Planning for Church and State Educational Leaders' Partnerships in Ghana: An Examination of Perceptions Impacting Relationships

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ABSTRACT

Education is a means to unlocking human potential for social, economic, and religious advancement. The Catholic Church and government in Ghana have had a long-standing partnership for the promotion of education at the pre-tertiary levels. The partnerships between religious bodies and the government dates back to the British colonial period, and is enshrined in the Education Acts of 1961 and 2008 of post-colonial governments. The partnerships have gone sour with accusations and counter accusations from both sides as Church and government policy makers as well as frontline educational leaders blame each other for the rapid decline in discipline in Church schools and poor student performance. Poor monitoring and supervision of schools by educational leaders is reported to be responsible for poor teaching and learning. Weak institutional collaboration between Church and government as well as role conflicts accounts for poor monitoring and supervision that negatively impact on schools. Using a convergent parallel mixed methods methodology, the researcher sought to understand educational leaders' perceptions of their attitudes, skills, and behaviors in the partnership. Quantitative and qualitative data on demographics as well as partnership attributes regarding competence, skills, and behavior of educational leaders were collected and analyzed for differences, relationships, and meaning. The main findings include significant interaction effects of demographic variables on perceptions. Education as a demographic variable, along with competence, and social skills were statistically significant predictors of individual behaviors in partnerships. The quantitative findings were correlated with the qualitative results and the findings have implications for leadership in pre-tertiary education. Policy makers associated with both Church and government relationships in pre-tertiary education should review policies on their respective partnerships and focus on the training of educational leaders in strategic planning to improve partnerships in order to improve education.

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally accepted as a means to unlocking human potential for social and economic progress, and for participation in society (Akyeampong, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2003; Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio & Guaquera, 2009). Besides the economic and social benefits of education, some religious bodies consider education as a means of evangelization (spreading religious beliefs and making followers). The state and the Catholic Church have a long-standing relationship in the promotion of pre-tertiary education in Ghana that historically led to rapid expansion and a high degree of quality education (Graham, 1971). The rapid expansion and the degree of quality in education over the years have both been declining at a rapid rate especially at the pre-tertiary level. Though programs put in place by the government of Ghana have contributed to increasing the enrollment, the quality of education has witnessed a serious decline (Ghana News Agency, 2009, 2010, as cited in Okyerefo, Fiaveh, & Lamptey, 2011; Ministry of Education, Ghana, 2012; Quist, 1999). High failure rates have caused more students to drop out of school (Imoro, 2009) at a rate unacceptable to both the Church and the state. Poor monitoring and supervision by educational leaders have been identified to be related to poor teaching and learning in public basic schools (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2012; Okyerefo et al., 2011). Weak institutional collaboration accounts largely for poor monitoring and supervision (Ministry of Education, 2012; Patrinos et al. 2009). Okyerefo et al. (2011) stated that the government needs to improve effective partnerships with communities in order to improve the performance, and the Ghana Education Service (GES) should "strengthen monitoring and supervision systems to ensure that problems are identified at early stages and dealt with" (p. 287).

In this light, there have been calls by the Churches and state educational authorities to strengthen the partnerships so that improvement can be made on the monitoring and supervision of schools (Akyeampong, 2009; Conference of Directors of Education (CODE), 2014; Okyerefo et al., 2011; Osei-Bonsu, 2010). Patrinos et al. (2009) stated that in order to promote the quality of education we need the right polices and the right institutions working cooperatively. Partnership as a concept is a central theme in educational policy and practice and yet the area is under researched especially as to what sustains a partnership (Dhillon, 2009). This study was designed to promote better understanding of the nature of the partnerships from the perspectives of both the Church and government educational leaders by examining their perceptions as to what sustains partnerships.

The main focus of the research was to address differences and relationships between educational leaders' demographic information, attitudes, and skills as well as their respective behaviors in education partnerships at the pre-tertiary level.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Ghana covers a landmass of 92,100 square miles (238,533 square kilometers) with a population of about 25 million. Ghana has ten administrative regions and over 230 administrative districts (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). It was the first country in Africa south of the Sahara to gain independence from British colonial rule. The country has endured upheavals in the political system with each successive government implementing education to suit its political agenda. Since its independence from Great Britain in 1957, Ghana has had six civilian governments, which have been interrupted by military governments. In 1992, a written constitution was developed and the country returned to constitutional rule.

Christian Churches since colonial times (1878), alongside colonial governments, introduced European-style formal education in the colonies (Bray, 2001; Der, 1974; George, 1976; Graham, 1971; Pobee, 1991). The British colonial government, for example, provided subsidies for mission schools in the then Gold Coast (Ghana) but remained in control of educational policy and teacher training (Williams, 1964). Since 1957, post-colonial governments in Ghana have continued the practice of providing subsidies for Church schools. Consequently, partnerships between colonial and post-colonial governments and the Churches have made significant contributions to pre-tertiary education, in terms of rapid expansion to rural communities, and educational quality (Abadamloora, 2006; Cox & Jimenez; 1990; Graham, 1971). It was noted that since Ghana's independence in 1957 until the late 1980s, Ghana's educational system was one of the best in Africa (Williams, 1964). However, over the years the partnerships between the government and the Churches have weakened with accusations and counter-accusations by both sides. There have been disagreements between the Church and the government over lack of involvement of religious bodies in curriculum, teacher postings, resource distribution, external donor interference in educational policy, and lack of clear roles and responsibilities in the context of government decentralization processes implemented in 1988 (Avenor, 2012; Buchert, 2002; Casely-Hayford & Palmer, 2007; Osei-Bonsu, 2010). There are very few, if any, studies using mixed methods to investigate the various factors impacting the partnership relationships between the Church and government in terms of education in Ghana. The complexities involved in partnerships require multidimensional analysis in order to understand the dynamics. This study sought to fill the gap in the literature using a mixed methods methodology.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Churches and state authorities have time and again raised concerns about deteriorating partnership relationships in education at the pre-tertiary level. There have been disagreements over the roles, content of education, management, and the allocation of resources (Avenor, 2012; Osei-Bonsu, 2010; Pobee, 1991). Speaking on behalf of the Christian Council of Ghana, Opuni-Frimpong stated as follows:

> The Church has virtually lost control of the schools it founded, and this is what has led to the fast decline in discipline, morality, and the deterioration of our educational facilities. We therefore call on all and sundry to be part of this debate in developing a comprehensive policy with public/private partnership that will empower the church to manage its schools with the overarching objective of training the hand, heart and mind (Opuni-Frimpong, 2012 as cited in Ghanaweb, 2014).

This view may have been exaggerated, and perhaps resulted in the expression of the frustration of the Churches' inability to manager their own schools as they have done historically. In response to the above statement, the Deputy Director General of the GES stated that mission schools are part of the Ghanaian society which is fast experiencing high levels of discipline related problems and Church schools are no exception. The blame should not, therefore, be laid at the doorstep of the GES (Deputy Director of Education, 2014 as cited in Citifm, 2014). The GES called on partners, both the government and the Churches, to engage in discussion and dialogue to find solutions to problems in the educational system (CODE, 2014).

The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC) (2011) stated that the partnership with government has many challenges as reinforced by the following:

> Over the years this educational partnership has suffered a lot of set-backs. Certain directives, policies, and practices in the educational management, which continued to be introduced, have reduced the control of the Churches in the management of schools operating under the partnership (p. 3).

The partnership of the Churches and state is described as confused, and not workable in education delivery. It was further identified that the GCBC complained about interference in the educational system by some international funding organizations using aid as a means to influence educational policies. As a result of all these challenges, schools continue to perform poorly in terms of student performance as measured by the local standardized testing (Avenor, 2012). As stated above, the educational partners in Ghana experienced disagreements, and complained about the ineffectiveness of the partnership between the Churches and the state in education at the pre-tertiary level.

As outlined above, education and student achievement will continue to decline if the partnerships remain in weakened states. This study, therefore, was designed to examine the partnership relations from the perspectives of the educational leaders of both the Church and the state in Ghana. The leaders' perceptions of the relationships, and their attitudes, skills, and behaviors are considered important elements for continuous improvement of pre-tertiary education in Ghana.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of the study was to collect and examine demographic information as well the perceptions of educational leaders of the Church and government in Ghana, using quantitative and qualitative methods. This study was aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of partnership perceptions between the Church and government, and to recommend skills and behaviors needed to sustain the partnerships in pre-tertiary education to improve education for students.

The following four main research questions guided this study:
Quantitative
1. What are the significant differences in educational leaders' perceptions of partnerships in pre-tertiary education across demographic variables?
2. What are the significant predictors of behavior 1 (perceived impact of educational leaders' behavior on outside groups) and behavior 2 (perceived behavior among educational leaders), respectively?
Qualitative
3. How and in what manner do educational leaders experience partnerships in pre-tertiary education?
4. What meanings do educational leaders have about their partnerships?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Partnerships are formed for the mutual interests of the partners involved and are sustained by patterns of human and social skills as well as behaviors. This study was designed to promote in-depth understanding from the perspectives of educational leaders about how the variables (competence, social skills, and behaviors) are currently impacting education at the pre-tertiary level in Ghana. The researcher contends that this research study contributes to a better understanding of the Church and state partnerships. For example, it can be useful for policy formulation, and also provides a guide to both the Church and state in strengthening their partnerships in pre-tertiary education so as to make an impact on student performance. The study can also serve to stimulate further research in the area of similar partnerships, as there appears to be a dearth of research in this topic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concepts and constructs derived from both the theoretical literature and empirical studies in partnerships are summarized together with operational definitions. It was important to examine perceptions of educational leaders in order to understand the nature of the partnership and identify key variables and patterns important for sustaining the partnership in education as a guide to educational planners so that education for more students may be improved.

Context of the Study

Ghana has ten administrative regions and a population of 24,658,823 (48.76% male and 51.23% female), with a large proportion under 15 years (Ghana Statistical Services (GSS), 2012). The literacy rate is about 74.1% of the population for persons 11 years and older (GSS, 2012). According to the 2010 population census report, 71.2% of the population is Christian, 17.6% profess Islam, 5.2% adhere to traditional religion, and 5.3% have no religious affiliation (GSS, 2012). Schools owned by the Churches exist within the public system, and are funded by the government. The Department of Education of the National Catholic Secretariat reported that the Catholic Church alone has 1,825 primary schools, 948 junior high schools and 52 senior high

schools and eight teacher-training colleges (Department of Education of the National Catholic Secretariat, 2008 as cited in Domfeh-Boateng, 2010). The GCBC stated that the Catholic Church is second to the government in the provision of education (Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2009). The Church schools are sometimes referred to as unit schools, in order to distinguish them from the schools that are under direct government control (Ministry of Education, 2003). There are also Church private schools, which are strictly private and managed by the Churches (Domfeh-Boateng, 2010). These schools do not receive funding from the government.

Key Concepts and Constructs

This review of the literature provides the foundation for assembling key concepts and constructs that were used to measure attitude, skills, and behaviors among education leaders of the Church and government in Ghana. Table 1 provides the constructs and some key references from the researched literature on partnerships.

Table 1

Key Attributes, Operational Definitions, and References

FACTOR	CONSTRUCT	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	REFERENCES
PERSONAL ATTITUDES & SKILLS	Competence	The possession of requisite knowledge and skills for participation and for tasks in the partnership as well acquisition of skills through training.	Anderson & Billing-Harris, 2010; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; Wellard & Copestake, 1993.
	Vision	Partnership goals, objectives and policies as clearly expressed and articulated by members of the partnership.	Bolman & Deal, 2008 ; Coll & Davis, 2007 ; Kouzes & Posner, 2007 ; Patrinos et al., 2007 ; Rasmussen et al., 2003 ; Salamon, 1995
	Adaptability	The ability to have an open mind and to challenge the status quo for creativity and innovation.	Bolman & Deal, 2008; Friedman & Mandelbaum, 2011; Morgan, 2006; Wellard & Copestake, 1993;
	Expectation /Context	The protection of the rights of partners in a legal system or mutually agreed upon system as well as other support systems and networks.	Coll & Davis, 2007; Dhillon, 2009; Vasavada, 2007
	Trust	The ability of members to have confidence in the knowledge and skills of the other partner as well as trusting their own competence for engaging in the relationship and the getting the job done.	Coll & Davis, 2007; Huxham, 1993; Morse & McNamara, 2007

SOCIAL SKILLS	Conflict	Pressure for uniformity, degree of compatibility and incompatibility, activities threatening the other party.	Bolman & Deal, 2008; Palestini, 2009; Wellard & Copestake, 1993
	Power	The ability to influence and share responsibility with the other party; such influence may be positive or negative.	Ayaga, 2000; Gary, 1996; Wellard & Copestake, 1993; Salamon, 1995
	Respect	The recognition of membership potential and use of knowledge and skills as well as accepting differences.	Mohan, 2002; Rasmussen et al., 2003; Bolman & Deal, 2008; Coll & Davis, 2007; Wellard & Copestake, 1993; CCC,1995; Patrinos et al., 2007
	Program	Routine activities and projects that address goals of the partnership and their impact on education; in this case schools and students and the wider community and stakeholders.	Dhillon, 2009; Foster-Fisherman et al., 2001; Googins & Rochlin, 2000; Salamon, 1995; Coll & Davis, 2007; Vasavada, 2007
		The protection of the rights of partners in a legal system or mutually agreed upon system as well as other support systems and networks.	
BEHAVIOR	Accountability	Defining roles of members and performance measures and monitoring as well as evaluating the processes progress.	Coll & Davis, 2007; Patrinos et al. 2007; Googin & Rochlin, 2000
	Communication	Information sharing and flow through frequent meetings, consultations and correspondence and the willingness to listen to the other partner, as well as engaging in negotiations and bargaining.	Anderson & Billing-Harris, 2010 ; Dhillon, 2009 ; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001 ; Morse & McNamara, 2007 ; Patrinos et al. 2007

Commitment	Likes doing things for the partnership. Interest in the partnership Degree of pledge of relationship for continuity, interests in the activities of the partnership.	Anderson & Billing-Harris, 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2008;; Mor Barak, 2010; Dhillon, 2009; Googins & Rochlin, 2000; Lee & Kim, 1999; Mohr & Spekman, 1994

Partnership Assumptions

The above concepts and constructs can be categorized under three main areas: attitudes and skills, trusting relationships, and behaviors. Attitudes and skills include both knowledge and technical know-how, and these are acquired through formal and informal training. These variables are independent, but, inter-linked. Organizations engaged in partnerships for mutual goals require attitudes and skills, trusting relations, and action (Anderson & Billing-Harris, 2010; Dhillon, 2009; Lee & Kim, 1999; Salamon, 1995). Trusting relationships enable individuals and organizations to accomplish mutual goals. As organizations and individuals encounter one another routinely they try to get to know each other and eventually begin to build trust among themselves. As they get closer to one another through trust relationships, there are expectations for reciprocity. On the other hand, poor communication, lack of trust as well as attempts to control others by imposing values may lead to conflicts and betray trust. Riketta (2008) asserted that positive attitudes correlate with work outcomes (as cited in McCoach, Gable & Madura, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was a concurrent mixed methods design. Partnerships between organizations in education are replete with complexities and different sources of data collection and methods of analysis are required. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), a mixed method is an "intuitive way of doing research that is constantly being displayed throughout everyday lives" (p. 1). In mixed methods research, the researcher collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and makes some inferences employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches in one single research study. A survey instrument was used to collect quantitative data and face-to-face interviews were conducted for the qualitative information. Triangulation of the different sources of data has helped to gain an in-depth understanding of educational leaders' perceptions of partnerships in education in Ghana and their respective impact on education. Survey questionnaires and personal interviews are complementary methods and integral in the triangulation of data in order to capture educational leaders' perceptions of the relationships in education in Ghana (Ridenour & Newman, 2008). This mixed-methods approach facilitates a better understanding of the partnerships between the Church and state in pre-tertiary education in Ghana because of the triangulation of multiple sources of data.

Population and Sample

District directors and supervisors of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and managers as well as heads of pre-tertiary schools of the Catholic Education Unit (CEU) constituted the target population in the research study. Ghana has ten administrative regions, and 216 administrative districts. Each district has a GES office headed by director. The Catholic Church has 20 Catholic education units, and nearly 3,000 basic schools. The sample was randomly drawn from this population. The Catholic Church is next to the government in the ownership of the largest number of public schools at the pre-tertiary level. Four hundred and seventy (470) questionnaires were distributed to both the GES and CEU leaders in eight of the ten regions of the country. Two hundred and ten (210) completed questionnaires were returned with useable data. Two questionnaires did not provide demographic information and one had 50% of the missing data. Therefore, the three were deleted from the sample, resulting in 207 cases used in the final data analysis. Six participants were purposely drawn from the sample and engaged in face-to-face interviews with the researcher.

Data Collection

An instrument for data collection was designed based on the constructs previously discussed. The questionnaires were in two parts; the first part collected demographic information regarding: age, education, years of experience, position, gender, organization, and location of the sample participants. The second part was the partnership inventory made up of 60 statements

predicated on the 12 constructs identified above. Each construct had 5 items. Hard copies of 470 60-item questionnaires and disclosures on the study were distributed through contact persons to participants in eight regions. The 60 items were scored on a 1-5 point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4, and strongly agree = 5).

Data Preparation

The raw data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and coded according to the composite variables, and cleaned for missing data. The information data were converted to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) files. A total of 470 questionnaires were distributed, 210 were completed and returned with useable data, with a response rate of 44%. Of the 210 cases 2 had demographic data missing, and one had about half of the items unanswered. The three were deleted, resulting in 207 cases with a response rate of 44%. There were missing data on item responses within the 207 cases. The items were assumed to be missing completely at random. Variables had less than 10% of the data missing; this figure was small and would not reduce the variances of the items.

The most common type of handling missing data is *listwise deletion*. Using this method, cases with missing data were deleted from the sample if any variables have missing data so that the sample would have no missing data. The concerns with *listwise deletion* are that a large part of the original sample may be discarded and may pose problems for the data to be used to make inferences, misestimating, and biased data (Bartholomew, Steele, Moustaki & Galbraith, 2008; Osborne, 2013; Peugh & Enders, 2004). However, an alternative to *listwise deletion* is *data estimation procedures* employed by researchers to make up for missing data. Using this method, simple mean imputation method was used to fill in the missing data. The mean of non-missing cases was calculated and inserted in the locations of the missing data. Table 2 provides details of missing items that had data missing and mean imputation scores.

Table 2

Missing Data and Mean Imputation

Partnership Statement	Missing Data	Mean Imputation
1. The partnership has clear goals	3	4
3. Policies guide the partnerships	4	4
5. There is shared understanding of goals	3	4
6. The partnership has laws and contracts	7	3
7. Members are involved in decision making	4	3
8. I have technical knowledge of my roles	3	3
9. Members meet often	3	3
10. Members feel free to speak and be heard	3	3
11. Members exchange information	5	4
12. The information shared is relevant	4	4
13. Information enables goals achievement	1	4
14. The partnership has needed resources to achieve goals	1	3
15. The partnership has activities and projects in place	1	3
18. Partnership work benefits the community	3	4
19. Members feel supported by the community	2	4
20. The partnership makes use of skills	1	4
21. The partnership has structures in place to support work	2	3
22. The partnership is responsive to needs of members	4	3
23. There is public support for the partnership	5	3
25. Members feel the need to cooperate	2	4
26. Member are able to resolve issues amicably	1	4
27. Members maintain close communication for compromise	2	4
28.I feel the need give in to the partner that has more influence	3	3
31. I believe in partnership values	3	4
34. Members have limited influence on decisions	3	4
35. My views in the partnership are taken seriously	3	3
36. The partnership does not rely heavily on any single member	3	4
38. I have confidence in members	1	4
39. I respect the interests of members	1	4
40. Skills of members are trustworthy	3	4
41. I feel my contributions are recognized	1	4
42. I have confidence in a working relationship	1	4
44. I recognize individual knowledge and skills	2	4
45. My feel individual skills are not used	1	3
47. I believe my needs are being met	1	3
48. I feel the partnership is not relevant to my needs	1	2
50. Time is not important to meet members' expectations	1	4
51. I expect little from the partnership	1	2
52. I feel needed changes are being made	4	4
54. My organization is prepared to make adjustments	3	4
55 Others should adjust to my organizations ways	2	3
56. There is little that can be reviewed	4	2
57. I have clear knowledge of my role	2	4
58. I have requisite skills for the tasks	3	4
59. I make use of my counterpart skills	2	4
60. I am being helped to acquire needed knowledge and skills	1	4

Some demographic variables were combined. Categories on age, education, and experiences were combined because they had low rates in some of the *Likert Scale* categories. Educational leaders aged ≤30 and 31-40 were combined as ≤31-40 years, and 61+ was combined with 51-60 years as 51-60 years and above. Further, educational ranks were combined; certificate was combined with diploma as certificate or diploma. The category, 'other' was combined with those with master's degrees or other. There was a participant with a doctoral degree and that category was eliminated. These resulted in three categories instead of six for the demographic variable education. Current years of experience were combined into four categories instead of seven. Educational leaders with 22-25 years and 26-30 years were combined with those 16-21 years as more than or equal 16-21 years. Further, under the variable, total years of experience, the five categories were reduced to four; 31-40 and 41-50 were combined as 31-40 and above.

DATA ANALYSES

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Windows version 21 program was used for the analyses. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify latent variables based on the measured variables. Descriptive statistics were then conducted to obtain means and standard deviations of the items and factors. Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to the variables of gender and organization to examine whether there were significant differences in mean scores. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences in group scores. Factorial ANOVAs were further conducted to determine the between-group effects on the five dependent variables. Finally, two multiple regression analyses were performed to find the relationships among demographic and partnership variables.

Quantitative Results

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The purpose of the first part of the survey instrument was to collect demographic information about the participants including age, education, years of current experience, and total years of experience in positions as educational leaders. The demographic information was intended to enable a better understanding of educational leaders' perceptions of human and social attitudes and skills as well as behaviors. The 207 educational leaders varied in terms of age, gender, education, and experience. One hundred and fifty-four respondents were male (74%) and 53 (26%) were female. Catholic education unit participants were 113 while 94 were Ghana Education Service. Persons aged 31-40 or less were 17%, 32% fell between 41-50, and 51% between 51-60 and above. On education, 21% had either a certificate or diploma, 61% had bachelor's degrees, and 18% Master degrees or other type of qualification.

Table 3

Age, Education levels, Current Years' Experience, Total Years' Experience, Gender and

Organization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
≤ 31-40	36	17.4	17.4	17.4
41-50	66	31.9	31.9	49.3
≥ 51-60	105	50.7	50.7	50.7
Total	207			
Certificate, Diploma	44	21.3	21.3	21.3
Bachelor's degree	127	61.4	61.4	82.6
MA degree or other	36	17.4	17.4	17.4
<3	47	22.7	22.7	22.7
3-5	63	30.4	30.4	53.1
6-10	58	28.0	28.0	81.2
≥11-20	39	18.8	18.8	100.0
3-10	49	23.7	23.7	23.7
11-20	39	18.8	18.8	42.5
21-30	71	34.3	34.3	76.8
≥31-40	48	23.2	23.2	100.0
Male	154	74.4	74.4	74.4
Female	53	25.6	25.6	100.0
CEU	113	54.6	54.6	54.6
GES	94	45.4	45.4	100.0

As presented in Table 3, the following are key demographics of this sample: educational leaders with less than 3 years of experience in their current position constituted 23%, 3-5years were 30%, 6-10 years constituted 28%, and those who had 11-20 years and above, 19%. Total years of experience in the position, 3-10 formed 24%, 11-20 constituted 19%, 21-30 formed 34%, and 31-40 and above constituted 23%.

Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a statistical method used to extract factors that represent relationships among variables (Bartholomew et al., 2008; Blaikie, 2003; DeVellis, 2012). The purpose of EFA was to identify latent variables based on manifest variables. Cronbach's alpha of the 60 items was .89. The EFA was conducted on the 60 items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olklin measure of sampling adequacy was .801 and Bartlet's test of sphericity was significant at Chi-square (5010.658) = 1770 ($p < .001$).

The EFA indicated a five or six factor solution but the intention was to extract three factors with at least a correlation coefficient of .3. In the three-factor extraction, 11 items did not load on to any factor. All the three factors accounted for 29% of the variances. This was not acceptable and a six-factor solution was tried using *quartimax* and *equimax* rotations at a time. In each of these rotations, all the items loaded on at least one or more factors except four items (Item # 21, 37, 50, and 54) which did not load on any of the six factors. Cronbach's alpha was calculated on each of the six the factors, reliability for two factors was low at .54 and .30, respectively. The wording of these items was checked and found to be vague in meaning. The four items were deleted, leaving 56 items, these were re-run on *equimax* rotation but the factor combination did not make sense to the researcher.

Varimax rotation method was used with at least .3 correlation coefficient to extract five factors. The rotation converged in 23 iterations. All the 56 items except four loaded on at least one or more factors. Items #52, 55, 28 and 36 did not load on any of the five factors. Reliability of factor 1 was .88, factor 2, .79, factor 3, .83, factor 4, .81, and factor 5, .63. The four items were checked and found to be vague in meaning or was intended to measure each of the five factors in an indirect way and may have been confusing. The items were then deleted and reliability of the 52 items was .90. Therefore, 52 items have been used for the analysis instead of the original 60 items. The results of the EFA are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

Items	Rotated Factor Loadings				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Members feel supported by the community (19)	.668				
Partnership work benefit the community (18)	.621				
I believe in the value of the partnership (31)	.607				
Information shared us relevant (12)	.593	.464			
Members feel the need to cooperate (25)	.580				
I take interest in activities and projects of the partnership (32)	.555				
Shared information enables goals achievement (13)	.555	.527			
The activities and projects of the partnership benefit schools (17)	.552	.349			
Members exchange information (11)	.534	.525			
Members work to achieve goals (16)	.506	.407			
The partnership makes use of membership skills (20)	.463				
Duration of partnership help to achieve quality (30)	.429				
Leadership in my organization shows interest in the partnership (33)	.426				
The partnership is responsive to the needs of members (22)	.424	.324			
Members maintain close communication for (27)	.410				
Leadership in my organization supports my work in the partnership (24)	.410				
Members are able to resolve issues amicably (26)	.409		.330		
There is public support for the partnership (23)	.325				

Item	1	2	3	4	5
The partnership should be doing more to help its members (49)	**.307**				
Members meet often (9)		**.644**			
Members are involved in decision making (7)		**.613**			
The partnership has laws and contracts (6)		**.608**			
There is shared understanding of goals (5)		**.537**			
Members feel free to speak and be heard (10)	.314	**.489**			
The partnership has activities and projects in place (15)		**.474**			
The partnership has needed resources to achieve goals (14)		**.465**			
Skills of members are trustworthy (40)			**.579**		
I believe my needs are being met (47)			**.523**		
I feel my contributions are recognize (41)	.334		**.502**		
I have confidence in members (38)	.323		**.501**	.314	
I recognize individual knowledge and skills in the partnership (44)			**.497**		
My views in the partnership are taken seriously (35)			**.496**		
I have confidence in a working relationship (42)			**.489**		
There is recognition of the uniqueness of each member (43)			**.472**		
I respect the interests of members (39)			**.462**		
Contributions of partner organizations are recognized (46)			**.415**		
I feel needed changes are being made (52)	-	-	**-**	-	-
My organization has policies regarding the partnership (2)				**.678**	
I have clear knowledge of my role (57)				**.670**	
I have requisite skills for my tasks (58)				**.617**	
Policies guide the partnership (3)			.385	**.589**	
I have a clear understanding of the goals of the partnership (4)			.434	**.587**	
I am being helped to acquire needed (60)				**.501**	
The partnership has a clear set of goals (1)			.348	**.498**	
I have technical knowledge of my role (8)				**.463**	
I make use of my counterparts skills (59)				**.404**	
The partnership does not rely on any single member (36)	-	-	-	-	-
I feel the partnership is not relevant to my needs (48)					**.632**
There is little room for flexibility in the partnership (53)					**.563**
I feel individual skills are not used (45)				-.306	**.552**
I expect little from the partnership (51)					**.551**
Members work against the interest of the other (29)					**.488**
There is little that can be reviewed (56)				.369	**.483**
Members have limited influence on decisions (34)				-.389	**.392**
Others should adjust to my organizations way of doing things (55)	-	-	-	-	-
I feel the need to give in to the member that has more influence (28)	-	-	-	-	-

Note: *Extraction method used was principal component analysis.*
Rotation method used was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 23 iterations. Factor loadings >.30 were in bold and factor loadings <.30 are not included, Factors with (-) had no loadings.

Descriptive Statistics Results

All the 207 participants rated how important each of the 52 attitudes, skills, and behavior statements were to them on a scale of 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral (neither agree nor disagree), 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). The descriptive results (mean and standard deviations of the rating for each statement assigned by the 207 respondents are shown in Table 5.

Indicating ratings of strongly disagree to strongly agree participants' mean scores ranged from 2.16 and 4.28. The standard deviation of items ranged from .643 to 1.187 indicating variances among participants' ratings. The highest mean rating was item #49 (*The partnership should* be d*oing more to help its members*) (m = 4.28) and the lowest mean rating was item #51 (I e*xpect little from the partnership*) (m = 2.16). Item 48 (*I feel the partnership is not relevant to the needs of my organization*) yielded the highest standard deviation (sd = 1.187) while item #25 (*Members* f*eel the need to cooperate*) (sd = .643) had the lowest indicating variation in ratings. Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for each of the five factors. The results of the

mean scores and standard deviations as well eigenvalues, percentage of variances of each factor and Cronbach's alpha are presented in Table 6.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for 52 Survey Instrument Items Rank Ordered from Highest Mean Scores to Lowest

Survey Item #	Rank		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
49.	1.	Should do more to help members	207	4.28	.881
25.	2.	Members feel the need to cooperate	207	4.17	.643
27.	3.	Maintain close communication for compromise	207	4.14	.871
31.	4.	Believe in partnership values	207	4.00	.797
32.	4.	Take interest in activities	207	4.00	.747
3.	6.	Have clear guidelines concerning roles	207	3.98	.881
1.	7.	The partnership has a clear set of goals	207	3.97	1.014
2.	8.	Partnership policies exist in work place	207	3.95	.918
33.	9.	Respect interests of members	207	3.92	.759
39.	9.	Workplace leadership shows interest	207	3.92	.858
58.	11.	Have requisite skills for tasks	207	3.89	.877
18.	12.	Work benefits communities	207	3.87	.835
17.	13.	Activities and projects benefit schools	207	3.86	.897
59.	14.	Make use of skills of counterparts	207	3.83	.769
43.	15.	Helps to acquire needed knowledge and skills	207	3.73	.925
60.	15.	Recognition of uniqueness	207	3.73	1.021
19..	17	Feel support of the community	207	3.71	.795
42.	17.	Have confidence in working relationship	207	3.71	.947
57.	19.	Have clear knowledge of my role	207	3.70	.975
12.	20.	Able to resolve issues amicably	207	3.69	.966
26.	20.	Information shared is relevant	207	3.69	1.020
44.	22.	Recognize individual knowledge and skills	207	3.68	.988
20.	23.	Recognition of membership contributions	207	3.65	.797
41.	23.	Makes use of skills	207	3.65	.884
46.	23.	Feel contributions are recognize	207	3.65	.890
13.	26.	Information enables partners achieve goals	207	3.62	1.021
4.	27.	Skills of members are trustworthy	207	3.61	.828
38.	27.	Have confidence in members	207	3.61	.907
40.	27.	Have clear understanding of my roles	207	3.61	.948
24.	30.	Leadership supports partnership work	207	3.60	.881
5.	31.	Shared understanding of my goals	207	3.55	.943
11.	31.	Exchange information	207	3.55	1.064
16.	33.	Work hard to achieve goals	207	3.53	.969
10.	34.	Feel free to speak and be heard	207	3.44	1.091
6.	35.	Guided by laws and contracts	207	3.42	1.044
30.	36.	Time helps to determine partnership quality	207	3.40	1.028
8.	37.	Technical knowledge of my role	207	3.38	1.108
35.	38.	Feels views are taken seriously	207	3.35	1.063
15.	39.	Has activities and projects in place	207	3.29	1.012
22.	40.	Responsive to needs of members	207	3.24	.959
34.	40.	Has limited influence on decisions	207	3.24	1.106
7.	41.	Actively involved in decision making	207	3.21	1.158
53.	42.	Little room for flexibility	207	3.18	1.059
23.	43.	Has public support	207	3.14	.934
45.	44.	Feel individual skills are not used	207	3.10	1.099
9.	45	Members meet often	207	2.95	1.067
47.	46.	Believe needs are being met	207	2.91	1.036
14.	47.	Has needed resources to achieve goals	207	2.80	1.142
56.	48.	There is little that can be reviewed	207	2.43	1.099
48.	49.	I feel partnership is not to my relevant to needs	207	2.42	1.187
29.	50.	Work against the interest of the other	207	2.36	1.106
51.	51.	I expect little from the partnership	207	2.16	1.070

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics of the Five Factors

Factors	Number of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Eigenvalue	Percent of Variance	Cronbach's α
Beh_1	19	71.0580	9.51833	6.244	11.150	.875
Beh_2	7	22.6618	4.93862	4.886	8.724	.785
Soc_1	10	35.8213	5.81861	4.065	7.259	.828
Humac	9	34.0435	5.35289	4.047	7.226	.813
Soc_2	7	18.8986	4.32360	2.571	4.591	.634

Independent Samples *t*-Tests Results

Independent *t*-tests were conducted to compare the mean score differences by gender (male and female) and by organization (CEU and GES) on the 52 items. As was expected, there were no mean score differences by gender on the 52 items. Surprisingly, there were also no significant differences between organizational groups as these were anticipated based on the literature.

One-way ANOVA Results

Independent Variable: Age

One-way ANOVA was conducted for the independent variable of age group (≤31-40, 41-50, and ≥ 51-60) to examine significant group differences on the five factors (*Humac, Soc_1, Soc_2, Beh_1, and Beh_2*). There were significant differences for scores on the factor, *Humac,* (F $(2,204)$ = 3.943, $p < .05$. A *Bonferroni post hoc* multiple comparison was conducted to find exact group differences. The *post hoc* results are shown in Table 7. As shown in Table 7, the independent variable, age has an effect on the factor, *Humac.* Participants 31-40 years old or less (mean = 32.64, sd = 4.16) rated the factor, *Humac* significantly lower than those who are 41-50 years old (mean = 35.45, sd = 4.34).

Table 7

One-Way ANOVA and Post Hoc Results for Independent Variable of Age

Dependent Variable	Source		N	F	Sig.	Bonferroni Multiple Comparison	
						Significantly different groups	Mean
	≤31-40		36	3.943	*	≤31-40 years & 41-50 years	32.64
Humac		41-50	66				35.45
		≥51-60	105				33.64
* $p < .05$.							

Independent Variable: Educational Levels

One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare significant differences among education levels (Certificate or Diploma, Bachelor's degree and Master's degree or other) on the scores of the five factors of partnership (*Humac, Soc_1, Soc_2, Beh_1 and Beh_2*). There were significant differences in score for the factor, Beh_2 (F $(2,204)$ = 3. 083.067, $p < .05$). A follow up *Bonferroni post hoc* was conducted to determine which groups differed. The Bonferroni of *post hoc* multiple comparisons did not produce significant differences to examine exact group differences for education levels. This is mainly due to the sensitivity of the ANOVA (greater than the pairwise test sensitivity). ANOVA detects lower variability around mean while pairwise test scarcely distinguishes between the pair's mean. Surprisingly, no significant differences were found for years of experience in current position and total number years of experience in position.

Factorial ANOVA Results

Factorial ANOVA was conducted to examine the main and interaction effects on participants' ratings of each of the five factors (Humac, Soc_1, Soc_2, Beh_1, and Beh_2) by age, by education, and by organization.

The results indicated that the independent variable age also has an effect on Soc_2 ($F_{(2,189)} = 3.132$, $p < .05$). The results are shown in Tables 8.

Table 8

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects on Age and Soc_2 Scores

Source	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	17	26.862	1.496	.100
Intercept	1	27270.611	1518.509	.000
AGE_1	2	56.239	3.132	.046*
Edu_ranks	2	12.077	.672	.512
Org	1	4.646	.259	.612
AGE_1 * Edu_ranks	4	33.016	1.838	.123
AGE_1 * Org	2	29.375	1.636	.198
Edu_ranks * Org	2	2.389	.133	.876
AGE_1 * Edu_ranks * Org	4	18.069	1.006	.406
Error	189	17.959		
Total	207			

The *Bonferroni post hoc* reported significant differences between age groups. The results are shown in Table 9. Those aged 31-40 or less (mean = 31.72, sd = 4.78) had lower scores compared to those aged 41-50 (mean = 35.60, sd = 4.62).

Table 9

Bonferroni Post Hoc Comparison among Age groups

Dependable Source Variable		N	F	Sig.	Bonferroni Multiple Comparison	
					Significantly different groups	Mean
	≤31-40	36	1,197	*	<31-40 years & 41-50 years	31.72*
Soc_2	≤41-50	66			.1726	35.42*
	≥51-60	105			-.1874	34.12

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 27.891. *$p < .05$ level.

Multiple Regression Results

Two separate multiple regression analyses were conducted to investigate if the following variables: Age_1, Edu levels, Org, Soc_1, Soc_2 and Humac were significant predictors of the dependent variables Beh_1 and Beh_2, respectively. The results of the first multiple regression analysis are presented in Tables 10-12.

Table 10

Model Summary for Dependent Variable Beh_1

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.667[a]	.445	.428	7.19625

a. Predictors: (Constant), Org, Soc_1, Soc_2, Edu Levels, AGE_1, Humac

Table 11

ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable Beh_1

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	8306.105	6	1384.351	26.732	.000[b]
1	Residual	10357.199	200	51.786		
	Total	18663.304	206			

a. Dependent Variable: Beh_1
b. Predictors: (Constant), Org, Soc_1, Soc_2, Edu Levels, AGE_1, Humac

Table 12

Multiple Regression Results for Beh_1 and Demographic and Social and Human Skills

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	33.267	5.231		6.359	.000
	Edu Levels	-1.919	.849	-.125	-2.259	.025*
	Soc_1	.780	.097	.477	8.035	.000*
1	Soc_2	-.122	.119	-.056	-1.026	.306
	Humac	.471	.104	.265	4.515	.000*
	AGE_1	.320	.703	.025	.455	.650
	Org	-.583	1.084	-.031	-.537	.592

a. Dependent Variable: Beh_1

As shown in Tables 10-12, for Beh_1 a significant regression equation was found (F $(6,200) = 26.732$, $p < .001$) and R square is .445. All variables except Age_1, Org and Soc_2 were significant predictors of Beh_1. This was expected because one's personal attitudes and social skills as well as education were significant predictors of Beh_1. The second multiple regression analysis was to investigate if the following variables: Age_1, Edu levels, Org, Soc_1, Soc_2 and Humac were significant predictors of the dependable variable Beh_2. The results are presented in Tables 13-15.

Table 13

Model Summary for Dependent Variable Beh_2

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.630[a]	.397	.379	3.89238

a. Predictors: (Constant), Org, Soc_1, Soc_2, Edu Levels, AGE_1, Humac

Table 14

ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable Beh_2

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	1994.201	6	332.367	21.937	.000[b]
1	Residual	3030.128	200	15.151		
	Total	5024.329	206			

a. Dependent Variable: Beh_2

b. Predictors: (Constant), Org, Soc_1, Soc_2, Edu Levels, AGE_1, Humac

Table 15

Multiple Regression Results for Beh_2 and Demographic and Social Skills and Personal Attitude

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.879	2.829		.311	.756
	Edu Levels	-1.105	.459	-.139	-2.405	.017*
	Soc_1	.355	.053	.419	6.769	.000*
1	Soc_2	.079	.065	.069	1.225	.222
	Humac	.280	.056	.304	4.964	.000*
	AGE_1	-.424	.380	-.065	-1.114	.266
	Org	.809	.587	.082	1.379	.170

a. Dependent Variable: Beh_2

As shown in Tables 13-15, for Beh_2 a significant regression equation was found (F $(6,200) = 21.937$, $p < .001$) and R square is .397. All variables except Age_1, Org and Soc_2 were significant predictors of Beh_1.

Qualitative Results

In the light of challenges in partnership relationships, the purpose of this study was to examine educational leaders' perceptions of partnership in pre-tertiary education in Ghana. It is important to understand the shared experiences of individuals so that a deeper understanding can be helpful to the partners in education. A phenomenological approach was chosen to examine perceptions of educational leaders' experiences and what that meant to them. According to Van Manen (1990), there is a world of experience out there, and individuals experience that reality and are conscious of it (as cited in Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). Partnership relations in education are objective realities that educational leaders have experienced and are conscious of these experiences.

Two questions were addressed in one-on-one interviews between the researcher and six participants (three each from the CEU and GES) who were purposefully selected to participate in the research. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the partnership experiences of six educational leaders in Ghana as well as the meanings they have about those experiences. Phenomenology as a qualitative method of inquiry is premised on the assumption that human experiences make sense to those who live them and can consciously present them (Creswell, 2013; Titchen & Hobson, 2011). The researcher can make a direct study of the human experience from the outside (Titchen & Hobson, 2011). People easily talk about their experience because they have knowledge of it, and have lived the experience, and are able to talk of the "foreground" (Titchen & Hobson, 2011, p. 122). The research shines the torch on something, which s/he chooses to study from the outside and tries to bury his/her own experience (Titchen & Hobson, 2011).

Interviews

Six participants were interviewed using semi-structured questions to elicit participants' perceptions and meaning of partnership experiences.
The two research questions were:
a) How, and in what manner do educational leaders perceive partnerships in pre-tertiary education?
b) What meanings do educational leaders have about their experiences?
Six sub-questions guided the discussions with participants in the study. These are as follows:
1. What are the aims of the partnership as you perceive them?
2. In your view, how does the partnership function?
3. Could you share with me your understanding of challenges in the partnership?
4. How did you handle the challenges?
5. What does the partnership mean to you?
6. In your experience, how do you perceive the future of the partnership?

The participants were purposefully selected from a sample of 210 in consultation with some education authorities in Ghana.
The answers were audio taped and notes were also taken during the interviews. These were transcribed and coded on based comparisons, concepts and themes (Miles, Huberman & Saldana,

2014; Philpot, Balvin, Mellor & Bretherton, 2013). Pseudo Ghanaian names have been used to identify the six participants in the study: Adjoa, Kada, Hero, Nereus, Atanga, and Kwesi for confidentiality purposes.

Demographic Information

The demographic information of participants is shown in Table 16. The six participants range between 51 and 60 years old and above.

Table 16

Demographic Information of Participants

Study Name	Age	Gender	Position	Organization
Atanga	51-60+	Male	District Director	GES
Hero	51-60+	Male	Regional Manager	CEU
Adjoa	51-60+	Female	Regional Manager	CEU
Nereus	51-60+	Male	General Manager	CEU
Kada	41-50	Female	District Director	GES
Kwesi	51-60+	Male	District Director	GES

During the interviews there were follow up probes to clarify and for understanding. Examples of such probes include: Could you please throw more light on that? That sounds interesting, could you tell more about that? How did you deal with the problems you faced? What was important for you? How do you interpret those experiences? The interviews lasted for 25-60 minutes. All interviews were taped recorded except one. In addition, the researcher also took notes.

Data Analysis

Lead words, concepts, and phrases that participants used were noted and shaded in different colors in the entire transcripts. The frequency of use of the concepts and phrases by the participants were noted. These were then placed in categories according to the six sub-questions (which provided the context). According to Philpot et al. (2013), paying attention to the use of words by participants in an interview, whether the words are meant in the positive or negative sense, helps to derive meaning. This insight helped to guide the categorization of the concepts and phrases used by the participants. The lead words, concepts and phrases are grouped together separately for the two groups, CEU and GES according to codes and themes.

The responses of the both CEU and GES participants were grouped under six main themes and sub-themes as follows: vision, sources of conflict, teacher recruitment and supervision, change and creativity, resources strengthening, as well as student performance. These are elaborated below with direct quotes from participants.

Description of Perceptions

Educational leaders' perception of partnerships in pre-tertiary education:

Themes & Sub-themes	Responses 1	Responses 2
Vision	The state, Church, and community are concerned with educating children. Partnership is unavoidable because the state and Church have similar aims for children. Both Church and government entered in partnership, the CEU takes care of schools while the government pays teachers and other expenses.	The Church could no longer sustain schools and so the government came in to provide teachers and infrastructure. This was the foundation for the collaboration/partnership between government and the Church.
Sources of Conflicts	The Churches want autonomy: they want to employ their own teachers and run the schools according to their values and this is what brings about conflict. On the one hand, government wants expansion and to keep to standards and this brings conflict with the Churches.	There is power struggle in terms of teacher transfer. There are double postings, double transfers and double releases, and this brings about indiscipline among teachers. As a result of the double postings there is over staffing and indiscipline among teachers in schools and this affects learning. GES discriminates against Unit schools but the Catholic schools do not have the resources.
Recruitment & Supervision	The problem came with change in the system and this led duplication of functions teacher postings. Respecting the system is not being done. A lot depends on who is at post. There is duality in the monitoring. CEU and GES CSs monitor same schools and this breeds duplication. There are parallel systems in terms of teacher postings and monitoring schools.	The regional manager and CEU roles are shrinking. The regional manager used to employ teachers and with the decentralization, the district director is in charge of education in the district. GES says we are duplicating functions

Educational leaders' responses to their partnership experiences:

Themes & Sub-themes	Responses 1	Responses 2
Change & Strengthening Partnerships	The partnership needs strengthening.	Reach out to the other partner
Participation	Support fora (forum) which encourage participation and involvement in decision making.	
Education & Training	We need to organize seminars and workshops so that roles in education to be understood by everyone.	
Creativity	What should be done is let the partnership go back to the drawing table then make proposals for what each perceive of the other and what can be put together for the partnership to work.	There was the need for understanding, respect and keeping to the boundaries on both sides.
Policy/Guidelines	No guidelines for the partnership. Church that needs to conform to government standards and requirements.	The Church and state co-exist but there are no contracts. Need to conform to standards. Partners need to understand Catholic education policy; all directors should have access to Catholic educational policy.
Understanding, Communication & Trust	There is need for understanding and respect on both partners. There was understanding among us. I understood the system well. I get local managers, recognize them. The thing is that some do not want to recognize the system. I had good understanding with the CEU unit.	I understand the situation to please both parties. I invite the manager and we discuss. As I talk now there is practically nothing in CEU file in my office. Put things in writing for the purpose of the record.

Control of Schools	We should revert to the old system-staffing, enrollment and supervision. Government should pay teachers but government should leave Churches to manage their schools. Where Churches are not responsible for payment that control is not fully there.	Pay visits to the director and hold discussion with district director and regional director on teacher transfers and releases.
Resources	Catholic education units do not benefit from government of Ghana allocation of funds; government does not have enough for its own things. Inadequate resources hinder effective monitoring and supervision by the CEU.	The diocese does not have enough resources and is not able to raise enough funds.
Student Performance	Once there is struggle perceived or real affects performance. Efficiency in supervision becomes a problem. In the past Church schools were doing well and they were for Church children. But now many children in Church schools are not Church children, and it is difficult to control. Supervision needs to be done by both CEU local managers and government authorities (GES) for students to do well because right now some cannot even write simple letters which we could do when we were in school at their age. The Church schools were discipline prior to the take over the Church schools.	The ultimate focus should be the child. When the missions had control over their schools, discipline, punctuality was working very well. Teachers came early to school, students were also punctual, instructional periods were never wasted teaching and discipline was very effective. There was improvement in teaching and learning activity. Once in a while directors of education would come from time to time to visit the schools.

The six educational leaders involved in the qualitative study stated that contextual issues and shared vision brought both Church and government together in partnerships at the pre-tertiary levels in Ghana. The education of Ghanaian children is the concern of the two partners. Both the Church and government maintain their standards and values in the partnerships. These standards and requirements as well as attitudes and behaviors of educational leaders are sources of conflict. These conflicts center on teacher recruitment and placement as well as duplication of monitoring and supervisory roles in education at the pre-tertiary levels. The conflicts in the partnerships can be solved with creativity, effective communication among partners, education and training for educational leaders as well as trust building and respect.

DISCUSSION

The quantitative part used inferential statistical analyzes to examine significant differences in educational leaders' perceptions of partnerships in pre-tertiary education across demographic variables, as well as significant predictors of in-group behavior among educational leaders, and their perceived impact on schools. The qualitative part of the research study addressed the context and structure of education leaders' partnerships at the pre-tertiary education levels, and the attribution of meanings to their experiences and perceptions.

Research Question # 1

The first research question sought to examine significant differences in educational leaders' perceptions across demographic variables.

The descriptive statistics showed that there were significant differences in the way educational leaders scored the 52 items. For example, item # 49 (*The partnership should be doing more to help members*) received the highest mean score (mean = 4.28 sd = .881) suggesting understanding and fair agreement with the statement. Item 51 (*I expect little from the partnership*) received the lowest mean score (mean = 2.16; sd = 1.070) indicating disagreements with the statements or that the statements were not properly understood by educational leaders. Item # 48 (*I feel the partnership is not relevant to the needs of my organization*) (sd = 1.187) had the highest standard deviation while Item # 25 (*Members feel the need to cooperate*) got the lowest standard deviation (sd = .643) suggesting variation in the scoring. The five factors' descriptive results also showed significant differences in mean scores. Behavior variable 1 (mean = 71.05; sd = 9.51) got the highest score indicating the importance that educational leaders attach to the impact of their behavior on schools performance at the pre-tertiary levels. For behavior variable 2 (mean = 22.66; sd = 4.93), the mean score was much lower suggesting educational leaders' disagreement with the statements regarding in-group behavior or lack of proper understanding of the statements. The factor, social 1 (mean = 35.82; sd = 5.81) had a fairly high mean score suggesting a fair agreement with the statements and the importance educational leaders attach to trusting attitudes in the partnerships in pre-tertiary education. The variable, humac (34.04; sd = 5.35) also had a fairly high means score suggesting educational leaders fair understanding and agreement with the importance of competence in their partnerships. Social variable 2 (mean= 18.89; sd = 4.32) yielded the lowest mean score, indicating educational leaders' disagreements with the statements regarding power relations and flexibility in the partnerships or that educational leaders did not have proper understanding of the statements.

The independent samples t-tests. The results of the independent samples t-test for gender (male, female) resulted in no significant differences for the scores in the five factors. This was not surprising because mean scores on the items were not expected to differ. Male and female educational leaders have similar understanding of the issues in partnership relationships. Further, there were no significant differences between organizations on the factor scores. This was surprising as it was expected that mean scores for the Catholic Education Unit (CEU) and Ghana Education Service (GES) would differ from one another because the literature on partnership (Rasmussen et al, 2003; Victor & Cullen, 1987) and results of the qualitative interviews indicated some differences. Educational leaders of CEU believed they show more understanding and trust for government than the other way round. This view is not supported by the results of the t-test for organization (CEU & GES). For the independent variable, age, the *One-way ANOVA* indicated significant differences among age groups ($p < .05$) regarding the scoring of the dependent variable, competence (*humac*). Educational leaders with 31-40 years old or less had a lower score (mean = 32.64) compared to those in the age range 41-50 (mean = 35.45) suggesting educational leaders 41-50 years old have a better understanding of the importance of personal competence in the partnership. Significant differences were shown for the education levels ($p < .05$) but the follow up *post hoc* analysis did not produce significant differences to examine exact group

differences. This may have been due to the sensitivity of ANOVA pair's mean. It was also surprising that experience did not have any influence on mean scores of the factors as experience was expected have an influence on educational leaders' perceptions. The *factorial ANOVA* the tests of between subjects confirmed the *one-way ANOVA* results for the independent variable age. Age has an effect ($p < .05$) on social skills relating to influence and flexibility.

Research Question # 2

What is the relationship between demographic information, competence, social skills and behavior?

The first multiple regression result indicated that education, competence and trusting relationships ($p < .05$ and $p < .01$) explain approximately 45% of the variances due to behavior. This suggests that any unit increase in education, competence, and trusting skills of educational leaders, will have corresponding increase in behavior. This result is significant and consistent with the assumptions about partnerships. Similar to the first multiple regression result, education, trusting skills, and competence ($p < .05$ and $p < .01$) predict approximately 40% of the variances of behavior regarding flexibility and adaptation. Increased levels of education, trusting attitudes, and competence predict partnership behavior.

Research Question # 3

The third research question sought to understand the context of the participants and the perceptions they had about the partnerships. The educational leaders in the qualitative study placed great importance on the value of the partnerships. Both Church and government share a common vision in educating children, and they need one another in order to achieve educational quality, that is expansion and student performance. In this respect, partnerships goals and objectives need to be clearly expressed and articulated by all participating members. The vision of Church and government in education needs to be clearly explained and understood by educational leaders in the partnerships in pre-tertiary education. The educational leaders relate to each other mainly over teacher recruitment, placement, as well as classroom monitoring and supervision. The vision, standards and requirements as well as activities of teacher recruitment, placement and supervision have been sources of conflict between Church and government educational leaders as there is role duplication and marginalization of the other. Unclear roles, power struggle, poor communication and lack of trust between Church and government educational leaders affect their performance, and have a negative impact on schools monitoring and supervision.

Research Question # 4

The fourth research question was designed to determine the meanings that educational leaders attribute to their experiences.

Educational leaders in the qualitative study in the light of the conflicts and role duplication in the partnership relations understood the urgency and need for change in attitudes and behaviors in order to sustain the partnership. The partnership needed strengthening by opening up channels of communication, improving trust, commitment, accountability as well as recognizing and respecting the other in the partnerships. These results are consistent with the quantitative findings. The multiple regression results showed that education, competence, and trusting skills were significant predictors of behavior. It is therefore not surprising that the educational leaders in the qualitative study identified the need for improving trust, competence and training in order to improve behavior.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As mentioned earlier, only educational leaders mainly from the Catholic Church and Ghana education service, in eight regions and only 22 of the 216 administrative districts as well as five Catholic dioceses participated in the research study. Most of these were from the three northern regions of Ghana. Policy makers of both the Church and government are crucial for sustaining partnerships in pre-tertiary education. These were not involved in study. There are five mainstream Churches including the Catholic Church, and several Pentecostal Churches as well as the Muslim communities operating in pre-tertiary education in Ghana. As indicated above, only the Catholic Church was targeted in the research study; other Churches and religious bodies were not involved in this study. There is therefore a certain limitation in generalizability of findings of the research. However, it is important to note that the Catholic Church accounts for over 35% of schools at the pre-tertiary level, next to government.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above limitations notwithstanding, taking both the quantitative and qualitative findings, the following conclusions can be made; first, there are significant differences in educational leaders' perceptions of partnerships across the demographic variable, age. Older educational leaders rated higher on competence compared to younger educational leaders. Secondly, gender did not produce any significant differences in perceptions of educational leaders. The literature and the qualitative findings indicated differences in perceptions across organizations but the quantitative results did not indicate any significant differences in educational leaders' perceptions by organization that is the Catholic Education Unit and the Ghana Education Service. Education, as a demographic variable, competence, and trusting skills are significant predictors of partnership behavior among educational leaders, and their work in improving schools and student performance. These findings have implications for the partnerships in pre-tertiary education between Church and government educational leaders in Ghana.

Church policy makers and educational leaders need to devise different ways of reaching out to government. Church leaders have a tendency to issue very strong statements against government for action or inaction of government leaders in pre-tertiary education. The strong statements of Church leaders against the state in education tend to deter well-meaning government leaders who may be committed to improving the partnership relations. In the qualitative study, educational leaders on the side of government suggested different ways of promoting engagement. It is recommended that Church policy makers and educational leaders develop more persuasive skills of engaging government beyond public statements. This will require Church policy makers reaching out personally to individual leaders, and groups in government on regular basis. The qualitative findings indicated strongly the need to sit down together to review roles in the partnership. In this light, it is recommended that the Church clarifies its policies in pre-tertiary education and in the partnerships, taking into account government requirements and the context of the decentralized system.

The findings of this study indicated that partnership relations have not been clearly defined, and not properly understood by educational leaders of both Church and government. It is, therefore, recommended that government policy makers and educational leaders review and clearly define its monitoring and supervisory roles in Catholic schools vis-a-vis the functions of the Catholic Education Units. This will help to avoid duplication of the functions of local and regional managers by circuit supervisors and district directors of education. Government policy makers and education leaders admit the role of the Churches in providing quality education in Ghana as stipulated in the Education Acts of 1961 and 2008 respectively. Therefore, government leaders should operationalize the contents of the two Acts. The roles of the Churches in pre-tertiary education need to be recognized and respected in the partnerships especially regarding their roles and decisions regarding Church public schools.

The results of this study emphasize the need for Church and state policy makers and educational leaders to be accountable to each other, and to the pre-tertiary schools and communities that the partnerships exist to serve. Both Church and government need a clear contract spelling out roles and responsibilities of each partner in the partnership in pre-tertiary education. Participation and opportunities for regular interactions, as indicated in the literature and the results of the qualitative study, are critical for sustaining partnerships. A forum needs to be created for regular interactions on information sharing and innovation. Educational leaders are highly qualified persons as far as their jobs are concerned but may not have the needed skills for collaboration. It is, therefore, recommended that collaborative skills training should be given periodically to members of the partnerships in pre-tertiary education. Such trainings should be reviewed regularly and follow up trainings designed to meet the needs of educational leaders.

As indicated earlier, it was surprising that the leaders of the organizations in the quantitative study did not differ in perceptions. Also, in the one-way ANOVA result, education as a single effect on competence was not conclusive. Further studies in these areas are suggested for more conclusive findings. Follow up studies involving other Churches and religious bodies as well as policy makers of both Churches and state are recommended. Furthermore, comparative studies of specific districts are also recommended since participants in the qualitative studies identified positive experiences in some areas of partnerships. Such comparative studies may be helpful to identify bright "spots" or good practices for replication by other members of the partnership not only in Ghana but elsewhere around the world.

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