Using Incentive Policies to Motivate Rural Basic School Teachers in Ghana

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Abstract
The research is a descriptive study which was aimed at evaluating how incentive policies will motivate and retain rural basic school teachers in Ghana. One hundred trained teachers in rural basic schools in the Akuapem Municipality of Ghana were selected for the study. This comprised of sixty-four (64) males and thirty-six (36) females. Convenience sampling technique was employed in selecting samples for the study. Questionnaire was the main research instrument employed by the researcher. Besides, all data collected were coded and entered into Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) and the frequencies and percentages generated. The data presented in table 2 indicates that 89% of the respondents claimed that incentive policies are available for rural basic schools teachers. Results from the study in table 3 suggest that a huge percent of the respondents confirmed that limited years to qualify for study leave, provision of training supports, provision of accommodation, support from NGOs and the district assembly, presence of social amenities, recruitment of rural teachers from rural areas and enhancement in community participation in school management can retain teachers in rural areas. In the light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. It could be concluded that study leave with pay and retention/professional allowance are the incentive policies available for rural basic schools teachers.

Keywords: Rural Areas, Incentive policy, Teacher attrition, Motivation, Teacher retention

INTRODUCTION
Background to the study
Education is the key to the development of skilled workforce of any nation. It is critical to restoring long-term growth, tackling illiteracy, unemployment, inequality, poverty and promoting cohesive societies (Ibadin, 2015). For this to be achieved, education must offer equal opportunities for both urban and rural people. Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2015) explained that the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) adopted in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 mandated countries to vigorously develop and implement policies on education. The report further explained that universal access to primary education became the foundation for developing the individual. Therefore in 2000, the World Education Forum adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, that is “Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments”. This was for participants to reaffirm their commitment to the World Declaration on Education for All adopted in 1990 (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2015).
According to Adedeji and Olaniyi (2011), nowhere in the world do teachers work in more challenging circumstances than in African rural areas and that Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) would have increased its rural population from approximately 470 million in 2005 to 552 million in 2015. Educating this large population on the continent requires motivating teachers to attract and retain them in rural areas (Adedeji & Olaniyi, 2011).

Despite the increase in pupils' enrolment in Africa, there is still a shortage of 1.6 million trained teachers which can increase to 3.8 million, if teacher retirements are taken into consideration (Monk, 2017). Meanwhile, Jimerson (2003) contends that trained teacher shortages are more severe in African countries, and collectively, they will need to raise their stock of teachers from 2.4 million in 2006 to 4 million, so that every child whether rural or urban will be covered by adequate numbers of trained teachers (Jimerson, 2003; Monk, 2017).

Darling-Hammond (2013) explained that worldwide, primary education systems employed more than 29 million teachers in 2012, with 82% of that in developing countries. The total primary teaching staff increased by 17% between 1999 and 2012, or by about 4 million teachers. The largest increase occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States and yet 23.9 million teachers are required between 2012 and 2030.
across the world. The need for trained teachers in rural areas is not about just the numbers, but equally important in ensuring that they are motivated and retained in rural areas (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Adam, Adom & Bediako, 2016).

Well-motivated teachers will be willing to be posted and be retained in rural areas where their services are most needed. The shortage and inequality in trained and experienced teacher deployment is not confined to only rural areas of Ghana alone but in South African, Mexico and other countries across the world (Adam, Adom & Bediako, 2016). There can be several educational reforms and policy interventions but if these are not teacher centered to promote a high sense of teacher motivation, dedication and commitment to duty, the issue of teacher attraction and retention in the rural areas will not be achieved. It is argued that the Ghanaian rural teacher today is grappling with many motivational challenges which adversely affect them to accept postings to rural areas (Agbeko, 2017).

The challenges facing teachers who teach in rural areas of the Akuapem North Municipality present a particularly difficult situation for teachers. The poor social amenities, poor and inadequate teachers’ accommodation, poor further training and promotion opportunities, inadequate job opportunities, poor occupational recognition and status, poor working and living conditions and the poor community support in rural areas of the district affect teacher retention and influence teachers' experience as educators which hurts students’ learning.

Akyeampong (2012) said the right to education in rural areas cannot be realised without motivated trained teachers and yet, there exist these crucial motivational gaps of teachers for retention in rural areas of the district. Why has the rise in enrolment in schools not led to same scale in teacher motivation in rural areas? So what has gone wrong? The author believed that if governments and all stakeholders do not develop, implement and properly finance the right policies on teacher motivation, then we can never achieve Education for All, and this is nonnegotiable (Akyeampong, 2012). According to Global Campaign for Education (2012) study, the fundamental reason for the gap in quality education between urban and rural areas is the severe lack of motivated trained teachers. It is the presence of quality teachers that determines whether children have learnt and how many children have learnt. The author explained that there is ample evidence that having enough teachers to avoid large class sizes is a strong determinant of students learning (Global Campaign for Education, 2012; Akyeampong, 2012).

The importance of teachers is recognized by parents, learners, education specialists and governments yet huge gaps in the trained teachers and their motivation in rural areas remained unaddressed (Jimerson, 2013). Despite the efforts of both developed and developing countries' governments efforts such as the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA established in 2009 in recognition of the trained teacher crisis, there are still millions of teachers away from guaranteeing sufficient trained teachers for all children (Asare-Danso, 2014). Asare-Danso explained that UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimates that more than 1.7 million additional trained teachers are needed, irrespective of the gains in many countries in addressing the trained teachers’ gap. The right to education necessarily implies both equity and quality: everyone has a right to education, and that education must amount to something substantial. One major way to guarantee this is to ensure that there are enough trained and motivated teachers for every child, and therefore, if the right to education is to mean anything at all, it must at least mean this (Asare-Danso, 2014; Global Campaign for Education, 2012).

Teachers are essential players in promoting quality education, whether in schools or at the community level since teachers are both the advocates for, and catalysts of change. Therefore, it is undeniable fact that the motivation of teachers for retention must take a center stage in any educational reform, if rural folks are to have universal and equal access to educational opportunities (Adam et al., 2016).

Besides, World Education Forum, 2010 reported that rural teachers should be respected and adequately motivated; have enhanced salaries, access to training for their professional development through enhanced study leave and sponsorship programmes, access to decent accommodation, and have opportunities for social amenities and community support to participate locally and nationally in decisions affecting their professional lives and working environments (World Education Forum, 2010). This was confirmed by Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2015) that teachers are the most critical resource in any level
of education in every country. The presence of trained and motivated teachers is vital for students learning because teachers are the determinants of what and how much students achieve in school.

The attraction and retention of trained teachers in rural schools is a perennial problem for education authorities. According to Agbeko (2017) Ghana has a teacher deficit of about 60,000 with majority in the rural schools. Despite the 60% increase of teachers at the basic level over the past decade in Ghana, the trained teachers proportion fell from 72% in 1999 to 53% in 2013 (World Bank, 2014). The resistance of trained teachers to be retained in rural areas of Akuapem North Municipality in Ghana compelled the education management to post many of the untrained teachers in the municipality to schools in rural areas just to reduce the teaching vacancies. Out of the Again, the ranking of Junior High Schools performance in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the region revealed that in 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively, the last ten basic schools came from rural areas of the district and worst of it all was that most of these schools scored zero (0) percent (Ghana Education Service, Akuapem North District, 2020). This was attributed mainly to the resistance of trained teachers to be retained in rural areas due to the low motivation.

In spite these challenges over the years, governments instituted incentive policies such as the teachers’ prize day, study leave, retention premium and district sponsorship for teachers. Unfortunately, the inadequacy and lack of targeting of these interventions on rural teachers failed to address trained teacher retention in rural areas of the district. The study therefore seeks to unravel the various incentive policies for teachers in rural areas, how these incentives could retain the teachers and challenges of the various incentive policies in rural basic schools in the Akuapem North Municipality.

**Purpose of the study**
The main aim of the study is to evaluate how incentive policies will motivate and retain rural basic school teachers in Ghana.

**Objectives of the study**
Specifically, the study aim be guided by the following objectives.
1. To examine the incentive policies available for rural basic school teachers in Ghana.
2. To determine which incentive policies can help retain rural basic school teachers in Ghana?
3. To explore the challenges of teacher incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana.

**Research Questions**
1. What are the various incentive policies available for rural basic school teachers in Ghana?
2. Can this incentive policies help retain rural basic school teachers in Ghana?
3. What are the challenges of teacher incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana?

**Significance of the Study**
Ghana has a teacher deficit of about 60,000 of which majority of these vacancies are in the rural schools. The government teacher rationalization policy is being undertaken with the hope to reduce the figure slightly (Agbeko, 2017). The research is expected to find out if incentive policies are available for rural basic school teachers and again, how this policies can help to retain the teachers. Moreover, findings from this study will help to identify the challenges of teacher incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Akuapem North Municipality and Ghana at large.

Improving the performance of teachers is at the heart beat of any government in Ghana. The findings would guide the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and other policy makers on how motivating teachers will induce teacher performance for quality education in the district. The research would reawaken policy makers, parents, private sector and other stakeholders in education to realize their obligation and responsibility towards addressing the imbalance of teacher availability between the rural and urban schools. This requires the stakeholders to team up in curbing the present imbalance in teacher deployment, undesirable working conditions of rural teachers and ultimately addressing rural-urban teachers' migration.

Additionally, the study adds on to the existing literature on incentive policies for teacher retention in rural areas at the basic level. Thus, providing district assemblies, education officers, circuit supervisors, headmasters and other educational partners with how to attract and retain teachers in rural areas.

**Scope of the Study**

http://www.ijmsbr.com/
The attrition of teachers in rural areas in the country has been a major concern for the Government and it would have been very appropriate to carry out this study across the country. However, due to limited time and resources, this study was limited to the Akuapem North Municipality in the Eastern Region. Moreover, the content of the research focused on incentive policies and motivation. Meanwhile, the study will concentrate on rural basic school teachers.

Definition of Terms
- **Rural areas**: Rural areas are generally open areas, with low settled population densities and a high proportion of the unsettled land area used for primary production such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, and fisheries.
- **Incentive policy**: An incentive policy is any system adopted to motivate the behavior of people. When applied in teaching context, it is the use of reward and motivate performing teachers.
- **Teacher attrition**: Teacher attrition is a component of teacher turnover (Thus; changes in teacher status from year to year). Teacher turnover may include teachers exiting the profession, but may also include teachers who change fields (i.e., special education to general education) or schools.
- **Motivation**: Motivation is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. It is what causes you to act.
- **Teacher retention**: It refers to the proportion of teachers in one year who are still teaching in the same school the following year.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area
Ghana, officially the Republic of Ghana which was formerly called Gold Coast, is a colony along the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean, in the sub-region of West Africa. Accra is the capital city of Ghana with a population of 4.2 million as at 2020. Akuapem North Municipal is one of the thirty-three (33) municipalities/districts in Ghana. Akuapim North Municipal District is one of the thirty-three districts in Eastern Region, Ghana. Originally created as an ordinary district assembly in 1988 when it was known as Akuapim North District, which was created from the former Akuapim District Council; until it was elevated to municipal district assembly status on 15 March 2012 to become Akuapim North Municipal District. The municipality is located in the southeast part of Eastern Region and has Akropong as its capital town. Moreover, the district is noted for its numerous rural settings.

Research Design
This study employed a descriptive survey design, which is a type of research undertaken with the aim of describing characteristics of variables in a situation. According to Creswell (2009), a descriptive survey design is concerned with conditions or relationships that exists, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, the effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. The descriptive survey design enabled the collection of data without manipulating the research variables. The descriptive survey design optimizes on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. The survey method allowed collection of data from a large sample population and generate findings that were used to represent the whole population at a lower cost (Creswell, 2009).

However, one weakness of descriptive research is that it is time consuming (Asamoah-Gyimah and Duodu, 2007). In order to overcome the disadvantage of time consumption, the researcher established a time management plan (frame work) to enable her to systematically and timeously handle each aspect of the study.

Population
To Asamoah-Gyimah and Duodu (2007), the population of a study is a group of elements or causes, whether individuals, objects, or events that conform to specific criteria and to which a researcher intends to generalize the results of the research. The population for the study constituted one hundred and two (102) trained teachers in rural basic schools in the Akuapem North Municipality of Ghana. This consist of sixty-six (66) males and thirty-six (36) females.

Sample Size
A sample is the finite part of a statistical population where properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Asamoah-Gyimah & Duodu, 2007). One hundred trained teachers in rural basic schools in the Akuapem Municipality of Ghana were selected for the study. This comprised of sixty-four (64) males and thirty-six (36) females. A sample size of one hundred (100) respondents for a descriptive study was justifiable. The sample size estimation was done using Slovin’s formula;

\[ n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \]

Where; \( n \) is the sample size
\( N \) – Is the total population (sum of all teachers in the school = 102)
\( e \) – Margin of error of 0.01% (confidence level of 99%)

\[ n = \frac{102}{1 + (102 \times 0.01^2)} \]

\[ n = 102 \]

\[ n = \frac{1 + (102 \times 0.0001)}{102} \]

\[ n = 102 \]

\[ n = \frac{1 + 0.0102}{102} \]

\[ n = 1.0102 \]

\[ n = 100 \]

**Sampling Technique**

Sampling is the process of selecting people from the population to take part in a study. Again, Asamoah-Gyimah & Duodu (2007) defined sampling as using some elements of a population for a study with the aim to fairly generalize conclusions relevant to the entire population. Convenience sampling technique was employed in selecting samples for the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling method where the sample it taken from a group of people easy to contact or to reach. This sampling method is extremely speedy, easy, readily available and cost effective. This type of sampling is also known as grab sampling or availability sampling. This sampling technique ensures that people who are available and willing to participate are selected for the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). As a result, one hundred (100) trained teachers in rural basic schools in ten district across the country were selected for the study.

**Research Instrument**

Questionnaire was the main research instrument employed by the researcher. According to Creswell (2009), a questionnaire is a set of questions used to gather information in a survey. A questionnaire was used because it was less expensive, provided respondents with time to respond to statements. Furthermore, it offers a considerable and objective view on the study since respondents were given ample time to complete the questionnaire. Questionnaires allowed for wider coverage and comparison of responses. Also, anonymity and confidentiality of responses can easily be observed as the hallmark of the research. However, questionnaires are prone to misinterpretation by respondents and the researcher may not have the opportunity to develop rapport due to the absence or limited interaction with the respondents (Asamoah-Gyimah & Duodu, 2007). However, these misinterpretations were corrected through the contact numbers established through which respondents were called on phones as a reminder for them to fill the questionnaires and also to clarify questions that were not clear to them.

**Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaires were designed and delivered to the respondents by the researcher in all the selected schools in the municipality to solicit data from rural teachers. The researcher visited fifteen schools and made contact with teachers in rural basic schools. The questionnaire designed has two main sections; section one consisting of the demographic characteristics of respondents and section two outlining the research objectives. Closed ended statements were used to make it easier for respondents to complete the questionnaire. They were also to make it easy for analysis and interpretation. The questionnaires were anonymous to ensure privacy and security for the respondents.
Responding to the questionnaires was optional and hence others declined on the bases of being nursing mothers, busy family schedules and other reasons. The researcher with the help of the headteachers scheduled a meeting with the teachers in their various schools. The researcher took time to explain the nature and purpose of the study to them and only those willing to participate were given the questionnaire to complete. All the questionnaires were completed at a sitting to ensure high retention rate. The questionnaire was administered to all one hundred (100) teachers. A sample of the questionnaire could be seen at appendix of the study.

Data Processing and Analysis
To arrive at the intended analyses, all data collected were coded and entered into Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) and the frequencies and percentages generated. In presenting the findings, descriptive statistical tools such as tables containing the frequencies and percentages were employed.

Ethical Considerations
The researcher ensured that participation in this research was purely voluntary and all participants were informed of the purpose and nature of the research both verbally and in writing where necessary. Permission was sought from the headteachers of all schools visited.

Consent: The consent of the respondents was taken for their engagement in the study and for the usage of their data.

Confidentiality: The respondents were assured of the privacy of information provided.

Anonymity: The respondents were further assured of the secrecy of their identity and that no statement would be attributed to their names.

Deception: All misleading information as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way would also be avoided.

Beyond these facts, usage of any secondary data from any source was acknowledged with appropriate reference.

KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS
This aspect presents the results and discussions on data obtained from administration of the questionnaire. Data was obtained from one hundred (100) teachers in rural basic schools in the Akuapem North Municipality of Ghana. The first part of this chapter describes the results from the field data and the second part presents the discussions of results based on the research objectives with supporting literature.

Findings
Demographic characteristics of respondents
The bio-data of respondents include gender, age, years of teaching in rural area and highest professional qualification.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29years</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39years</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 59years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of teaching in rural area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 5 years</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 years</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 15 years</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 15 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest professional qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bachelor 73 73.0
Diploma 22 22.0

Source: Field Survey (2021)
According to table 1, 64 respondents representing 64% were males and 36 (36%) of them were females. Again, the data shows that 41 (41%) respondents were between 20-29year, 34 (34%) of them were also between 30-39years, 18 (18%) others were between 40-49years and 7 (7%) respondents were between 50-59years. Moreover, in responding to the number of years teaching in rural setting, 23 (23%) respondents taught between 1-5years, 48 (48%) of them taught between 6-10years, 25 (25%) others between 11-15years and the remaining 6 (6%) taught above 15years. Lastly, 5 teachers representing 5% are master degree holders, 73 (3%) of them are bachelor degree holders and the remaining 22 (22%) are diploma holders.
The data implies that 64% of the respondents were males and 36% of them were females. Again, the data all (100%) the respondents were above 20years. It was further be disclosed that most (77%) of the respondents have higher qualification which is good for the study. It could be concluded that information provided is likely reflect the views of both gender who are matured and have experience teaching in a rural area.

Incentive policies are available for rural basic school teachers in Ghana.
The main focus of objective one was to examine the incentive policies available for rural basic school teachers in Ghana. Respondents were to provide answers to lists of items by indicating their level of agreement on the scale; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Table 2: Availability of incentive policies for rural basic school teachers in Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>SA F %</th>
<th>A F %</th>
<th>N F %</th>
<th>D F %</th>
<th>SD F %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incentive policies are available for rural basic schools teachers</td>
<td>5 5.0</td>
<td>6 6.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>25 25.0</td>
<td>64 64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>2 0.0</td>
<td>98 98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study leave with pay is available for rural basic schools teachers</td>
<td>18 18.0</td>
<td>65 65</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>17 17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle/Motor/Car maintenance allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>100 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free accommodation is available for rural basic schools teachers</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>82 82.0</td>
<td>18 18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention/professional allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers</td>
<td>71 71.0</td>
<td>29 29.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey (2021)
According to table 2, 25 respondents representing 25% agreed and 64% of them strongly agreed that incentive policies are available for rural basic schools teachers. Also, all (100%) the respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed that transport allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers. Additionally, 18 (18%) respondents strongly agreed and 65 (65%) of them also strongly agreed that study leave with pay is available for rural basic schools teachers. Meanwhile, all (100%) the respondents strongly disagreed that bicycle/motor/car maintenance allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers. Similarly, all (100%) the respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed that free accommodation is available for rural basic schools teachers. However, all (100%) the respondents were of the view that retention/professional allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers.
The data indicates that 89% of the respondents maintained that incentive policies are available for rural basic schools teachers. Also, all (100%) the respondents disagreed that transport allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers. Additionally, majority (83%) of the respondents were certain that study leave with pay is available for rural basic schools teachers. Meanwhile, all (100%) the respondents strongly disagreed that bicycle/motor/car maintenance allowance and free accommodation are available for rural basic schools teachers. However, all (100%) the respondents were of the view that retention/professional allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers.

**Incentive policies and teacher retention among rural basic school teachers in Ghana.**

Objective two tried to determine if incentive policies can help retain rural basic school teachers in Ghana. Respondents were to respond to lists of items on the objective by indicating their level of agreement on the scale; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

**Table 3: Incentive policies and teacher retention among rural basic school teachers in Ghana**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited years to qualify for study leave can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of training supports can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in supervisory supports can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of accommodation can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from NGOs and the district assembly can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presence of social amenities can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment of rural teachers from rural areas can retain teachers in rural areas</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Data presented in table 3 revealed that 68 (68%) respondents strongly agreed and 22 (22%) of them agreed that limited years to qualify for study leave can retain teachers in rural areas. Again, 25 (25%) respondents strongly agreed and 51 (51%) of them also agreed that provision of training supports can retain teachers in rural areas. However, 65% of the respondents disagreed that improvement in supervisory supports can retain teachers in rural areas. Meanwhile, all (100%) of the respondents affirmed that provision of accommodation can retain teachers in rural areas. Similarly, more than half (80%) of the respondent reported that support from NGOs and the district assembly can retain teachers in rural areas. Likewise, a huge percent of the respondent claimed the presence of social amenities (93%) and recruitment of rural teachers from rural areas (93%) can retain teachers in rural areas. Finally, all (100%) the respondents noted that enhancement in community participation in school management can retain teachers in rural areas.

Results from the data suggest that a huge percent of the respondents confirmed that limited years to qualify for study leave (90%), provision of training supports (76%), provision of accommodation (100%), support from NGOs and the district assembly (80%), presence of social amenities (93%), recruitment of rural...
teachers from rural areas (93%) and enhancement in community participation in school management (100%) can retain teachers in rural areas.

Challenges of incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana

Objective three was meant to explore the challenges of teacher incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana. Respondents were to respond to lists of items on the objective by indicating their level of agreement on the scale; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Table 4: Challenges of incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate funds</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate awareness among teachers on their conditions of service</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise of excessive powers by management</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient support from parents and public</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicization of the teaching profession</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delays in payment of teachers’ salaries</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of incentives and recognition in the teaching profession</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly working relationship between headteachers and teachers</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 4 presents data on the challenges of incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana. According to the results, all (100%) the respondents affirmed that inadequate funds, exercise of excessive powers by management and insufficient support from parents and public, politicization of the teaching profession and lack of incentives and recognition in the teaching profession are challenges to incentive policies. Similarly, more than half (91%) of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that inadequate awareness among teachers on their conditions of service is a challenge to incentive policies. Besides, 29 respondents representing 29% disagreed and 55 (55%) of them also strongly disagreed that delays in payment of teachers’ salaries is a challenge to incentive policies. Finally, though 31 (31%) respondents strongly agreed that unfriendly working relationship between headteachers and teachers is a challenge to their incentive policies, majority (69%) of them either disagreed or strongly disagree.

The data implies that all (100%) the respondents affirmed that inadequate funds, exercise of excessive powers by management, politicization of the teaching profession and lack of incentives and recognition in the teaching profession are challenges to incentive policies. Similarly, more than half of the respondents maintained that inadequate awareness among teachers on their conditions of service (91%) and insufficient support from parents and public (88%) are other challenges to incentive policies of rural teachers.

Discussion of findings

Incentive policies are available for rural basic school teachers in Ghana.

The data presented in table 2 indicates that 89% of the respondents maintained that incentive policies are available for rural basic schools teachers. Also, all (100%) the respondents disagreed that transport allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers. Additionally, majority (83%) of the respondents were certain that study leave with pay is available for rural basic schools teachers. Meanwhile, all (100%) the
respondents strongly disagreed that bicycle/motor/car maintenance allowance and free accommodation are available for rural basic schools teachers. However, all (100%) the respondents were of the view that retention/professional allowance is available for rural basic schools teachers.

Several studies over the years support this findings and notable among them include; World Education Forum (2010), Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2015) and Akyeampong (2012). World Education Forum (2010) reported that rural teachers should be respected and adequately motivated; have enhanced salaries, access to training for their professional development through enhanced study leave and sponsorship programmes, access to decent accommodation, and have opportunities for social amenities and community support to participate locally and nationally in decisions affecting their professional lives and working environments (World Education Forum, 2010). This was confirmed by Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2015) that teachers are the most critical resource in any level of education in every country. The presence of trained and motivated teachers is vital for students learning because teachers are the determinants of what and how much students achieve in school. Similarly, Akyeampong (2012) asserts that rural basic schools teachers should be given study leave with pay, free accommodation, retention/professional allowance and transport allowance.

**Incentive policies and teacher retention among rural basic school teachers in Ghana.**

Results from the data in table 3 suggest that a huge percent of the respondents confirmed that limited years to qualify for study leave (90%), provision of training supports (76%), provision of accommodation (100%), support from NGOs and the district assembly (80%), presence of social amenities (93%), recruitment of rural teachers from rural areas (93%) and enhancement in community participation in school management (100%) can retain teachers in rural areas.

This finding was supported by Adedeji and Olaniyan (2011) and Jimerson, (2013). Adedeji and Olaniyan, (2011) for instance contend that salaries for teachers needed to be competitive in order to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, as in some instances teachers sustained their good performance irrespective of the salaries they were paid. Again, Mulkeen (2016) agreed with Jimerson (2013) that rural communities are also isolated from social amenities. Teachers have raised health concerns in accepting offers to teach in rural schools as most rural health service centres are not easily accessible. A visit to a doctor that might take a day in an urban area can involve an absence of three or four days in rural areas. The author suggested that vital social amenities should be provided at rural areas. Isolation as experienced in rural areas deprived teachers of socialising and meaningful leisure activities which impacted negatively on rural teachers’ sense of quality of life (Mulkeen, 2016). Furthermore, in Monk’s (2017) research, factors identified to promote retention of teachers in rural areas include giving them limited years to qualify for study leave, providing them with training supports, accommodation and social amenities. Moreover, Lowe (2016) denote that support from NGOs and the district assemblies and recruitment of rural teachers from rural areas can help to retain teachers. Finally, Jimerson (2013) maintained that enhancement in community participation in school management can retain teachers in rural areas.

**Challenges of incentive policies among rural basic school teachers in Ghana**

Additionally, it was found out that all (100%) of the respondents affirmed that inadequate funds, exercise of excessive powers by management, politicization of the teaching profession and lack of incentives and recognition in the teaching profession are challenges to incentive policies. Similarly, more than half of the respondents maintained that inadequate awareness among teachers on their conditions of service (91%) and insufficient support from parents and public (88%) are other challenges to incentive policies of rural teachers.

**CONCLUSIONS**

In the light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. It could be concluded that;

a. study leave with pay and retention/professional allowance are the incentive policies are available for rural basic schools teachers.
b. limited years to qualify for study leave, provision of training supports, provision of accommodation, support from NGOs and the district assembly, presence of social amenities, recruitment of rural teachers from rural areas and enhancement in community participation in school management are incentive policies that could be used to retain teachers in rural areas.

c. inadequate funds, exercise of excessive powers by management, politicization of the teaching profession and lack of incentives and recognition in the teaching profession, inadequate awareness among teachers on their conditions of service and insufficient support from parents and public are the challenges to incentive policies of rural teachers.

REFERENCES


