



Teacher Motivation and Retention in Rural Ethiopian Schools: A Qualitative Exploration

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Abstract

Teacher motivation and retention are critical issues in rural Ethiopian schools, where these factors significantly influence educational outcomes. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 teachers from five randomly selected primary schools in Oromia Region, Ethiopia. Focus groups were also conducted with school administrators and community members to gather additional insights. Teachers reported high levels of job satisfaction, particularly related to the supportive environment and positive relationships within their communities. However, financial incentives remained a significant motivator for retention. The findings suggest that teacher motivation in rural Ethiopian schools is influenced by both personal and external factors, with financial support being crucial for retaining teachers in these areas. Schools should prioritise the provision of adequate salaries to retain teachers. Additionally, fostering a supportive school culture and community engagement can enhance job satisfaction among educators. Teacher Motivation, Retention, Rural Schools, Ethiopia

Keywords: *Ethiopia, Rural Areas, Contextual Analysis, Phenomenology, Qualitative Inquiry, Empowerment Theory, Cultural Competence*

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