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# Impact of Teacher Trainee Sponsorship Scheme on Improving Teacher Supply in Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District of Ashanti Region

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of Teacher Trainee Sponsorship Scheme on improving teacher supply in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data from the District Education Office and the District Assembly. The sample included 228 teachers selected from 45 primary and Junior High Schools. The study revealed that majority of sponsored teachers are native of Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District or share common border with the district. Most sponsored teachers in the deprived areas have some rural background. The scheme is faced with the problem of non-payment of regular and realistic allowances to the teacher trainees. The study revealed that sponsored teachers in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District have high expectations for conditions and facilities in the schools and communities. When the conditions and facilities are favourable, the teachers feel satisfied.

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### Introduction

Teachers play a central role in the educational enterprise and, therefore, they are trained to be exposed to the knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy and also equipped with skills to perform social roles in the schools in which they find themselves. It is in this light that Ansu-Datta (1984) indicated that a teacher is person who:

Maintains some kind of order in the classroom as a disciplinarian, transmits knowledge as a mediator of learning, supplements in the school what the parents do at home, decides what is right and what is wrong in the academic field as also in social interactions, shows sympathy and understanding for children so that they will be safe to confide in him and are supposed to exhibit the moral values of the dominant group in society (pp.116-117).

The issue above puts the responsibility of teachers in a very vital situation, such that they are required to remain in one school for quite a long period in order to move the school forward. Their long stay in a school will enable them to be in a position to gather more experience and apply it to the benefit of the school and the community as a whole. It is against this background that teacher education has been considered important from the colonial era to date.

One writer, Good as he was cited by Lawton and Gordon (2002) defined teacher education as all the formal and informal activities and experience that help to qualify a person to assume the responsibilities of a member of educational (teaching) profession and to discharge his/her responsibilities more effectively. This explanation thus portrays Teacher Education as an educational programme designed to equip and upgrade prospective teachers with instructional skills, knowledge of the subject matter, management and administrative skills and competencies in order that after their training they can function effectively at the level where they find themselves.

At the initial stages of educational development in Ghana, teaching in the schools was modeled on the well known monitorial system of Lancaster and Bell (Hilliard as cited in Bame, 1991, p.50) which were popular in Britain and Canada at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this system, the scarcity of trained teachers was to be managed in the special way. For instance, one master or trained teacher was in charge of a school and a number of monitors were appointed from among the brilliant pupils of the schools to help him by being in charge of the "mechanical" teaching and rote learning in the various classes.

Similar teaching was adopted in Ghana. However, despite its popularity the monitorial system had to be abandoned in England because among other things, it encouraged much mechanical learning and the mentors were also immature for teaching, which demanded not only in teaching reading, writing and arithmetic but also the need to moral influence on the pupils. Consequently, the country saw the need to tackle the problem of inadequate teachers by training professional teachers.

The initiative was started by the Basel Mission as they established a Teacher-Catechist Theological Seminary at Akropong in 1848 and a second one at Abetifi. These and the Roman Catholic teachers' college were the only institutions for teacher-training education in Ghana until 1909 when Accra Training College was established. Later, the government came in to supplement the effort of the missions and established teacher training centre not only for government teachers but also for teachers of all the missions who had no teacher institutions of their own.

In 1922, the Wesley Mission also opened a training college first at Aburi and later transferred it to Kumasi in 1924 to be known as Wesley College. These institutions improved the supply of certified teachers in the country but did not completely solve the numerous vacancies in the schools,

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especially the rural areas. With regard to the above consideration, conscious efforts were made in the 1960s to increase the number of qualified teachers particularly for the basic level of education but the problem of shortage of teachers persisted. McWilliam and Kwamina-Poh (1975) observed that various efforts were made by government to increase the number of training colleges from 31 colleges in 1961 to 82 certificate colleges in 1966. Consequent to those efforts, about 9,000 teachers came out of the 82 Certificate 'A' and 'B' colleges which existed in 1966 and the total number of trained teacher on the field rose by 28%.

Throughout the years training of teachers has not been omitted from the government plan. There has been some expansion in the teacher training colleges to admit more students. The establishment of study leave, best teacher award scheme and re-introduction of the teacher training allowance facilitated this move.

According to an International Labour Organisation Report (1998), which focused on the status of the teachers, whereas surplus numbers of teachers may offer school systems a chance to make qualitative improvements, teacher shortages never do. The report continues that short falls of well trained teachers are known round the world in all income levels but they are known to be a "chronic" handicap to educational effort in many developing countries including Ghana.

The most important factor in the education sector in relation to teacher is how best to find recruitment and retention strategies that will bring about improvement in the various schools in Ghana. There is the need to find a strategy that attracts the teachers to the teaching field and this strategy should be able to maintain them for an extended period of time.

It is, therefore, disheartening to observe that in most rural districts in the Ashanti Region, the trend is that teachers do not remain to teach in one school for a long period of time. This observation was made by Britwum (2003) when he delivered the key note address at an inaugural ceremony of the Ghana National Association of Teacher Training Colleges Tutors (GHATTCOT) Ashanti/Brong Ahafo zone at St. Louis Training College in Kumasi. During his address as the Regional Director of Education for the Ashanti Region, he stated specifically that the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District is one of the rural areas that are not able to retain teachers for a long period of time. The situation has been a source of worry to administrators, directors, headteachers, community leaders, parents and even pupils.

The way forward to change this trend is to find some lasting solutions to attract and keep qualified teachers in our rural schools. In an attempt to alleviate the problem in the country as a whole, the government has introduced teacher trainees' sponsorship scheme in the various District/Municipal/Metropolitan Assemblies. Under this scheme, there is supposed to be a decentralized and demand driven approach to teacher recruitment and selection. Recruitment for both pre-service and in-service teacher training is supposed to be carried out by district education offices in collaboration with district assemblies to meet the teacher requirements for schools in a particular district. Teacher recruits are supposed to be sponsored by and bounded to serve particular districts for a minimum period of three years.

Even though, the fifth batch of beneficiaries of the trainees' sponsorship scheme is at the moment in the teaching field, yet no study is known to have been conducted to

determine the success or otherwise of the entire programme in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. This study was an attempt to find out the positive impact or otherwise of the teacher trainee sponsorship scheme as practiced in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers and the even greater difficulty in retaining teachers to achieve effective teaching and learning outcomes have, for some time past, been matters of serious concern for educational authorities and opinion leaders in Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. Even though the district recruits teachers yearly, many schools are understaffed. A serious look at the district reveals a relatively high proportion of untrained teachers in some schools especially those in the rural areas.

A casual observation by this researcher and concerns raised by some residents of the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District seemed to suggest that the trained teacher population is not encouraging, since the inception of sponsorship package. The concerns further pointed that efforts to improve the teacher supply situation in the district have seen any appreciable improvement based on some pertinent issues. It appears that teacher retention in the district has become major concern because these teachers do not like to stay in the rural environment for longer periods. The question then is, what are the most effective strategies that can be used in facilitating the entire teacher trainee sponsorship scheme to work effectively in order to bring in the needed teachers and help them to remain and teach for a long time in Bosomtwe-Atwima- Kwanwoma District?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to find out factors that promote or militate against the teacher trainee sponsorship scheme and for that matter the success or otherwise of the programme as practised in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti region of Ghana.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. In what ways are sponsored teachers of Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District placed to teach in the district?
2. What management and support services are in place at the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District to retain sponsored teachers in the rural schools?
3. To what extent are respondents satisfied with the basic amenities provided in their respective communities in the district?
4. What are the indications that respondents are likely to stay in their present schools for the next three years or more?
5. What views do respondents have on the sponsorship scheme – do they consider it important or otherwise?
6. What suggestions do respondents offer with the view to improving the sponsorship scheme?

### **Research Design**

Since the study was intended to collect data from the members of a population in order to determine current status of the population with respect to one or more variables, the descriptive survey research was used. According to Worgu (1991) research design is a plan or blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analysed.

Gray (1976) stated that a research design provides a procedural outline for the conduct of any investigation. He explained that research design indicates the basic structure of

the study, the nature of the hypotheses and the variables involved in the study.

Gay (1987) stated that the descriptive survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine current status of that population with respect to one or more variables. Again, Gay stressed that the descriptive survey method is used to investigate a variety of educational problems including assessment of attitudes, options, demographic information, conditions and procedures and description data are usually collected through questionnaire, interviews or observation.

The researcher employed the descriptive survey method because when used, a careful probability sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken to reflect those of the target population. Another strength that encouraged the researcher to use the descriptive survey method was that a carefully constructed standardized questionnaire provides data in the same form from all respondents. The method enabled the researcher come out with credible and meaningful picture of events that characterized the population and explained respondents' perception and behaviour on the basis of the data gathered during the period of the research.

#### **Population of the Study**

The research was designed to investigate the impact of teacher trainee sponsorship scheme as practised in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. The district is located at the middle part of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The district has most of its communities around the Lake Bosomtwe and it shares common boundaries with Atwima District, Kumasi Metropolis, Ejisu Juabeng District, Amansie East District and Amansie West District. The area predominantly consists of fishing and farming communities. However, there are some other small and medium scale projects such as palm oil extraction, production of locally made soap, gari processing among others. There are 101 Primary Schools and 96 Junior High Schools in the district. Altogether, there are 1,110 teachers employed in the schools in the district. Of this figure, 457 are untrained, leaving the number of trained teachers at 653. Out of 653 teachers, 295 are sponsored teachers currently at post. The population for the study comprises the Sponsored Teachers and Headteachers in the basic schools, the District Education Officers and the District Assembly Personnel in the district.

#### **The Sample**

An ideal procedure would have been to consider the sponsored teachers in all the basic schools in the district but since time and resources would not permit that, rather some schools, mostly those in deprived areas were selected randomly. Of the nine circuits in the district, five schools made up of three primary and two junior high schools were selected from each, making a total of 45 schools. From each school a minimum of one and a maximum of four schools were selected depending on the population of the school.

The schools in the district were grouped into semi-urban and rural schools for selection. In all, 10 primary and six junior high schools were selected from the semi-urban areas while 17 primary and 12 junior high schools were chosen from the rural areas for the study. In all 228 sponsored teachers were selected from all the schools. In order to find out the situation on the ground, other relevant persons were selected to be part of the study. They included 15 heads of basic schools, three district education officers and two district assembly personnel.

#### **Sampling Techniques**

The main sampling techniques employed in the selection of respondents were the purposive and simple random sampling method. For instance, the first batch of the sponsored teachers who came out in 2001/2002 academic year totaling 39 was purposefully selected. In other words, their number was relatively small and it was because they were all required for the study. The remaining sponsored teachers who came out from 2002/2003 to 2006/2007 were randomly selected because they were many, numbering 256. The researcher decided to use about three-quarters of the remaining sponsored teachers which came up to 189 teachers.

With the selection of the 189 teacher respondents, the lottery method was used. Specifically, the names of the 256 sponsored teachers were written on pieces of papers and put into a bowl. A research assistant was employed to assist in the selection of the required 189 through the lottery method of random sampling. In the end, 228 teacher respondents were selected purposefully or randomly.

Apart from the teacher respondents, other respondents were selected purposefully because of the role they play in the recruitment and retention of teachers in the district. Once again, these respondents were made up of 15 basic school heads, the District Director of Education, the Assistant Director in-charge of Human Resource Management and Development (HRMD) and the Public Relations Officer (P.R.O.). Others were the District Chief Executive for the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District Assembly and his District Coordinating Director.

#### **Research Instruments**

Two major data gathering instruments were employed to collect data for the study. These were questionnaire and interview guide. The questionnaire was used because of the advantages it has in data collection for research studies. Koul (1997), for instance noted that questionnaire is a popular means of gathering all kinds of data for research purposes. He maintained that it is usually used in educational research to obtain information about certain conditions and practices and to inquire into opinions and attitudes of individuals or groups. Nwana (1981) on his part indicated that questionnaire is useful if the respondents cannot give information in the project unless complete anonymity is guaranteed. Also, Nwana stated that the questionnaire is useful if the population is widely distributed geographically and not enough time and personnel and other resources are available for data collection. Moreover, questionnaire is used when respondents have to look into records to be able to respond to the questionnaire (Nwana, 1981).

In spite of the good side of the use of questionnaire method, it has some weaknesses. For instance, it is expensive in terms of finances and time especially if respondents are scattered over a large area as was the case of this research. Sometimes, respondents may not provide appropriate responses so this can affect the final result, if care is not taken. Therefore, in order for the researcher to overcome or at least reduce the magnitude for the weaknesses, a follow-up interview was planned to support the questionnaire.

In all there were 25 items in the questionnaire and they were made up of six open-ended questions and 19 close-ended questions with alternatives.

The close-ended items took the form of statements where respondents had to show their 'Satisfaction' or 'Dissatisfaction', 'Yes' or 'No', 'Agree' or 'Disagree' among others.

As has been noted earlier, some selected officers were interviewed using interview guide. The reason for using the interview method for this group of respondents was that they were too busy to respond to long questionnaires. The interview method also helped to cross-check information provided by the teacher respondents, if the questions asked in the interview bear close similarity to questions in the questionnaire. The interview guide for the officers had eight open-ended questions. These items covered the researched posed for this study.

#### **Pre-Testing of Research Instruments**

The instruments were pre-tested in parts of the district which were not part of the main study. Tuckman (1992) gave credence to pre-testing of the instruments and stated "it is usually highly desirable to run a pilot test on a questionnaire and to revise it based on the results of the test" (p.199). He went on to state that a pilot test, which uses a group of respondents who are part of the intended test population but will not be part of the sample attempts to determine whether questionnaire items possess the desired qualities of measurement and consistency. The use of part of the intended population was agreed upon based on a wide consultation of fellow students and the supervisor for this study.

Eventually, Akokofe D/A Junior High School and Jachie Anglican Primary school both in Kuntunase circuit of Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District and Deputy District Director of Education were selected for the pilot test. Additionally, the Deputy District Coordinating Director and another senior staff of the district assembly were interviewed using the interview guide as described earlier. The purpose of the pre-testing of the instrument was to find out if it contained any ambiguous items that might jeopardize the collection of the appropriate responses.

It was the intention of the researcher and in conformity with research methodology to validate the instruments, so colleague students were made to edit the draft instrument before the supervisor approved them for the pre-testing process. As a practice, the researcher went to the selected schools and introduced himself to the heads of the schools who agreed to help to facilitate the process.

Same procedure was used to contact the other people targeted for the pre-testing. On the whole, the pre-testing process did not detect any weakness in either of the instruments. When the instruments were retrieved and analysed electronically, a reliability test was run and the result was of 0.8 coefficient of reliability. The supervisor then authorised this researcher to proceed with the main data administration.

#### **Data Collection Procedure**

To ensure effective collection of data, a research assistant was hired to help in data collection. He was given the necessary briefing and was taken to all the selected places for formal introduction. The research assistant was charged with the administration of the questionnaires. He had to visit some places about four times before the questionnaire could be retrieved. In some circumstances, respondents claimed the questionnaires were missing and new ones were issued out because, we wanted to capture every respondent selected for the study.

In the end, the research assistant managed to retrieve all the questionnaires given out and it took two months to accomplish this task.

In the conduct of the interviews, the researcher did it himself because a scholar had said that interview guide should

be administered by an experienced interviewer and that was exactly what was done under this circumstance. Sewell (2006) points out that "this type of interview requires an interviewer who is relatively skilled and experienced, since he or she will need to know when to probe for more in-depth responses or guide the conversation to make sure that all topics on the outline are covered" (pg 4). All the officers slated for the interview process obliged and were interviewed accordingly, even though it took quite a longer time of three months to complete. The researcher had to book appointment long before the interview could be conducted especially in the case of the district chief executive and district director of education.

#### **Data Analysis Plan**

The questionnaire was given code numbers for easy identification and the responses were also coded, computed and converted into simple percentages for analysis. The data was purely descriptive and descriptive statistics were used for the analysis of the data from the questionnaires were analysed using frequencies and percentages to show the distribution of responses. Additionally, data gathered with the interview guide was analysed manually because of the nature of responses.

#### **Results and Discussion**

##### **Placement of Sponsored Teachers**

This was an effort to answer Research Question One which sought to find out whether the sponsored teachers in the district are well placed to teach in the district.

Table 1 indicates that majority of teachers who were sponsored by the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District have been posted to teach in the district. An interview with the District Education Personnel by the researcher revealed that there have been some isolation cases where few sponsored teachers are given the opportunity to teach outside the district due to ill-health.

Aboagye (1997) asserted elsewhere in this study that the nation experienced shortage of qualified teachers certain subject areas like Mathematics, Science and Technical Skills due to poor a supply of qualified teachers in the rural schools as compared to the urban schools. This study does indicate any shortage of teachers in the areas enumerated above.

##### **Availability of Management and Support Services**

Another important area investigated by the researcher concerns the availability of management and support services to sponsored teachers. This was considered in order to find out whether or not the availability of management and support services can motivate the respondents to remain at post especially in the deprived schools. Analysis of the issue was to answer Research Question Two which states "What management and support services are in place at the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District to retain sponsored teachers in the rural schools? For the details of the responses to research question two see Table 10.

From Table 2, one can say that 58.8% of the respondents are satisfied with the provision of accommodation. Another 61% respondents are satisfied with the availability of School-Community relations. Apart from these two support services, the remaining management and support services show figures below 50%. In the case of orientating or inducting new teachers in the district, as low as 18% of respondents indicated that is done whilst the majority of 82% responded in the negative.

**Table 1. Placement of Sponsored Teachers.**

| Placement  | 5  | %    | 4   | %    | 3 | % | 2   | %    | 1  | %    |
|--|----|------|-----|------|---|---|-----|------|----|------|
| Sponsored teachers are posted to the schools in the district                                     | 29 | 12.7 | 174 | 76.3 | 0 | 0 | 25  | 11.0 | 0  | 0    |
| Sponsored teachers lobby to teach in schools outside the district                                | 0  | 0    | 32  | 14.0 | 0 | 0 | 179 | 78.5 | 17 | 7.5  |
| Sponsored teachers visit their schools once and never go back to teach in the school             | 0  | 0    | 12  | 5.3  | 0 | 0 | 181 | 79.4 | 35 | 15.3 |
| Sponsored teachers report to their schools for a few terms and teach                             | 0  | 0    | 47  | 20.6 | 0 | 0 | 163 | 71.5 | 18 | 7.9  |
| Sponsored teachers accept posting willingly to their schools and are to stay for a longer period | 37 | 16.0 | 162 | 71.0 | 0 | 0 | 21  | 9.0  | 8  | 4.0  |
| Supposed sponsored teachers do not report to teach because they were not sponsored               | 47 | 20.6 | 54  | 23.7 | 0 | 0 | 92  | 40.3 | 35 | 15.3 |

Key: 5 means Strongly Agree      4 means Agree      3 means Undecided      2 means Disagree      1 means Strongly Disagree

**Table 2. Availability of Management and Support Services.**

| Availability of Management and Support Services          | Yes | %    | No  | %    |
|--|-----|------|-----|------|
| Provision of accommodation (Free or subsidized)          | 134 | 58.8 | 94  | 41.2 |
| Orientation/induction of new teachers                    | 41  | 18.0 | 187 | 72.0 |
| Provision of In-service education for new teachers       | 53  | 23.2 | 175 | 76.8 |
| School-community relations/sense of community security   | 139 | 61.0 | 89  | 39.0 |
| Welfare services in the school                           | 101 | 44.3 | 127 | 55.7 |
| Availability of cost effective distance learning courses | 96  | 42.1 | 132 | 57.9 |
| Opportunity to earn additional source of income          | 65  | 28.5 | 163 | 71.5 |

The observation is that the district education directorate offers some services to teachers, which serve as motivators and encourage teachers to remain at post in the district. This confirms Adentwi's (2002) viewpoint that teacher retention may be said to be determined by all the various personnel management strategies and techniques employed by the education service to get teachers satisfied with their job and to motivate them to remain at post. In this study it has been observed that few management and support services are available and where they are available they served as a motivation to attract and retain teachers for a long period of time.

#### Level of Satisfaction with Basic Amenities in Communities Where Respondents Teach

Another issue the researcher considered under the topic being studied was whether respondents were satisfied with the facilities available in the communities where they teach. Responses offered by respondents answered Research Question Three. The details are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Level of Satisfaction of Basic Amenities in Communities Where Respondents Teach.**

| Level of Satisfaction of Basic Amenities | 5 | % | 4  | %    | 3   | %    | 2  | %    | 1  | %    |
|--|---|---|----|------|-----|------|----|------|----|------|
| Good Drinking Water                      | 0 | 0 | 28 | 12.3 | 97  | 42.5 | 41 | 18.0 | 62 | 27.2 |
| Electricity                              | 0 | 0 | 74 | 32.5 | 109 | 47.8 | 32 | 14.0 | 13 | 5.7  |
| Post Office                              | 0 | 0 | 34 | 14.9 | 148 | 64.9 | 20 | 8.4  | 26 | 11.4 |
| Good Health Service                      | 0 | 0 | 15 | 6.6  | 169 | 74.1 | 37 | 16.2 | 7  | 3.1  |
| Road Network                             | 0 | 0 | 57 | 25.0 | 59  | 26.0 | 48 | 21.0 | 64 | 28   |
| Entertainment Centres                    | 0 | 0 | 2  | 0.9  | 188 | 82.5 | 10 | 4.3  | 28 | 12.3 |
| Good schools                             | 0 | 0 | 59 | 25.9 | 0   | 0    | 87 | 38.2 | 82 | 35.9 |

Key: 5 means Very Satisfied      4 means Satisfied      3 means Not Available      2 means Dissatisfied      1 mean Very Dissatisfied

Table 4 shows that none of the respondents stated "very satisfied" on the issue of good drinking water. Only 28 out of the 228 respondents representing 12.3% said they were satisfied with the water they drink. The trend is the same for the remaining amenities namely Electricity, Post office, Good Health Service, Road Network, Entertainment centres and Good Schools. In the same way, none of the respondent stated "very satisfied". On the other hand, most respondents expressed either "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied". This is a clear indication that most respondents are not satisfied with the basic amenities available in their respective communities. The observation that various basic amenities are not made only available but also satisfying to ensure the retention of sponsored teachers in the deprived areas confirms the viewpoint of Kankam (1998), which stated that to retain teachers especially in the rural areas, the disparities in the provision of basic amenities in the rural and urban communities should be removed.

#### Opinion of Respondents on How Long They Would Like to Stay in the District

The respondents were given the opportunity to disclose their intention as to whether they would remain teaching in their present schools for the next three years or more. The opinions expressed by respondents answer research question four, which asked if respondents were likely to stay at their present post for the next three years. The results of the investigation are shown in Table 12.

Table 4 indicates that as many as 186 respondents out of 228 representing 81.6% said they are likely to stay for the next few years. The remaining 42 respondents representing 18.4% stated that they are unlikely to stay for the minimum of three years.

**Table 4. Whether Sponsored Teachers Would Stay for the Next Three Years.**

| Whether Teachers Would Stay for Three Years | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Unlikely                                    | 42        | 18.4       |
| Likely                                      | 186       | 81.6       |
| Total                                       | 228       | 100.0      |

One sees this development where most respondents have expressed their desire to stay in the district for a minimum of three years as a remarkable improvement which the teacher sponsorship scheme has contributed towards teacher retention in the district. The observation made here is that when teachers are sponsored under bonding arrangements they are encouraged to stay a longer period in their schools. This confirms the assertion of Adentwi (2002) that teacher retention may be said to be determined by all the various personnel management strategies and techniques employed by the education service to get teachers satisfied with their jobs and to motivate them to remain at post.

#### **Respondents' Views About the Importance of the District Sponsorship Scheme for Teacher Trainees**

Another crucial issue of the study concerned respondents' views on the importance of the scheme as practised in Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. The researcher sought to find out whether the views of the respondents would enable him to assess the important role the scheme plays in the retention of qualified teachers in the district. It was an attempt to answer Research Question 5 which states that "what views do respondents have on the sponsorship scheme?" Responses elicited are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Respondents' Views on the Sponsorship Scheme.**

| Respondents' Views on the Sponsorship Scheme | Frequency | %    |
|--|-----------|------|
| Very Important                               | 216       | 94.7 |
| Fairly Important                             | 12        | 5.3  |
| Total  | 228       | 100  |

Table 5 summaries the views expressed on the teacher trainee sponsorship scheme in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. As many as 216 respondents, that is, 94.7%, said the scheme is very important. The remaining 5.3% indicated that it is fairly important. None of the respondents said the scheme is not important. This indication suggests that if the implementation of the sponsorship scheme is reviewed periodically and attempts are made to minimize the various challenges identified, the scheme would go a long way to improve teacher supply and retention problem that Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District is facing. This observation confirms Adentwi's (2002) viewpoint that changes and policies introduced in teacher education which include teacher trainee sponsorship do improve teacher supply. According to Adentwi, the scheme is supposed to help produce adequate number of professional teachers who are able to meet demands imposed by the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education, which is one of the conditions required for a teacher to accept posting to rural area. The observation that most sponsored teachers have accepted to teach in the rural areas makes the scheme very important.

#### **Suggestions to Improve the Sponsorship Scheme**

The researcher tried to solicit views from the respondents in order to have variety of views on how the sponsorship scheme could be improved to achieve the desired impact. Hence, the researcher offered some suggestions for respondents to indicate their opinions. Respondents were also given the opportunity to specify other suggestion of their own

which were not stated on the questionnaire. This was an attempt to answer Research Question Six, which sought suggestions from respondents for improvement on the sponsorship scheme as practised in Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. The responses are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Suggestions to Improve the Sponsorship Scheme.**

|    | Suggestions   | Frequency | %     |
|----|---|-----------|-------|
| 1. | Sponsored trainees must have rural background   | 184       | 80.7  |
| 2. | Sponsored trainees must be a native of the district of sponsorship  | 155       | 67.0  |
| 3. | The District Assembly should make regular payment of sponsorship allowance to sponsored trainees                | 228       | 100.0 |
| 4. | Allowances must be reviewed from time to time   | 228       | 100.0 |
| 5. | There should be uniformity in payment of allowance by the District Assemblies in the country                    | 288       | 100.0 |
| 6. | Sponsored teachers should be given the opportunity to indicate choice (At least three circuits of their choice) | 228       | 100.0 |
| 7. | Orientation of new teachers to make them feel welcomed and secured should be organized                          | 228       | 100.0 |
| 8. | Sponsored teachers should be made to sign at least three years bond to stay in the district of sponsorship      | 228       | 100.0 |

From Table 6, one observes that suggestions with numbers 3 to 8 recorded 100% response each. This indicates how beneficial the scheme would serve if those suggestions are taken seriously and well implemented. Suggestion number 1 with a percentage of 80.7% endorses the perception of some people with rural background. In the same manner, 155 respondents out of 228 representing 67% suggest that sponsored trainees must be natives of the district. The observation that the introduction of the teacher trainee sponsorship scheme in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District faces a few challenges towards achievement of its desired goal underscores the need for the district to work further towards total success of the scheme.

#### **Summary of Findings**

A number of observations have been made from the study. The following are some of the key findings. It has been found from the study that close to half the number of the sponsored teachers (45.2%) comes from Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District. While another sizeable number (29.8%) of respondents indicated they come from five districts which share common boundary with the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District.

It was also observed that (48.2%) of the sponsored teachers in the district have some rural background. It has also been discovered that payment of sponsorship allowances to the trainee teachers was irregular in that payments were made only when money was made available by the District assembly. In some cases, some sponsored teachers only have their sponsorship forms endorsed by the district without any allowance paid to them. It has also been observed that most communities in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District lack basic amenities such as health services, good drinking water, accommodation, good transportation, which sometimes

prevent some teachers from staying in a school for a long time.

### Conclusions

The findings of the study support the idea of the introduction of the teacher trainee sponsorship scheme by the educational authorities. This is because if the programme is well implemented and sustained, it will enhance teacher supply in Ghanaian rural basic schools in general and Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District in particular.

It is clear from the findings that sponsored teachers were dissatisfied with the sponsorship package received from the District Assembly. They were however satisfied with teacher management and support services received from the district education directorate, which had motivated them to stay in the district for a long period of time.

The results of this study revealed that sponsored teachers in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District have high expectations for conditions and facilities in the schools and communities. When the conditions and facilities are favourable, the teachers feel satisfied. On the other hand, when the conditions and facilities are not appreciable, frustration and dissatisfaction set in. Accommodation, transportation, good drinking water, health services and so on constitute the expectations of teachers that are to be met. It is not surprising that the sponsored teachers are not finding the conditions quite satisfactory. Good accommodation, drinking water and health facilities are some of the major challenges facing rural areas of Ghana as a whole.

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