



Teacher Retention in Secondary Schools of Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Kenya Union Conference

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Cite As: Kamundi, S. (2021). Teacher retention in secondary schools of Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Kenya Union Conference. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 2 (1), 13-25. 10.51867/ajer.v2i2.16

ABSTRACT

The study aimed at examining retention of teachers in secondary schools of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in East Kenya Union Conference (EKUC). It employed a concurrent mixed methods research design and adopted an exploratory approach using a descriptive survey. Out of the twenty secondary schools in the Union, the researcher targeted eleven which sat for the national exams since 2008. The subjects of the study included teachers, principals, the Conferences/Field Education Directors and the BoM chairpersons. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires for teachers. Interview schedules were organized for education directors, the school BoM chairpersons, the principals and teachers for triangulation. Observation schedule was also organized. This targeted the school infrastructure and generally all what goes on in the school. The school learning facilities and the behavior of teachers in school was also captured here. The other instrument used was the tool for document analysis to collect data for 8 years. Ninety-eight (98) teachers were required to fill the provided questionnaire, but the eleven principals, five education directions and eleven Boards of Management (BoM) chairpersons were subjected to interviews. Three teachers per school were also interviewed for triangulation purpose. Observations were also done during the visits in schools. Documentary analysis method was also used to gather information on the turnover trends of teachers for eight years. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Documentary analysis was done on records about teacher retention. Content analysis was done on responses from interviews and in open-ended questions to identify the emerging themes. The findings show that more teachers were leaving schools than those being employed in most of the years. Generally, it is evident that some teachers left church employment. The turnover was experienced annually. However, teachers intended to remain in the school as long as the administration was cooperative, understanding, appreciative, recognizes their efforts, was caring and was ready to treat them with dignity. The study recommends that the school administration should be cooperative to teachers, by treating them with dignity and appreciating their efforts. There should be stringent measures for motivating teachers, ensuring that they had access to housing and transport and that they were adequately remunerated.

Key words: Teacher Retention; Secondary Schools; Seventh-day Adventist Church; East Kenya Union Conference (EKUC)

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention, according to Xaba (2003) is a global concern which affects education and needs a serious attention. It needs an investigation to explore ways of retaining teachers in learning institutions. On the global perspective, Fulbeck (2011) reported that there was a challenge of low teacher retention internationally. Educator shortage was a national crisis in Britain. The situation was worse in Sweden, Germany and New Zealand, as well as in Canada and Australia. The low teacher retention, is said to undermine quality of teaching workforce. When the rate of teachers' mobility is frequent, it results into detrimental impact. The cost of hiring new teachers and training them becomes an expensive venture. The turnover and attrition also disrupts the general learning in school. On the other hand, Schaffhauser (2014) stated that low teacher retention affects education negatively, especially due to the cost and the implication involved in recruiting new ones.

It was further, identified by Deborah, Kim, Rueben, and Elisha (2014) that in California, experienced teachers are more likely to attain the federal goal of ensuring all children access education. Keeping teachers in the classroom for long can improve student achievement. This is because experienced teachers are more effective in raising students' academic attainment. The challenge of losing teachers narrows down to Africa. In Ghana, Sam, Effah and Osei-Owusu (2014) disclosed that over ten thousand teachers leave the profession annually in search of greener pastures, by being employed in other professions. Although the country's teachers' colleges produced very many new teachers every year, schools continued to suffer from shortage of teachers because of the turnover rates in the occupation.



Cobbolt (2015) discovered that in the year 2007, Ghana had a shortage of forty thousand (40000) teachers. Out of which, twenty-four thousand (24000) vacancies were filled with the untrained teachers. This disrupted the stability and continuity of learning. As a result, students were forced, by circumstances to transfer from the affected schools, something which caused low student retention, as well. Low teacher retention affected students' retention too. The loss of students and teachers without replacement is what is referred to as attrition, while the loss and replacement is called the turnover.

Xaba (2003) identified other African countries with the challenge of low teacher retention as: Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia and Central Africa. The situation has also hit South Africa. This was articulated strongly by the South African Minister of Education, who urged high school students to choose the teaching profession, as a career, to curb the challenge of teacher shortage in the country.

Low teacher retention, according to UNESCO (2010), affected even the most developed and stable education systems. They experience periods of teacher shortage and oversupply in some areas. However, the most hit were the Sub-Saharan countries compared to other parts of the world. In the year 2006, for example, the government of Eritrea temporarily stopped teacher retirement due to the concern of low teacher workforce. In other countries the challenge was not lack of enough teachers but the imbalance in the supply. Among those affected by the supply imbalance were Gambia, Lesotho and Zambia. The teachers who were affected more by low retention were those below the age of fifty years.

In East Africa, Acom (2010) stated that Ugandan schools suffered teacher shortage due to "teacher rural-urban migration", whose average attrition stood at 4%. The retention dilemma, could not be fully eradicated because of its long history but could be reduced. The employee retention challenge dated back to early 1900s during the time of industrialization. In Uganda the situation was better before independence since teachers were highly respected and well paid. To reduce the challenge, the ministry should have come up with clear staff policies, elaborate communication channels, involve teachers in decision making, cater for their personal and social needs and assign them reasonable workloads. With stable teaching workforce, the academic standards were expected to be high, which was found as a predictor of an elite population and a strong economy.

The situation in Rwanda, according to Monaco (2016) was not far from the neighborhood. The level of education was said to be the pointer to income, health and general quality of life. Rwandan rural schools could not attract and retain quality teachers due to poor pay, poor access to healthcare, sociocultural isolation, lack of leisure amenities and large class sizes, among others. As a result, the rural schools lacked qualified teachers or remained without teachers at all. The government, therefore, suffered a high rate of teachers' attrition which was burdensome to the ministry. As a result, there was lack of a cohesive, collaborative and established staff. There was compulsory posting of all new teachers to the rural schools, something which was received by teachers with resistance leading to poor teaching quality and negative attitude to the classroom. This made some teachers to decide to quit the profession, hence low teachers' retention.

In Tanzania, Bonface (2016) ascertained that knowledge was the most valued commodity for all the Tanzanians. They believed that knowledgeable human capital produced services and goods of high value. Because teachers were the agents of imparting the required knowledge, their retention in schools was of paramount importance. The place of secondary education, in the society, could not be overemphasized, for it was the gateway to higher education, tertiary, vocational, as well as the technical training. In fact, secondary school level was termed as the pivot of education. Both the public and the private sector heavily relied on secondary school products. Primary schools entirely depended on secondary school products, the teachers and other staff members.

The teaching profession was the highest and quickest possibility of employment, in Tanzania. This was to fill the vacancies caused by the high level of teachers' attrition. To reduce the attrition, salaries and incentives seemed to work in the retention of teachers. Conducive working environment and motivation of teachers were among what seemed to be the solution to low teacher retention in Tanzania (Bonface, 2016).

The problem of low teacher retention in Kenya, Orodho (2012) says, was not different from the global and regional trends. Teachers were leaving the profession for other careers which pay better and have more defined working conditions. Mugo (2009) discovered that there was a shortage of teachers in Kenya because some qualified teachers left the profession for non-teaching employment. After the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE), the enrollment in schools increased. This made some teachers unable to bear the stress of overcrowded classrooms. As a result, they quit the employment for other stress free employments.

Oyaro (2008) revealed, the evidence from the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) that the degree of teacher turnover in the country had been alarming. For example, between January and June 2008, over six hundred teachers left classrooms for better paying employment. The report from the Republic of Kenya/UNICEF (2012) showed that in the Coast and North Eastern provinces, the student teacher ratio was wanting compared to other areas



in the country. Despite the government's effort to recruit new teachers, the shortage still persisted. Koech, Tikoko and Chemwei (2014) elaborated that Kenya lost about three teachers from the profession, every day. Private schools were more affected. The retention remained a paramount issue because lack of enough teachers led to burnout, overwork and sub-standard teaching.

The study by Githinji, Afande and Riro (2015) showed that private schools in Kenya were highly affected by low teacher retention. In the year 2010, the turnover was at 12%, 2011 it stood at 15%, while in the year 2012 the degree of teachers who left the private schools' employment stood at 20%. The factors attributed to the high degree of teacher attrition were: poor human resource management, teachers being overworked, lack of career advancement and low salaries. In fact, 96% of the teachers who left attributed their departure to low salaries. Other factors associated to the low retention included lack of human resource policies. As a result, there was poor selection methods, poor recruitment procedures and lack of training for teachers. They were not developed and schools lacked performance management.

Keeping teachers in a school for a long time according to Barnes, Crowe and Schaefer, (2007) enhanced academic achievement. Teachers' attrition does not only affect academic performance; it also affects students' retention. When teachers the students also quit, since they cannot remain in school to teach themselves. It was on this background that this study it was set to assess the status of the teacher retention in Adventist Secondary Schools within the East Kenya Union Conference (EKUC), of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The preliminary review of the background of the study showed that low retention of teachers was a major problem in schools within developed and developing countries (World Bank, 2004). The challenge of low teacher retention was also experienced in SDA Church schools of East Kenya Union Conference (EKUC). The statistics of the year 2015, showed that teacher retention had been of concern. This could affect not only the budgeting of a school but also the academic performance of students because the new teachers might affect the coverage of the syllabus. There would also be immense time wastage as these teachers adjust to their new schools. Basing on the statistics from EKUC schools, on the teacher retention, there is a need to account for such a trend. The only way to unearth such was through a research. In the absence of empirical evidence regarding the teacher retention, the forces behind the low retention remained unidentified/attended and the challenge remains unresolved. This study was, therefore, set to examine low teacher retention, in schools, and come up with some possible ways for high retention.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the retention trend of teachers in secondary schools of EKUC from the year 2008 to 2015?
2. To what extent do teachers intend to remain in school?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teachers in School

According to Akram and Hazif (2013), the process of learning in a school requires some direction. When there is good order and organization, students achieve the goals of education. This calls for an instructor or a guide to show and provide direction. This is the teacher. Schools need quality teachers, well trained, experienced and licensed to direct the students' learning.

Amutuhaire (2010) discovered that retaining teachers in their profession was essential for any school because they are the most valuable assets. Koech et al. (2014) supported this by asserting that teachers are the cornerstone for a successful school. A high quality teaching staff is very vital if a school is to achieve its objective. In the classroom, a teacher is the focal point and the most variable instrument for the students to achieve, in academics. When the teacher interacts with the students on daily basis, learning takes place. However, the teaching profession normally gets disrupted by challenges which discourage teachers from sticking to the work. As a result, some get dissatisfied and decide to quit the classroom work, leading to shortage of the teaching workforce. The end outcome is the teacher attrition and turnover which is an indication that something is wrong with the school or in the profession. Undesirable teacher turnover is costly, disruptive, drains resources and causes inefficiency.

High rate of teacher turnover, as per Chiat and Miller (2009), makes the replacement to be filled by the newly recruited ones. Normally these are not experienced and lack some knowledge on the efficiency in the classroom.

Freedman and Appleman (2008) found that many learning institutions are desperate of getting teachers who are efficient, qualified and committed to their calling and are willing to stay. Without such teachers, students' achievement is at stake. This contributed to the down fall of a school and influences the students' turnover. At the



same time, Guin (2004) verified that teacher turnover and attrition has a negative effect on faculty interactions and the general school climate. Teachers' turnover has a disruptive effect on the development of the school and maintenance of social resources. The worse comes when the affected is the principal. The school remains without some direction. Frequent change of principals retards general development and enhances the attrition of other school workers and students, since the administrator is like the owner of the school. Teacher retention, therefore, promotes staff collegiality, community trust and students' academic achievement.

Loeb, Kalogrides, and Beteille (2011) emphasize the importance of quality teachers as the way to improve educational outcomes for the learners. This is because quality teaching force is among the important factors which facilitate student learning. In support of this, White (1903) distinguishes between false teachers and true ones. True teachers ensure that students are well guided to maximize their potential, in life. Such teachers are satisfied when their students get the highest achievement possible to them. They provide both academic and professional education, as well as the education for eternity. They prepare the young people to embrace the truth of God, which gives them the everlasting hope and make them truthful as they serve humanity. So education administrators need to ensure that there is high quality of teaching workforce, by hiring highly qualified teachers, who do not only qualify with certificates but are God fearing. False teachers, on the other hand are geared only to academic achievement regardless of whether the learners are disciplined or not. They care less about their morals and social life. They offer only grade based education. Their students memorize facts to pass examinations.

Sargent, (2003), agrees that quality teaching team improves educational outcome for students. Therefore, quality teachers improve student retention. What is important is to recruit qualified teachers, remove low quality ones, and develop them for higher academic achievement. However, Moore (2014) advises that getting rid of bad teachers is not the solution to teachers' inefficiency. Instead, ways should be devised to make bad teachers better, rather than get them out. Such teachers should be removed only when due process to reclaim them has failed. When a school has built excellent teaching culture, bad teachers can voluntarily see their way out.

McLaurin et al. (2009), lament that the biggest challenge facing United States' Schools is the teacher retention. Too many leave the profession for other employments, yet their replacement is low. Teacher retention impacts student retention; a permanent solution is far from being realized. Despite the struggle to retain teachers, the turnover rate is on the increase. This means effective learning is at stake. At the same time, it is not easy for a school to implement new policies, reach high targets and effect the required changes, when there is a persistent flux of educators.

Kipsoi and Sang (2008), stated that the challenge of teacher shortage was overwhelming in the Kenya. Several researchers and institutions acknowledged the same. Much of the problem was lack of even distribution of teachers by the TSC to all parts of the country but now there was a solution to the same. The recruitment policy, which was done locally, ensured teachers were interviewed at Sub-county levels and the names forwarded to the national office for employment. They were then posted to their areas of origin. However, others could be posted to any part of the country where the shortage was more. Despite all this, there was an acute teacher shortage. A demand for more teachers was on the rise following the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) and Subsidized Day Secondary Education.

In the year 2010, the Ministry of Education recruited over 18000 teachers, on temporary basis to ease the challenge of the teacher shortage. These were confirmed two years later. However, the shortage still remained because of the teacher' turnover and attrition. Surprisingly, some of the newly recruited teachers quit the profession before they were confirmed. This forced the government to do more recruitment, to replace the lost ones. This exercise came with its own challenge, the teachers' turnover.

2.2 Teacher Retention

Job satisfaction, according to Koech et al. (2014), in the world today, has become a matter of concern in order to maintain the work force for any organization. School organizations are also affected. Lack of teachers' job satisfaction leads to a high teacher turnover and causes serious effects, like the teacher burnout. Because of the importance of retaining teachers in a school, Acom (2010) suggested ways to make them stay for a longer time. One of the ways is to persuade them to stay, showing them that they are important assets and that without them the school cannot run. Other ways include: establishing clear teacher policy, clear channels of communication and encouraging teacher participation in decision making. Attending to teachers personal and social needs, assigning reasonable duties and teaching load, as well as, listening to their personal challenges. This can make teachers to have a sense of belonging, hence a desire to stay in a school for long. Further, good remuneration, better working conditions/environment, and general serious school management was identified as a motivating factor to enhance teachers' retention. In support of this, Sawchuk (2009) stated that job dissatisfaction affects teachers' retention and



low salaries increase teacher turnover. So there was a need for more financial incentives to reduce the rate of teachers' attrition. This worked in the United States, as a way to improve the profession of teaching.

Koech et al. (2014) recognized the high turnover of teachers in Kenya and attribute the same to remuneration factor. For a long time, Kenyan teachers' remuneration remained poor compared to the civil servants, with the same qualifications. As a result, teachers frequently went on strike to force the government, to push the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to review the teachers' salaries. The understaffing challenge, in the Kenyan schools, was not because enough teachers were not trained, but due to the loss to other employments. Much of the loss was attributed to lack of incentives in the teaching occupation. Teachers wished to have career advancement and better working conditions. In the absence of these, many Kenyan teachers could not stay in the teaching profession.

Sargent (2003), articulates that the challenge of teachers' attrition could be associated with the wrong process through which they enter the occupation and could start with the initial stages of advertisement. During this period the qualifications should be well spelt out, in a manner that the applicants understand before they attempt to apply. This then should be followed up by the short listing stage. Only those who meet the requirements should be short listed for interview. After the interview, those who qualify should go through an orientation and be supported fully as they begin the teaching. Once the teaching work has commenced, what should follow is to establish professional relationship and a network of belonging. Teachers need to own each other, creating a good rapport between themselves. Once the sense of belonging is established, retaining them becomes easy.

McLaurin et al. (2009), advise on how to retain teachers, by making policies which attract and boost their retention. Schools should be admirable enough to attract quality teachers, for no one can apply to a school without a good name. They should strive to improve their performance because qualified teachers fear to apply for employment in low performing institutions. Again, it is difficult to implement changes and policies when teachers are on constant flux. Acom (2010) attributed low teacher retention to low academic performance in Eastern Uganda Schools.

Although it is important to retain teachers, McLaurin, et al. (2009) said that only good teachers should be retained in the profession. This was asserted by Schaffhauser (2014) who stated that "in the Obama administration, the Federal Policy Initiative emphasized that only the effective teachers should be retained. There is no point of struggling to retain teachers who do not add value to the American education." Therefore, in order to enhance learning, teachers who are not committed and are not effective should not be retained for they are liabilities to the profession.

However, Moore (2014) noted that much effort should be put to redeem bad teachers and make them better, rather than just get them out. Bad teachers should be removed only when all efforts have been put to reclaim the individuals. The motive should be to build excellent teaching workforce and not just to fight bad teaching. When teachers know that efforts are being put to build them, they in turn change for better or quit. Bad teachers may opt to quit rather than stay in a culture where excellent performance is the norm. There, however, remains a dilemma on how these bad teachers find their way into the classrooms and how they go through their training.

At the same time, Lloyd (2012) shed light on how to identify bad teachers: they yell and humiliate learners in public. They answer phone calls in class and can make calls. They come to class late and do not pay attention to individual learners. Are there bad teachers anyway? If there are bad doctors and bad garbage collectors, there are bad teachers, as well. The challenge remains that, due to unavoidable circumstances, we may have to live with the bad teachers because getting rid of them may not only be expensive, but can demoralize the good ones. Again there is the agony of going through the legal process. At the same time there is the court cost, and the compensation. All these may not be worth the venture.

In contrary, Acom (2010) explains that there are teachers who remain in the profession because they love it. These are referred to as 'stayers', while those who decide to leave are referred to as 'movers'. The stayers regard teaching as a profession of proximity because most schools are situated in their villages and within walking distances, from their homes. Those who are more favored are the female teachers. They operate from their homes and find this being very convenient for family life. Some women prefer the job rather than stay home idle or with household hassles. Teachers also enjoy paid leaves, which come three times a year. At the same time, they enjoy going to school with their children and coming back with them after school. Some couples enjoy being in the same profession. They never separate from their families. As a result, they remain glued to the profession, and this increases their retention.

While contributing to the issue of teacher's retention, Mbwirira (2010), stressed on job satisfaction and commitment of school administrators as "key" to the retention. However, when assigned too much workload, when the school is situated far from the residential place of the teacher and when the working facilities are inadequate, teachers are likely to have no other choice but leave the school, on either a transfer or changing the profession for other better and stress free employments.

In the turn of events, Koech et al (2014) discovered that 25% of annual employee turnover is normal. Such a turnover rate has an advantage because the new teachers who join the school provides new ideas from their



experiences learned elsewhere. What is harmful to the school is when there is massive turnover which affect the school culture and the school budget in terms of advertisement and recruitment.

On the contrary, Armstrong (2006) indicates that high turnover of employees is a sign of a problem within the school. This is because it affects publicity and brings about dissatisfaction within the institution. The outcome is negative production and low performance, a thing which brings about student dropping out of school in search of better performance. This leads to student to low student retention, as well.

Another factor affecting retention of teachers, as identified by Koech et al. (2014), is the frequent reforms and syllabus review. The practice has had negative effect on subject delivery by teachers. What teachers are used to teaching, gets changed leading to destabilization from the existing practices. The work load increases, something which increases teachers' stress. It also demotivates them for the changes are usually forced on them without orientation or earlier training. Among the challenges which come along include: meeting deadlines, increased workload, records of achievement, limited time, as well as restructuring the organization. As a result, the profession has lost the teaching staff in big proportions.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the concurrent mixed methods research design. In this design, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected. Thereafter, the data collected are mixed concurrently. In this study, quantitative data was collected using questionnaires while qualitative data was collected using interviews. The target population was the twenty Seventh-day Adventist Church maintained Secondary Schools in EKUC. The unit of analysis was eleven secondary school principals, ninety-eight teachers, five education directors and, eleven chairpersons of the school boards of management (BOM). The school principals' manner of administration could influence the retention, while the education directors make the policies which are responsible for retaining teachers in school. The SDA church maintained secondary schools were targeted because they struggle with retaining teachers. Teachers quit the church employment for TSC and other employments. Cluster sampling technique was used to get the samples. In this sampling technique, the target population was divided into five clusters (principals, teachers, education directors and, board chairpersons). Samples were obtained from each of these clusters.

The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires for teachers. Interview schedules were organized for education directors, the school BoM chairpersons, the principals and teachers for triangulation. Observation schedule was also organized. This targeted the school infrastructure and generally all what goes on in the school. The school learning facilities and the behavior of teachers in school was also captured here. The other instrument used was the tool for document analysis to collect data for 8 years.

Ninety-eight (98) teachers were required to fill the provided questionnaire, but the eleven principals, five education directions and eleven BoM chairpersons were subjected to interviews. The researcher conducted interviews to the school principals during the visit after the questionnaires were administered, filled and returned. All the chairpersons and education directors were interviewed. Whereas four chairpersons were interviewed in their offices, seven were interviewed over telephone discussions. At the same time, three education directors were interviewed in their offices while the rest (two) were through telephone interviews. Those interviewed through telephone discussions could not be reached by the researcher, at the time of data collection. Some teachers (three per school) were also interviewed for triangulation purpose. Observations were also done during the visits in schools. Documentary analysis method was also used to gather information on the turnover trends of teachers for eight years. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Documentary analysis was done on records about teacher retention. Content analysis was done on responses from interviews and in open-ended questions to identify the emerging themes.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented. The study sought to establish teacher retention in secondary schools of Seventh-day Adventist Church in EKUC. Teachers, School Principals, School Chairpersons and Education Directors were targeted by the study. Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

4.1 Response Rate

The researcher issued 98 to teachers. All of these questionnaires were returned. This made a response rate of 100% which was considered sufficient for analysis.

4.2 Demographic Profile of Teachers

The majority of the teachers were male (68.4%). On their part, female teachers were (31.6%). Both sexes were well represented in the study. As such it was possible to avoid sex bias.

Figure 1

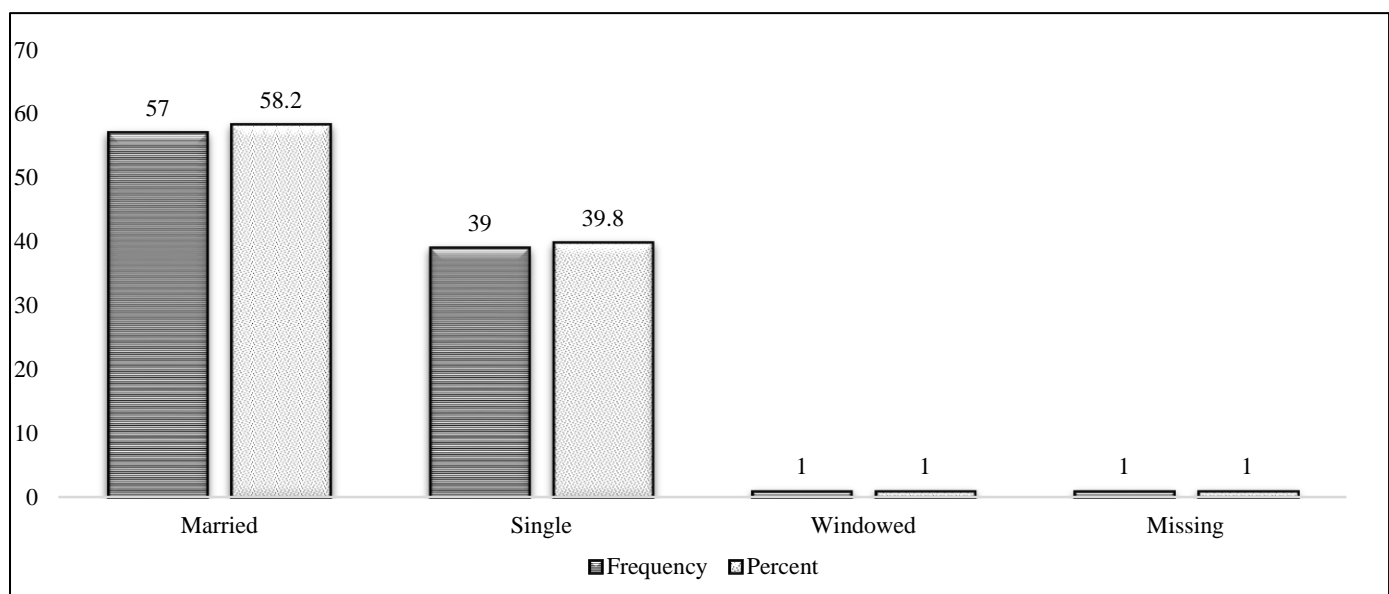
Sex of Teachers



Most of the respondents were married (58.2%). These were followed by those who were single (39.8%). Only one was windowed (1%). Marital status, although without the scope of this study, could determine the willingness of teachers to remain in a particular school or vice versa; usually in the endeavor to live with spouses or children.

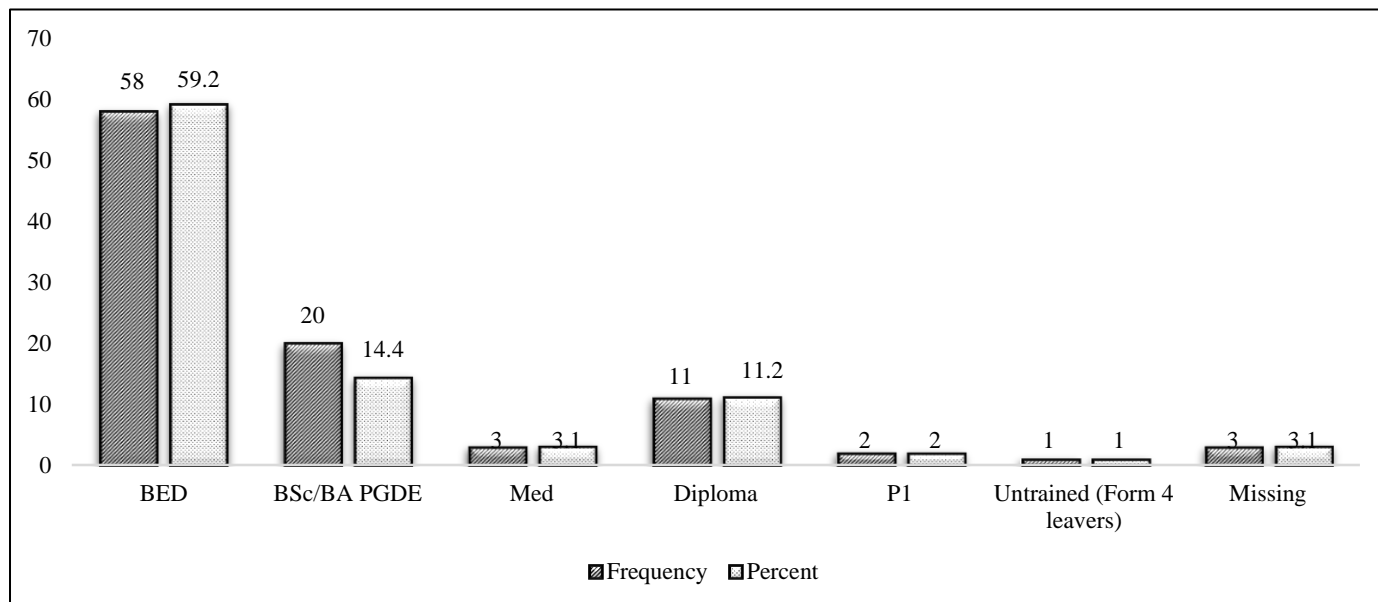
Figure 2

Marital Status

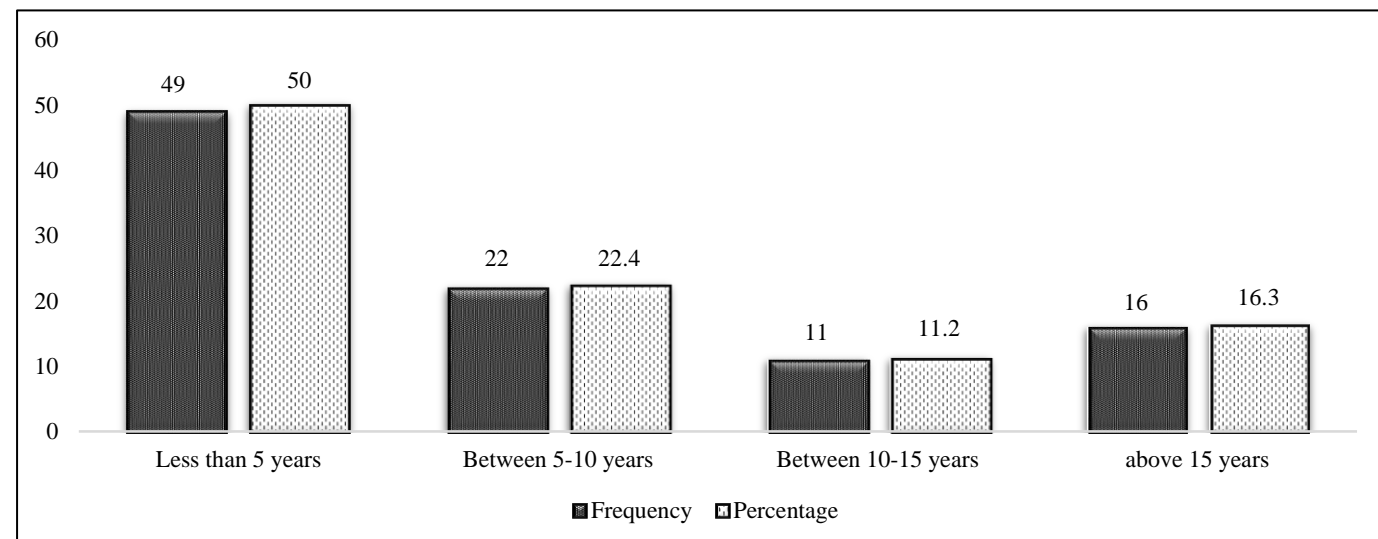


Most of the teachers (59.2%) had Bachelor of Education degrees. These were followed by those with BSc/BA with Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) (14.4%) and those with Diplomas (11.2%). The next category was

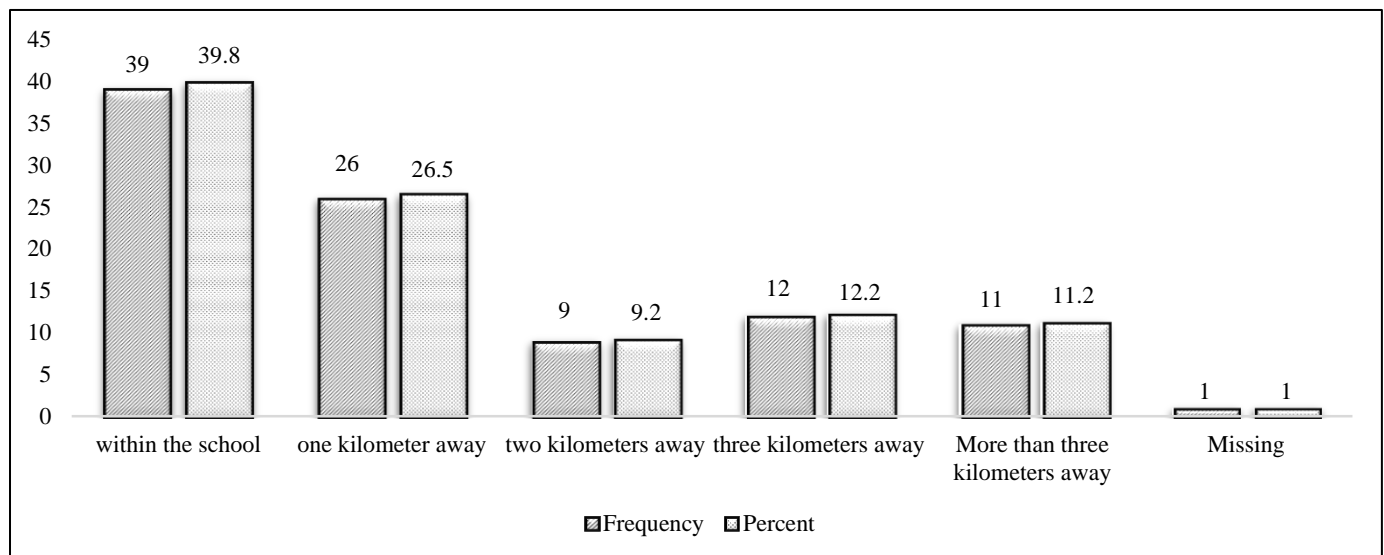
of those with Masters' degree in Education and P1 qualifications at 3.1% and 2% respectively. Only 1 teacher (1%) was untrained. These findings show that the teachers had sufficient qualifications to adequately respond to the subject under investigation and majority qualified to teach in secondary schools.

Figure 3*Academic Qualifications*

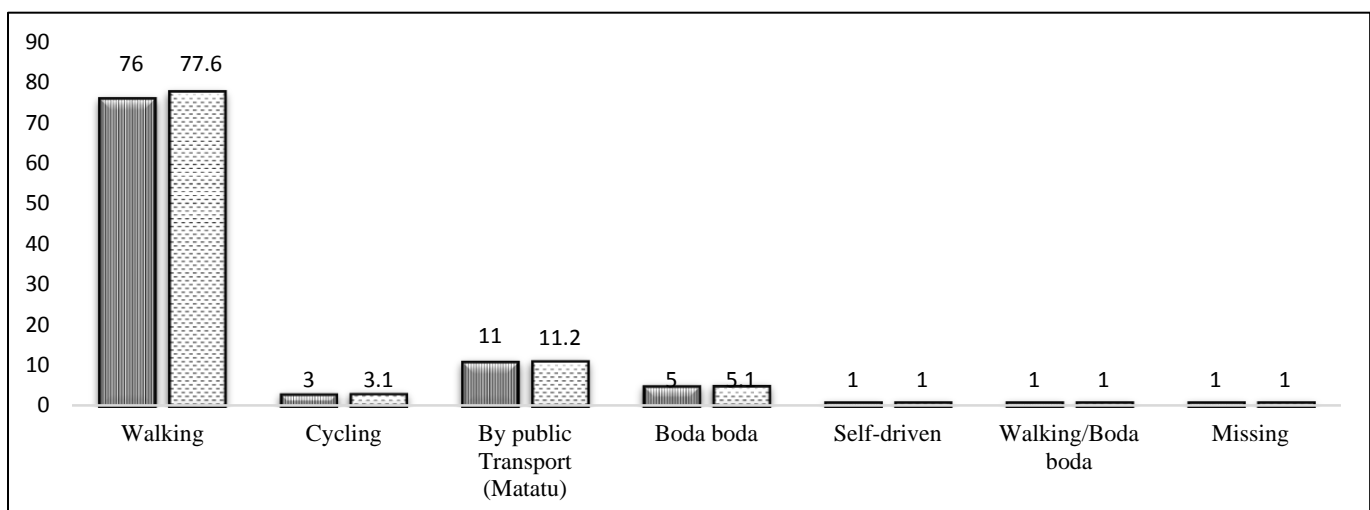
Regarding the duration in teaching, 50% of the teachers had less than 5 years' experience in teaching. The rest (50%) had more than 5 years of teaching experience. Such experience ranged from 5 years to more than 15 years, with those having teaching experience of more than 15 years being 16.3%. These show that the respondents had sufficient teaching experience to understand and contribute significantly to the subject under investigation.

Figure 4*Teaching Experience*

As shown in Figure 5, most of the teachers (about two thirds) lived either at the school or within a kilometer from the school. Those who lived within the school were the majority at 39.8%, whereas those who lived a kilometer away followed at 27.6%. The rest lived two kilometers away (9.2%), three kilometers away (12.2%) or more than three kilometers away (11.2%). All in all, it was evident that most of the teachers did not live too far from school. Since distance is a determinant of decision to remain in a school, it can be deduced that the distance from school could probably not significantly affect teachers' decision to remain or leave the school.

Figure 5*Distance to School*

The majority of the respondents got to school by walking (78.6%). These were followed by those who came by public transport (*matatu*) at 11.2% or *bodaboda*, paid cyclists (5.1%). The fact that most of the teachers could walk to work agrees with the prior findings that most of the teachers did not live far from the school. As such, it can be argued that since most teachers did not have problems coming to school, accessibility to school could not be a major predictor of decision to remain in the school.

Figure 6*Means of Transport to School*



4.3 Extent to which Teachers Intended to Remain in School

The researcher presented the descriptive analysis of the responses to items on the extent to which teachers intended to remain in school using a four-point scale (4 – agree; 3 – tend to agree; 2 – tend to disagree, 1 – disagree).

Scale of interpretation:

3.50 – 4.00 – Agree

2.50 – 3.49 – Tend to agree

1.50 – 2.49 – Tend to disagree

1.00 – 1.49 – Disagree

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics on Teachers' Intention to Remain

Intention to remain	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I plan to remain in this school until I retire	1	4	2.32	1.181
This is my best school since when I started teaching	1	4	2.85	1.161
I have a strong sense of staying in this school	1	4	2.87	1.086
I do not intend to transfer from this school	1	4	2.50	1.214
I am committed to contribute to the growth of this school	1	4	3.79	0.584
Mean	1	4	2.84	0.839
N = 98				

Teachers showed willingness to remain in their respective schools as shown by the mean of 2.84. The overall Standard Deviation of 0.839 shows that the data was closely clustered around the mean. As such, the findings could be relied on to show the perceptions of the respondents on the statements presented to them.

In this regard, the respondents opined that their current schools were not the best nor were they the worst. The fact that teachers were committed to teaching and to the growth of the schools never contradicted that they had some intention of transferring.

In addition, although teachers never committed themselves to having a strong sense of staying, and that the schools may not have been the best, they remained very committed to teaching. This means they had a feeling of staying but something seemed to be lacking. Why then do they seem to like being in the school while at the same time tend to disagree to the fact that they do not plan to retire in the schools? These teachers seem to like working in the SDA Church Schools. That is why they applied to teach in them and have continued teaching in them. They do their best to improve the schools but the commitment appears short lived. They plan to quit the service at any moment. The possible reason being lack of facilities, lack of administrators support or due to lack of motivation, among other reasons.

During the interview with the teachers, they stated that *some schools lacked direction in their operations. The church working policies favor teachers' working conditions but they are not implemented by the immediate supervising bodies, like the Conferences and the Unions. Teachers access the church policy and the spirit of prophecy books. They are aware of their rights. So when they see the policies being contravened they get demoralized and see no future in the church employment.*

On another hand, the teachers tended to agree with the statement "I do not intend to transfer from this school (mean of 2.5)." They indicated that they had no plan of remaining in the school until retirement (mean of 2.32). This means that teachers had a likelihood to leave their current schools, despite the fact that they had a sense of staying.

When interviewed on the same, teachers said that *they joined the church employment with much expectation, only to learn that there was no job security and also found that in some schools the spirituality was quite low. Some stated that they realized that there were no remuneration policies, while one of the schools operated without an annual budget. Others got disappointed by the fact that some schools lacked seriousness in the provision of teaching and learning materials. However much they were committed to teaching, they felt that their hands were tied.*

They knew the right thing to do but they felt incapacitated by those in higher leadership positions. Some blamed the Education directors and Executive Directors for not being available to listen to their challenges.

This agrees with the findings of Githinji et al. (2015) that private schools in Kenya, such as Adventist schools, are highly affected by low teacher retention.

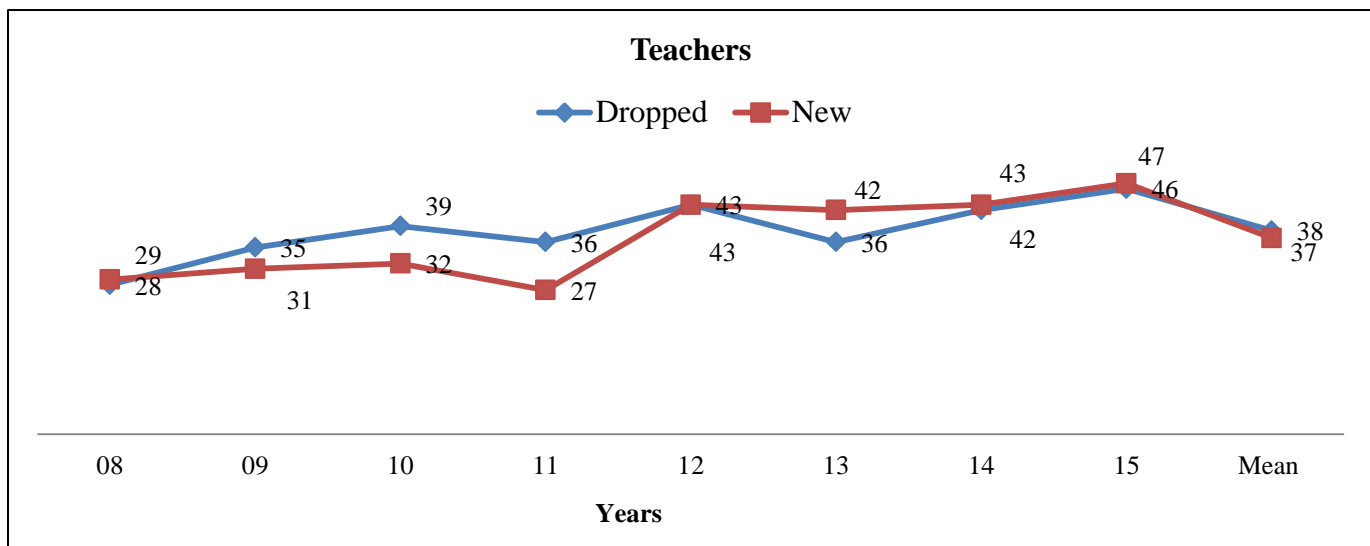
The findings obtained indicated that teachers, somehow, planned to remain in their current schools, but other circumstances discouraged their willingness to remain. This is evidenced by the mean of 2.82 with a standard deviation of 0.875. The low standard deviation shows that the data was closely clustered around the mean.

4.3 Turnover and Attrition among Teachers

There were more teachers leaving schools than those being employed in most of the years, as indicated in figure 4. In the year 2012, for example, the number of teachers leaving and those employed was the same (43). The average number of teachers leaving, for the years, was 38 while the average number of teachers joining the schools was 37. It was also evident that schools were not keen on replacing teachers as they left in the first four years. The turnover rate which is evident in the findings was not healthy to smooth learning of students.

Figure 7

Turnover and attrition among teachers



This could be due to lack of enough resources, among other possible reasons, in those years. In the last years, and starting from 2012, teachers were more motivated as a result of seminars and conferences aimed at motivating them to remain. In 2014, some conferences voted to increase teachers' salaries, from tithe. This was after it was voted to implement the SDA Church Working Policy.

Generally, it was evident that some teachers left church employment. The ones who joined were new and had just graduated from universities. Normally, the TSC did not absorb new graduates immediately. It took about five years of waiting. The turnover was experienced annually, older graduates joined the TSC.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The researcher assessed the turnover and attrition trends among teachers in nine schools for a period of 8 years (2008-2015). More teachers were leaving schools than those being employed in most of the years. Generally, it is evident that some teachers left church employment. The turnover was experienced annually. However, teachers intended to remain in the school as long as the administration was cooperative, understanding, appreciative, recognizes their efforts, was caring and was ready to treat them with dignity.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that the school administration should be cooperative to teachers, by treating them with dignity and appreciating their efforts. There should be stringent measures for motivating teachers, ensuring that they had access to housing and transport and that they were adequately remunerated.



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