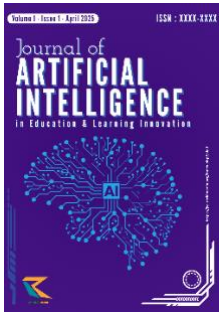


Factors influencing teachers' attrition in public basic schools in Techiman Municipality, Ghana: An embedded mixed methods study



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ABSTRACT

Background: The high teacher attrition rate in public primary schools in Techiman, Ghana, has become a serious problem that directly impacts the quality of education and the achievement of national education development goals.

Objectives: The study investigated factors that influence teachers' attrition in the Techiman Municipality.

Methods: One hundred ninety-seven teachers were sampled for the study using convenience and simple random sampling techniques. This study utilized the embedded mixed methods design with descriptive survey and phenomenology as research methods to collect quantitative and qualitative datasets using questionnaires and interviews as data collection tools. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, while the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using the SPSS software.

Results: It was found that teachers perceived salary as the major employer-related factor in teachers' attrition (relative importance index (RII) = 0.85). team member-related factors, such as the willingness of teachers to pursue another career outside education, were perceived as the primary factor of attrition (RII = 0.78). In contrast, an external-related factor, such as better opportunities in some other occupations, was ranked the first major contributor to teachers' attrition (RII = 0.88). The overall assessment of the factors of attrition based on the relative importance index revealed that Employer-related factors are the major contributor to teachers' attrition (RII = 0.70).

Conclusions: The study recommends that the Ghana government find innovative ways of increasing teachers' salaries as a source of motivation and offer them other incentive packages to aid in retaining them in the service.

Keywords: basic school education, Ghana, incentivization, teacher attrition, teacher motivation.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a multifaceted concept central to individual and societal development [Tariq \(2023\)](#). It encompasses not only acquiring knowledge and skills but also forming character, identity, and the ability to participate meaningfully in society ([Komara, Hendriana & Suherman, 2021](#)). [Novitska \(2024\)](#) describes education as "learning for its own sake," Further, education is not limited to formal instruction but includes character formation, critical abilities, and preparation for societal life. It is a process that integrates learning, socialization, and personal development ([Sriatun, Sugiono, Kurniasih & Hendrizal, 2024](#)). It involves facilitating learning or acquiring knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. For education to achieve its aim, it takes place under the guidance and direction of teachers (tutors, facilitators, instructors). This is affirmed by [UNESCO \(2023\)](#) study that the basis for attaining sustainable development Goal (SDG 4), inclusive and equity and quality education opportunities for lifelong learning for all, is laid by teachers, who play a central role at all educational institutions. Unfortunately, the educational ecosystem faces a teacher attrition rate, which, in effect, affects the system.

Teacher attrition is a critical issue that needs to be addressed to improve education outcomes ([Doherty, 2020](#)). Teacher attrition is explained as teachers moving out of teaching for many factors other than retirement ([Kelchtermans, 2017](#)). It is a global challenge, and its rates vary across levels and regions ([UNESCO, 2023](#)). In the US, teachers' attrition has increased since post-pandemic ([Steiner & Woo, 2023](#)). A study by [Doherty \(2020\)](#) revealed that state-funded schools in England allocate roughly £21billion annually for teachers' salaries, yet there is teacher attrition at the primary and secondary schools. A similar study by [McLean, Worth, and Faulkner-Ellis \(2023\)](#) confirms that the UK faces comparable challenges. A National Foundation for Educational Research report revealed that over 12% of teachers depart the profession within a year of qualifying important factors such as heavy workload, low morale, and classroom behavioral issues ([Martin et al., 2023](#)). Moreover, findings from a 2024 State of America Teacher survey by [Doan, Steiner, and Pandey \(2024\)](#) showed that teachers intend to leave their jobs by the end of the 2023-2024 school year as other working adults in similar professions. According to the [UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(2023\)](#), there is high teacher attrition in Sub-Saharan Africa and part of Asia, where the working conditions, large class sizes, and inadequate professional development opportunities are common. In addition, the [UNESCO \(2025\)](#) report points to the fact that if the issues of teacher attrition and insufficient training are not addressed, sub-Saharan Africa is expected to face a teacher shortage of 15 million by 2030.

In many African countries, teacher attrition is influenced by low pay, insufficient teaching resources, and inadequate infrastructure. For instance, a 2022 study by the [Ghana National Association of Teachers \(2022\)](#) in Ghana noted an increasing trend of trained teachers moving to other professions or seeking opportunities abroad. Like global trends, teacher attrition is high in the Techiman Municipality of Ghana. Hence, this study was carried out to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon and find out the key factors (employer and team member factors and external related factors) that affect teachers' attrition while probing into the factors that help them to stay. This research is premised on the following research objectives:

1. To analyse employer and employee related factors that contributes to teachers' attrition in the Techiman municipality of Ghana.
2. To analyse external related factors that contributes to teachers' attrition in the Techiman municipality of Ghana.
3. To examine factors that can help retain basic school teachers in Techiman municipality of Ghana.

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition, where educators leave their classroom duties for other professions or personal reasons, is a critical global issue with significant implications for educational quality and societal progress. Globally, there is a substantial shortage of teachers, with an estimated need for 44 million primary and secondary educators by 2030 (UNESCO, 2025). This shortage is worsened by rising attrition rates, nearly doubling from 4.6% in 2015 to over 9% in 2022. Young teachers are particularly likely to leave the profession at higher rates than their more experienced counterparts, intensifying the crisis (UNESCO, 2025). Several factors contribute to teacher attrition worldwide, including heavy workloads, low salaries, lack of recognition, and insufficient professional development opportunities (UNESCO, 2025; Shaoan, Namanyane, Feng, & Arif, 2025). Research consistently indicates that economic incentives, career advancement, and improved working conditions are essential for retaining skilled teachers (Shaoan, Namanyane, Feng, & Arif, 2025). Additionally, a supportive school environment with strong leadership and positive mutual relationships significantly influences teacher retention (Nguyen et al., 2024). Also, student behavior, inadequate resources, and a poor school environment contribute to teacher dissatisfaction and turnover (Walker, 2025).

Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly affected by teacher shortage, with an estimated need for 15 million new teachers by 2030 (UNESCO, 2025). Teacher attrition in this region has reached critical levels, posing an obstacle to achieving educational goals like universal primary education (Pitsoe & Machaisa, 2012). However, available literature highlights several contributing factors driving attrition in the African context, such as Low salaries, poor working conditions, and limited opportunities for professional development (Ayodele, Chang-Richards, & González, 2020). Ghana is experiencing a significant teacher attrition crisis, with reported Rates ranging from 7% to 15% (Ngmenkpiao, Tseer & Gyei, 2023). With nearly 44,000 basic school teachers leaving in 2021 alone, this exodus severely threatens the nation's education and development goals. Research in Ghana consistently identifies a combination of factors driving teacher attrition. The followings are underpayment and financial pressure, poor working conditions, lack of professional development and recognition, stress and workload, inequitable deployment, rural challenges, and low professional status (Epyildirim, Mimay, & Muyco, 2024). Studies suggest that while actual attrition levels in Ghana might be low due to limited alternative employment opportunities, the intention to leave is high, fueled by persistent dissatisfaction (Owusu, 2021; Acheampong & Gyasi, 2019). Addressing teacher attrition in Ghana requires a Comprehensive approach that focuses on competitive remuneration, improved working conditions, enhanced professional development, and a supportive school climate to retain skilled educators and ensure quality education for all (Acheampong & Gyasi, 2019).

Factors Influencing Teachers' Attrition in Basic Schools

Effective educational leadership plays a critical role in the teaching process with an inherent teacher motivation. It improves and sustains progress in schools that are struggling academically. According to [Leithwood \(2021\)](#), school leaders should lead and sustain these improvements by creating long-term career pathways for teachers. Teacher attrition in public schools is a complex and persistent challenge with implications for educational quality and student outcomes ([Bentil, Acquah & Akyiaw, 2019](#)). A growing body of research has sought to identify and explain the factors that drive teachers to leave the profession, especially during the early years of their careers. The literature ([Drammeh & Samba, 2023](#); [Mekonen, 2022](#); [Sass, Flores, Claeys, & Pérez, 2012](#); [Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016](#)) reveals that a dynamic interplay of personal and professional, organizational, and contextual factors shapes teacher attrition.

Notably, teachers with formal training in education are more likely to remain in the profession. However, the most significant predictor of early attrition is the quality of job conditions during the first year and the importance of institutional support and effective career management in retaining new teachers ([Bentil, Acquah, & Akyiaw, 2019](#); [Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016](#)). The literature categorizes the factors influencing teacher attrition into three broad domains such as those related to teaching tasks, individual teacher characteristics, and the broader social environment ([Nguyen, Pham, Springer & Crouch, 2019](#); [Karsenti, Collin, & Dumouchel, 2013](#)). Furthermore, teaching tasks comprise workload, administrative demands, and classroom management challenges, all of which can contribute to stress and burnout ([Javed & Akhter, 2024](#)). Besides that, individual factors include personal characteristics such as age, gender, and professional identity, while social environment factors involve relationships with colleagues, school leadership, and the community ([Li & Yao, 2022](#)). [Mabusela and Mahlangu \(2025\)](#) posit that many approaches are required to handle teacher attrition since several external and internal reasons influence teacher retention.

Employer and Employee Related factor to Teachers' Attrition

Employers and team members, to a greater extent, contribute to teachers' attrition rate at the primary level of education. Burnout and job satisfaction are potent predictors of teachers' intentions to quit ([Madigan & Kim, 2021](#)). It further demonstrates that all three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment are strongly associated with higher intentions to leave the profession. Burnout appears to be a more potent driver of attrition than low job satisfaction, and its impact has intensified over time ([Madigan & Kim, 2021](#)). Workload and stress are also positively linked to turnover intentions, while trust, professional identification, and organizational commitment help retain teachers ([Li & Yao, 2022](#)).

Meanwhile, compensation and economic factors significantly influence teacher attrition ([Shaoan et al., 2025](#)). [Podolsky et al. \(2016\)](#) and [Rhinesmith et al. \(2023\)](#) indicated in their studies that higher salaries, exceptionally competitive with neighboring districts, can reduce inter-district transfers and exits from the profession. However, substantial salary increases may be required to reduce attrition rates in high-need areas to average levels ([Madigan & Kim, 2021](#)). In addition to salary and working conditions, opportunities for career advancement and mentorship programs

are important in retaining teachers, particularly among newer and female teachers (Callahan, 2016).

The institutions' working conditions and support systems within schools are critical. A motivating work environment with strong teacher recognition, mutual relationships, and responsive leadership significantly reduces attrition rates (Doherty, 2020; Clandinin et al., 2015). Moreover, schools with poor working conditions, high levels of conflict, or limited opportunities for teacher inputs experience higher turnover (Nguyen & Springer, 2023; Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). Despite all that, special education teachers, working conditions, administrative and mutual support, and access to resources are relevant factors influencing attrition and retention (Arnold & Rahimi, 2025; Walker, 2025). Li and Yao (2022) state that younger teachers, especially those experiencing high burnout and low intrinsic motivation, are likelier to consider leaving.

Factors that can help retain basic School Teachers

The role of teachers in the educational enterprise is central and vital. As a result, retaining them in their respective schools will bring growth and development. See, Morris, Gorard, and Soufi (2020) concur that a supportive and conducive working environment is consistently identified as a key factor in retaining teachers. Yao and Zhen (2024) also affirm that ongoing support, positive school culture, and a sense of community are crucial for keeping teachers in their positions over time. Social capital and positive relationships within the school and local community are important retention drivers. Also, Key policy factors significantly impact teacher retention in schools, and creating supportive working environments can help reduce attrition and enhance the quality of education (Ackah-Jnr et al., 2022). Furthermore, Shell, Hurt, and White (2023) in their study opined that acknowledging teachers' efforts, conducting fair evaluations, and maintaining clear communication from school leadership further contribute to teacher retention.

Theoretical Framework

In order to establish a theoretical framework that deals with teacher attrition and factors that push teachers to make such decisions, Maslow's need hierarchy (1954) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (1983) were considered. Both theories focus on the fulfillment and satisfaction of an individual in a context. Research confirms a powerful connection between job satisfaction and needs fulfillment that compels teachers to leave, stay, or transfer from the profession. Conversely, job satisfaction is negatively related to attrition, serving as a protective factor (Li & Yao, 2022). Therefore, based on the above-discussed literature review, factors for attrition can be connected with the needs identified by Maslow and factors of job satisfaction proposed by Herzberg.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs describes five levels of human needs: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem, and self-actualization (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019). The basic needs of teachers, such as a decent salary and appropriate working conditions, must be met so that they can focus on higher needs, such as job security and social relationships (Han, Borgonovi, & Guerriero, 2018). Positive relationships with colleagues, students, and the community fulfill social needs and foster a sense of belonging and caring. Teachers also strive for respect and recognition, which leads them to esteem needs such as self-esteem and self-confidence. Realizing these needs leads to self-actualization, where teachers strive for personal growth and fulfillment. However, self-actualization is challenging as it requires continuous development.

Satisfying these needs can increase teacher engagement and improve student learning and the school's reputation.

On the other hand, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between hygiene factors (like salary and work environment) that prevent dissatisfaction and motivational factors (such as recognition and responsibility) that drive positive satisfaction. Teacher attrition is linked to unmet hygiene factors (low pay, poor conditions, workload) and a lack of motivational factors (recognition, development). Satisfying lower and higher-order needs is crucial for teacher retention, motivation, and a quality learning environment. Viewing schools as "factories," attractive conditions and fulfilled needs are essential "inputs" for producing quality "learning." Balancing personal and professional development through in-service activities is also vital.

Conceptual Framework

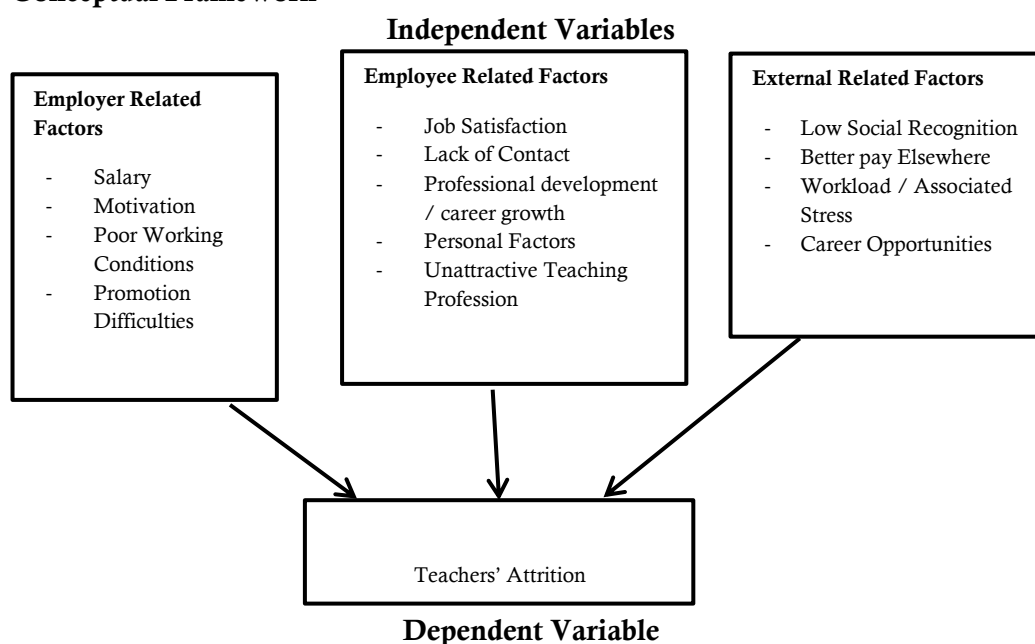


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition, a global issue, involves teachers leaving classroom duties for other professions or personal reasons (Miller & Chait, 2008). High attrition rates, particularly within the first five years, pose challenges for workforce planning and reflect potentially poor school environments and low morale. Factors contributing to this include low wages, poor working conditions, lack of professional development, and stressful environments. Employer-related issues like inadequate salaries, poor motivation, difficult working conditions (lack of resources, poor facilities), and limited promotion opportunities significantly influence teachers' decisions to leave the profession, impacting the quality of education.

Employer-related factors significantly drive teacher attrition. Low salaries compared to other sectors and poor motivation (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Adelabu, 2008) contribute to turnover. Difficult working conditions, including inadequate facilities and poor management (Boyd et al., 2011; Ladd, 2011), and limited promotion opportunities (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007) further exacerbate the issue, impacting teacher retention globally.

Teacher retention is significantly impacted by several factors directly related to the team member experience. Job satisfaction, strongly tied to competitive salaries and

supportive administrative practices, remains a critical element influencing a teacher's decision to stay in the profession (Jacobs, 2025; Gratz et al., 2024). A lack of adequate administrative support and limited collegial interaction also contribute to teachers leaving (Jacobs, 2025; Gratz et al., 2024). Opportunities for professional development and career growth, including chances for specialization, are vital for long-term commitment (UNESCO, 2025; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020). Furthermore, personal factors such as stress, burnout, and family responsibilities significantly influence attrition rates (Gratz et al., 2024).

METHODS

Study Design and Participants

This research uses an embedded mixed methods design that prioritizes one data type (quantitative or qualitative) as the primary source. At the same time, the other serves as a supplement (Yu & Kazanchi, 2017). This design was chosen because the three research objectives had different data needs: the first two objectives were analyzed using quantitative data, and the third used qualitative data.

Quantitative data collection was conducted through a descriptive survey design to describe existing conditions (Salaria, 2012), while the phenomenological approach was used to explore teachers' in-depth experiences related to their retention factors (Frechette et al., 2020). Interviews were conducted using a pre-tested semi-structured guide.

The study population included 593 JHS teachers in 10 Techiman Municipality, Ghana circuits. The sample was drawn through simple random and convenience sampling techniques. Five circuits were randomly selected using the lottery method, while 197 teachers were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate.

Table 1. Summary of Classification of the Sample

Sample Category	Number of Teachers
Techiman South Circuit	38
Ahenbronoso Circuit	38
Techiman East Circuit	38
Techiman West Circuit	38
Kenten Circuit	37
Teachers out of the service	3
Teachers in the service	3
Human Resource Officers	2
Total	197

The total sample size (n = 197) is representative of the target population (n = 593) (Table 1). This was found sufficient and applicable because, according to Gay and Diehl (1992), the sample size should be 10% of the population for descriptive research. However, if the population is small, then 20% may be required. Looking at the total population (n = 593) and the sample size (n = 197), the researcher can say that the sample size is representative of the target population.

Ethical approval statement

The study received approval from the ethical committee at the Department of Educational Innovations in Science and Technology, Kwame Nkrumah University

Research Instruments

Questionnaire

The use of a questionnaire as a survey tool for the study was deemed adequate for the collection of quantitative data (Saunders et al., 2012) among basic school teachers because it is most productive when the respondents are expected to be able to read and understand the questions (Denscombe, 2010). The questionnaire was in four parts. The first part talks about the teachers' background information. Teachers' sex, age, marital status, academic qualification, teaching experience, and professional status were sought.

The second Part solicits information on employer-related factors contributing to teachers' attrition. Twelve closed-ended questions were set for this Part. The questions were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Strongly disagree was scored 1, Disagree scored 2, Neutral scored 3, Agree scored 4, and strongly agree scored 5. The third and fourth Part Parts sought information on employee-related and external factors contributing to teachers' attrition. The two parts (Part Three and Part Four) were made of 12 closed-ended questions rated on the same Likert-type scale.

Key Informant Semi-Structured Interview

A semi-structured interview guide was used to gather responses from the participants on what can help retain basic school teachers in the profession. The respondents were asked to describe their views on how the government/Ministry of Education, school administrators, and parents of students can help retain teachers in the Techiman Municipality of Ghana. Two human resource officers, three teachers in the service, and three teachers out of the service were interviewed.

Piloting of the Data Collection Instruments

The questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were piloted with 35 teachers in one of the circuits in Techiman North District. Suggestions garnered were used in revising sections of the data collection tools before they were administered.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire and the interviews were analyzed in two main ways: The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as percentages, mean, and standard deviation with the help of Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 20. On the other hand, qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The responses were audio-taped and transcribed. During the analysis, codes and themes were generated from the transcribed qualitative data with the assistance of the Nvivo software. The themes were interpreted to make meaning and compared with the extant literature to make scholarly inferences. Some of the thick quotes from the interview transcripts illustrated the themes generated to enliven the richness of the qualitative thematic analysis.

RESULTS

Demographic Information about Teachers

The demographic information of teachers for the study covers characteristics such as teachers, sex, age, marital status, academic qualification, length of teaching

experience, and professional status. These characteristics were sought to know more about the participants (teachers) involved in the study. The results obtained are reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Demographic of Teachers

Demographic factors	Aspect	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	134	68.0
	Female	63	32.0
	Total	197	100.0
Age	20-25 years	16	8.1
	26-30 years	50	25.4
	31-35 years	52	26.4
	36-40 years	34	17.3
	41 years and above	45	22.8
	Total	197	100.0
Marital Status	Single	50	25.4
	Married	145	73.6
	Widowed	2	1.0
	Total	197	100.0
Academic qualification	Certificate 'A'	9	4.6
	Diploma	57	28.9
	HND	7	3.6
	First Degree	118	59.9
	Masters	6	3.0
	Total	197	100.0
Length of Teaching Experience	1-5 years	53	26.9
	6-10 years	64	32.5
	11-15 years	35	17.8
	16-20 years	20	10.2
	21 years and above	25	12.7
	Total	197	100.0
Professional Status	Pupil-teacher	1	0.5
	Professional	192	97.5
	Non-professional	4	2.0
	Total	197	100.0

Demographic data (Table 2) shows that most respondents are male (68%), reflecting an inevitable gender dominance in the composition of teachers at Techiman. Regarding age, most teachers are in the 26-35 years range (51.8%), which means they are in the early to mid-career phase-a period often associated with high attrition rates.

73.6% of teachers are married, which may affect their stability and choice of work location. Regarding educational qualifications, 59.9% of teachers have a bachelor's degree (S1), indicating that most have met formal academic standards, although only 3% have a master's degree, indicating limited further academic development.

Teaching experience is dominated by teachers with 1-10 years of service (59.4%), indicating that most are still in the early stages of the service period and are prone to decisions to change careers. In addition, 97.5% of respondents were professional teachers, which ensures that the data obtained comes from individuals with a formal educational background in the teaching field.

Research Question 1. What employer-related factors contribute to teachers' attrition in the Techiman Municipality?

This research question was set to investigate factors related to the employer contributing to teachers' attrition. The results obtained from the questionnaire are

reported in Table 3. The responses were based on the Likert scale: Strongly disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A), and strongly agree (SA).

Table 3. Employer Related Factors that Contribute to Teachers' Attrition

Factors	SD N (%)	D N (%)	N N (%)	A N (%)	SA N (%)	Mean(M)	RII Ranked
Teachers' salaries make them to leave the service	5(2.5)	14(7.1)	6(3.0)	75(38.1)	97(49.3)	4.24	0.85
Lack of allowances make teachers to leave the service	4(2.0)	17(8.6)	16(8.1)	90(45.7)	70(35.5)	4.04	0.81
Motivation of teachers make them to leave the service	11(5.6)	23(11.7)	8(4.1)	74(37.6)	81(41.1)	3.97	0.79
Pension benefits of teachers make them to leave the service	4(2.0)	32(16.2)	17(8.6)	70(35.5)	74(37.6)	3.90	0.78
Accommodation of teachers makes them unattractive to stay	13(6.6)	31(15.7)	21(10.7)	72(36.5)	60(30.5)	3.69	0.74
Difficulties in promotion level make a teacher to leave the service	11(5.6)	34(17.3)	20(10.2)	84(42.6)	48(24.4)	3.63	0.73
Health care package of teachers makes them to leave the service	10(5.1)	38(19.3)	28(14.2)	78(39.6)	43(21.8)	3.54	0.71
Restrictions in teachers transfer make them to leave the service	19(9.6)	53(26.9)	34(17.3)	57(28.9)	34(17.3)	3.17	0.63
Style of school administrators make teachers to leave the service	23(11.7)	53(26.9)	38(19.3)	52(26.4)	31(15.7)	3.08	0.62
Style of district administrators make teachers to leave the service	20(10.2)	56(28.4)	37(18.8)	56(28.4)	28(14.2)	3.08	0.62
Inadequate staff development or training makes teachers to leave the service	25(12.7)	58(29.4)	47(23.9)	39(11.8)	28(14.2)	2.93	0.59
Low teachers' involvement in decision making of the school makes them to leave the service	27(13.7)	72(36.5)	36(18.3)	40(20.3)	22(11.2)	2.79	0.56
							Average of RII 0.70

N = 197; SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N= Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

The findings in Table 3 show that low salary is the most dominant factor driving teachers to leave the profession, with the highest RII of 0.85. Other factors that also have a strong influence are lack of benefits (RII = 0.81), lack of motivation from the employer (RII = 0.79), and uncertainty of retirement benefits (RII = 0.78).

In contrast, factors such as lack of teacher involvement in decision-making (RII = 0.56) and lack of training/professional development (RII = 0.59) have a lower influence on teachers' decision to leave the profession.

Overall, the average RII for the employer factor is 0.70, indicating that structural and financial issues managed by the institution significantly contribute to high levels of teacher attrition.

Research Question 2 What team member-related factors contribute to teachers' attrition in the Techiman Municipality?

This study aims to identify factors from colleagues (team members) contributing to teacher attrition, such as interest in teaching, social interaction, desire to continue education, student and parent behavior, family conditions, residential location, and desire to switch professions. The results are presented in [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Employee Related Factors that Contribute to Teachers' Attrition

Factors	SD N (%)	D N (%)	N N (%)	A N (%)	SA N (%)	Mean(M)	RII Ranked
Willingness of teachers to pursue another career outside education makes them to leave the service	7(3.6)	25(12.7)	11(5.6)	93(47.2)	61(31.0)	3.89	0.78
Teachers disrespecting themselves make teaching unattractive.	6(3.0)	35(17.8)	15(7.6)	98(49.7)	43(21.8)	3.70	0.74
Willingness of teachers to continue their education make them to leave the service	16(8.1)	51(25.9)	22(11.2)	64(32.5)	44(22.3)	3.35	0.67
Some teachers' bad attitudes toward teaching make others to leave the service.	23(11.7)	52(26.4)	26(13.2)	63(32.0)	33(16.8)	3.16	0.63
Unwillingness to live in villages make them to leave the service	18(9.1)	54(27.4)	35(17.8)	71(36.0)	19(9.6)	3.10	0.62
The level a teacher teaches can steal his/her interest in the job	27(13.7)	67(34.0)	22(11.2)	59(29.9)	22(11.2)	2.91	0.58
Some teachers' lifestyle in their communities makes teaching unattractive.	15(7.6)	68(34.5)	47(23.9)	54(27.4)	13(6.6)	2.91	0.58
Teacher's dissatisfaction with the working conditions of schools makes them to leave the service	27(13.7)	65(33.0)	37(18.8)	48(24.4)	20(10.2)	2.84	0.57
Family problems make teachers to leave the teaching service	34(17.3)	65(33.0)	31(15.7)	47(23.9)	20(10.2)	2.77	0.55
Teacher's intention to live with friends and love ones make them to leave the service	31(15.7)	77(39.1)	23(11.7)	43(21.8)	23(11.7)	2.75	0.55
Teacher's intention to live near family makes them to leave the service	34(17.3)	82(41.6)	23(11.7)	38(19.3)	20(10.2)	2.63	0.53
Lack of contact or interaction with others makes teachers to leave the service	34(17.3)	83(42.1)	38(19.3)	30(15.2)	12(6.1)	2.51	0.50
							Average of RII 0.61

N = 197; SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N= Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

The findings in [Table 4](#) show that the most internal factor that drives teacher attrition is the desire to switch to a career outside education, with the highest RII value of 0.78. This reflects that many teachers find other professions more attractive than teaching. In addition, the lack of respect among teachers (RII = 0.74) and the desire to continue their education (RII = 0.67) are also important triggers in the decision to leave the profession.

In contrast, factors such as lack of social interaction (RII = 0.50), desire to live near family (RII = 0.53), and family problems (RII = 0.55) ranked lower, indicating a relatively small influence on attrition decisions. This suggests that the decision to leave the profession is more influenced by professional factors and personal

aspirations rather than solely for domestic or social reasons. With an overall average RII of 0.61, teacher self-factors have a lower contribution than employer and external factors but are still relevant in teacher retention policymaking.

Research Question 3 What external factors contribute to teachers' attrition in the Techiman Municipality?

This study aimed to identify external factors that influence teacher attrition, including job opportunities outside the profession, social recognition, school location, opportunities in NGOs and the private sector, overseas job opportunities, political pressures, limited learning logistics, and school social and safety conditions. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. External Related Factors that Contribute to Teachers' Attrition

Factors	SD N (%)	D N (%)	N N (%)	A N (%)	SA N (%)	Mean(M)	RII Ranked
Better opportunities at some other occupations make teaching unattractive for teachers to stay in the service	1(0.5)	9(4.6)	1(0.5)	81(41.1)	105(53.3)	4.42	0.88
Low recognition by society for teachers make teaching unattractive for teachers	3(1.5)	23(11.7)	14(7.1)	86(43.7)	71(36.0)	4.01	0.80
Opportunities for abroad make teaching unattractive for teachers to stay in teaching	5(2.5)	22(11.2)	16(8.1)	95(48.2)	59(29.9)	3.92	0.78
Opportunities in private sectors (either private companies or own business) make a teacher to leave the service	5(2.5)	24(12.2)	23(11.7)	101(51.3)	44(22.3)	3.79	0.76
Opportunities in non-governmental organizations make teachers leave the service	9(4.6)	26(13.2)	23(11.7)	88(44.7)	51(25.9)	3.74	0.75
Insecure policies in the service makes teachers to leave the service	5(2.5)	33(16.8)	31(15.7)	84(42.6)	44(22.3)	3.65	0.73
Political intimidations make teachers to leave the services	12(6.1)	35(17.8)	39(19.8)	71(36.0)	40(20.3)	3.47	0.69
Politics make teachers to leave the service	15(7.6)	31(15.7)	35(17.8)	79(40.1)	37(18.8)	3.47	0.69
Fear of violence in community makes teachers to leave the service	20(10.2)	57(28.9)	33(16.8)	63(32.0)	24(12.2)	3.07	0.61
Limited social or recreational opportunities in schools location make teachers to leave the service	15(7.6)	69(35.0)	43(21.8)	50(25.4)	20(10.2)	2.95	0.59
Distance of schools makes teaching unattractive	20(10.2)	82(41.6)	25(12.7)	42(21.3)	28(14.2)	2.88	0.58
Opportunities in private schools make teachers in public schools to leave the service	42(21.3)	85(43.1)	19(9.6)	29(14.7)	22(11.2)	2.51	0.50
							Average of RII 0.69

N = 197; SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N= Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

The analysis results show that the external factor that drives teacher attrition is better job opportunities outside the teaching profession, with the highest RII of 0.88. Other significant factors are low social recognition of the teaching profession (RII = 0.80) and job opportunities abroad (RII = 0.78).

Meanwhile, factors such as school location distance (RII = 0.58), lack of social or recreational facilities (RII = 0.59), and job opportunities in private schools (RII = 0.50) have a lower influence on teachers' decision to leave the profession. With an average RII of 0.69, external factors have a significant contribution, especially about the attractiveness of other professions that are considered more promising in terms of economic and social status.

Research Question 4 What Factors Can Help Retain Basic School Teachers in the Techiman Municipality?

This research question was used to investigate what, from the respondents' view, can help keep teachers in the teaching profession. Two human resource officers (HRO), three in-service teachers (IST), and three teachers who left the service (TWLS) were interviewed.

Table 6. Factors to Retain Teachers

Category of Respondents	Responses
Human Resource Officers	Government should establish good policy, increase salary of teachers, motivating teachers, good pension package for teachers
	School Administrators should guide, counsel and direct teachers. Should help teachers appreciate teaching profession.
	Students' Parents should appreciate teacher's effort, respect teachers, encourage and offer support to teachers
Teachers Who have Left the Teaching Service	The government should provide teaching materials/aids and logistics to teachers, Pay all salaries and allowances, motivate teachers, and ensure regular inspections.
	School Administrators should be leaders by example, establish cordial relationship, should provide teaching aids.
	Students' Parents should show love for teachers, appreciate teachers' work, should attend PTA meetings.
In-Service Teachers	Government should motivate and increase teachers' salary, ensure good retirement package, make promotion easy, provide incentives for rural teachers.
	School Administrators should avoid autocratic rulings, establish cordial relationship, show respect for teachers, involve teachers in decision making, should support teachers in times of need.
	Students' Parents should provide accommodation for new teachers, respect teachers, build cordial relationship with teachers, should offer gifts for teachers, and should stop insulting teachers.

The qualitative interviews (Table 6) revealed that teacher retention efforts rely heavily on three main stakeholders: the government, school administrators, and parents. The factor most frequently mentioned by different categories of respondents was increased salaries and benefits, which was affirmed by all groups, including 100% in-service teachers and teachers who have left the profession.

Other important factors include improved work facilities and learning logistics, career and promotion support, and respect for teachers by the community. In addition, good relationships between teachers and principals and appreciation from parents were also seen as influential in fostering teacher retention. Overall, teacher retention is strongly influenced by economic incentives, professional support, and social rewards, with the government playing a key role in supporting structures and policies.

Factors to Help Retain Teachers in the Teaching Profession

The government/Ministry of Education, school administrators, and students' parents examined the factors to be considered in retaining teachers. The interviewees

were concerned about how the Government can retain teachers. One HRO had this to say;

"Good policy must be established to retain teachers for at least five years from college. Increase teachers' salaries to a satisfactory level per qualifications and motivate them to stay and teach. Plan a good package for teachers such as housing for pension; retirement benefits must be adequate, accommodation for teaching staff; transfer grants must be given".

The respondents' view indicates that the government should establish sound policies and increase teachers' salaries, motivate teachers, and ensure good pension packages for teachers, to mention just a few. The view indicated above is similar to the one expressed by one In-Service Teacher:

"The government or Ministry of Education should motivate and increase teachers' salaries. Also, provide basic needs for teachers."

The other respondents also have different views on how the Government can help retain school teachers. One of the Teachers Who has Left the teaching Service has this to say;

The government or the Ministry of Education should provide teaching materials and equipment for the teachers and schools.

The respondent's view indicates that the Government must give teachers the requisite resources to aid teaching and learning. Furthermore, regarding the respondents' views on how school administrators can retain teachers, one Human Resources Officer (HRO) provided the following insight;

School administrators should guide, counsel, and direct teachers in the profession. Also, it must help teachers appreciate the teaching profession.

The respondent believes that school administrators should assist in counseling teachers to understand the intricacies of their profession without becoming frustrated. This can be achieved through career development programs. These views align with those of another respondent (IST), who stated;

Encourage teachers to give their best to teach, support teachers in times of need, defend them when necessary, avoid hiding vital information from them, and involve them in decision-making.

The respondents believed that, through their administrator's support and appreciation, they would be able to understand the teaching profession properly. This will make them stay in the service. Another respondent (TWLS) re-echoed a similar view:

They must periodically visit the staff members to encourage them to love the work and also visit their students.

This suggests that administrators' words of encouragement and time to visit motivate teachers to admire their profession. Finally, on the respondents' views on how students' parents can help retain teachers, one HRO expressed his view that:

Parents must appreciate the efforts of teachers and respect teachers as well. Also, we must encourage teachers and offer support to them.

This respondent also shares a similar view regarding parents, suggesting that teachers can be retained when parents respect and appreciate their efforts. Teachers

can be retained when they are accorded the necessary respect in society. Another respondent (IST) holds a similar view on this matter:

Parents should respect teachers and the teaching profession and stop insulting teachers in the presence of their children.

Teachers are not rich, and their lifestyles are below average compared to other professions or jobs. In order to retain teachers, the government/ministry of Education, school administrators, students' parents, and all stakeholders must do their part to retain teachers.

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: The teachers' perceived employer-related factors are more important contributors to attrition than employee-related factors and external-related factors.

The researcher compared the average of the employer, team member, and external related factors by performing the relative important index.

Table 7. Average Mean based on the Relative Important Index

Factors	RII Ranked
Employer related factors	0.70
External related factors	0.69
Employee related factors	0.61

Table 7 shows that of the three categories of factors analyzed, employer-related factors ranked first with the highest RII of 0.70, indicating that aspects such as salary, benefits, and working conditions influence teacher attrition most.

External factors came in second with an RII of 0.69, meaning their influence is almost comparable, mainly due to the attractiveness of jobs outside the teaching profession. Meanwhile, although they remain relevant, employee-related factors have the least influence, with an RII of 0.61. This finding confirms that efforts to reduce teacher attrition should first focus on improving institutional factors and policies managed by the government or employers.

DISCUSSION

The study explored the employer-related factors, member-related factors and external factors that contribute to teachers' attrition in the Techiman Municipality. Also, it explored factors that could help retain basic school teachers in the Municipality. The study revealed that among the employer-related factors that contribute to teachers' attrition in the Techniman municipality, low salary is the most dominant, followed by lack of benefits and motivation from the employer as well as uncertainty of retirement benefits. These findings align with previous research indicating that low salaries and lack of allowances are significant factors in teacher attrition (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Doherty, 2020; UNESCO, 2025; Shaoan et al., 2025; Ayodele, Chang-Richards, & González, 2020). However, the low concern for staff development and decision-making involvement contrasts with findings by Ayodele, Chang-Richards, González, (2020), who identified a lack of professional development as a potential factor in attrition.

Regarding team member-related factors, most teachers believed that willingness to pursue another career outside education and willingness to pursue education were the significant factors that influenced teachers' attrition. This revelation did not differ from the findings of Borman and Dowling (2008). These researchers found in their

research work that teachers departing to other professions were a significant factor in teachers' attrition. A powerful relationship was found between teachers' attrition and departure to other professions. Also, it was found that teachers did not place much premium on lack of contact or interaction and intention to live near family or friends as a significant determinant of their attrition. These findings align with [GNAT \(2022\)](#) and [Doan, Steiner, and Pandey \(2024\)](#), who found that teachers leaving for other professions is a significant factor in attrition, with a strong relationship between attrition and career change. Teachers did not prioritize lack of contact or interaction and living near family as significant factors in their attrition.

In respect to the external factors that drive teacher attrition, the leading factor is pursuance of better job opportunities outside the teaching profession. This key finding indicate that teachers prioritize better opportunities in other occupations, low societal recognition, and opportunities abroad as major external factors in their attrition ([UNESCO, 2025](#); [Shaoan et al., 2025](#)). They place less importance on opportunities in private schools, school distance, and limited social or recreational opportunities.

In relation to the factors that could help retain basic school teachers in the Techiman Municipality, the respondents' view indicates that the government should increase teachers' salaries, motivate teachers, and ensure good pension packages for teachers. These views show consistency with [Madigan & Kim \(2021\)](#) and [Han, Borgonovi, and Guerriero \(2018\)](#) that salary increment is a significant factor for teachers to stay. [Béteille and Loeb \(2012\)](#) report that new teachers who left public schools indicated that "better salary and benefits" affected their decision to leave teaching. Also, the study participants want the Ghana government to give them the requisite resources to assist them in deploying effective teaching and learning. This is consistent with ([Doherty, 2020](#); [Arnold & Rahimi 2025](#); [Walker, 2025](#)), that support for professional study and learning through incentives and resource availability is critical in retaining teachers. This shows that the availability of resources is a key driver to retaining teachers in the profession.

Moreover, the respondents asserted that school administrators should assist in counseling teachers to understand the intricacies of their profession without becoming frustrated. This, they emphasized that it could be achieved through career development programs. [Callahan \(2016\)](#) emphasized the importance of supporting teachers, particularly those beginning their careers, through teacher development initiatives and mentorship. Such support is believed to help retain teachers ([Shaoan et al., 2025](#)). Additionally, a supportive school environment with strong leadership and positive mutual relationships significantly influences teacher retention ([Nguyen, See, Brown, & Kokotsaki, 2024](#)). Another key finding is parents respecting and showing dignity for teachers as a bait for their stay in the profession. [Shahzad, Ali, and Shafiq \(2024\)](#) echo this perspective that teachers often receive low social status and are held in low esteem. This view shared also concur with existing literature ([Kochemasova, 2018](#)) that teachers see the teaching profession as unique, but the public finds it a low-salary profession with poor recognition. Consequently, many teachers leave the education sector due to public pressure, which portrays them as undervalued, disrespected, and degrading the teaching profession.

In addition, the teachers' perception of employer-related factors as important contributors to teachers' attrition is consistent with the findings of research conducted by [Mchia \(2013\)](#). The main findings of the research were that unfavorable employer-

related factors significantly affect teacher turnover. The study established that poor and challenging working environments, delays in promotion, and provision of teachers' allowances, arrears, and salaries are the factors of teachers' turnover. Other employer-related factors, such as inadequate benefits and lack of teacher motivation, were found to contribute to teacher turnover (Madigan & Kim, 2021). These findings were not different from what was found in this study. Further, Candle (2010) discovered that 70% of the respondents, based on the final analysis, showed that employer-related factors such as wages and salaries, supervisors' style, and poor working conditions accounted for the high teacher turnover rate. The schools with better salaries, supervision, and good working conditions had a low teacher turnover rate. The study also revealed a positive relationship between employer-related factors (like poor salary, supervision style, and poor working conditions) and teachers' attrition. The aforementioned studies show that the findings of this study do not deviate from the existing literature that teachers' perceived employer-related factors are more important contributors to attrition than employee-related and external factors.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite the novelty of this cross-sectional scientific inquiry, some limitations potentially affected the conclusions drawn. First, the study was limited to an investigation of factors that influence teacher attrition in the Techiman municipality. Therefore, the generalization of the results of the study is much more applicable to the municipality. As such, the generalization of the results to other municipalities in the region may not give an accurate description of the factors of teacher attrition. This is because the factors that affect teacher attrition may be different in other municipalities within the region. More so, the study was carried out between August 2023 and February 2024. As such, the factors for teacher attrition studied could change within another time frame. As such, the conclusions drawn from the evidence-based factors influencing teacher attrition in public basic schools in the Techiman municipality could change if a similar study was conducted within another time frame.

CONCLUSIONS

The study investigated factors influencing teachers' attrition in public basic schools in Techiman Municipality. The study revealed that the majority of the basic teachers in the Techiman Municipality believed that low salaries and lack of allowances are the major employer-related factors of teachers' attrition. Teachers did not show much concern for staff development and involvement in decision-making as major employer-related factors of teachers' attrition. Most teachers believed that willingness to pursue education and another career outside education were the major employee-related factors of teachers' attrition. Most teachers do not believe that lack of contact/ interaction and intention of living near family or friends are significant determinants of team member-related attrition factors. Most teachers were concerned about better opportunities in other occupations as major external factors of teachers' attrition. Also, many teachers viewed low recognition by society as another major external factor of teachers' attrition. Employer-related factors were a major contributor to teachers' attrition compared to external and employee-related factors.

Therefore, the employer (government) must put measures in place to help reduce teachers' attrition caused by factors such as low salaries, lack of allowances, and condition of service, among others. Further studies can look at the effects of teachers' attrition on students' academic performance in the Techiman Municipality of Ghana. This is important in appreciating the impacts of teachers' attrition on the expected learning outcomes of students.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

The data for the study is available and will be made available upon request to the corresponding authors.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that this research is free from conflicts of interest with any party.

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