

Assessing Teacher Motivation and its Outcome on Performance in Public Basic Schools in East Gonja District of Ghana

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Abstract

The study explored the extent and adequacy of motivation within the Ghana Education Service (GES) and its effect on teaching. The population for the study was all teaching staff in the East Gonja District. A Survey design was used in the study and a questionnaire developed by the researchers was administered to teachers in 25 schools out of 69 zoned schools giving a 36% representation of the entire population. Random sampling method was used to select four teachers from each of the selected schools to give a total of 100 respondents. The study revealed that promotion, salary increment, cash rewards and study leave with pay were motivating factors to teacher performance. The study also unraveled poor management commitment to teacher performance, and finally, the relationship between years of experience and job satisfaction depicted that teachers with more years of teaching experience were more motivated and satisfied than the youth. It is recommended that management pays attention to factors that motivate teachers so as to improve performance and also give some form of incentives/appreciation to especially longer serving and industrious teachers.

Key words: Teacher motivation, Performance, Satisfaction, Management, Demotivation, Years of experience.

Introduction

Teacher motivation plays an important role in the promotion of excellent teaching and learning. Generally, motivated teachers persuade students to learn in the classroom, to ensure the accomplishment of educational reforms and feelings of satisfaction and fulfilment. While teacher motivation is fundamental to the teaching and learning process,

several teachers are not highly motivated as compared to other professions and even teachers across various countries, school contexts, and subject fields (Sarpong, 2002; Claeys, 2011). Similar to some experts that are considered selfless, teachers in public pre-tertiary schools in Ghana are always given that age long encouragement that their reward is in heaven. However, in Ghana, a number of them hang about not satisfied because of poor working conditions (Osei, 2006). The situation is even worsened with teachers in the rural areas.

This has made a number of teachers resort to doing other jobs like selling of goods to support themselves and their families since their efforts at contributing massively to educational development in the country are not well compensated for to sustain them till another pay day (Mensah, 2011). Engaging in other works generate non-attendance in the classrooms (Salifu, 2013) and many of the teachers as a result, do not have time for co-curricular activities, teaching notes preparation and marking of exercises (Tawia-Armah, 2010; Mensah, 2011). Many others vacate, resign their position, or do not even resume post at all after leave of absence or sponsored study leave (Mensah, 2011). This implies that the Government may be required to spend a huge sums of money to prepare additional professional teachers to occupy the available spaces created.

In Ghana the teaching profession is not frequently seen as a monetarily pleasing one by the new age group graduates (Osei, 2006). A lot of Ghanaian intellectuals will prefer other professions to teaching because it is generally perceived as a low paying profession with poor conditions of service (Davidson, Powney, Wilson, Hall & Mirza, 2005). Generally, a large number of Ghanaians who get into the teaching profession do so when they fail to meet their dreams of pursuing other professions and eventually leave when they succeed (Agezo, 2010).

Although some studies have been conducted on teacher performance in Ghana (Mensah, 2011; Osei, 2006; Sarpong, 2002), there is still paucity of information on teacher motivation in schools in Northern Ghana most especially in the East Gonja District which encouraged the researchers to undertake this study. The current research therefore seeks to:

- i. investigate the various factors that motivate teachers to increase performance in public schools within the East Gonja District

- ii. unravel management commitment to teacher motivation and also
- iii. examine the relationship between years of experience and satisfaction on the teaching job within the East Gonja District.

The findings of this study would assist management, affiliates and key stakeholders of the Ghana Education Service (GES) to recognize the current motivational confronts so as to draw appropriate strategies and policies to meet the needs and expectations of staff.

Significance of the study to educational delivery in Ghana

It is broadly anticipated that this study will impact on educational experts/specialists at the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service, Teachers, Academia, and all other stakeholders as well as the general public by giving a more dependable scientific measure and standpoint for describing teacher motivation and its consequence on performance.

It also provides a source of information that brings to the fore the switching plans of current and possible staff of GES, thereby providing pragmatic assistance for policy review and management of strategic decisions in numerous critical parts of their operations.

Review of Related Literature

‘Motivation’ was formally gotten from the Latin word ‘movere’ meaning ‘to move’. However, Robbins (2003) posits that this might be an insufficient description for what it was intended. Vroom (1964) defines motivation as a process of governing choice made by persons or lower organisms among alternative forms of voluntary activity, and Akinwumi (2000) describes the term as “the modern-day influence on the vigor, direction and determination of action”. Ifinedo (2003) also opines that worker motivation is a compound and complex term to define, hence an exact definition of this theory is indefinable as the idea comprises the distinctiveness of individual and condition in addition to the opinion of that circumstance by the individual. However, motivated and committed staff can be a determining factor in the success of an organization.

Theories in management (Gullat & Bannet, 1995; Tosti & Herbst, 2009) indicate a strong correlation between the workers’

contribution in the overall success and the level of motivation that exists in the organization.

The main purpose of motivating your workforce is to reduce dissatisfaction and to keep people within the association (Tosti & Herbst, 2009). There are so many factors that can motivate an individual employee; examples of such factors are interpersonal relations, technical supervision, working conditions, salary, status, job security and company policy (Tosti & Herbst, 2009). Steinmetz (1983) states that motivation is the commencement or the institution of goal-oriented behaviour and is of two main forms; intrinsic and extrinsic. The researcher further explained that motivation is intensely rooted in the essential needs to reduce physical pain and maximize happiness, or it may comprise particular needs such as resting and eating, a desired object, goal, hobby, ideal, state of being, or it may be ascribed to less-apparent explanations such as altruism, morality, and selfishness.

Intrinsic motivation is defined as doing of an action for its innate satisfaction instead of some distinguishable consequence. When inherently motivated, a person is stimulated to perform more willingly whether for enjoyment or challenge for outside pressure, prods, or rewards. Career development, voice, recognition and prestige are some factors outlined to intrinsically motivate teachers (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Ramachandran & Pal, 2005). This trend of intrinsic motivation was initially recognized within investigational studies of animal behaviour, in which it was revealed that many organisms employ playful, exploratory and curiosity-driven behaviours in the lack of reinforcement or incentive (Weightman, 2008).

In humans, motivating intrinsically seems not to be the only method of motivation, or even of preferential activity, although it is a persistent and significant one. This is because the tendency to take interest in innovation, to actively understand, and to innovatively apply our talents is not restricted to childhood, although it is an important feature of human life that influences persistence, performance, and well-being across life's time (Reiss, 2004).

A study by Carnegie (1987) stated that extrinsic motivation comes from outside the performer. Remuneration and incentives, accountability, institutional environment, learning materials and facilities are also factors that motivate teachers extrinsically (Duflo, Dupas & Kremer, 2011). This is however contrary to a study conducted in Brazil by Delannoy and Sedlacek (2000) which depicted that across-

the-board salary increment was ineffective in increasing teacher performance.

Extrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome. Although intrinsic motivation is clearly an important type of motivation, most of the activities people do are not strictly speaking, intrinsically motivated because after early childhood the freedom to be intrinsically motivated becomes increasingly curtailed by social demands and roles that require individuals to assume responsibility for non-intrinsically interesting tasks.

A study on the analysis of the key determinants of teacher motivation in the developing countries context by Michaelowa (2002), found that large class size, rural location, double-shifting, active parental involvement and high educational achievement negatively correlated with teacher job satisfaction in these countries. It was further revealed from the study that level of communication between teachers and school supervisors had no statistically important impact on teacher job satisfaction. On the contrary, a study by Urwick, Mapuru & Nkhobotin (2005) in Lesotho showed teachers professional relationships with supervisors as critical for teacher motivation and outweigh the influence of pay and facilities on motivation.

The pressure of class size on classroom relations in the rouse of Free Primary Education (FPE) in Kenya, established that FPE increased class sizes, heavy teachers' working load, shortage of teachers' leading to absence of teacher motivation (Parham, 2003). Further revelation showed that teachers were depressed with heavy workloads, extended hours of work and handling several lessons involving many pupils. The main critical result that surfaces from the studies was that significant proportions of primary school teachers, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, have little levels of job satisfaction and are inadequately motivated. Millions of children are, thus, not being taught correctly and are not getting even a minimally adequate education. This was confirmed by Bennell and Muykanuzi (2005) who undertook a study in Tanzania and revealed that de-motivation of teachers is a key contributory issue to the appallingly poor learning attainments of primary school pupils.

Development in the Ghanaian educational system has a lot to do with teachers because of the important role they play. However, available research (Sarpong, 2002; Osei, 2006) have shown that those at the public pre-tertiary level mostly are not motivated during their

practice in their profession. Research has found a number of factors that affect teaching performance in our educational system. They include but not limited to the following: inadequate provision of facilities in schools for effective learning processes; irregular payment of teacher's salaries or lack of incentives to teachers; negative societal view and attitude towards teachers; inadequate supervision in school system (Brown, 2013; Buchanan, 2006). This notwithstanding, motivation of teachers is said to increase with increased years of experience (Esther & Marijon, 2008; Nagy & Davis, 1985).

However, George and Mensah, (2011) hypothesized that young Ghanaian graduates will prefer other professions to teaching because teaching is generally perceived as unattractive. In consonance with this, Wilson (2009) admonished that the best young people will be attracted to teaching as a lifeline career if working conditions of the teacher is comparable to those enjoyed by other professional groups. It has been argued that teachers do not receive fair treatment although they are most times regarded as potential agents of change (Osei, 2006). These problems of unfairness come down to these teachers having high Teacher-Pupil Ratio (TPR) of 1:70 instead of the stipulated TPR of 1:24 (Tanaka, 2010).

One of the main duties of successful managers is to aid their employees increase job performance on a continuous basis (Agezo, 2010). Managing teacher performance is therefore a continuous process which involves 'identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and also aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization since individual performance is seen as the building block of organizational success. Claeys (2011) holds that the assessment of teachers' performance is as important as the assessment of pupils. Certain managerial principles adopted by some principals are often seen to be authoritarian and are constructed on the basis of colonial rationality. With this, they refuse to involve the teachers in decision-making. For instance, they often take autonomous decisions and occasionally issue queries to teachers that are recorded on their files without allowing them any opportunity to defend their shortcoming (Agezo, 2010).

Studies by McClelland, Koestner and Weinberger (1989) revealed three types of motivational needs and encouraging factors to perform as the need for affiliation, need for power and need for achievement. Osei (2006) posited that aside the early promotion and

shorter serving period to qualify for study leave with pay for teachers in the rural areas, teachers who agree to go to these areas to teach do not receive any additional incentive package to motivate or put them on the same scale as those in the urban centres. This as aforementioned has made a number of teachers resort to doing other jobs (Mensah, 2011). This practice of taking on other jobs generate non-attendance in the classrooms since the educational system in Ghana does not offer room for urgent situation teacher substitution (Salifu, 2013).

Research Questions

To accomplish the objective of the study, the following research questions were answered.

1. Which factors motivate teachers in public schools within the East Gonja District?
2. How can management commitment to teacher motivation be unraveled?
3. What is the relationship between years of experience and satisfaction on the job?

Methodology

Research approach and design

The research is a quantitative study which adopted the survey design. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered to teachers through the support of field assistants. Closed ended questions in the form of multiple-choice questions, two-way questions as well as ranking scales were provided for respondents to choose the category that best describes their answer. This formed the primary data source. Secondary data was collated through the review of relevant journals, textbooks, articles, publications, magazines, internal records of GES and District Assembly.

Population and sample size

The GES in the East Gonja District boasts of 12 main circuits, 69 basic schools comprising 44 Primary and 25 Junior High Schools (Moro, 2018).

The study population comprised only the teaching staff of GES in the East Gonja District. The total number of basic schools in the District are 69. Using the simple random sampling method, specifically the lottery technique, 25 schools out of the 69 zoned schools

constituting 36% of the entire population were selected. This is a good representation of the entire population. This sample selection method was chosen because the researchers wanted to give each subject a fair chance of being selected. Four teachers from each of the selected schools were chosen to give a total of 100 respondents. To achieve this, teachers in each of the selected schools were assigned numbers. Using the fishbowl technique, four numbers were then randomly picked out of the total in each school. This procedure was repeated for all the 25 selected schools arriving at a sample size of 100. Names of schools covered were withheld due to ethical reasons.

An introductory letter was obtained from the District Education Office which allowed the researchers to move to the various schools. Appointments were made with head teachers and headmasters of the selected schools to seek their permission to undertake the research in their schools and also arrange for the dates for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into three different sections. Section A contained the background information of the respondents, Section B looked at motivational issue, whereas Section C contained items on performance measurement.

To ensure validity, the questionnaire was piloted in two schools involving six teachers who did not partake in the actual study. The pre-testing was done to ensure that this instrument precisely measure what it was designed to measure and that information acquired was a true indication of the variables under study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This therefore helped the researchers to modify items that were not clear before the actual field work was carried out.

Reliability of the tool was tested using the split-half method. This method entails scoring two halves normally odd and even objects of a test individually for grouping. Then the correlation coefficient for the two categories of scores calculated. The coefficient shows the extent to which the two halves of the test give equal outcomes and thus explains the internal consistency of the test.

Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula below was used to test the reliability of the instruments:

$$\frac{2 \times \text{Corr. between the Halve}}{1 + \text{Corr. between the Halves}}$$

$$r = \frac{2r}{r+1}$$

Where r = reliability of the coefficient resulting from correlating the scores of the odd items with the scores of the even items. Orodho (2004) states that correlation co-efficient of up to 0.8 is high and adequate to evaluate the tools as reliable for research. After piloting, a correlation coefficient of 0.76 was attained and therefore considered the instruments reliable.

Data analysis

The questionnaires were retrieved, sorted and checked for completeness by the researchers. Quantitative data were later coded by assigning a code to every response. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data in the form of percentages, charts, etc. Likert scale was used and response categories ranged from strongly agree (0), agree (1), neutral (2), disagree (3) to strongly disagree (4). Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 was used for the analysis as it enabled the handling of large amount of data.

Results and Discussion

Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics of the respondents showed a 1:1.3 ratio of male to females, representing (47%) males and (53%) females. This indicates sufficient gender equilibrium although there was a slight female dominance which lend credence to the assertion that, women naturally exhibit patience, empathy and the care for mankind hence the field of teaching which is in consonance with a research report by Davidson, et al. (2005) in England in the United Kingdom.

Fig. 1: Ages of Respondents

Ages of the respondents ranged from 20 to 59 years. The modal age category was between 31 to 40 years representing (41%) of the respondents as shown in Figure 1. About (23%) were between the ages of 41 and 50 years while (21%) was for ages between 20 to 30 years and the remaining (15%) for age groups between 51 to 60 years.

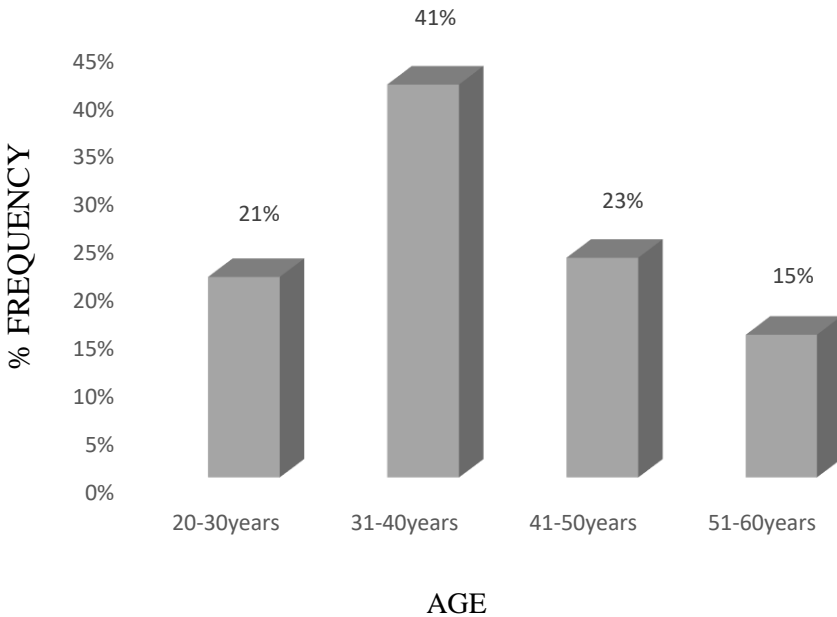


Fig. 1: Ages of Respondents

From the above statistics it can be deduced that the GES, East Gonja District has a youthful workforce and few aged. This exhibits an excellent mix of majority youthful, active and innovative staff with more skill and experienced than old people. It is also worth mentioning that the age of teachers has become younger in many countries due to the quick rolling out of primary and secondary school enrolments and/or high levels of teacher attrition. This confirms a study by Bennell and Mukyanuzi (2005) on teacher motivation crisis in Tanzania. The research established that teacher personality and character can also negatively have effect on motivation levels.

Ranks of Respondents were grouped into six main categories of the GES, namely, Principal Superintendent, Senior Superintendent I, Senior Superintendent II, Assistant Director of Education I, Assistant Director of Education II and Director of Education. The Senior

Superintendent I was the modal rank with (38%) representation, while Senior Superintendent II and Principal Superintendent registered (25%) and (21%) respectively. Assistant Director of Education rank aggregately registered (16%) for the senior rank level as presented in the Figure 2. This distribution of ranks was not surprising due to the more youthful nature of the respondents.

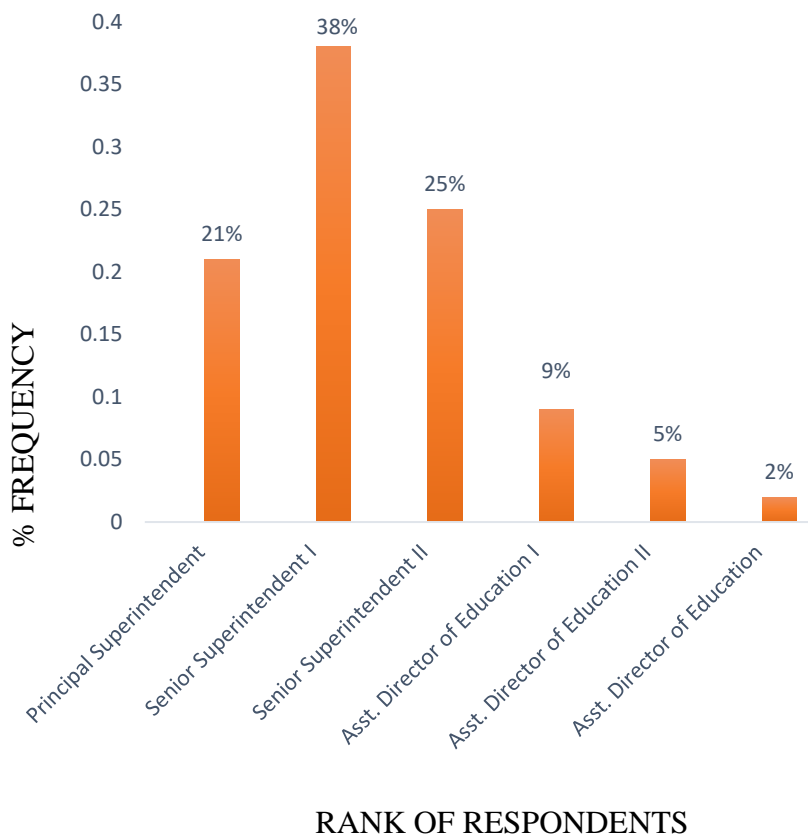


Fig. 2: Ranks of respondents

In relation to the academic qualification of respondents, the least qualification attained by respondents was Teacher certificate ‘A’ and the highest a Master’s degree. It was noticed that respondents with Diploma and Certificate ‘A’ formed the majority representing (65%), while first degree holders and postgraduates recorded (21%) and (14%) respectively. This suggests that the staff were qualified/professionals,

well informed and competent in their area of operations which implies that they could be relied upon to act responsibly and professionally.

Teaching experience of respondents was also sought and from the responses it was revealed that (87%) aggregately had been with the GES for more than five (5) years, depicting that GES East Gonja has more experienced staff.

Factors motivating teachers in the East Gonja District

The first objective of the study was to identify the factors that motivate teacher performance. The study outlined four major factors that encouraged teachers to maximize their performances at the workplace. These factors were promotion, cash rewards, salary increment, and study leave with pay. Promotion as an encouraging factor to performance was selected by (53%) of the total. This was followed by cash rewards, (31%), salary increment (11%) and lastly (5%) for study leave with pay. This conforms to Osei (2006) who posited that early promotion as well as shorter serving period to qualify for study leave with pay are some motivating factors for especially teachers in the remote areas.

Investigation into whether respondents were satisfied with the motivational packages revealed that (78%) of the respondents were not satisfied with those factors, while (13%) assented and (9%) were indifferent as presented in Figure 3 and this confirms findings in the study by Sarpong (2002) who found that despite the motivational packages given to teachers, they are not well motivated during their professional practice which in turn affects their performance. 'Satisfaction to motivational packages' showed a strong disagreement to the notion with the distribution curve skewing more towards the disagreement side with a significant difference of ($t= 57, p= 0 .000$) meaning that motivational packages are woefully inadequate.

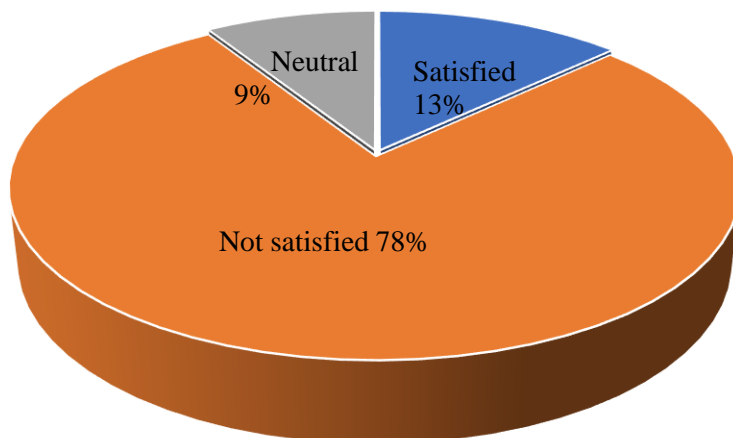


Fig. 3: Satisfaction with motivation package

This corroborates the findings of previous authors that the majority of the Ghanaian youth generally perceive teaching as a low paying profession with unattractive service conditions (Claeys, 2011; Davidson et al., 2005). Agezo (2010) and George and Mensah (2011) reiterate that because the teaching profession is less monetarily pleasing a lot of literate Ghanaians will prefer other professions to teaching. Therefore, a large number of young people who get into teaching do so when they fail to meet their dreams of pursuing other professions and eventually leave when they succeed.

The study also disclosed certain notable factors that demotivate teachers during the discharge of their duties. They included high Teacher-Pupil Ratio (80 pupils in a class), inadequate teaching aids for pupils and in certain instances, poor teacher-supervisor relationship, the unhygienic environment of the school premises-sometimes community refuse dumps close to school buildings. It was discovered from the study that (83%) of respondents were not motivated under such circumstances while (5%) felt motivated notwithstanding these challenges and (12%) indifferent to motivational tendencies. This finding supports Tanaka (2010) and Duflo et al. (2011) who found that certain factors such as remuneration and incentives, unhygienic institutional environment, learning materials and facilities when absent can demoralize teachers. In the context of developing countries, Michaelowa (2002), also found large class size, rural location, double-shifting system negatively correlated with teacher job satisfaction.

Management commitment to teacher motivation

The second objective of the study was to unravel management commitment to teacher motivation. It was revealed from the study that management of GES was not committed to the implementation of teacher motivation issues. The research results showed (85%) dissenting view on the assertion that ‘very high management’s commitment to implementation of motivation’ with significance level of ($t= 46.528, p= 0.000$). This gives an indication that management of GES East Gonja District were not committed to the implementation of teacher motivation which the respondents believe is affecting their performance. However, (15%) of the respondents were indifferent to this assertion. This result confirms the research by Urwick, Mapuru & Nkhobotin (2005) in Lesotho which reported that teachers’ professional relationship with supervisors is critical for teacher motivation and outweigh the influence of pay and facilities on motivation. Mensah (2011) also disclosed that about 10,000 teachers in public pre-tertiary schools in Ghana disappear from the classrooms each year due to poor working conditions in the classroom.

Tosti and Herbst (2009) also pointed interpersonal relation with supervisors, technical supervision, and company policy as factors that motivate an individual employee. However, contrary to the findings of this current study and other researchers mentioned earlier, Michaelowa (2002), found no statistically significant value between the level of communication between teachers and school supervisors and that of teacher job satisfaction.

Relationship between teacher’s years of experience and teacher job satisfaction

The relationship between teacher’s years of experience and satisfaction on the job was the last objective of the study. Satisfaction with one’s current schedule of work was used to measure the satisfaction level of their jobs. The study found that (49%) of the respondents liked their current schedule of work. They explained further that they like teaching because they were trained to teach and therefore were satisfied with the profession. They also indicated that they earned their living by teaching, and finally added that being in the classroom gives them enough time for doing their own businesses. However, (35%) did not like their current job, attributing it to remuneration which does not commensurate with the workload, job

being too monotonous without challenges to push them to the limit to deliver their best. Meanwhile, (16%) were indifferent about the situation as illustrated in Figure 4. This finding supports that of Mensah (2011) who discovered that some teachers as a result of poor working conditions, resort to doing other jobs. Salifu (2013) however discourages this practice since it generates non-attendance in the classrooms because the educational system in Ghana does not provide room for urgent substitution of teachers.

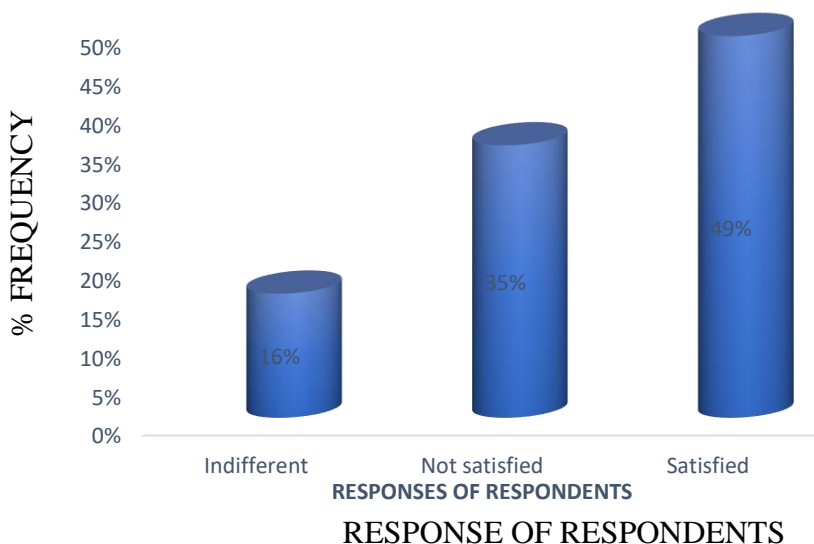


Fig. 4: Preferred level of satisfaction with Current Schedule of work

Table 1 highlights the relationship between years of experience and job satisfaction. From the table, satisfaction with ones’ job increases with increased number of years in the service, as respondents with more than 10 years of experience had (51%) job satisfaction level as compared to respondents with between 6-10 years of experience and job satisfaction level of (34%). Job satisfaction is drastically reduced to (15%) with less than 5 years of experience in GES. This means that as years of experience increases, there is a corresponding increase in job satisfaction indicating a direct relationship between years of experience and job satisfaction.

Table 1: Relationship between teacher's years of experience and job satisfaction

Years of experience	% Job satisfaction
Less than 5 years	15%
6 – 10 years	34%
More than 10 years	51%
Total	100

This finding confirms studies by Nagy and Davis (1985), and Esther and Marijon (2008) who found that motivation increases with years of experience, and therefore teachers with more teaching experience tend to be more motivated and satisfied than the youth who are less experienced.

Conclusion

The strategic role played by teachers in the socio-economic development of the country cannot be overemphasized. The Ghana Education Service of the Ministry of Education as a corporate entity cannot detach itself from the all-important concept of motivation. The study revealed four (4) factors: promotion; salary increment; cash rewards; and study leave with pay as factors motivating teachers. On the other hand, factors such as high Teacher-Pupil Ratio, inadequate teaching aids for pupils, poor environmental conditions can de-motivate teachers. It was also discovered from the study that management of East Gonja District GES show little or no commitment to teacher motivation issues. Finally, it was revealed from the study that teacher motivation increases with years of experience.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, it is recommended that:

1. management of GES should be committed to teacher motivation factors by giving incentives such as decent accommodation, appreciable salary increments, expand Best Teachers Award Schemes, offer scholarship for teachers especially those working in the rural areas as well as industrious teachers to keep them in the classroom;
2. workshops, requisite logistics and modern laboratories for teachings and learning in contemporary times should be provided to achieve better performance; and

proper reward systems, for example substantial amount of money, building facilities, means of transport are very commendable for longer and outstanding staff.

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