opportunities across gender. This would help reveal the opportunities and the challenges that women, who were the minority, face in their professional development.

5.6 Concluding Remarks

This thesis addressed three key interrelated issues relevant to school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools. The first issue concerned with the paucity of empirically-based insight into how school leaders in Ghanaian basic schools develop their leadership skills when serving in their leadership roles. The second issue related to the concern that the quality of leadership in basic schools in Ghana was generally poor as leaders focused on managerial and administrative duties to the exclusion of leadership functions in schools while there was some lack of account on the nature of instructional leadership the leaders carried out. The third issue connected with the factors that facilitated the transfer of learning in such contexts.

The study makes a number of important contributions to knowledge and practice to school leadership in Ghanaian basic schools as well as the international literature. One of the key contributions of the study lies in its findings relating to the prevalence of different informal and self-directed learning initiatives employed by leaders in the study which has been ignored by past studies investigating the professional development of school leaders in Ghana. Educational leadership literature in Ghana indicated that headteachers were appointed to
leadership without any formal preparatory training and thus in-service training served as the only means through which they developed their leadership competencies without explicating the various avenues and ways through which the leaders learned on the job.

Similarly, the few past studies on professional development in Ghana (Kusi, 2008; Oduro, 2003) specifically focused on the weaknesses and limitations of existing in-service training programmes in Ghana. Yet, contemporary learning within organisations is no longer confined to the classroom but has been expanded to a more fluid learning environment where learners can learn on demand and constantly seek information to address problems or to just satisfy curiosity (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012). Recognising that formal in-service training programmes are not the only means through which leaders develop their leadership skills, this study has extended our understanding concerning the different ways that headteachers, assistant headteachers, and form masters develop their leadership skills in the Ghanaian contexts. The study has highlighted a number of informal/self-directed PDA that various leaders employ for their development.

Quite recently, a number of studies in Ghana are advocating the need to initiate a nationwide leadership development programme for basic school leaders in Ghana (Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013). While we acknowledge that school leaders stand to gain from such development interventions, it should be realized that one of the key setbacks that has confronted educational development in most developing countries including Ghana over the years has been the importation of models of foreign orientation without due regard to the contextual realities prevailing in such countries. In this regard, by shedding light on the existing informal/on-the-job learning mechanisms that leaders employ for their development, it opens up directions on how best such existing self-directed and informal learning
approaches can be fully utilized and incorporated into any formal leadership development intervention yet to be implemented.

Another uniqueness of this study is that it has illuminated the voices of assistant headteachers and form masters in Ghanaian basic schools in connection to their professional development, instructional leadership and learning transfer systems. To the best of my knowledge, there has been no study investigating these educational issues in Ghana by exploring the views of assistant headteachers and form masters together with headteachers. Over the years, the attention by policy makers and researchers in Ghana has always been on the headteachers without much recognition given to other leaders with formal and informal leadership positions in the basic schools. Interestingly, the study showed that across the three leadership levels, headteachers had more opportunities and avenues for development than the other school leaders. Besides, headteachers significantly engaged in all dimensions of instructional leadership compared to assistant headteachers and form masters. These revelations have the potential to shape any future development intervention in Ghana since assistant headteachers and form masters eventually will emerge as future school leaders.

In sum, the major scenario that emerges about the leadership in Ghanaian basic schools is that leaders strongly rely on informal learning which is individualistically based thus failing to promote synergy and creativity in leadership within individual schools and across the education system. The school leaders in such contexts experienced inadequate training programmes to enable them to meet the challenges they faced in their leadership roles and thus making them rely on their own effort to find immediate solutions to the problems that they face in their leadership. This pragmatic focus on leadership means that leaders at all levels remain primarily concerned with daily challenges and remain management focused thus potentially depriving school systems of creative development and policy improvements.
Thus, the leaders were unable to exercise effective and high-quality instructional leadership practices that could result in improvement in schools since they did not engage in adequate professional development experiences.

Nonetheless, many countries around the globe now appreciate that school leadership is a distinct profession and different from that of a classroom teacher and thus initiatives are being developed and implemented to enable principals, and other leaders, to access specialized training for their leadership roles (Asia Society, 2012; Bush, 2012). Research has shown that since school leaders are relatively small but pivotal group, ‘an investment in producing effective school leaders yields a high rate of return’ (Asia Society, 2012, p. 16). Such developmental initiatives will equip them with knowledge and competencies that would enable them to focus on what matters most in schools by supporting the development of effective teaching, setting school goals, measuring performance, strategically allocating resources for teaching and learning, and partnering with community institutions to support the development of the whole child (Barber et al., 2010; Pont et al., 2008; Smith & Smith, 2015).

Thus, to strengthen school leadership in Ghanaian basic schools, Ghana would need to learn from international best practice in connection with initiating sustainable professional development activities to strengthen the instructional leadership capacities of leaders to promote effective teaching and learning in schools. Such learning interventions need to equally take into account the existing learning transfer systems of leaders to ensure that the learning of leaders leads to desired work outcomes and school improvements. This is in recognition that learning efforts are unlikely to result in positive changes in job performance unless newly learned competencies and skills are transferred to the work environment (Holton et al., 2000; Leberman et al., 2006; Velada et al., 2007).
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Appendix 1: Permission from the District Education Office

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

My Ref. No GES/CR/ED/12/5

13th JANUARY, 2014

PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH STUDY IN

DISTRICT EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

Permission is hereby granted to Mr Abonyi Usman Kojo to carry out a research study in the Basic Schools in District.

Mr. Abonyi is carrying out a research study on the topic "APPLICATION OF LEADERSHIP LEARNING OF LEADERS IN GHANAIAN BASIC SCHOOLS" and has chosen our district as the research site. The study investigates the professional learning of leaders in Ghanaian Basic Schools and how this learning is transferred to impact their instructional leadership practices in their schools.

He has duly sought permission from the District Education Office and permission is hereby granted.

I therefore request all Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers and Form Masters to give him the necessary assistance.

[Signature]

DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

DISTRIBUTION:

ALL HEADTEACHERS,
ALL ASSISTANT HEADTEACHERS,
ALL FORM MASTERS,
ALL CIRCUIT SUPERVISORS,
MR. ABONYI USMAN KOJO
Appendix 2: Permission for Using PIMRS Instrument

Dr. Philip Hallinger
7750 Golf Pointe Way
Sarasota, FL 34243
hallinger@gmail.com

August 29, 2014

Usman Kojo Abonyi

As copyright holder and publisher, you have my permission as publisher to use the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) in your research study. In using the scale, you may make unlimited copies of any of the three forms of the PIMRS.

Please note the following conditions of use:

1. This authorization extends only to the use of the PIMRS for research purposes, not for general school district use of the instrument for evaluation or staff development purposes.

2. This is a single-use purchase for the author’s graduate research, thereby requiring purchase of additional rights for use in any future research.

3. The user agrees to send a soft copy (pdf) of the completed study to the publisher upon completion of the research.

4. The user agrees to send a soft copy of the data set and coding instructions to the publisher upon completion of the research in order to enable further instrument development.

5. The user has permission to make minor adaptations to scale as necessary for the research.

6. If the instrument is translated, the user will supply a copy of the translated version.

Please be advised that a separate permission to publish letter, usually required by universities, will be sent after the publisher receives a soft copy of the completed study.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Professor Philip Hallinger

www.philiphallinger.com
Appendix 3: Survey for School Leaders

As a school leader, this survey investigates your professional development activities, instructional leadership practices/behaviours and the learning transfer system factors that facilitate the transfer of your professional learning. You do not have to provide any personal identity and your responses to this survey will be treated as confidential information.

PART I: PERSONAL DATA

Instruction: please you are required to answer the questions by ticking (√) the appropriate box

QUESTION 1
Which leadership position do you hold currently in the school?
Headteacher { } Assistant Headteacher { } Form Master { }

QUESTION 2
How many years have you served in this leadership position?
Less than 5 years { } More than 5 years { }

QUESTION 3
What is your gender?
Male { } Female { }

QUESTION 4
What is your age group?
Less than 30 years { } 30 - 39 years { } 40 - 49 years { }
50+ years { }

QUESTION 5
What is your highest qualification?
SSCE/WASSE { } Certificate A { } Diploma in Basic Education { }
Bachelor Degree { } Master’s Degree { }
**PART II: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

**QUESTION 6**

Please for each learning activity listed below indicate how often you use this activity to develop your instructional leadership practices in your school by using the rating below.

1 = Not at all; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Occasionally; 4 = Frequently; 5 = Very Frequently

Please respond to each item by circling the number which best describes your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Development Activities</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenging work assignments or projects completed on-the-job</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching by supervisors, peers and/or subordinates</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal and external meetings of school leaders</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal or external 'knowledge networks' or communities of learning</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a committee or working party/taskforce</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-building retreats</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor programmes - formal and informal</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (books, newspapers, articles, magazines, manuals)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured &amp; non-intentional experiences resulting from daily-work</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondments at same grade</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting in a more senior position</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal university-based leadership development</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom training - short-term or longer term courses</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops, Seminars, forums,</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences of school leaders (regional and national levels)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation to schools</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line learning via internet</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 degree feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisals</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based/Cluster based In-service training</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 7
Choose the most recent learning experience (either formal, non-formal or informal) you have completed at work in the last 2 years, which has significantly affected your instructional leadership practices in your school.

QUESTION 8
Please provide a short description of the learning experience you have named above (eg what it involved, the aims & objectives, when you undertook the learning, the duration of the experience).

PART III: EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ON INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

QUESTION 9
Following your learning experiences, how do you carry out each of the following instructional leadership practices? Please rate each practice on a continuum from 1 to 5: 1 = Almost Never, 2 = Seldom, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Frequently, 5 = Almost Always.
Please respond to each item by circling the number which best describes your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>input on goal development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use data on student performance when developing the school's academic</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displays in the school (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic progress)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to the school’s goals or mission in forums with students (e.g.,</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in assemblies or discussions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPERVISE &amp; EVALUATE INSTRUCTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the goals and direction of the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review student work products when evaluating classroom instruction</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not involve written feedback or a formal conference)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point out specific strengths in teacher's instructional practices in</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss academic performance results with the faculty to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform students of school's academic progress</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that students are not called to the office during instructional time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities on instructional time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward special efforts by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honour roll or mention in the principal's newsletter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use assemblies to honour students for academic accomplishments or for behavior or citizenship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize superior student achievement or improvement by seeing in the office the students with their work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions to and accomplishments in class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part IV: Learning Transfer System Factors that Facilitate Transfer of Learning

Please think back to your completed learning experiences that you have indicated:

Please select the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) to the right of each item that most closely reflects your opinion about the use of your newly learned knowledge and skills back to the job. The aim is to determine what might have influenced you most to transfer your learning experience in the school.

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither disagree nor agree 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Please respond to each item by circling the number which best describes your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to this learning, I knew how the program was supposed to affect my performance</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This learning will increase my personal productivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I leave this learning experience, I can’t wait to get back to work to try what I learned</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe this learning experience will help me do my current job better</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successfully using this learning experience will help me get a salary increase</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I use this learning experience, I am more likely to be rewarded</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am likely to receive some recognition if I use my newly learned skills on the job</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before this learning experience, I had a good understanding of how it would fit my job-related development</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I knew what to expect from this learning experience before it began.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have time to try to use this learning experience on my job</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to use this learning experience will take too much energy away from my other work</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees in this organization will be penalized for not using what they have learned in this learning experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be able to try out this learning experience on my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much happening at work right now for me to try use this learning experience</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I do not use new techniques taught in this learning experience I will be reprimanded.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I do not utilize this learning experience I will be cautioned about it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The resources needed to use what I learned in this learning experience will be available to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My colleagues will appreciate my using the new skills I learned in this training.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At work, my colleagues will expect me to use what I learned in this learning.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor will meet with me regularly to work on problems I may be having in trying to use this learning experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor will meet with me to discuss ways to apply this learning experience on the job</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor will oppose the use of techniques I learned in this learning experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor will think I am being less effective when I use the techniques taught in this learning experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor will probably criticize this learning experience when I get back to the job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor will help me set realistic goals for job performance based on my training.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructional aids (equipment, illustrations, etc.) used in this learning experience are very similar to real things I use on the job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The methods used in this learning experience are very similar to how we do it on the job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the way this learning experience seems so much like my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is clear to me that the people conducting this learning experience understand how I will use what I learn.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The trainer(s) used lots of examples that showed me how I could use my learning on the job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way the trainer(s) taught the material made me feel more confident I could apply it in my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will get opportunities to use this learning experience on my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are systems in place that will reward me when I apply this new learning on the job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this organization, there are incentives for me to apply this learning experience on the job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The knowledge and skills taught in this learning experience are the same as those required by my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of this learning experience matches my job requirements.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job performance improves when I use new things that I have learned.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The harder I work at learning, the better I do my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the most part, the people who get rewarded around here are the ones that do something to deserve it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I do things to improve my performance, good things happen to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job is ideal for someone who likes to get rewarded when they do something really good.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced employees in my group ridicule others when they use techniques they learn in training.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in my group are not willing to put in the effort to change the way things are done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My workgroup is reluctant to try new ways of doing things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People often make suggestions about how I can improve my job performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People often make suggestions about how I can improve my job performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get a lot of advice from others about how to do my job better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never doubt my ability to use newly learned skills on the job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am sure I can overcome obstacles on the job that hinder my use of new skills or knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At work, I feel very confident using what I learned in training even in the face of difficult or taxing situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People often tell me things to help me improve my job performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Interview Guide for School Leaders

1. How long have you been in this leadership position?

2. What is your highest educational qualification?

3. How old are you?

4. What formal leadership development programmes have you undertaken to develop your instructional leadership practices in your school over the past two years?

5. What nonformal leadership development programmes have you undertaken to develop your instructional leadership practices in your school over the past two years?

6. What informal leadership development programmes have you undertaken to develop your instructional leadership practices in your school over the past two years?

7. Choose the two most recent learning experiences (either formal or informal) you have completed in the last two years that have significantly impacted your instructional leadership practices in your school.

8. Please provide a short description of these learning experience:
   i. What it involved?
   ii. The aims and objectives?
   iii. The description of the learning experience?

9. What instructional leadership practices have you implemented in your school as a result of these professional development activities?

10. What can you point to that would indicate that these learning experiences affected your instructional leadership practices in your school?

11. Follow up questions:
   i. In what ways have these learning experiences influenced you to frame and communicate school goals?
ii. In what ways have these learning experiences influenced you to supervise and evaluate instruction in your school?

iii. In what ways have these learning experience influenced you to monitor students’ progress?

iv. In what ways have these learning experience influenced you to protect instructional time?

v. In what ways have these learning experiences influenced you to provide incentives for teachers in your school?

vi. In what ways have these learning experience influenced you to provide incentives for learning in your school?

vii. What other specific ways have you implemented your professional learning to improve teaching and learning in the school?

12. What personal factors enable you to transfer what you learn to improve teaching and learning in your school?

13. What personal factors hinder your desire to transfer your professional learning activities in your school?

14. During the training session, what factors positively affected your learning performance which ultimately affected the learning transfer? Were you pre-informed about such learning?

15. What do you think could have been done to better ensure learning and its transfer before, during, and after the professional learning programme?

16. Reflecting on your school environment, what do you perceive as some opportunities that promoted or encouraged you to apply what was learned to improve teaching and learning in your school?
17. Reflecting on your school environment, what do you perceive as some challenges that prevented you from applying what was learned to improve teaching and learning?

18. In what ways do your peers and supervisors support you to transfer your learning in the work place?

19. What structures exist in your school that influence you to transfer your learning?

20. Are there measures to reprimand or punish you in any form if you fail to transfer what you learn back to the school? If so, how is it like?

21. What reward systems exist in your school that urge you to transfer your learning back to the school?

22. Overall, what are three most important factors that facilitate/promote your learning transfer as a school leader? Kindly explain these points.

23. Overall, what are the three most important factors that limit/hinder your learning transfer as a school leader?