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ASSESSING INCENTIVES OF WORKERS OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN SUNYANI MUNICIPALITY, GHANA

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ABSTRACT: Available and preferred incentives of staff members of five public and five private Senior High schools in Sunyani Municipality, Ghana, West Africa, were compared in this study during the 2021/2022 academic year. A random sample of 214 out of 645 workers from the 10 schools selected from 19 responded to 55 Likert-type questionnaires which had been pretested and with the Cronbach score of 0.73. Inferential statistical analysis identified several and specific incentives offered to the two groups (private and public), as well as those they prefer. Respondents from private institutions favoured incentives that emphasized on their development to enhance their ability to excel and to support their remunerations with mid-day meals. However, public sector workers prioritized facilities like school busing, small classroom sizes and improved retirement benefits. The revelation from the study suggests the need for educational institutions to continuously track workers' performance against the incentives and rewards granted. Public workers are remunerated from the public trust and assured of timely payments and promotions, but not necessarily satisfied. Future study will need to assess the level of satisfaction against performance of their schools.

Keywords: Incentives, workers, private and public high schools, performance

1. INTRODUCTION

Every educational institution is as good as its workforce. In the opinion of Liao Fei, & Chen (2007) "organizational success rests on its employees, therefore the need to stress on elements that will impact employees' motivation and performance" should be paramount to all enterprises including the educational sector. The success of any educational institution to a higher degree depends on how the institution manages its human resource through well-designed and implemented incentives/compensations that help to motivate them to put in all their best. Educational institutions aim at being unique within the industry. Though information systems have drastically influenced the traditional ways of doing things, Human Capital remains crucial in the educational sector (Nkansah, 2016, Huttu, 2010).

Incentive plans for workers are to encourage the workforce in any institution for efficiency, productivity and profitability. These could be monetary or non-monetary. Studies have shown how incentives can motivate the workforce especially in educational institutions (Camping, Graham, Ng, Aitken, Wilson, & Wdowin 2020; Kingful and Nusenu, 2015). In addition, institutional characteristics could directly or indirectly support or motivate workers to perform (Kreitner, 1995).

In the contemporary competitive world, business organizations face increasing challenges regarding commitment, their engagement, beliefs, recruitment, and retention of employees (Wellins, Bernthal, & Phelps, 2017). The research by Development Dimensions International (DDI) revealed that only 19% of employees were highly engaged within their organizations (Wellins et al., 2017.). Motivation and incentives are about giving your staff the right mixture of guidance, direction, and resources and rewards so that they are inspired and are keen to work in the way that you want them to (Omolo, 2015). A large portion behind these difficulties can easily be solved by imparting proper motivation and incentives, and managing human resources and attitudes effectively (Remi and Toyosi, 2011; Osibanjo and Adeniji, 2012).

According to Bolling-Cooper (2018), a number of educational institutions lack the experience to motivate employees. Several organizations, however, consider a strategic approach to motivation management to improve their competitiveness, profit, and sales (Bateman and Snell, 2007). Some of the strategies according to Bateman, Snell & Konopaske (2015) include ensuring organizational citizenship behaviour, and honouring customer loyalty with appropriate incentives.

Information provided by the Ghana Education Service indicates that there are, as at 2021, 14 private and 5 public secondary schools. A search through the Google search engine, revealed the absence of published research on the incentivization in the secondary educational sector in the Sunyani municipality. Anecdotal evidence, however, shows that most workers do not get the essential incentives. This study throws further light on the state of incentives among both public and private secondary schools' workers in the municipality (Adeniran, 2022).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The cross-sectional study design (Creswell, 2009) with a quantitative approach to data collection was used. The directorate of the Ghana Educational Service in the Municipality provided the list and location of 19 secondary schools, reviewed to questionnaire and approved the questionnaire instrument for implementation. With only 19 schools, the researchers chose a first stage sample of all 5 public schools and 7 out of the 14 private institutions. Two of the private institutions pulled out leaving 5 for further study. The total workforce or population for the 10 schools was 675. The second stage total sample size was obtained by using Slovin's formula, $n = N / 1 + N (e)^2$, where e is 5% error (95% confidence), $N = 675$ which gave a desired sample of 251. The second stage sample for the strata (selected schools) was obtained by proportionately to size of schools and by categories (Management, Teaching and Non-Teaching staff). The questionnaire had been pretested and modified by selecting 25 persons that were not from schools randomly identified. The questionnaire had 4 main sections: background information on respondents, Institutional characteristics, available incentives known to staff and preferred incentives. Respondents were to indicate their level of agreement to statements under each of the last three sections on the five-point liker scale (with 5 being strongly in agreement and 1 least in agreement). Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency gave an acceptable value of 0.73 (Taber, 2019)

The questionnaire on available and preferred incentives to staff was completed by the sample of 251 (irrespective of gender and other classification) during the months of December 2021 to January 2022 with non-response of 37, leaving 214 questionnaires for assessment. The sample size of 214, representing 75% of initial sample, exceeded the minimum requirements for this type of study (Cochran, 1963). The quantitative approach facilitated the investigation of statistically significant relationships among identified variables. Statistical analysis included basic inferential analysis of means, correlation and factor analysis (Afifi & Clark, 1990; Kim and Mueller, 1978). The analyses were done with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS version 26.

3. RESULTS

Institutional Attributes

More than three-quarters of the respondents were males with a similar percentage were married, while the majority of respondents were educated at least to the Diploma level (Table 1). Furthermore, factor analysis on institutional characteristics showed clearly the desirable and observed attributes of the heads of institutions (Figs. 1 and 2) and the association of students' performance with attributes such as effective communication, healthy relations among staff and conducive environment.

Table 1: Socio-demography characteristics of the respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sex	male	144	67.3	67.3
	Female	70	32.7	100.0
	Total	214	100.0	
Age	under 20	4	1.9	1.9
	21-30	85	39.7	41.6
	31-40	73	34.1	75.7
	41-50	47	22.0	97.7
	Above 50	5	2.3	100.0
Marital Status	Single	93	43.5	43.5
	Married	113	52.8	96.3
	Widowed	7	3.3	99.5
	Divorced	1	.5	100.0
Education	No Formal	1	.5	.5
	Basic	3	1.4	1.9
	Secondary	11	5.1	7.0
	Diploma	37	17.3	24.3
	1st Degree	131	61.2	85.5
	2nd Degree	29	13.6	99.1
	PhD	2	.9	100.0

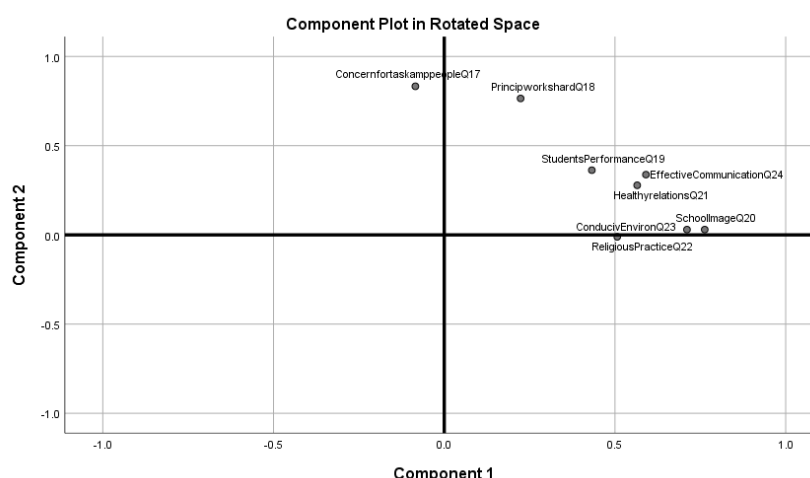


Fig 1: Two components' plot in rotated space from factor analysis of institutional attributes

Available Incentives

Results on available incentives are presented in Tables 2 and 3. While Table 2 provides a summary of the percentage of respondents that agreed with the statement (score >3), Table 3 provides the statistical test on the differences between the Likert scores for variables (statements) and statistical significance of the differences. In Table 2, we note that only two-fifths of workers in the public educational sector agreed that policy on incentives package existed, while three-fifths of private were also in agreement. Opportunity for career advancement was certain for workers in the public schools (59%) but barely so for their counterparts in the private sector (25%). Employees in the public sector appreciated fact that they were given some level of autonomy to develop their confidence but this was not apparent in the private school sector. Furthermore, whereas public schools' staff was assured of satisfactory end-of-service package beyond the mandatory social security benefits, the same could not be said of private school retirees. On environmental incentives, workers in the private schools commended management on improved classroom ventilation, while the public-school respondents rather wished for such. Public schools' staff confirmed that timely payment of salary motivated them. Workers of private schools were motivated by the receipt of end-of-term motivational packages of various forms. Such motivation can lead to improved performance (Akuoko, Dwumah, & Baba, 2012).

Regarding the test of differences in means of the Likert scores, it was observed that there were no significant differences among public and private for most of the 55 variables. However, there was confirmation that public school teachers needed more than their private colleagues in respect of the following: motivational fees ($p=0.000$), retirement benefits ($p=0.00$), small classroom sizes ($p=0.025$), improved classroom's ventilation ($p=0.013$) and need for a school bus for transportation ($p=0.026$). On the other hand, private school teachers had greater responses for career advancement ($p=0.000$) and provision of mid-day meals ($p=0.036$).

Table 2: Available incentives as indicated by respondents in percentage

Incentive	Public	Private
Policy on incentive package exists.	43.40	37.80
Aware incentive package is in practice.	42.80	44.50

Favorable package.	29.00	40.00
Timely payment of salary is motivating.	64.50	53.40
Motivational fees applied at the end of term.	32.00	64.50
School encourages hour of rest	60.30	51.20
Annual leave with pay.	37.40	15.60
Suggestions from staff appreciated.	56.70	42.30
Available medical facility (clinic)	39.80	17.80
Free education for staff children.	15.70	6.70
Housing facilities are available.	36.80	26.70
Availability of retirement benefits	58.50	28.90
Higher wages for better performance.	26.00	22.30
The transportation allowance encourages	22.90	15.60
Participation in decision making motivates.	53.10	57.80
Recognition of positive attitudes helps.	67.50	57.80
Opportunities for career advancement.	58.50	24.50
Autonomy to develop my confidence to perform.	56.70	42.30
Counseling support is available.	56.10	42.30
Provision lunch motivates	39.20	20.00
There is end-of-service package	33.20	44.50
Virtual teaching material available.	27.20	24.50
Migration from chalk to marker-boards	72.90	66.70
There is minimum small class number.	43.40	55.60
There is avoidance of threats words.	54.90	55.60
There is improved classrooms ventilation	64.50	77.80
There is a provision of a school bus.	42.20	53.40
Provision of staff accommodation.	41.60	31.20
There is a common staff room.	82.60	77.80
There are varied sport facilities	46.40	35.60
Respect is reciprocal for all.	80.20	73.40

Factor Analysis of Available Incentives

The major output from the factor analysis is presented as Table 3. It had been derived with the eigenvalue value constraint of less than 1 (0.67), and the 9 component axes using the Extraction Method of Principal Component Analysis that had emerged. There are thirty-one variables under available incentives and the thirty-one variables were reduced to nine components, and this accounted for 62%. The first axis is described by 14 variables, the second by 5 variables, and the 3rd axis by 4 variables. Timely payment of salary accounts for fourth axis. While the fifth axis is driven by the retirement benefits. The 6th component is driven by two variables. The 7th to 9th variables are explained by 3 variables.

Table 3: Component and Weights of Variables from Factor Analysis of Available Incentives

Variables	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Policy Exists	.531	-.195	-.114	.492	-.141	-.325	-.198	.022	-.195
Incentive Practiced	.538	-.119	-.120	.479	-.093	-.342	-.140	-.046	-.227
Incentive Package	.615	-.317	-.266	.351	.127	-.224	.074	-.152	.142
Timely payment Salary	.392	-.189	.044	.485	-.284	.089	.098	.006	.384
Term motivational fees	.542	-.445	-.162	-.065	.238	-.104	.031	.006	.030
Rest Hour	.511	-.297	.115	-.017	-.230	-.032	-.053	.090	.105
Leave with pay	.467	.102	-.170	-.049	-.118	.222	.106	.162	-.531
Initiatives appreciate	.441	-.091	.111	.201	.197	.228	.145	.449	.328
Medical facility - Clinic	.263	.632	-.045	-.130	.125	-.236	-.327	.143	.136
Free education	.462	.186	-.436	-.124	.315	.011	-.222	.203	.022
Housing facilities	.555	.230	-.180	-.317	-.382	-.230	-.167	.214	.069
Retire. Benefits e.g. PF.	.289	.142	.032	.098	-.665	.294	.278	.145	-.064
Higher wages – Perform	.555	.109	-.359	-.224	.007	.172	.339	-.172	.268
Transport Allow.	.582	.277	-.359	-.032	.140	.091	.113	-.124	.067
Decision making	.626	-.208	.160	-.138	.221	.251	-.115	-.174	.014
Positive attitude	.582	-.214	.269	-.138	.140	.114	-.191	-.055	-.186
Career Advance	.456	-.104	.078	-.121	-.216	.473	-.361	-.236	.010
Autonomy to develop	.431	-.215	.074	-.113	.006	.157	-.477	-.150	.144
Counselling	.422	.509	.177	.102	.147	.031	-.045	.223	-.157
Lunch	.401	.597	-.045	.084	.014	.033	-.081	.064	.165
End-of-service package	.493	.003	-.075	-.047	.102	.109	.407	.195	-.190
Virtual Teaching Materials	.372	.477	-.041	.176	.028	.260	.123	-.431	-.052
Chalk to marker-boards	.016	.385	.537	.355	.120	.152	.086	-.170	.012
Small class number	.408	-.292	.051	-.185	.338	-.036	.229	-.054	-.156
Avoid. of threats words	.466	-.204	.381	-.102	.015	-.010	.144	.072	-.116
Improved Classroom ventilation	.302	.016	.531	-.080	-.033	-.232	.063	-.264	-.078
School bus	.091	.542	.334	.272	.252	-.042	-.047	.010	-.071
Accommodation	.522	.208	.053	-.378	-.347	-.326	.060	-.119	-.058
Staff room	.209	.064	.583	-.194	-.188	-.181	.010	.019	.177
Sport facilities	.275	.096	.172	-.182	.135	-.456	.361	-.136	.167
Respect	.218	-.246	.549	-.045	.126	.096	-.050	.368	.046

Preferred Ranked Incentives

Table 4 provides paired rankings of preferred incentives. The rank correlation coefficient of 0.518 was not statistically significant, indicating lack of linear association among the preferences of public and private workers in academic institutions. For instance, while workers in public institutions indicated their first and most preferred incentives (in addition to existing incentives) as staff accommodation, those in private institutions ranked it as their third preference. Free medical care was ranked as the first priority for private school but was the 6th preference for the public institutions.

Canonical correlation analysis (Table 5) of institutional characteristic variables and incentive variables showed significant association for the first 3 canonical variates ($r_1=0.677$, $p = 0.000$; $r_2 = 0.572$, $p = 0.000$; $r_3 = 0.501$, $p = 0.014$, respectively). The first canonical correlation approximately measured the association between {principal's work ethics, students' performances and effective communication} and incentives {freedom to operate, transport, counselling services, and respect for staff}. The second canonical correlation ($r_2 = 0.572$; $p = 0.000$) may be associated with institutional attributes {heads positive attitude towards staff, school image, conducive environment} and incentives like {prompt salary payment, leave and housing}. Association of healthy relations and religious affiliation with incentives such as {Career advancement, small classroom sizes, virtual learning tools, accommodation for staff} roughly accounted for the third canonical correlation ($r_3 = 0.501$, $p = 0.014$).

Table 4: Ranking of preferred incentives by respondents from Public and Private

Item	RANKING	
	Public	Private
Staff Accommodation	1 st	3 rd
End of year/term/service/SSNIT package, appreciation for teachers	2 nd	6 th
Transport/travel/Car maintenance allowance/School Bus for teachers	3 rd	2 nd
More Classrooms	4 th	10 th
Teaching and learning materials: Audio-Visual/textbooks	5 th	4 th
Free medical care/health facilities for reviews, screening, Insurance	6 th	1 st
Best teacher award by the school and GES	7 th	8 th
Increment/timely payment of salaries	8 th	7 th
Provision of lunch for staff/Canteen services	9 th	5 th
Wi-Fi/bundles internet Connection	10 th	11 th
Allowance for further studies/Sponsorship/financial support	11 th	9 th

4. DISCUSSION

The profile of respondents indicates the quality of respondents for the exercise, and expectedly with the ability to understand and respond appropriately to the study questions. Clear understanding of the questions could therefore be assumed.

The role of the head of institution was considered crucial by respondents, particularly with human relations attribute of care and concern for wellbeing as well as work attitude of hard work. School proprietors therefore need to take these into consideration during appointments and staff performance evaluation, as they are intricately linked with students' performance and attributes such as effective communication, healthy relations among staff and conducive environment.

The composition of the factor analysis on available incentives is further discussed (Table 3). It is inferred that the first component was driven by; existence of policy, awareness of incentives practiced being practiced, term motivational fees, resting hour (break time), free education for staff children, availability of housing facilities, higher wages for higher performance, participation in the decision-making is motivational, transport allowance encourages, end-of- service packages, small classroom number, avoidance threats of incentives can be calculated in terms of money, and hence the axis can be referred to as "monetary incentive" axis. These types of incentives are available for the workers of both the public and private SHS for their physiological, social and security needs. The second component was driven by medical facilities, counselling, lunch, virtual teaching materials, and provision of school bus. Health is said to be wealth. It can therefore be inferred that any organization that has healthy workers is a wealthy organization. The provision of medical facilities, good lunch motivates, having teaching materials enhanced the teaching and learning and the school bus reduces tiredness, lateness to work. The axis may be referred to as "well-being Incentive". In study on school health services, Kuponiyi, Amoran & Kuponiyi (2016) observed the strong role of the services in encouraging teaching and learning at basic schools in western Nigeria.

The variables that drove the third component were the movement from chalk-board to marker-boards, improved classroom ventilation, provision of a common staff room and respect being so reciprocal for all. Every business enterprise works to improve their technology to have an edge over its competitors. The migration from chalk-boards to marker-boards and improved classroom ventilation are not just motivational to the workers of the private and public but aid the students' learning. The provision of common staff room in some of the schools with television enables relaxation and eases up tension and means of socialization among the workers, which can be considered as "improved work environment".

Timely payment of salary explained the fourth axis. Some workers believe that even the salary may be small, but the timely payment is very motivating. The fifth axis is driven by the retirement benefits such as pension, providence fund (PF), SSNIT, gratuity these are available to the workers to motivate them. These incentives are suitable for them for security and safety purpose. The sixth component is driven by career advancement, sport facilities. Whenever there are promotional opportunities, employees improve their skills and efficiency with the hope that they will be promoted to high level. Promotion, as an incentive, is a major stimulator or motivator which induces people to perform to their best level.

The seventh component was autonomy to develop the workers' confident to perform. This empowerment develops confidence in employees. They use their positive skills to prove that they are performing to the best when freedom is given to them. The eighth component was appreciation of suggestions and initiatives from staff members. SHS workers of both private and public appreciate their engagement in decision-making especially decisions concern them. Finally, the ninth component is due largely to "annual leave with pay". Both workers of SHS of private and public expressed that the extra pay helps them to cater for unforeseen expense.

In summary this study observed that the nine key incentives broadly, in order of importance, as: monetization, staff well-being, improved work environment, timely payment of salaries, provision

of gratuity, career advancement, enabling staff to half self-confidence to perform, participation in decision and annual leave entitlements. The finding on monetization supports the study by Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin (2004) that salary exerts a modest impact once compensating differential is taken into account. The analysis also presented differences in level of preferences between public and private school workers, with the lack of career advancement a major issue among private school workers. On the other hand, the need for improved classroom environment including limiting number of students in class was of concern among public school teachers. These findings differences on available and desired incentive package among private and public institution, are consistent with observations elsewhere (Springer & Taylor, 2016; Lee *et al.*, 2021).

Though there was no data on workers' performance, it was evident from the canonical correlation analysis that institutional characteristics of positive attributes of headship, ownership, religious beliefs, etc. are potential contributory factors that could motivate the workers in private and public schools.

In theory and practice, rewarding learning improvements should result in improved outcomes because it encourages teachers to enhance learning across the board for all students (World Bank, 2018). These findings will help policymakers on the desire of their teachers on incentives. School principals and human resource managers frequently search for performance indicators to utilize in objectively assessing the output of each worker in an effort to provide the appropriate incentives. These performance measures usually emphasize the components of the job that are readily quantifiable and ignore the qualitative aspects of the job that are more difficult to quantify (Hout & Elliott, 2011).

Qualitative measures for assessing workers needs to be developed; these measures may be generated in-depth, through open-ended interviews, direct observations, and from written documents (including programme records, personal diaries, teachers' logbooks among others), of the workers. From these assessments, thorough needs such as incentives can readily be obtained as standard assessment tools are now available (Patton, 2002). Focus Group Discussions done periodically with staff on their needs and desired incentives will promote harmony and efficiency.

Policymakers should develop the best ways to introduce incentives in order to continuously raise success and enhance education. Promising new models that employ incentives to foster a positive mindset, accountability, and improvement processes should be developed and evaluated with the cooperation of all stakeholders, including the workers.

5. CONCLUSION

The study identified nine broad groups of incentives as monetization, staff well-being, improved work environment, timely payment of salaries, provision of gratuity, career advancement, enabling staff to half self-confidence to perform, participation in decision and annual leave entitlements. Institutions should model compensation along this broad group of incentives and possibly study their relationships with the success of the educational establishments.

The study confirmed existing incentives and unique preferences in the public and private Senior High Schools studied. There were obvious preferences depending on the status of the institutions with the public institution beneficiaries having the upper hand. However, the preferred incentives among private institution respondents related to personal quality and their advancement. It is ironical that workers in the public setting would rather rate need for a school bus higher than their colleagues in the private. Specifically, {principals work ethics and healthy relations with staff, students' performance, effective communication, conducive environment} were strongly associated

with such incentives like {freedom to operate, transport, counselling services, and respect for staff, prompt salary payment, leave and housing, career advancement, small classroom sizes, virtual learning tools, and accommodation for staff}. The role of the principal is thus paramount to the success of the institution, particularly the ability to carry staff along, and should therefore be recognized, encouraged and supported.

The study lacked the component of linking the incentives directly to performance of the institutions and the institutional attributes. It was therefore not possible to determine and test the circular correlation amongst performance, satisfaction and motivation as described by Hadi & Adil (2010). Results from preferred and available incentives, however, suggest the need for educational institutions to ensure that staff performance is continually monitored and assessed against incentives offered to staff. Furthermore, school managers should not focus solely on motivation, but also consider intrinsic factors to enhance employee productivity (Bergstrom & Martinez, 2016).

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