

## Rewards, a Nostrum for improving Teacher Retention in Zambia

by

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### Abstract

*This article aimed at examining the impact of rewards on teacher retention and to propose a suitable mode for teacher retention on the Copperbelt province of Zambia. This was done by answering the following research questions: i). How do reward system effect teacher retention on the Copperbelt province of Zambia? ii). What is an appropriate model for teacher retention of teachers on the Copperbelt province of Zambia. The research paper also tested the following alternative hypotheses: H1: Rewards have a positive effect on teacher retention on the Copperbelt province. Herzberg two factor theory and job embeddedness theory were used to guide this paper.*

*The article employed a mixed design approach precisely an embedded correlational model, which was primarily quantitative and secondarily qualitative. The sample comprise of 600 participants and 10 informants. Multistage sampling and snowball sampling techniques were used as sampling techniques. Self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively. Quantitative data was then analyzed using inferential statistics precisely linear regression analysis. On the other hand, qualitative data were analyzed using both a qualitative interpretative approach and Moustakas`s Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen (SCK) method. Findings revealed that rewards had a positive significant relationship with teacher retention when tested at 95% confidence interval. The findings suggest that teachers` salary should be increased, qualifications should match with the salary grade, and promotion should be based on merit. Basing on the research findings, the researcher recommended that policy makers should consider increasing teachers` salaries, teachers with master`s degrees and other higher qualifications should have a salary scale commensurate with their qualifications and the Rewards model for teacher retention to be implemented.*

**Key terms:** *Teacher retention, rewards, monetary rewards, non- financial rewards*

### 1.0 Background and context of the study

Employee retention is one of the major concerns for most institutions for it has a great impact on the welfare of institutional operations. Poor retention negatively affects the efficiency, and productivity of many institutions. The problem of employee retention has affected many profession (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014) and the teaching profession hasn't been spared. World wide, the teaching profession has been badly affected by this problem and it is serious especially among teachers of

Science, technology, special education, languages, and senior mathematics (Vonow, 2015; Anne et al., 2016; Sutchter, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2019).

In England 31% and 17% of teachers of science and mathematics respectively would consider leaving the profession (House of Common Education Committee, 2017). In Australia, teacher attrition rates range from 8% to 50% (Mason & Matas, 2015). And coming to the Saharan Africa, there is a need of a total of about 17 million teachers to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030 (Teacher shortage in Africa, 2016).

In Zambia, teacher attrition has also been a very serious problem. The 2020 Education Statistical Bulletin shows a total of 7894 teachers left the profession with resignation been the second largest contributor to that. Teacher attrition in 2018 and 2020 by province, sex, and level of education, showed Copperbelt Province with the highest teacher turnover (MoE 2018; 2020) as presented in Table 1;

*Table 0: Teacher attrition in all schools by sex and province*

Province/ Education Level/sex	Primary School			Secondary School			All schools		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>National</b>	<b>3310</b>	<b>3106</b>	<b>6416</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>1478</b>	<b>4159</b>	<b>3735</b>	<b>7894</b>
Provinces									
Central	391	406	797	103	69	172	494	475	969
Copperbelt	398	670	1068	146	107	253	544	777	1321
Eastern	317	236	553	95	71	166	412	307	719
Luapula	373	268	641	82	55	137	455	323	778
Lusaka	363	416	779	86	89	175	449	505	954
Muchinga	208	117	325	62	33	95	270	150	420
N/Western	213	191	404	82	68	150	295	259	554
Northern	363	240	603	105	57	162	468	297	765
Southern	355	287	642	63	42	105	418	329	747
Western	329	275	604	25	38	63	354	313	667

*Source: MoE (2020)*

Low retention rates among teachers worldwide are a result of the following reasons; poor working conditions, poor infrastructure, lack of accommodation, distance from town, poor leadership styles, low salaries, lack of opportunities for employee development, lack of job security, lack of recognition of highly performing teachers and many more others (Podolsky et al., 2016; Wamitu, 2018).

It is however, important to be aware of the fact that teachers who are leaving the profession are hurting student learning, reducing the number of taxpayers and it is also a profound drain on the country's resources (Beaugez, 2012). Teacher attrition is also compromising quality education (Pitsoe, 2013).

However, a number of studies carried out in Zambia were reviewed in relation to teacher retention (Msango & Mulenga 2010; Kukano 2020; and Muma 2021) as a way of identifying the research gap. Among the contributing factors to teacher retention which were established none of the factors identified were examined further as a way of determining the degree of their effect on teacher retention, hence the need for this study. This study, therefore, focused on the impact of rewards on teacher retention.

Rewards have been defined in different ways, thus something given in recognition for a good job is referred to as a reward. The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2011) also defines rewards as benefits that you are given for doing something good. Bratton and Gold (1999) further define them as all forms of monetary returns and tangible services and benefits employees receive as part of an employment relationship. Different types of rewards are used in organizations and they are mainly classified in to two categories of rewards, namely intrinsic and extrinsic.

Reward systems have a direct effect on the cost side of an institution's financial statement. These rewards also have an influence on people's beliefs, etiquette and staging (Santos, & Gomez-Mejia, 2015). Studies have identified rewards as one among other things that can be used to reduce teacher turnover rates (Ndungu, 2017; Manundu, Mwanza, & Mulwa, 2021). A study done by Makhuzeni, & Barkhuizen, ( 2015) contend that many teachers considered leaving the teaching fraternity as a result of poor rewards.

Additionally, the massive movement of teachers to other fields and their lack of commitment to work is a clear sign of job dissatisfaction among teachers. Rewards can therefore be used to enhance job satisfaction (Farrington, Venter, & Sharp, 2014). And among these rewards, recognition strategy and promotion strategy impacts on retention positively and at the same time they are less costly, affordable and at the disposal of all school managers (Mochengo, Atambo, & Abuga, 2016). Compensation, work-life balance, training and development and career growth have also been identified as key determinants of retention from a human resource management perspective (Kimunge, 2014). Therefore, school administrators should consider improving both financial and non-financial rewards to attract and retain teachers (Manundu, Mwanza, & Mulwa, 2021).

Other than helping to reduce teacher turnover, rewards play a significant role in other areas of teacher wellbeing. Rewards reduce absenteeism and increase employee commitment. Reward systems also influence people's attitudes, behavior and performance ( Santos & Gomez-Mejia, 2015). Rewards also affect teachers' performance as well as achievement motivation (Kalsoom et al., 2017; Ningsih, Arafat, & Mulyadi, 2021). Additionally, rewards such as financial incentives, promotion opportunities and organizational prestige have a strong effect on employees'

psychological empowerment (Gkorezis, & Petridou, 2012). In the same vein, inconsistencies in the implementation of rewards systems lead to non-achievement of the intended effects of rewards on teacher performance (Chitimwango, 2016). Rewards also help to manage behaviour ( Santos & Gomez-Mejia , 2015; Trivedi, 2014).

And focusing of monetary rewards, research has shown that, a teacher can easily be motivated with a high compensation in terms of salary (Nosheen, & Yasin, 2015). In another study, Fullard (2021) also assert that higher salaries do improve labour productivity in different ways. In other studies, the findings showed an increased level of attention to steps that were related to compensation (Glass, 2011). This clearly shows that among employees, money is considered a primary motivator that can lead to high performance and retentions rates. To support this statement, Wang et al. (2017) contends that monetary and social rewards are generally connected to human motivation and behavior. Contrally, Aguinis, Joo, & Gottfredson, (2013) contends that money is not everything and it cannot always lead to the desired goals. This is so because it is not always that people will do what you asked them to do but rather do what they are paid for. Therefore, to make monetary reward effective, it has to be given on time and should match the work been done

However, existing rewards systems in some institutions have proven to be ineffective (Siwale et al., 2020), hence human resource managers should also try not only to decide on type of rewards to give to worker, but to design a reward system that will benefit and motivate employees. Therefore, based on what has been discussed, it is clear that rewards are, at least, a partial solution to improve retention rates in learning institutions and other organizations. Hence, the effect of rewards especially on job retention cannot be underestimated.

## **2.0 Theoretical and conceptual framework**

The paper was informed by Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation and the Job Embeddedness Theory. According to Herzberg (1966), the two factor theory of motivation contends that for employees to have long term satisfaction they need both motivators and hygiene factors. The theory further suggests that managers should use the motivators as a means to improve employee job satisfaction and hygiene factors to prevent job dissatisfaction among employees (Herzberg, 1966).

On the other hand, the Job Embeddedness theory stipulates that in an organization, there are number of factors that can inspire employees to stay and this can be seen when employees who feel linked to the social and professional space within an organization demonstrate a lesser habit to leave the institution. This theory further contends that as long as an employee feels embedded in the organization that they belong to, they tend to stay long (Merin, 2021).

It is however important to know that the two theories relate to employee needs and expectations, though Herzberg Two Factor theory focuses more on work environment related factors whilst Job Embeddedness theory includes both job factors and off job the factors such as personal, family and

community commitments. And looking at the variable been examined (rewards), the two theories will be the best to guide the research paper.

Further, to simplify the relationship between the key variables thus rewards and teacher retention, the Employee Retention Connections (ERC) model was used since it is a tested model and the independent variable (thus rewards) being used in this study fitted well in the model as illustrated in figure 1.



**Figure 0:** Employee Retention Connection's (ERC) model

Source: Nazia and Begum (2013)

The model identifies rewards to be a determinant of employee retention. Therefore, if proper rewards systems are employed in an organization, then the tendency to leave the job or switch over to some other job gets reduced. Thus, job satisfaction as well as employee retention are always positively correlated to one another (Nazia, & Begum, 2013). Therefore, to retain competent and committed employees in an institution, managers should take care of factors affecting job satisfaction (Gorde, 2019).

### **3.0 Research problem, Research questions and Hypothesis**

Retaining of qualified and experienced teachers in Zambia is still a challenge in the Ministry of Education. A number of teachers with skills and credentials most needed by the labour market are leaving the profession (EFA, 2010; MoE 2016).

The loss of these teachers has really created problems in the Ministry of education of which among the few are the increase in replacements and training costs (O'Reilly et al., 2010); the inability to provide students with highly qualified teachers (Ingersoll, & Merrill, 2010); and the concentration of inexperienced and underprepared teachers in some schools (Carver-Thomas, & Darling-Hammond, 2017). The loss is also a profound drain on the country's resources (Beaugez, 2012).

Many researchers have tried to find solutions to the problem of high turnover rates among experienced and qualified teachers (Thomas, & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Mwenda, & Mgomezulu, 2018; Kukano 2020; Muma, 2021), but the problem seem to be intensifying though reasons behind that have already been identified as poor working conditions, poor infrastructure, lack of accommodation, distance from town, poor leadership styles, low salaries, lack of opportunities for employee development, lack of job security, lack of recognition of highly performing teachers and many more others (Daka, 2016; Podolsky et al., 2016; Wamitu, 2018). However, among the contributing factors to teacher retention which were establish, non of the factors identified were examined further as a way of determining the degree of their effect on teacher retention, This therefore is a serious problem that needs an urgent solution so as to pave way for the attainment of goal number four (4) as stipulated in Vision 2030.

This research, therefore, sought to answer the following questions: i). How does reward systems (been one of the common variables in main organization) affect teacher retention on the Copperbelt province? ii). What would be an appropriate model for teacher retention on the Copperbelt province of Zambia. The paper also tested the following hypothesis which emerged from the literature reviewed:

H<sub>1</sub>: Rewards have a positive effect on teacher retention on the Copperbelt province.

H<sub>0</sub>: Rewards negatively effect on teacher retention on the Copperbelt province.

#### **4.0 Research methodology and Design**

This paper was underpinned by pragmatic research philosophy and used a mixed design approach specifically an embedded correlational model, in which qualitative data was embedded within a quantitative design. The research was done on the Copperbelt Province of Zambia with the population of 17, 885 which included the teaching staff in government secondary, combined primary and basic schools.

From the population, the sample of 600 participants was calculated using Yamane formula. Sampling was done using multistage sampling and snowball sampling techniques. To collect quantitative and qualitative data, self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides were used respectively. The questionnaires were given to both serving teachers and those who had joined other organizations. And out of the 600 questionnaires distributed a total of 503 questionnaires were collected. This gave a response rate of 84 %, an acceptable percentage to make the study generalizable. The interview schedule was then used to interview those teachers who had joined other organizations. The data collection exercise took more than one month. Quantitative data were then analyzed using linear regression

To achieve reliability and validity, extensive literature reviews was done to extract the related items as a way of establishing content validity. Experts in the topic under investigation, were also consulted on their own judgement of the items in the survey instrument. However, it was not easy to

present the instrument to many experts due to scarcity of experts in this field. This caused a limitation to conduct validity tests on the research instrument (Choudrie, & Dwivedi, 2005).

Cronbach's statistical analysis for the questionnaire items was also done and a figure of  $\alpha = 1$  was obtained, an indication that the internal consistency of the questionnaire was good. It is important to note that for a questionnaire with good internal consistency, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  should exceed 0.70 for a developing questionnaire or 0.80 for an accepted questionnaire (Bowling 1997; Bryman, & Cramer, 1997).

Additionally, validity was also achieved through critical self-reflection and the instrument design and development was backed up by a logical, systematic and structured approach. The questionnaire was also checked for completion after collecting them from the participants. Quantitative data was then coded and cleaned with the aid of Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 26. And to attain trustworthiness in this research, environmental and methodological triangulation was used.

The paper also considered the following ethical principles: avoiding harm to participants, ensuring informed consent to participants, getting permission from authorities such as provincial education officer, District Board Secretaries and School head teachers. Privacy of participants was also respected for instance the researcher made sure that an appointment was made with those to be interviewed. The researcher also avoided the use of deception and ensured that Covid -19 protection guidelines were followed.

## **5.0 Research Results and findings**

This paper aimed to ascertain the effect of rewards on teacher retention and to determine a suitable model for teacher retention. The findings were presented starting with descriptive analysis, then ANOVA results on survey items on the independent variable and then the presentation of the hypothesis. Lastly findings on the second research question were presented.

### ***5.1 Research question 1: What effect do rewards systems have on teacher retention on the Copperbelt province of Zambia?***

To address the research question one, the researcher did descriptive analysis in order to present the participants' responses to survey items. The findings are presented in table 2

**Table2** : Descriptive statistics on individual items relating to rewards

	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Good salary packages can help to retain teachers	503	4.34	.962
Rewards inform of promotion can increase teacher retention rates	503	4.08	.981
Monetary reward is more motivating than non-financial rewards	503	3.44	1.324
Rewards system contributes to occupational choices	503	3.43	1.182
The rewards given to teachers is what makes them to stay long in their working places	503	3.27	1.381
Most rewards give in school are fair and unbiased	503	2.68	1.193
Teachers who do a good job are always rewarded	503	2.43	1.183
Rewards given to teachers are better than those given in other organizations	503	2.15	1.194
Most teachers simply enjoy what they do hence no need of giving them external rewards	503	2.12	1.279
Valid N (listwise)	503		

*Source: Field Data (2022)*

In Table 2 the highest mean of 4.34 was an indication that on average the participants agreed that good salary packages can help to retain the teachers. The standard deviation (0.962) also showed some consistency in the way data was spread and an indication that most of the data was close to the mean. Rewards in form of promotion can increase teacher retention rates also showed a higher mean of 4.08 with the standard deviation of 0.981. The rest of the items had the mean ranging from 2.12 to 3.44 with the standard deviation ranging from 1.182 to 1.381 an indication that the data set was also closer to the true value. Additionally, the Analysis of variance test statistics (ANOVA) on survey items in relation to the effect of rewards on teacher retention was also done as presented in table 3.



**Table 3:** Analysis of variance test statistics (ANOVA) on individual items in relation to rewards systems for teacher retention

		<b>ANOVA</b>				
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Most rewards give in school are fair and unbiased	Between Groups	9.061	4	2.265	1.600	.173
	Within Groups	705.118	498	1.416		
	Total	714.179	503			
Teachers who do a good job are always rewarded	Between Groups	17.676	4	4.419	3.211	.013
	Within Groups	685.279	498	1.376		
	Total	702.954	503			
Monetary reward is more motivating than non-financial rewards	Between Groups	23.353	4	5.838	3.394	.009
	Within Groups	856.547	498	1.720		
	Total	879.901	503			
Good salary packages can help to retain teachers	Between Groups	18.666	4	4.666	5.212	.000
	Within Groups	445.879	498	.895		
	Total	464.545	503			
Rewards system contributes to occupational choices	Between Groups	92.757	4	23.189	18.970	.000
	Within Groups	608.762	498	1.222		
	Total	701.519	503			
Most teachers simply enjoy what they do hence no need of giving them external rewards	Between Groups	5.640	4	1.410	.861	.487
	Within Groups	815.203	498	1.637		
	Total	820.843	503			
Rewards inform of promotion can increase teacher retention rates	Between Groups	10.387	4	2.597	2.737	.028
	Within Groups	472.433	498	.949		
	Total	482.819	503			
Rewards given to teachers are better than those given in other organizations	Between Groups	.867	4	.217	.151	.962
	Within Groups	714.247	498	1.434		
	Total	715.113	503			

Source: Field Data (2022)

Table 3 clearly indicates that at 0.05 level of significance only five (5) items were significant out of the eight (8) analyzed. These are as follows: Good salary package can help to retain the teachers (f-value=5.212, p-value=0.000); Monetary reward is more motivating than non-financial rewards (f-value=3.490, p-value=0.009); Rewards systems contributes to occupational choices (f-value=18.970, p-value=0.000); Rewards in form of promotion can increase teacher retention rates (f-value=2.737, p-value=0.028); Teachers who do a good job are always rewarded (f-value= 3.211, p-value=0.013).

Further, the researcher sought to test the hypothesis (thus  $H_1$ : Rewards have a positive impact on teacher retention;  $H_0$ : Rewards have a negative impact on teacher retention). The findings are presented in table 4.

**Table 4: Presentation of hypothesis**

ANOVA <sup>b</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	150.813	8	18.852	11.548	.000 <sup>a</sup> .
	Residual	806.415	494	1.632		
	Total	957.229	503			
<i>a. Predictors: (Constant), Rewards in form of promotion can increase teacher retention rates, teachers who do a good job are always rewarded, most teachers simply enjoy what they do , hence no need of giving them external rewards, Monetary reward is more motivating than non-financial rewards, Most rewards given in school are fair and unbiased, Rewards systems contributes to occupational choices, Rewards given to teachers are better than those given in other organizations, Good salary packages can help to retain teachers.</i>						
<i>b. Dependent Variable: Teachers Retention</i>						

Source: Field Data (2022)

The ANOVA test results revealed significant results with the significant value of 0.000 at 5 % and f-statistic value of 11.548. This indicates that there is a significant impact of rewards on teacher retention, hence we rejected the null hypothesis.

To validate the quantitative results and findings, qualitative findings are also presented below;

### 5.3 Qualitative results: question 1

From the findings it was established that Lack of Provision of both financial and non-financial rewards to teachers contributes to low retention among experienced and highly qualified staff in the Ministry of education. And to be precise, low salaries and lack of promotion opportunities especially to teachers with very high qualifications is really demotivating and has led to a number of teachers to leave for other organizations. In the same vein, **Teacher H** had this to say:

*I can only continue to work for Ministry of Education if the salary matches my qualifications. What I mean here is that I have a master's degree but I still get a salary of a bachelor's degree holder. And it will also be motivating if only there could be an automatic upgrade immediately one attains a higher qualification. Salaries should also be cost reflective.*

Additionally, **Teacher F** had the following to say:

*It's not just a low salary that stresses teachers, but they also get demotivated and stressed out because of lack of promotion opportunities. In fact promotion in the Ministry of Education should be based on merit. Many teachers with Master's degree are still class teachers whilst those with bachelor's degrees and diplomas*

*are holding administrative positions. This is what made me to leave the Ministry of Education.*

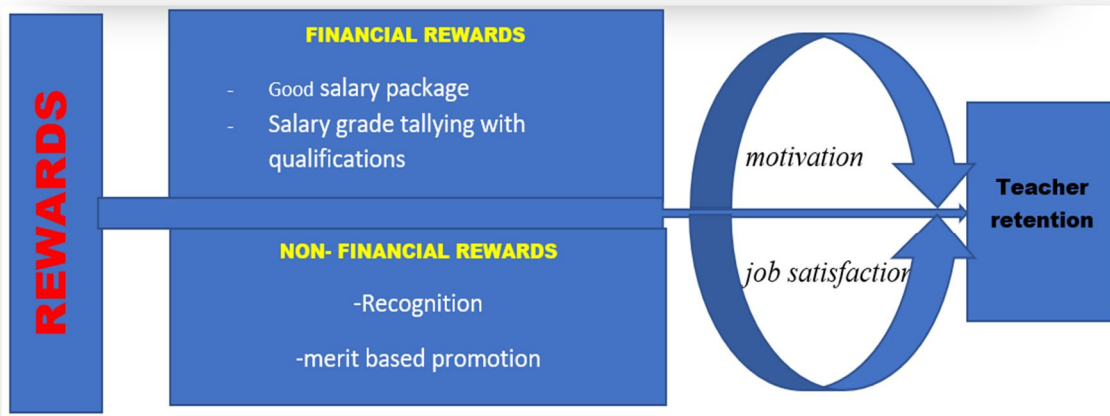
**Teacher A** also went to say that:

*Though one has security when working in government, teachers would rather work for other organizations were they can benefit from other financial incentives other than a salary. Although at times teachers are rewarded for doing a good job, the rewards given have no much impact on teachers and creates no difference on our social standard. Personally, I would say my social status has even changed in a positive way since I joined another organization*

Furthermore, a number of themes emerged from the qualitative findings, thus **low salaries, lack of promotion opportunities, financial benefits in other organizations**. It is however, important to say that both quantitative and qualitative results pointed in one direction. This therefore was enough evidence to conclude that a good salary package ( a salary that will allow teacher to meet their daily basic needs) aligned with the qualifications, and promotion based on merit has a positive effect on teachers on the Copperbelt province. The results also proved that monetary rewards have a motivating effect on teachers and that rewards given contributes much too occupational choices.

#### ***5.4 Research question 2: What is an appropriate model for teacher retention of teachers on the Copperbelt province of Zambia?***

In answering the research question number one, findings from both quantitative and qualitative data set, contend that a good salary package aligned with their qualifications, and promotion based on merit has a positive effect on teacher retention on the Copperbelt province. The results also established that monetary rewards have a more motivating effect on teachers and that rewards given contributes much to occupational choices. Therefore, based on the these findings, we can conclude that, for experienced and qualified teachers on the Copperbelt province to be retained in the Ministry, they need a good salary package which is cost reflective and tallies with their qualifications. In the same vein, the findings also revealed that to teachers, monetary rewards are more motivating. Opportunities for promotion was also something they crave for. This therefore, put together resulted in a Rewards model for teacher retention as presented in figure 2



**Figure 2:** The Rewards (R) Model for Teacher Retention

Source: Field data (2022)

## 6.0 Discussion of findings

The hypothesis in the study reveals that rewards have a positive impact on teacher retention. This agreed with the findings of certain studies that identified rewards as one among other factors that can be used to reduce teacher turnover rates (Terera, & Ngirande, 2014; Makhuzeni, & Barkhuizen, 2015; Manundu, Mwanza, & Mulwa, 2021;). A number of issues emerged amongst the individual items that were analyzed as discussed below.

### 6.1 Good salaries

The research revealed that a good salary can help to retain teachers with good qualifications. A good salary in this context is a salary that will allow teachers to meet their daily basic needs and live a life of their dreams. A number of former teachers who were interviewed also came out strongly that they had left because the salary they were getting was not commensurate with their qualifications. To be precise some teachers with master's degree got the same salary as those with bachelor's degrees. Also, despite a number of teachers having had their first degrees, they were still in the salary scale for diploma holders. Other than the salary not matching with their qualifications, it was also reported that the salaries they got were not cost reflective such that they could not manage to provide for their basic necessities and they could barely survive through the whole month. This is really impacting negatively on teacher's wellbeing especially that most of those with good qualification paid their tuition fees through loans with the hope that their lives will improve after graduating.

However, it is important to know that monetary rewards such as salaries are generally connected to human motivation (Wang et al., 2017), though Herzberg's two factor theory classifies a salary as a hygiene factor. A low salary has always been described as very dissatisfying by most Zambian teachers. For them, a good salary package matters most. In fact, though a salary is not a motivator

as Herzberg two factor theory explains, to Zambian teachers money is actually the main motivator. This agrees with Nosheen and Yasin's (2015) study which argues that teachers can easily get motivated with a high compensation in terms of salary. Fullard (2021) also contends that higher salaries do improve labor productivity in different ways. The informants who were interviewed also intimated that they could only return to the Ministry of Education if the government was ready to offer them at least the same salary they were being paid by the new companies they worked for. From this discussion, we can conclude that teachers are not really happy with the salaries they are getting and that is affecting their motivational levels hence we cannot expect quality performance from them. It is also important to know that the higher the levels of motivation and satisfaction, the greater the levels of performance and productivity (Baskar, 2013). And it is due to lack of monetary motivation that many qualified and experienced teachers decided to leave for better paying jobs.

### ***6.2 Monetary rewards and occupational choices***

The research also established that monetary rewards are more motivating than non-financial rewards. These findings validated Wang et al., (2017) study which argued that monetary and social rewards are generally connected to human motivation and behavior. Contrary to this, Aguinis, Joo, & Gottfredson (2013) assert that although money is looked at as a primary motivator, money is not everything and it cannot always lead to the desired goals. Therefore, school administrators should give importance to both monetary and non-monetary rewards.

The research findings also established that rewards systems contribute to occupational choices. Many people take teaching as a stepping stone and many leave for other jobs immediately they attain certain qualifications. For instance, the Global Competitiveness Report (2015-2016) states that those teachers with experience and good qualifications have a greater choice of employment both locally and internationally. As a result, many leave for other jobs which pay better. It is therefore prudent for the Ministry of Education to try and find a lasting solution to this problem. Related to this, the embeddedness theory argues that employees can choose to stay in one place if there are enough forces to attract them to remain. This may include rewards which are attractive and equitable, opportunities in career advancement, recognition and prestige.

However, since most employees want to be paid the monetary equivalent of their skills and qualifications, capable employees will always look for more rewarding organizations to work for or other occupations with better rewards. Hence, to attract capable employees to stay in an institution, school administrators should employ different strategies to motivate employees. However, they should keep in mind that different strategies would have different motivational effects on different people (Baskar, 2013). According to Robbins (1993), as cited by Cole (2004), when people view an inequitable situation for themselves, they tend to quit their job or leave their field altogether with the aim of finding a job in another organization. Therefore, to curb attrition of Zambian teachers, policy makers should try to compare the working conditions at Ministry of Education with those of other organizations and try to harmonize them to suit individual aspirations.

### ***6.3 Promotion opportunities and recognition***

Further, findings also revealed that rewards in form of promotion can increase teacher retention. These findings agreed with Bibi et al. (2017) that suggested that promotional opportunities had a positive relationship with employee retention. Research also argues that individuals who do not have any responsibilities are considered to have low job embeddedness, for such employees may have few connections that may not matter much to them if they decide to leave the organization. Hence, promotion can be used as a tool of making people feel connected to the organization. On the other hand, Herzberg's two factor theory of motivation identifies promotion as a hygiene factor which contributes to reducing job dissatisfaction that later leads to higher retention rates. Therefore, school administrators should consider promoting employees with good qualifications to positions where they feel responsible and to contribute the knowledge they have to the wellbeing of the institution. In so doing, that may increase job embeddedness among the employees you should positively recognize the behaviour immediately" (Schultz, 2015).

To continue, it was also established that teachers who do a good job are always rewarded and if that is the case, why are some teachers with good qualifications leaving? The answer could only be that, though rewards are given, they may not be equitable and attractive and that could affect retention negatively as well (Kukano, 2020; Muma, 2021). This also tallies with the job embeddedness theory which contends that employees may be attracted to stay in one place if there are forces attracting them to. However, the findings clearly indicate that despite rewards been given to deserving teachers, the rewards may not be satisfying to the teachers forcing them to leave for greener pastures. In contrast, Herzberg's two factor theory holds that job performance improves when staff are praised and recognized for a job well done and this will definitely have a positive impact on employee retention. Hence, school administrators should consider improving the systems being used in schools. In agreement to this, the ERC model identifies recognition and rewards as those among a few factors that can help to reduce the tendency of employees to leave their job.

To conclude, it is important to note that a good salary and other monetary rewards monetary rewards have been identified as motivating. Promotion has also been singled out as one of the strategies that can also increase teacher retention. Relating these results to the two theories guiding the study, it is clear that for employees to stay at the organization where they work, both motivators and hygiene factors should be at their disposal. The findings show that insufficient rewards significantly affect job retention negatively, and thus rewards strategies should be given utmost importance.

Lastly, with proper rewards strategies in place (both monetary and non-monetary rewards), qualified and experienced teachers can be retained in the Ministry. From the analysis of findings, the researcher considers that rewards (ie. good salary package, other monetary rewards, and promotion), 'are significant factors in employee retention. Accordingly, the Rewards Model for teacher retention is proposed in response to research question number two (2). Rewards model is discussed further in the following section.

#### **6.4 Rewards Model for Teacher retention**

As we all know that a model is an explanation of the observed facts, and the Reward (R) model for teacher retention emerged after a thorough examination of rewards on teacher retention and it is clear from the research findings that a good salary package and promotion can help to retain teachers. Monetary rewards were also identified to be motivating to the teachers. However, though monetary rewards are not under the motivators specified by Herzberg's two factor theory, to the Zambian teachers they are more of motivators than hygiene factors. Therefore, if we are to reduce turnover rates among the teachers with good qualifications, the issue of a low salary has to be addressed. The policy makers should consider paying teachers just like other professionals as a way of reducing frustration, especially among teachers with master's degree whose salary scale is below their qualifications. Therefore, based on the above discussion and the main findings of this study, it will be of help to implement the Rewards (R) model for Teacher Retention in the Ministry of Education as a solution to improving teacher retention rates

The R model for Teacher Retention clearly shows that with an adequate salary that can help teachers afford their daily basic expenses and a salary aligned with their qualifications, recognition and merit based promotion, there will be high job satisfaction and motivation amongst teachers. Without the motivation or job satisfaction, teachers may be less willing or fail to perform, feel detached from work, increase their absenteeism and tardiness, 'silently resign', or leave work altogether. It is therefore surmised that the rewards are especially important to increase the retention rates of highly qualified and experienced teachers.

#### **7.0 Implications of the study**

The practical implications of the research paper are of great standing to education policy makers, to teachers as well as to stakeholders in the Zambian education system. Education plays a vital role in the development of the economy and a teacher is a main player in it. Therefore, there must be effective strategies that will allow teachers to stay in the Ministry. A clear understanding of the main preferences of the teachers is required, which this paper provides. The paper has empirically proven that teachers need certain things to be put in place for them to remain in the profession. This research therefore proposes the Reward(R) Model to be adopted in Ministry of Education human resource policy as a useful tool for school administrators, policy makers and all other stakeholders in order to retain teachers in schools across Zambia.

The R model identified both financial and non-financial rewards to be useful in teacher retention. A good salary commensurate with a person's qualifications was key. Additionally, promotion (a non-financial reward) was also another key variable identified to have an impact on teacher retention. Generally speaking, the issue of a salary required a thorough understanding of what would please a teacher. Policy makers need to understand that teachers' salaries are too low to help them meet their basic needs. Compared to the prices of commodities on the market, the teacher's salaries are insufficient to cater for their needs for the whole month. Worse still, teachers are not allowed to do extra tuitions, meaning they depend solely on their meager salaries. This really negatively affects their performance and requires urgent attention. And when it comes to promotion, many teachers have been left frustrated despite having all the necessary requirements for higher office. This has

therefore forced a number of teachers to go on unpaid leave or to resign. This issue may not sound very important, but it also something that needs serious attention from the policy makers. In life every individual wants to move up the ladder and so do teachers. Therefore, policy makers should devise promotion policies that will be fair to all teachers. If possible, educational administrators should be on three years contract and teachers should be directly involved in choosing their administrators. This will give every teacher with the necessary qualifications to be accorded a chance of promotion. This will also help to improve administrators' performance of their duties.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

To conclude, in this paper, the impact of rewards on teacher retention was examined using a mixed method approach. The study theoretically confirmed some concepts in the ERC model (Nazia, & Begum, 2013), but with changes such as specifying the most needed type of rewards that teachers need for them to stay in the profession. An important contribution is that a good salary package aligned with the qualifications also has a strong effect on teacher retention. Theoretically, the results of this study gave a clear picture of what a Zambian teacher needs to remain motivated and experience job satisfaction which can lead to high retention rates. The Rewards model presented did not only contribute to the understanding of teacher behaviour and preferences (ie.whether to should stay in the Ministry or not), but also contributed to understanding that rewards significantly affect teacher retention. This paper also contributed to expanding the knowledge base by examining the rarely researched impact of rewards on teacher retention.



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