

Teachers' Self-efficacy on School Improvement: A Comparative Analysis of Private and Public Junior High Schools in the Takoradi Metropolis, Ghana

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One construct of teachers' belief that has consistently been associated with the numerous qualities of an effective teacher, is teacher efficacy. Varying studies conducted have established relationships between teacher efficacy and motivation, learners' outcomes and job performance. More so, studies conducted have attributed the differences in the performance of public and private schools to supervision, school climate, availability of teaching, and learning materials among others. However, not much has been studied about the teachers' belief in these two working environments. The study therefore sought to examine teacher efficacy in public and private basic schools and how it influenced the general improvement of their schools. A correlational design was employed for the study. The stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 15 public and private schools; a total of 134 teachers comprising 90 public and 44 private basic school teachers respectively. A standard questionnaire for measuring teacher efficacy was used in gathering data. The study revealed that, among other things, though, there are more professional teachers in public schools than private schools, teachers in the latter have a slightly higher efficacy. More so, there was no relationship between teacher qualification and teacher efficacy. Thus, it was recommended that, in the short term, circuit supervisors and heads of schools should organize seminars for teachers on changing their mindset about teaching in general and learners who go to public schools in particular, since this has serious implications for teachers' self-efficacy and school improvement.

Keywords: self-efficacy, teacher efficacy, school improvement, public schools, private schools

Introduction

That education is the single most important building block on which a nation's development is founded is an understatement. In fact, it is the fulcrum, around which all the nation's enterprises and endeavours revolve. The extent to which these enterprises are functional and the endeavours are worthwhile, is largely dependent on the quality of education that a nation provides for its people. This explains the large proportions of resources that nations devote to the provision of education for their citizens (Ankomah, 2002). Though, the efforts at providing quality education require the inputs of various stakeholders, teachers are the prime vanguards, they are the final implementers of the curriculum. As a result, the quality of learners that an education system turns

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out is determined by the quality of teachers (Hallack, 1977), to a greater extent, learners' achievement is determined by the quality of teaching. Without mincing words, one can say that no nation can develop beyond the level of its teachers. Awoniyi (1979) concurred by reiterating that the quality of teachers largely determines the quality of education in a society. Awoniyi emphasized that the indicators of the quality of a school system are the qualifications and experiences of teachers, which may influence teachers' level of efficacy.

Bandura studied self-efficacy concepts in relation to a variety of concepts, such as motivation (Schunk, 1991) and phobias (Bandura, 1983, as cited in Adu, Tadu, & Eze, 2012). The studies noted that individuals develop ideas and self-perceptions of their capabilities. These capabilities "drive" individuals when interacting with their environment. Bandura (1977) referred to this control as "perceived self-efficacy", this research supports the relationship between teacher efficacy/self-determination and academic achievement. Ross (1995) also found a positive relationship between teacher efficacy and working conditions. Teachers with high efficacy interact more frequently with peers, participate in joint work (team teaching, peer coaching, mentoring, or committee work), and assume a stronger role in school decision-making than teachers with lower efficacy. Therefore, it is probable that teachers' self-efficacy may influence school improvement.

Teacher Efficacy

One construct of teachers' belief that has consistently been associated with the numerous qualities of an effective teacher, is teacher efficacy. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk (2001) (as cited in Vasquez, 2008) defined teacher efficacy as "a teacher's judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (p. 283). Teacher efficacy has been related to students' outcomes, such as motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989), achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986), and students' own sense of efficacy (Anderson, Green, & Loewen, 1988). Teacher efficacy has also been related to teacher behavior in the classroom. Allinder (1994) found that teachers with high efficacy beliefs plan more thoroughly and are more organized. Highly efficacious teachers have a willingness to try new strategies (Guskey, 1988), they persist longer when teaching becomes difficult (Coladaraci, 1992) and work with struggling students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Teachers with high efficacy show greater commitment to teaching (Evans & Tribble, 1986), more enthusiasm for teaching (Allinder, 1994), and are more likely to stay in the profession (Burley, Hall, Villeme, & Brockheimer, 1991).

More so, Ashton and Webb (1986) found that teachers with a high sense of efficacy have high expectations for all students, establish classroom environments that encourage warm interpersonal relationships, and promote strong academic work. They are more humanistic in their classroom management style (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990), evoke trust from their students (DaCosta & Riordan, 1996), and favor student-centered classrooms (Czerniak & Schriver, 1994), as well as activity-based and experiential learning (Enochs, Scharman, & Riggs, 1995). Furthermore, teachers with high efficacy are more likely to seek assistance from other educational professionals (DeMesquita & Drake, 1994) and promote parental involvement in schooling (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992).

A gleaning of the forgoing suggests that teacher efficacy influence most attributes that a teacher demonstrates and it also plays a significant role primarily in learners' outcomes. However, considering the key role a teacher plays in the entire life of a school, it cannot be overestimated that the extent to which a teacher is efficacious may influence all aspect of a school, which may invariably impinge on its improvement.

School Improvement

School improvement entails a whole gamut of worthwhile activities that schools employ in order to make the schools better and ensure the achievement of educational outcomes. Welzen (1985) believed that it is a systematic and sustained effort to improve learning outcomes. Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994) discussed the two meanings of school improvement: (1) It is a “common sense which relates to general efforts to make schools better places” (p. 3); and (2) It is a “distinct approach to educational change that enhances students’ outcomes as well as strengthening school’s capacity for managing change” (p. 3).

School improvement is not an event but a deliberate effort to systematically set a process in motion geared towards making schools better. Stoll (1998) argued that it is not a quick fix but part of an ongoing process that requires the participation of teachers in decision-making. Therefore, this implies that it is a process of sustained activities that seek to enhance benefit for learners, which may be influenced by responses from internal or external contributions. Some internal elements that may facilitate school improvement may be an open school climate, participation of teachers and learners in decision-making, provision of resources, enforcing discipline, etc., whereas, a strong school community relationship that allows for parental and community involvement may constitute external factors. The ultimate aim is to enhance learners’ progress, achievement, and development (Stoll & Fink, 1996). The extent to which teachers are efficacious may influence all these.

Problem Statement

A growing line of literature, starting with Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore (1982), have suggested that “other things equal, private schools are more effective learning institutions” (Hall & Vedder, 2004, p. 77). Ankomah (2002) intimated that inspite of the effort of the government of Ghana at providing sound education, especially at the basic level, public schools continue to lag behind private schools in pupils’ performance with unacceptably wide disparities, which has implications for school improvement. It may be argued that schools with appreciable learners’ outcomes are progressively improving most aspects of schools, such as teachers’ participation in decision-making, provision of resources, enforcing discipline, encouraging parental and community involvement, etc..

Though the contributing factors for these disparities are not farfetched, the irony is that most teachers in public schools are certified, more trained and qualified, and are better paid than most of their counterparts in private schools, which may naturally prop up their level of efficacy. More so, most studies conducted have concentrated on resources availability, management, supervision, learners’ socio-economic background, students’ self-efficacy and teacher efficacy, and their relationship with learners’ academic performance. Most of such studies have all shown a positive relationship among all these variables. This investigation, however, seeks to examine the extent to which basic school teachers’ level of efficacy in other aspects of school life in public and private JHS (junior high schools) influence the school improvement.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

- (1) What is the difference between teacher efficacy in public and private JHS?
- (2) How does teacher qualification relate to teacher efficacy?
- (3) What are differences in public and private school teachers’ efficacy in other aspects of school life?

Methodology

The correlational design was deemed appropriate for the study, since the study sort to examine the relationship among variables. All teachers in JHS in the Takoradi Metropolis constituted the target population. The stratified sampling was used to group the schools into public and private. The lottery with replacement method of simple random sampling was employed in the selection of 22 JHS, comprising 15 public and seven private schools. A total of 134 respondents was purposively selected for the study, which consisted of 90 and 44 teachers from public and private JHS respectively. These groups of teachers were selected because they have been teaching in their respective schools for more than two years.

The questionnaire was the main research instrument designed to gather data for the study. Gibson and Dembo's (1984) Teacher Efficacy Scale was adopted with minimal changes. This instrument has been widely used (Reames & Spencer, 1998; Yisrael, 1996; Hipp, 1996), it is reliable and "recognised as a standard measure of teachers' professional efficacy" (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997, p. 453). The questionnaire consisted of 30 mainly close-ended items on a 5-point Likert Scale with the following weightings: 1—N (Nothing); 2—VL (Very little); 3—SI (Some influence); 4—QB (Quite a bit); and 5—GD (A great deal).

Data Analysis Procedure

Data gathered were serially numbered, edited, and coded accordingly. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyse biographic information. The rest of the items in the questionnaire were analysed using means. The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was computed to ascertain the relationship between teacher qualification and teacher efficacy. Relationships were interpreted within the confined ranges suggested by Cohen (1988). That is:

$R = 0.10$ to 0.29 or $R = -0.10$ to -0.29 , small;

$R = 0.30$ to 0.49 or $R = -0.30$ to -0.49 , medium;

$R = 0.50$ to 1.0 or $R = -0.50$ to -1.0 , large.

The independent sample *t*-test was also used in determining the differences between teacher efficacy in public and private JHS. All the research questions were addressed at a significance level of 0.05.

Interpretation and Discussion of Results

Data in Table 1 indicate that there were more male teachers in the private schools (54.5%), but more female teachers in the public schools (63.3%).

Table 1

Sex Distribution of Teachers

Sex	Group	Frequency	%
Male	Public	33	36.7
	Private	24	54.5
Female	Public	57	63.3
	Private	20	45.5

The distribution of the educational qualification of teachers in both public and private schools is presented in Table 2.

It may be deduced from the data in Table 2 that an overwhelming majority of the public school teachers constituting about 90.1% are professional, whereas 63.5% of their counterparts in the private schools also

have education that qualifies them to become professional teachers. This is not surprising since most teachers are now taking advantage of the certificate, diploma, and post diploma education programmes by regular, part-time, or distance education, offered by various public and private tertiary institutions, to upgrade themselves.

Table 2

Highest Educational Qualification of Teachers

Qualification	Group	Frequency	%
High school	Public	1	1.1
	Private	8	18.2
3/4 year post secondary	Public	22	24.4
	Private	9	20.4
Diploma with education	Public	38	42.4
	Private	13	29.5
Diploma without education	Public	3	3.3
	Private	5	11.4
Degree with education	Public	21	23.3
	Private	6	13.6
Degree without education	Public	4	4.4
	Private	3	6.8
Masters degree	Public	1	1.1
	Private	-	-

Data in Table 3 sort to explore both public and private teachers' efficacy levels.

It may be deduced from the data in Table 3 that with respect to influencing class sizes, teachers in the public basic schools have very little influence as compared to their counterparts in the private schools, who indicated that they have some influence. This may be attributed to the fact that enrolment in public basic schools is heavily influenced by and controlled by government policies. For instance, in recent times, enrolment figures and attendance in basic schools have doubled due to the introduction of policies, such as the capitation grant, free school feeding (Osei-Fosu, 2011), and free school uniform without much corresponding increase in facilities and infrastructure. However, in the private schools, admissions and enrolment figures are controlled by the proprietors, who may seek the opinion of class teachers before admitting learners into their classes.

With regard to how much teachers can do to get community members to be involved in working with the school, whereas teachers in the public schools have some influence, and those in the private schools have little influence. This may be due to the fact that public schools are community owned. As a matter of fact, most communities provide land and other resources for the establishment of basic schools in their communities, thus, they are major stakeholders and partners in school development. In order to strengthen the community-school relationship, committees, such as the SMCs (school management committees) are formed, apart from the traditional PTA (Parent Teacher Association) with some members of the community handling key positions. Elders, groups, and individuals in the community are directly or indirectly obliged to take keen interest in the activities of public schools in the community. Thus, it becomes easier for teachers in such school to involve the community in the activities of the school when the need arises. On the other hand, private schools are established and owned by private person(s). As a result, apart from the PTA or the parents of wards, private school teachers have little influence when it comes to involving the community in what the school does.

Table 3

A Distribution of Teachers' Self-efficacy Levels

Efficacy statements	Group	GD Freq. (%)	QB Freq. (%)	SI Freq. (%)	VL Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	Mean	Remarks
How much can you influence decision-making in school?	Public	11 (12.2)	26 (28.9)	23 (25.6)	27 (30.0)	3 (3.3)	3.17	SI
	Private	0 (0.0)	19 (42.3)	6 (13.6)	16 (36.4)	3 (6.8)	2.93	SI
How much can you express your views on matters?	Public	28 (31.1)	27 (30.0)	13 (14.4)	21 (23.3)	1 (1.1)	3.67	QB
	Private	9 (20.5)	18 (40.9)	6 (13.6)	11 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	3.57	SI
How much can you do to get instructional materials and equipment?	Public	10 (11.1)	27 (30.0)	15 (16.7)	36 (40.0)	2 (2.2)	3.18	SI
	Private	21 (47.7)	9 (20.5)	7 (15.9)	6 (13.6)	1 (2.3)	3.97	QB
How much can you do to influence class sizes?	Public	9 (10.0)	15 (16.7)	11 (12.2)	29 (32.2)	26 (28.9)	2.47	VL
	Private	7 (15.9)	13 (29.5)	3 (6.8)	17 (38.6)	4 (9.1)	3.04	SI
How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	Public	20 (22.2)	32 (35.6)	22 (24.4)	15 (16.7)	1 (1.0)	3.61	QB
	Private	12 (27.3)	14 (31.8)	13 (29.5)	5 (11.4)	0 (0.0)	3.75	QB
How much can you do to promote learning when there is no support from home?	Public	13 (14.4)	18 (20.0)	32 (35.6)	25 (27.8)	2 (2.2)	3.17	SI
	Private	9 (20.5)	14 (31.8)	19 (43.2)	2 (4.5)	0 (0.0)	3.70	QB
How much can you do to keep students on tasks?	Public	26 (28.9)	27 (30.0)	31 (34.4)	4 (4.4)	2 (2.2)	3.79	QB
	Private	13 (29.5)	17 (38.6)	12 (27.3)	2 (4.5)	0 (0.0)	3.93	QB
How much can you do to increase students' memory of previous lessons taught?	Public	38 (42.2)	32 (35.6)	14 (15.6)	6 (6.7)	0 (0.0)	4.13	QB
	Private	19 (43.2)	19 (43.2)	6 (13.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.30	QB
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	Public	32 (35.6)	34 (37.8)	19 (21.1)	4 (4.4)	1 (1.1)	4.02	QB
	Private	17 (38.6)	18 (40.9)	8 (18.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	4.16	QB
How much can you do to get students to work together?	Public	38 (42.2)	32 (35.6)	15 (16.7)	4 (4.4)	1 (1.1)	4.13	QB
	Private	22 (50.0)	12 (27.3)	10 (22.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.27	QB
How much can you do to minimize the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning?	Public	7 (7.8)	19 (21.1)	29 (32.2)	26 (28.9)	9 (10.0)	2.88	SI
	Private	2 (4.5)	13 (29.5)	18 (40.9)	11 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	3.14	SI
How much can you do to get students to do their homework?	Public	42 (46.7)	30 (33.3)	14 (15.6)	4 (4.4)	0 (0.0)	4.22	QB
	Private	24 (54.5)	13 (29.5)	7 (15.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.39	QB
How much can you do to get students to follow classroom rules?	Public	55 (61.1)	21 (23.3)	9 (10.0)	5 (5.6)	0 (0.0)	4.40	QB
	Private	25 (56.8)	9 (20.5)	10 (22.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.34	QB
How much can you do to get students to control disruptive classroom behaviours?	Public	43 (47.8)	31 (34.4)	13 (14.4)	3 (3.3)	0 (0.0)	4.27	QB
	Private	29 (65.9)	10 (22.7)	4 (9.1)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	4.52	QB
How much can you do to prevent problem behaviours on school grounds?	Public	21 (23.3)	36 (40.0)	22 (24.4)	9 (10.0)	2 (2.2)	3.72	QB
	Private	15 (34.1)	13 (29.5)	12 (17.3)	3 (6.8)	1 (2.3)	3.86	QB
How much can you do to get parents to be involved in school activities?	Public	10 (11.1)	26 (28.9)	29 (32.2)	19 (21.1)	6 (6.7)	3.17	SI
	Private	7 (15.9)	18 (40.9)	9 (20.5)	9 (20.5)	1 (2.3)	3.48	SI
How much can you assist parents in helping their children to do well in school?	Public	12 (13.3)	28 (31.1)	33 (36.7)	15 (16.7)	2 (2.2)	3.37	SI
	Private	5 (11.4)	19 (43.2)	16 (36.4)	3 (6.8)	1 (2.3)	3.55	SI
How much can you do to get parents to feel comfortable coming to school?	Public	29 (32.2)	32 (35.6)	21 (23.3)	5 (5.6)	3 (3.3)	3.88	QB
	Private	22 (50.0)	10 (22.7)	9 (20.5)	2 (4.5)	1 (2.3)	4.14	QB
How much can you do to get community groups involved in working with the school?	Public	6 (6.7)	20 (22.2)	31 (34.4)	26 (28.9)	7 (7.8)	2.91	SI
	Private	2 (4.5)	6 (13.6)	12 (27.3)	18 (40.9)	6 (13.6)	2.55	VL
How much can you do to get churches involved in working with the school?	Public	6 (6.7)	13 (14.4)	23 (25.6)	25 (27.8)	23 (25.6)	2.74	SI
	Private	2 (4.5)	9 (20.5)	9 (20.5)	18 (40.9)	6 (13.6)	2.61	SI
How much can you do to get local colleges and universities involved in working with the school?	Public	4 (4.4)	12 (13.3)	24 (26.7)	30 (33.3)	20 (22.2)	2.49	VL
	Private	1 (2.3)	5 (11.4)	11 (25.0)	19 (43.2)	8 (18.2)	2.31	VL
How much can you do to get businesses involved in working with the school?	Public	6 (6.7)	13 (14.4)	23 (25.6)	25 (27.8)	23 (25.6)	2.44	VL
	Private	9 (20.5)	10 (22.7)	15 (34.1)	10 (22.7)	0 (0.0)	2.41	VL
How much can you do to make the school a safe place?	Public	21 (23.3)	38 (42.2)	24 (26.7)	7 (7.8)	0 (0.0)	3.81	QB
	Private	21 (47.7)	17 (38.6)	3 (6.8)	2 (4.5)	1 (2.3)	4.25	QB
How much can you do to make students enjoy coming to school?	Public	43 (47.8)	28 (31.1)	15 (16.7)	4 (4.4)	0 (0.0)	4.22	QB
	Private	24 (54.5)	11 (25.0)	8 (18.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	4.25	QB

(Table 3 to be continued)

How much can you do to get students to trust teachers?	Public	40 (44.4)	34 (37.8)	12 (13.3)	4 (4.4)	0 (0.0)	4.22	QB
	Private	26 (59.1)	7 (15.9)	6 (13.6)	5 (11.4)	0 (0.0)	4.23	QB
How much can you do to help other teachers with their teaching skills?	Public	22 (24.4)	36 (40.0)	19 (21.1)	13 (14.4)	0 (0.0)	3.74	QB
	Private	7 (15.9)	17 (38.6)	15 (34.1)	5 (11.4)	0 (0.0)	3.60	QB
How much can you do to enhance collaboration between teachers and administration?	Public	19 (21.1)	27 (30.0)	21 (23.3)	22 (24.4)	1 (1.1)	3.46	SI
	Private	12 (27.3)	17 (38.6)	10 (22.7)	5 (11.4)	0 (0.0)	3.82	QB
How much can you do to reduce school drop out?	Public	9 (10.0)	32 (35.6)	31 (34.4)	13 (14.4)	5 (5.6)	3.30	SI
	Private	14 (31.8)	4 (9.1)	18 (40.9)	8 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	3.54	SI
How much can you do reduce school absenteeism?	Public	17 (18.9)	27 (30.0)	27 (30.0)	16 (17.8)	3 (3.3)	3.43	SI
	Private	9 (20.5)	21 (47.7)	10 (22.7)	4 (9.1)	0 (0.0)	3.80	QB
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school?	Public	42 (46.7)	31 (34.4)	16 (17.8)	1 (1.1)	0 (0.0)	4.27	QB
	Private	22 (50.0)	13 (29.5)	9 (20.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.30	QB

Note. Mean ranges: 0.00-1.59: N; 1.60-2.59: VL; 2.60-3.59: SI; 3.60-4.59: QB; and 4.60-5.00: GD. Mean of means: Public schools—3.54 and private schools—3.69.

On the issue of how much can be done to get local colleges and universities involved in working with their schools, both public and private school teachers indicated that they have very little influence. This may be attributed to the fact that, especially in Ghana, because universities are highly placed, pre-tertiary institutions have a difficulty in soliciting assistance from them. More often, it has been the universities rather getting institutions at that level involved in their activities. For instance, universities sometimes involve basic and high schools in their teaching practice and attachment programmes. Similarly, both public and private school teachers indicated that they can do very little in involving cooperate bodies in school activities. Though well-established cooperate bodies have vaults for social responsibilities, they decide what to use such resources for. Individual teachers can therefore hardly do something in this regard.

Summarily, data in Table 3 suggest that private school teachers have a slightly higher efficacy level than public school teachers. This is confirmed by a cumulative mean of 3.69 for the former and 3.54 for the latter.

Table 4

T-test Results for Level of Efficacy of Public and Private School Teachers

Group	<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Public	90	106.18	16.019	-1.654	132.000	0.101
Private	44	110.75	12.735	-1.788	104.914	

Note. $p < 0.05$

A *t*-test for independent samples was used to ascertain the differences in the efficacy levels of public and private school teachers. The result of the analysis showed that there was no significant difference in the efficacy levels of teachers in public and private schools. This was indicated by a significance value of 0.101, which is greater than the conventional marker of 0.05 (see Table 4). It was thus concluded that teachers in public and private basic schools did not differ significantly in efficacy levels.

The relationship between public and private basic school teachers' qualification and teacher efficacy level was investigated using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient. The data suggest that there is a low, negative correlation between the two variables ($r = -0.066$, $n = 134$, and $p < 0.05$), high level of qualification associated with lower levels of efficacy (see Table 5). The significant differences in the private and public school teachers' level of efficacy in various areas of school improvement are demonstrated in Table 6.

Table 5

Results of Correlation Between Teacher Qualification and Teacher efficacy

	Qualification	Efficacy
Qualification (Pearson's correlation)	1	-0.066
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.445
No.	134	134
Efficacy (Pearson's correlation)	-0.066	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.445	
No.	134	134

Table 6

T-test Results of Public and Private School Teachers' Level of Efficacy in Various Areas of School Improvement

Areas	Group	N	X	SD	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Decision-making	Public	90	6.80	1.98	-93	132	0.355	Ns
	Private	44	6.50	1.90	-94	88.713		
Resources	Public	90	3.08	1.11	-4.195	132	0.000	S
	Private	44	3.95	1.18	-4.112	81.170		
Self-efficacy	Public	90	32.42	5.51	-2.442	132	0.016	S
	Private	44	34.66	3.64	-2.799	120.328		
Discipline	Public	90	12.39	2.03	-0.860	132	0.391	Ns
	Private	44	12.73	2.36	-0.816	74.977		
Parental involvement	Public	90	10.59	3.83	1.007	132	0.316	Ns
	Private	44	9.93	2.89	1.107	109.447		
Community involvement	Public	90	10.59	3.83	1.007	132	0.316	Ns
	Private	44	9.93	2.89	1.107	109.447		
School climate	Public	90	30.46	4.95	-1.500	132	0.136	Ns
	Private	44	31.82	4.93	-1.501	85.709		

Notes. Ns: Not significant; S: Significant; and $p < 0.05$.

The significant differences in private and public school teachers' level of efficacy in various aspects of school improvement were tested at a p value of 0.05. The data above illustrate that there were significant differences in the private and public school teachers' level of efficacy in influencing the provision of resources and self efficacy. This was because their significance values (0.000 and 0.016) were less than the conventional marker (0.05). The means show that the public school teachers' level of efficacy in influencing the provision of resources is higher than the teachers in private schools. Contrarily, the private school teachers seem to have a higher self-efficacy than teachers in the public schools.

Discussion of Findings

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief on his or her capacities to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977; 1997). It also reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behaviour, and social environment. An individual's own self-evaluations not only influence his or her goals for which he or she strives, but also affect the amount of efforts used toward the attainment of goals. Moreover, self-efficacy beliefs are varying depending on the domain of functioning and surrounding circumstances (Khurshid, Qasmi, & Ashraf, 2012).

The present study was designed to explore the differences between public and private teachers' self-efficacy and its influence on school improvement. The investigation revealed that though public school teachers have more professional (qualified) teachers, teachers in the private schools have a slightly higher self-efficacy than teachers in the public schools. This is contrary to the findings of Khurshid et al. (2012) that

highly educated teachers have higher self-efficacy. However, further analysis showed that there is no significant difference in the efficacy levels of public and private school teachers. This may be as a result of the slight differences in the means. Ashton and Webb (1986) found that teachers with a high sense of efficacy have high expectations for all students, they establish classroom environments that encourage warm interpersonal relationships and promote strong academic work.

It also came to light that the relationship between teachers' professional qualification and their level of efficacy is negative and low. This suggested that an increase in one variable does not bring about an appreciation in the other. More so, out of the seven areas of school improvement, there was a significant difference in their self-efficacy and how they influence resource availability. The latter may be due to the fact that, in public schools, teachers are supposed to make inputs with regard to the materials to buy with the capitation grant that government gives to schools before the SPIP (School Performance Improvement Plan) is drawn. As a result, individual teachers have some influence when it comes to what resources should be procured for a school.

Conclusions

- (1) Private school teachers' level of efficacy is slightly higher than that of public school teachers;
- (2) There is no significant difference in the level of efficacy of public and private school teachers;
- (3) There is a low relationship between teachers' professional qualification and their level of efficacy;
- (4) Out of the seven areas, there is a significant difference only in the extent to which teachers influenced resources availability and self-efficacy.

Recommendations

Since teachers' beliefs and orientation largely influence their self-efficacy, in the long term, it is important that colleges of education that turn out teachers, through seminars encourage pre-service teachers to develop a positive orientation and belief towards their learners and the teaching profession in general. It is a common knowledge that most people who enter the teaching profession in Ghana do not do so with a positive mindset.

In the meantime, circuit supervisors who visit public schools more than any other education officer, as part of their responsibilities, should encourage teachers to change their beliefs and orientation about the teaching profession in order to increase their level of efficacy, since it has implications for learners' outcomes or achievements in particular and school improvement in general.

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