

## **Factors Contributing to Teacher Attrition in Senior High Schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities, Ghana**

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**Abstract:** *This study explored the factors contributing to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities in the Ahafo Region, Ghana. The concurrent mixed method research design was adopted for the study. Four schools were selected for the study using purposive sampling method. The teacher population of the schools was 300. Stratified and simple random sampling methods were also employed to select the sample of 120 teachers for the quantitative study and 12 headmasters were purposely selected to collect the qualitative data for the study. That meant that the instrument used for the study were questionnaire and unstructured interview guide. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse the quantitative data while verbatim responses of the interviews were used to analyse the qualitative data. The major external factors that contributed to teacher attrition were low salary, inadequate support from administration and high workloads. Again, job dissatisfaction, pursuit of alternative careers and family issues were the internal factors that contributed to teacher attrition. The study also revealed that, teacher attrition affects the quality of education delivery: negative impact on students' performance, loss of instructional time and difficulty in finding experienced and qualified teachers. The researchers therefore recommend that salaries of teachers should be improved to retain them in the teaching profession. Again, heads of Senior High Schools should make sure they provide teaching and learning materials and textbooks to teachers for them to enjoy their lessons in the classroom.*

**Key Words:** Teacher attrition, job dissatisfaction, low salary, quality education,

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## **INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Teachers constitute an indispensable segment of the population in the development agenda of Ghana. Teachers remain one of the most crucial components of any educational system. It is the teachers' duty to design and deliver instruction to students who constitute the future. In support of these views, Ms. Twum Ampofo, the Deputy Minister of Education in charge of Technical, Vocational, Education and Training (TVET) noted that the role of teachers had never been more critical, considering the fact that the world is "rapidly advancing in its quest for knowledge acquisition, where it requires constant verification and authentication of information before learners can consume it" (Aklorbortu, 2023, p.5). She further stressed that "teachers were not merely conduits of information, but rather the architects of collective future, shaping the minds of young ones, fostering critical thinking and instilling values and attitudes that transcended generations" (Aklorbortu, 2023, p.5). In addition, findings of several studies (Belogolovsky & Somech, 2010; Duyar, Normore & Oplatka, 2012) indicate that Extra-Role Performance (ERP) of teachers is essential for the effectiveness and improvement of schools. Effah and Osei-Owusu (2014) posited that teachers are the bedrock for all human learning, and represent the hub around which individual citizens are made to realize their full potential to serve their nations. Unfortunately, Ghana Education Service (GES) is experiencing high rate of teacher attrition. The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) has expressed concern about the high annual attrition rate of teachers in the country, particularly at the Basic and Senior High School levels (Sottie, 2019). GNAT notes that, the rate of attrition of teachers from the Ghana Education Service (GES) in recent times, especially in the rural areas, stood at approximately 7000 annually, which is described as 'very high and alarming'. The National First Trustee of GNAT, Ms. Abena Gyamera made this revelation at the closing ceremony of the one-week GNAT/ Canadian Teacher Federation (CTF) in-service training for 350 teachers selected from all the GNAT District in the Eastern Region at Kibi (GNAT, 2019).

The Tano South and North Municipalities which are the focus of the study have experienced teacher attrition for many years (GES, 2009). For example, a survey conducted by the Network for Education and Development (NED, 2017) showed that over 1,200 teachers left the classroom in 2015/16 academic year, 321 out of these figures came from senior high schools (SHS) within the Tano South and North Municipalities. The survey revealed that, these teachers left the classroom for various reasons. While some leave with permission to study with or without pay, others go on secondment, retire, or just leave to take up non-teaching jobs where conditions of service are relatively better (GES, 2018).

A closer look at the attrition rates of teachers in the Tano South and North Municipalities revealed that those who left the classrooms far outnumbered the teachers posted to the Municipalities in the same year (GES, 2018). This situation puts the Student Teacher ratio (STR) at 56 students to a

teacher far above the national average of 26 students to a teacher and the regional average of 37 students to a teacher (GES 2009).

According to the Ghana Education Service (GES, 2008) annual report, a very high STR has direct effect on teaching and learning because class work, assignments and exercises as well as contact between the teacher and the student cannot be effective. Arguments have been made that the current demand for teacher is not as a result of shortage of teachers, but rather due to the high attrition rate of existing teachers particularly those who leave classrooms within the first three years of their career. In support of this observation, Dr. Christian Addai-Poku also revealed that the high attrition rate of teachers poses a great threat to the future of the nation's education sector. He noted that, in 2023, a little over 16,000 Ghanaian teachers had applied to the Department of Education in the United Kingdom (UK) for employment and by June 13, 10,000 of the applicants with Ghana Teacher Licences had been certified to work in the UK.

It is against this background that the study seeks to explore the factors contributing to teacher attrition in Senior High schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities in the Ahafo Region. A number of factors could account for the attrition of teachers in many senior high schools. In view of aforementioned factors on teacher attrition which calls for a research to identify the underlying causes for such a high attrition rate and possible measures to address the situation.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to explore the factors contributing to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities of Ghana.

### **Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What external factors contribute to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities?
2. What internal factors contribute to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities?
3. How does teacher attrition affect quality education delivery in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities?

### **Research Design**

The Pragmatic research paradigm was adopted in this study. Pragmatism has gained considerable support as a stance for mixed methods researchers (Feilzer, 2010; Johnson & Maxcy, 2003; Morgan, 2007). It is oriented on the based proposition that researchers should use the philosophical and/ or methodological approach that works best for a particular research problem that is being investigated (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998).

The concurrent mixed method research design was used for the study. Immediately after collecting the answered questionnaire from the teachers in each school selected for the study the researchers conducted the interview with the participants on the same day.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised of teachers, headmasters and their assistants of Bechem Presbyterian SHS, Techimantia Sam. Otu SHS, Serwaa Kesse Girls SHS, and Boakye Tromo SHS/Technical. The population for the study was 300.

### **Sample and sampling techniques**

In selecting the sample for the quantitative study, the stratified sampling method was used to get a proportional figure from each school selected for the study. This sampling method was used because the teacher population from each school were not the same. After that, the simple random sampling method was used to select a sample from each school. In all, 120 teachers were selected to answer the questionnaire for the quantitative data. In order to get participants for the interviews, the purposive sampling method was used to select the headmasters and their assistants. In each school, there was one headmaster and two assistants, therefore, in the four schools, there were 12 participants who were interviewed to get the qualitative data. Purposive sampling method was used to select the four schools in the area because they were accessible and also were best suited to answer the questions. In all, the sample for the study was 132 based on proportional representation of the selected schools.

### **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data for the study. The researchers used questionnaire because, it is generally quick to collect information with it. Questionnaire were appropriate for this study because it could reach many people in a short time (Ary, et al., 2006). The questionnaire consisted of four sections: A, B, C and D. Section A comprised of demographic items such as sex, marital status and educational qualification. Section B, consisted of ten external factors of teacher attrition. Section C comprised of internal factors that influenced teacher attrition. Section D comprised of items indicating the effect of teacher attrition on quality education delivery. There was 4-point Likert scale (labelled strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) used for section B, C and D.

The researchers validated the research instruments in terms of content and face validity. The content and face validity of the questionnaire were done by giving the questionnaire to colleagues to assess its' ability to collect the required data. The suggestions given were incorporated to validate the instruments.

The instrument was pilot tested in Ahafoman SHS in the Ahafo Region. This town was selected because it has similar characteristics with the actual study sample. The purpose of the pre-test was

to ascertain the clarity and adequacy of the instruments in testing their reliability and validity. It also ensured that ambiguous items that might jeopardize the collection of appropriate responses were identified and corrected. The questionnaires were administered to 15 teachers.

The data generated from this pilot test was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20) to compute the reliability co-efficient of the instrument. The internal reliability of the questionnaires was determined with the help of the SPSS version 20. Kothari (2004) offered the following guidelines regarding interpretation of Cronbach's alpha scores:  $\geq 0.9$  is excellent,  $\geq 0.8$  is good, and  $\geq 0.7$  is acceptable,  $\geq 0.6$  is questionable,  $\geq 0.5$  is poor, and  $\leq 0.5$  is unacceptable. Using this guide of the Cronbach's alpha score, the reliability test results of the research instrument yielded 0.72 which is acceptable.

### **Unstructured Interview Guide**

For the qualitative data, an unstructured interview method was adopted. Denscombe (2007), is of the view that with an unstructured interview, the interviewer has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. The choice of unstructured interviews could reflect the researchers' need to gain an in-depth understanding of the motivations of a particular group of people. Unstructured interview is considered to be flexible and provides room for the interviewee to speak widely on the phenomenon. It enables participants to express their views and concerns freely and explicitly.

Unstructured interview guide was constructed based on the proposed research questions and literature review for the study. The instrument was given to colleagues to scrutinize, examine and make comments that could be used to improve the instrument before it was used. A pilot test of the unstructured interview guide was conducted at Ahafoman SHS in Asunafo Municipality with 1 headmaster and 2 assistant headmasters.

### **Trustworthiness of Data**

Triangulation and peer review can be used to establish credibility. Triangulation is used to examine data from the participants. Peer review is the process of checking a researcher's work from another researcher in the same field. Member checking was used to allow the participants to review the final report of the data to check for accuracy. In this study, there were two strategies used: member checking and peer review to check for accuracy. When all interviews were coded and analyzed, the researchers wrote the final data analysis in themes. The researchers provided each participant with a copy of their transcript and the results of the study for their review. For member checking, the participants had the opportunity to have a follow-up session to share additional insights on the analysis. For the peer review, the researchers used an external auditor to check for accuracy. A peer review involves using someone to review the study and ask questions to the researcher about the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This process allows a researcher to determine whether the study relates to other people. An external auditor is an individual who is unfamiliar with the study

and provides an objective overview of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This process confirms whether the study is free of researcher biases and that the results connect with the purpose of the study. The use of peer review is to ensure that the study provides quality information, built on the knowledge regarding factors contributing to teacher attrition, and it is original. The peer review process allowed the researchers to determine the credibility of the study.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

After sorting out the questionnaires, the data were computed and analysed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. In this study, means and standard deviations were used to present the data. The qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. The responses from the interviews were used to support the findings from the quantitative data. In this study a mean score less than 2.5 meant disagree; a mean score equal to 2.5 meant not sure and a mean score more than 2.5 meant agree.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The quantitative results to the research questions are presented in the study as follows. In the analysis, the researchers dichotomised the original 4-point Likert scale of the questionnaire responses (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree) by collapsing responses for 1 and 2 into disagree category, and 3 and 4 into an agree category. According to Beamish (2004), the dichotomisation will help the study to gain more interpretability for the data. The interviews data were used to support the quantitative data.

### **Demographic Characteristics of Teachers and Headmasters**

The demographic characteristics of 120 teachers and 12 headmasters who participated in the study include sex, marital status, and educational level. The details are presented in Table

**Table 1: Teachers’ and headmasters’ demographic characteristics**

Variable	Category	Teachers		Headmasters	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	82	68	9	75
	Female	38	32	3	25
Marital status	Single	42	35	0	0
	Married	72	60	12	100
	Divorced	6	5	0	0
Educational qualification	Bachelor’s degree	108	90	9	75
	Master’s degree	12	10	3	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Data (2023)

The data in Table 1 shows that out of 120 teacher participants selected for the study, 82 (68%) of the respondents were males whereas 38(32%) were females. The data shows that, there were more male teachers than females in the study. It is also evident from Table 1 that, 72(60%) were married while 42(35%) teachers were single. The remaining 6(5%) were divorced. This shows that, there were more teachers who were married at the senior high schools. Moreover, 108(90%) hold bachelor’s degree whereas 12(10%) teachers were master’s degree holders. This indicates that, most of the teachers in the senior high schools hold bachelor’s degree which is good for the schools.

In the case of headmasters and their assistants, Table 1 shows that out of 12 headmasters and their assistants selected for the study, 9 (75%) of the respondents were males whereas 3 (25%) were female. This is an indication that, there were more male headmasters than females in the study. Also, it was evident from Table 1 that, all the 12(100%) were married. Moreover, 9(75%) hold bachelor’s degree with 3(25%) of the headmasters being master’s degree holders.

**Research Question 1: What external factors contribute to teacher attrition among public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities?**

This research question explored the external factors contributing to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities. The researchers used descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations in presenting the data. Table 2 shows the results from the field.

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From Table 2, a mean of means of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 0.77 suggests that, over all, majority of the teachers in the public senior high schools on average acknowledge that these external factors contribute to their attrition.

It is evident that, a mean of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.74 of the teacher participants agreed that high workload as an external factor contribute to teacher attrition. The interview with participants showed that high workload influences teacher attrition. One of the participants affirmed this:

*I go home always very tired but no incentive or recognition, I overloads myself too much.*

This is what another participant said:

*Working in this school is very tedious, everything here is overpopulated, from students to classrooms to dormitories, throughout the week one has to work even during weekend with it social gatherings, madam it not easy.*

**Table 2: External factors that contribute to teacher attrition**

Items	N	Mean	SD
High workload	120	3.68	0.74
High teacher-student ratio	120	3.56	0.82
Inadequate support from administration	120	3.76	0.66
Low salary	120	3.84	0.48
Inadequate professional development	120	3.66	0.74
Unclear approach to student discipline	120	3.46	0.88
Lack of shared leadership	120	3.38	0.92
Unfriendly community members	120	3.64	0.76
Insufficient teacher recognition	120	3.66	0.72
Culture of the school	120	3.34	0.94

**Source:** Field data (2023) Mean of means = 3.59, Std = 0.77

The data from the responses suggests that teachers are overburdened with so much work as a result of high student population which results in high volume of workload for teachers to do. Teachers work throughout the weeks and hardly get time to rest and yet they are not given any incentives.

High teacher-student ratio of 3.56 mean and 0.82 standard deviation showed that high teacher-student ratio contributed to teacher attrition. This implies that the teacher participants agreed that high teacher-student ratio influenced teacher attrition. It is in line with finding that Dr. Addai-Poku argued that although the country produces a good number of qualified teachers every year but the high attrition rate turns around to create a shortage every year across the country (Aklorbortu, 2023). He therefore recommends that all stakeholders in the nation's education space should make effort to play their roles towards attaining the best education the nation's future leaders.

A number of teacher participants with a mean score of 3.76 and standard deviation of 0.66 were of the view that inadequate support from administration is an external factor that contributed to teacher attrition. This shows that, some teacher participants were not happy with the support they get from heads of schools. In support of this finding the interviewees also expressed these sentiments. *"We are handicap, formally we used to pay part payment of teacher's accommodation and other financial needs to support them, especially, the newly posted staff"*. Acheampong and Fosua (2019, p.89) found that some rural schools do not have accommodation for teachers at all and that this leads to excessive absenteeism and loss of contact hours, which eventually affect the quality of education in the country.

In addition, an interviewee made this comment:

*Nothing come to us for such support, I wish when the needs come, we will be able to give such support, is like education system is now in the military era, order from above.*

Also, another participant commented:

*The education institution needs autonomy; we need to be self-governance to take effective decision making and especially in respect of funding provided by the state and respect for academic freedom.*

According to the data gathered heads of senior high schools complain that no incentives are provided for them to give teachers as a form of support. Orders are usually issued from their superiors without the needed incentives that should go with it. However, it is worth noting that teachers' satisfaction is based on the appraisal of how much control and support one has within the job (Landy & Conte, 2013; Mondal et al., 2011). Besides these factors, it is observed that providing competitive salaries, supportive work environments, and manageable workloads are important hygiene factors that should be considered among other factors.

A significant number of teacher participants with a mean of 3.84 and standard deviation of 0.48 suggests that majority of teacher participants agreed that low salary is an external factor that contribute to teacher attrition. It is in the light of this that Ms. Abena Gyamera, the National First Trustee, stressed that "all incentives due teachers by way of increased salary and payment of promotion arrears should be provided, so as to entice them to stay" (Sottie, 2019, p.2). In an

interview session participants made the following observation in support of the quantitative data. *“Our teachers often need to provide the needed TLMs to support teaching, and they make all these expenditures from the little salary they receive.”*

Another headmaster added that:

*Hmm!! The salary situation of teachers is very low as compare with those in other institutions. Two of my teachers recently move to forestry division and I learnt the salary is good.*

Again, a participant also gave this comment:

*Both salaries and working condition of teachers should be determined through a process of negotiation between teachers’ organisations but not by any so-called salary commission, the level of inflation erodes the value of our earning.*

The data show low salary was the major cause of increased teacher attrition. The data further indicate that what makes the teacher’s situation worse is the use of his/her little salary to prepare teaching and learning resources to support teaching in the classroom. Teacher participants stressed that both salary and working conditions of teachers are not good and must be determined through a process of negotiation between teachers’ organizations and government. They further observed that the level of inflation erodes the value of what they earn. Studies have shown that teachers’ salary is the major determinant of public-school teachers’ decision to remain in the profession (Hughes et al., 2014; Marston, 2014). It is in the light of this that Gallo and Beckman (2016) argued that increasing teacher’s salary is the most significant and effective way to reduce attrition.

Again, with the mean and standard deviation of 3.66 and 0.72, teacher respondents agreed that insufficient teacher recognition contribute to the external factor that contributes to teacher attrition. This means that, teachers want their sacrifices they make in the classrooms to be acknowledged and recognised by all stakeholders of education. In respect of teacher recognition, Acheampong and Fosua (2019, p.91s) expressed a similar opinion that “rural teachers should be given special recognition such as awards and promotions to motivate their service in deprived schools”.

From both the quantitative and qualitative data, it was realised that the external factors that contribute to teacher attrition were low salary, inadequate support from administration, high workload, inadequate professional training, low teacher recognition and unfriendly community members were the top most external factors that contribute to teacher attrition in the Tano South and North Municipalities of Ahafo Region. As a result of some these factors, Ingersoll (2013) noted that every year about 15.7% of teachers leave the profession to another, while 40% of teachers sponsored to further their education are not willing to return to the classroom.

**Research Question 2: What internal factors contribute to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities?**

This research question sought to determine the internal factors contributing to teacher attrition in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities. In exploring the internal factors in the first phase of the study, the researchers used descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations to present the data. Table 3 presents the detailed results as follows:

**Table 3: Internal factors that contribute to teacher attrition**

Items	N	Mean	SD
Job dissatisfaction	120	3.82	0.44
Personal/family issues	120	3.66	0.70
Inadequate preparation/training	120	3.48	0.88
Little to no enjoyment in position	120	3.36	0.94
Lack of autonomy	120	3.44	0.90
Pursuit of alternative career	120	3.7	0.72
Intrinsic (positive experience) rewards	120	3.28	0.98
Relocation	120	3.42	0.92
Inadequate behavior management training	120	3.28	0.98

**Source:** Field data (2023)                      Mean of means = 3.49, Std = 0.83

Table 3 presents a mean of means of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 0.83 suggests that majority of the teachers in the public senior high schools on average acknowledged that these internal factors influence teacher attrition.

It is evident from Table3 that, a mean of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 0.44 of the teacher participants agreed that job dissatisfaction as an internal factor influence teacher attrition. Acheampong and Fosua (2019) found that there is high attrition and absenteeism rate due to dissatisfaction among teachers especially those serving in underserved areas. This implies that job dissatisfaction that bring about teacher attrition can hinder the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal four (SDGs) (Madigan & Kim, 2021). In support of the quantitative findings participants made the following comments:

*This profession has lost it glory, it used to be the best profession in the past but what do we see, teachers don't have the control, indiscipline, mass promotion are the order of the day*

Another participant commented:

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*The working condition are not friendly, I feel stagnant in the job role, how I feel I have it my own way, poor performance of students' makes me dissatisfied in the job.*

Yet, another participant observed that:

*In my whole duration in the teaching profession, teaching has been considered as a profession for failures, while engineers, lawyers and medical practitioners who are the result from teachers' efforts are greatly respected and valued with good salaries aside allowance of all kinds*

The data reveal that the teaching profession has lost its glory and it is no longer the respected profession it used to be. This has caused many teachers to be dissatisfied with the profession. As a result, Ghana National Association of Teachers [GNAT] indicated the attrition rate of teachers from the Ghana Education Service in recent time, especially in rural areas is approximately 7000 annually, which is described as “very high and alarming” (Sottie, 2019, p.1). In respect of this, Ms Abena Gyamera, appealed to the GES to motivate teachers to stay in the profession. She observed that, “Ghana’s development, hinges on well-developed and committed citizenry and this can only be driven by teachers. So, she further appealed that, all incentives due them by way of increase in salary and payment of promotion arrears should be provided, so as to entice them to stay” (Sottie, 2019, p. 2). Teachers no longer exercise any power or control and as a result indiscipline has become the order of the day which affects students’ learning and performance in schools. Teachers’ working conditions are not the best and as if that is not enough students’ performance is so bad that teachers feel dissatisfied on the job. The data suggest that teaching has become a profession for failures because teachers are marginalised in terms of salaries as compare to other professions.

On family issues, as an internal factor from the teacher participants, a mean of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 0.70 show that family issues influence teacher attrition. The qualitative data agree with the quantitative data in some ways as evident from the participants’ comments. One participant commented that:

*I wish to be closed to my family, I have aged parent to be taken care of, if I get any nearby school, I wouldn't hesitate to go, they are very dear to me*

Again, a comment from a participant noted:

*Most of the females' teachers who leave far from their families ask for transfers and if the transfer is not fourth coming, they tend to resign. On the other hand, those who are single, once married tend to quit and join their spouses.*

According to the data family issues influence teacher attrition in various ways. Teachers who do not live with their families at their stations always have to be travelling to and fro to visit their

families which creates a lot of inconveniences for them. So many teachers in this situation will always find ways of joining their families even if it means vacating their posts.

The study further found that a mean of 3.7 and standard deviation of 0.72 indicate that pursuit of alternative career was an internal factor that influence teacher attrition. This was an indication that some teacher participants were of the view that pursuit of alternative career influence teacher attrition. In support of the quantitative data the qualitative data also show that most teachers would like to move to other alternative careers if they get the slightest opportunity. This is evident by the comments below:

*When they get the opportunity they leave, just this year three of my agriculture staff left to the COCOBOD.*

Again, a participant said this:

*You know this saying that most teachers in the teaching profession used teaching as a stepping stone, so most of them dream of quitting to seek alternative careers.*

It can be deduced from the interview data that teachers are leaving the classrooms for other jobs which they perceive offers better job satisfaction than teaching. The data also reveal that some teachers use the teaching profession as a stepping stone to get better alternatives. It is in line with this situation that some scholars are pushing for higher salaries and improved conditions for teachers (Elyashiv, 2019 & Kukano 2020). Others also are calling for re-evaluation of the teaching profession's societal perception to attract and retain talent (Turner, 2021).

From the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative data, it was realised that the internal factors that contribute to teacher attrition were job dissatisfaction, pursuit of alternative career, family issues, inadequate preparation and lack of autonomy were the top internal factors that contribute to teacher attrition in the Tano South and North Municipalities of the Ahafo Region.

### **Research Question 3: How does teacher attrition affect the quality of education delivery in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities?**

This research question sought to explore how teacher attrition affect quality of education delivery among public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities. Table 4 details the results as follows:

Table 4 presents data on how teacher attrition affects quality of education delivery in public senior high schools in the Tano South and North Municipalities. The data revealed a mean of means of 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.75 which implies that, majority of the teachers in the public senior high schools acknowledged that these external factors influence teacher attrition. This finding is supported by Turner (2021) who identified poor salaries, absence of professional development opportunities and lack of career prospects as some of the disincentives of the teaching profession in Kumasi which usually lead to high attrition rate among teachers.

**Table 4: Teacher attrition affects quality of education delivery**

Items	N	Mean	SD
Disruption of relationships among teachers.	120	3.46	0.84
Difficulty in finding experienced teachers to fill vacancies	120	3.76	0.68
Teacher attrition has negative effect on students' performance	120	3.84	0.4
Teacher attrition has financial implications for the school	120	3.32	0.96
Loss of instructional time	120	3.84	0.48
Increased workload of teachers	120	3.34	0.94
Increased reliance on inexperienced teachers	120	3.62	0.8
Teacher attrition erodes trust among teachers	120	3.38	0.92

**Source:** Field data (2023) Mean of means = 3.50, Std = 0.75

The data further revealed that a mean of 3.76 and standard deviation of 0.68 shows that there is always difficulty in filling vacancies with experienced teachers and this situation affects the quality of education delivery. This means that, teacher participants agreed that difficulty in filling vacancies with experienced teachers affect the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Some of the effects of teacher attrition that directly affect students and general school performance are loss of experienced teachers, disruptions in student learning, and diminished academic performance in affected schools (Ngmenkpieo, Tsee & Gyei, 2023). Acheampong and Fosua (2019) agree with Ngmenkpieo et al. that such school are more likely to suffer the consequences of teacher instability, which affects the academic performance of most pupils. From the qualitative data, participants expressed similar views. The following were some responses from the interviewees:

*When this happened, we relied on the service personals to fill the vacuum with no experience till the end of the academic year.*

Another participant commented:

*The process to get teachers to fill the vacancy most of the time take too long and also if the new placement for the experienced teacher is not more comfortable and friendly such teachers will not be interested to accept the offer.*

The data reveal that it is always difficult to fill such vacancies with equally qualified and experienced teachers. So heads fall on inexperienced national service persons to fill such vacancies or heads have to plead with the existing staff to take more classes and this lead to increased workload for teachers which subsequently affect quality of teaching and learning. The present finding is in agreement with Wushishi, Fooi, Basri, & Baki (2014, p.13-14) who observed that “in a school where a hard working teacher is given an administrative responsibilities and within a short period of time the teacher leaves the teaching profession... in most cases the new person may not be as experienced as the one that left”. These measures are usually adopted because it takes a long process to fill vacancies with qualified and experienced teachers in schools. The above responses from the participants showed that there is difficulty in finding experienced teachers, loss of instructional time and negative impact on student performance as a result of teacher attrition in the study area.

Similarly, with a mean of 3.84 and standard deviation of 0.48, teacher participants agreed that loss of instructional time affect the quality of educational delivery. The interview with the participants also revealed similar findings that supports that teacher attrition causes loss of instructional time. This is evident by the following comments:

*I will say, there is no argument about the fact that teacher attrition leads to poor performance of students especially in the affected subject. I have witnessed about five of my teachers leaving the school at the most crucial moments where the students needed to complete their topics in order to start WASSCE.*

One of the participants also observed that:

*It is good you've brought this up! Teachers who leave the school do not normally end the term. They rather leave most times in the middle of the term, and it becomes very difficult to find someone to continue with the students. At times the remaining staff suffers*

Another participant said:

*According to our records, we have seen a drop in some subjects, particularly difficult subjects like Agric courses where we have few teachers available to handle the subject, there will be significant drop in the students offering such courses.*

The data reveal that teachers always leave in the middle of the term which makes it difficult to replace them. This situation leads to increased workload of serving teachers, this present finding corroborates the finding of Wushishi, Fooi, Basri, & Baki (2014). A situation like this usually affects teachers' performance which in turn affects students' performance. This implies that increased workload of serving teachers affect quality of education delivery.

Lastly, teacher attrition jeopardizes trust among teachers; from the teacher participants a mean of 3.38 and a standard deviation of 0.92 show that some of the teacher participants agreed that teacher attrition jeopardizes trust among teachers and it does affect the quality of educational delivery. From the interviews with the participants, it was revealed that teacher attrition has negative effect on students' performance in the quality of education delivery. From the interview session interviewees made these comments:

*Sometimes, it becomes pathetic to see colleagues leave innocent children [students] in a half way of the term and move to other place or job. Always, these students are lagged behind when it comes to teaching and learning of contents. This will lead students to fail in that subject*

Again, a participant commented:

*Looking at the educational system now, at times we struggled to complete the normal syllables and now just imaging what will happen, when a teacher leaves, it will definitely affect the performance of the students*

The observation made was consistent with the views of most of the sampled teacher participants in the study report. From the quantitative and qualitative data, it was realised that teacher attrition affects the quality delivery of education in diverse ways which include negative impact on students' performance, loss of instructional time, difficulty in filling vacancy with experienced teachers, increased reliance on inexperienced teachers and disruption of relationship among teachers. However, it is critical to note that for a nation to achieve its educational goals, it is absolutely important to have an accountable and responsive educational system that focuses on recruiting, training, and retaining skilled and high-performing teachers (Elyashiv, 2019 & Farmer2020). It is in consonance with this that Ms. Gifty Apanbil, who is the Deputy General Secretary in charge of professional development said "teachers were stakeholders in the delivery of quality education and called on Ghanaians to see teachers as partners and collaborate with them to achieve that goal" (Sottie, 2019, p.3).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Conclusions were made based on the findings of the study. The study findings revealed a high rate of teacher attrition. The findings also revealed that teacher attrition has an influence on the quality of education. This shows that, in order to effectively implement the educational sector strategy to facilitate the attainment of Ghana's developmental agenda, there is a need to retain experienced and qualified teachers in the teaching profession since teachers are guarantors of quality education. Supporting teachers in order to retain them in their positions can help improve students'

achievement and teacher retention. Teacher preparation programs are unable to provide all the skills necessary for successful teaching. Government, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDA) and headmasters must help provide supports for teachers in order to keep them in the service. As the demands for teachers increase, so must we also see the need to support teachers in their practice, otherwise the whole educational system will suffer from quality teaching which affect students' outcomes.

In situations involving the issues of teacher attrition, counselling can be used to decrease or prevent the factors contributing to attrition of teachers in senior high schools. Going by Frank Parsons' Trait and Factor Theory, counsellors should take into consideration the personal characteristics of the job seeker such as teachers. The personal characteristics of teachers such as interest, abilities, values, skills and attitudes are very important when the individual wants to enter into the teaching profession. If the right personality traits or characteristics are considered in job selection, there will be no attrition of workers in the educational institutions. Policy makers in education should find it very important to put in place good measures to ensure that workers such as teachers have good salaries, opportunity for advancement or progress as well as appropriate and satisfying conditions of service.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations for the study were made based on the findings from the study.

1. From the findings, teachers acknowledged low salary as an external factor that influences teacher attrition. The researchers therefore recommend that; the government needs to improve the condition of service of teachers with the aim of reducing the rate of attrition so as to improve the educational standard in the country.
2. Among the findings of the study, job dissatisfaction was found as one of the internal factors that influence teacher attrition. It is therefore recommended that the government institute better pay packages and incentives such as bursaries for teachers' children in senior high schools, and provision of the needed teaching and learning materials to schools to enhance teaching and learning.
3. The study found that teachers are always on the receiving end and not involved in decision-making. There is also the need for school administrators to regularly organize sessions in which open discussions can take place between teachers and the school heads to allow teachers air their grievances.
4. The teaching profession for that matter Ghana Education Service (GES) as an agent of the Ministry of Education should be given the necessary recognition and autonomy by the central government through consultation when it comes to decision-making in order to assure teachers that they are capable of managing their own affairs rather than always imposing decisions on teachers.

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