



Understanding teacher retention challenges in East Kenya Union Conference SDA Secondary Schools in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Teacher retention remains a critical challenge in both public and private education systems, particularly in faith-based institutions where spiritual mission intersects with employment conditions. This study examined the determinants of teacher retention in Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools in Kenya, focusing on school administration, socio-economic status of schools, motivational strategies, wage administration, and religious commitment. The study adopted a concurrent mixed-methods research design, where quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires and qualitative data were obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The target population included principals, education directors, Board of Management chairpersons, and teachers across selected SDA secondary schools in Kenya. Findings indicate that teacher retention is influenced by a combination of institutional and intrinsic factors. School administration moderately supports retention through participatory decision-making and policy clarity, although limited career development opportunities constrain its effectiveness. Socio-economic challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited teaching resources, and poor staff welfare conditions negatively affect retention. Motivational strategies are inconsistently applied, with weak recognition systems and limited professional development opportunities, although some schools provide basic welfare support. Wage administration presents concerns related to salary delays and policy inconsistencies. Notably, religious commitment emerged as the strongest determinant of retention, with teachers viewing their work as a divine calling and a form of ministry, which enhances their resilience and long-term commitment. The study concludes that while structural and economic factors remain important, intrinsic religious motivation plays a dominant role in sustaining teacher retention in SDA secondary schools. It recommends strengthening administrative support systems, improving working conditions, standardizing motivational practices, and ensuring fair wage administration while maintaining the strong spiritual foundation of Adventist education.

Keywords: Religious Commitment, School Administration, Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Teacher Retention

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention is widely recognized as a critical determinant of educational quality, institutional stability, and long-term student achievement. Schools that successfully retain qualified and experienced teachers tend to demonstrate improved learner performance, stronger institutional culture, and greater continuity in curriculum delivery. Conversely, high teacher turnover disrupts instructional continuity, increases recruitment and training costs, and negatively affects student learning outcomes (Ingersoll, 2001).

Globally, teacher attrition remains a persistent challenge, particularly in private and faith-based school systems where working conditions, remuneration structures, and governance models differ significantly from those in public education systems. Research indicates that private schools often experience higher turnover rates due to job insecurity, lower salary scales, and limited career progression opportunities, even though some faith-based institutions benefit from strong intrinsic motivation among staff (UNESCO, 2021). In many contexts, teacher retention is influenced not only by extrinsic rewards such as pay and working conditions, but also by intrinsic factors such as job satisfaction, professional identity, and personal commitment to institutional values.

In sub-Saharan Africa, teacher retention challenges are compounded by resource constraints, workload pressures, and limited institutional support systems. Studies show that inadequate infrastructure, low morale, and weak administrative support significantly increase teacher turnover intentions in many developing countries (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). As a result, schools operating in low-resource environments often struggle to maintain a stable and experienced teaching workforce, thereby undermining educational quality and equity.

In Kenya, Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) secondary schools operate within a faith-based education framework that integrates academic instruction with spiritual development. These institutions emphasize moral discipline, service, and religious commitment as core values guiding both teaching and learning processes. While SDA schools are often associated with strong organizational identity and a disciplined learning environment, they are not immune to teacher



attrition and retention challenges. Teachers in these institutions may be influenced by a combination of spiritual calling, organizational conditions, remuneration structures, and administrative practices when deciding whether to remain in service or seek alternative employment.

Faith-based schools present a unique context for understanding teacher retention because they blend spiritual mission with formal employment systems. In such settings, religious commitment may serve as a powerful intrinsic motivator that enhances teacher loyalty and institutional attachment. However, when extrinsic factors such as wages, workload, infrastructure, and leadership practices are weak, even strong intrinsic motivation may not fully prevent turnover (Vroom, 1964).

Against this background, this study investigates the determinants of teacher retention in SDA secondary schools in Kenya, focusing on five key factors: school administration, socio-economic status of schools, motivational strategies, wage administration, and religious commitment. Understanding how these factors interact is essential for developing effective retention strategies that ensure stability, improve teacher satisfaction, and enhance educational outcomes in faith-based secondary schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Teacher retention remains a persistent challenge in both public and private education systems globally, with significant implications for educational quality, institutional stability, and student achievement. High teacher turnover disrupts instructional continuity, increases recruitment and training costs, and weakens the overall effectiveness of school systems. While this problem is widely documented, its dynamics are more complex in faith-based educational institutions where employment decisions are influenced not only by economic and organizational factors but also by spiritual and value-based commitments.

Existing studies on teacher retention have largely focused on public schools or general private school systems, with limited attention to the unique context of faith-based institutions where religious commitment may serve as a distinct intrinsic motivator. Moreover, while factors such as remuneration, leadership, and working conditions are well-established predictors of teacher retention, there is limited empirical evidence on how these factors interact with religious commitment in shaping teachers' decisions to remain in SDA schools.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the determinants of teacher retention in Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools in Kenya.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the teachers' evaluation rating of the following factors in Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools in Kenya?
2. How do the following factors contribute to teacher retention in Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools in Kenya?
 - a) School administration practices
 - b) Socio-economic status of the school
 - c) Motivational strategies
 - d) Wage administration and remuneration systems
 - e) Religious commitment

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 School Administration and Teacher Retention

In a study done by Omar (2004), it was discovered that school administrators have a great impact on teacher and student retention. Support for teachers' innovations is one factor which enhances teachers' retention. Teachers feel secure and develop a sense of belonging when the school administrators side with them against parents' complaints. This enhances teachers' retention due to the feeling of a bond between them and administrators. Barnett, Fuller and Williams (2007) affirmed that support from colleagues and school administrators make teachers to stay in a school, while lack of it make them to leave. This was in agreement with Branch et al. (2009) that the school principal is key in determining teachers' retention. Availability of teaching resources, appropriate work load and teacher empowerment can enhance teachers' retention.

According to Loeb et al. (2005), teachers cannot be retained in a school where the level of indiscipline is high. This is because of instability in such a school. Teachers are not policemen to run after wrongdoers. They love teaching more than sorting out consistent problems of students. Indiscipline affects performance, which in turn, affects enrollment. Poor, school administration also leads to low retention of teachers. Low enrollment means low fees collection, which results into deficit in the school budget. As a result, teachers run away, especially if they are in a private school, where fees is the school's backbone of operations. It is therefore, the role of the school administrator to instill discipline to the students in order for the school to have conducive learning environment.



Obtaining quality teachers and retaining them is a dilemma of educational leaders at all levels. This was supported by Giacometti (2005), who said that it is not clear whether the challenge was the shortage of teachers or whether retaining them was the problem. School administrators have a challenge of ensuring teachers are retained for smooth running of any school. Effective teachers should be retained at whatever cost. These teachers determine the success of students. What children learn can have a critical difference in what teachers know and what they do to them. All these lie in the hands of the school administrator, the principal. When a school performs well, the credit goes the principal and vice versa. Therefore, it is upon the school head to ensure all mechanisms are in place to motivate teachers for a smooth running to take place.

2.2 Socio-Economic Status of Schools

Socioeconomic status affects student and teacher retention. Gituriandu (2010) observed that financial inability of parents contributed greatly to low student retention in schools. Because the cost of education is expensive at all levels, some people cannot afford to sustain their children in school. Although there is free primary education in Kenya, parents still struggle to buy school uniform, build classrooms and schools keep on asking for money to put up projects, on daily basis. Parents who cannot support the school projects are forced to have their children sent home and their education comes to a halt. Such students end up looking for child labor employments. Some who get money resume their studies while others never get back to school at all.

On the stability of teachers, Mumo (2000), insists that teachers remain in the teaching job when their economic, social and physical status are well cared for. Appropriate salary and favorable working conditions make them to stay on course. In the absence of these, teachers work with a feeling of insecurity. As a result, they opt for more secure jobs or seek for transfers to more secure school environments.

However, the concept of Meyer and Allen (1991), states that there is more career commitment, when an individual identifies with the organization. Such get fully involved with the occupation, and are more likely to remain in the career. A person's decision to quit or remain in the organization depends on one's commitment to the employment.

2.3 Motivational Strategies

Motivation is defined by Gultekin and Acar (2014), as a mental and physical behavior which is complex in nature. It is an internal state that directs, channels an individual and maintains a character. It is an internal drive that leads to the teacher's commitment and enables the development of student's level of performance. So motivation can be a stimulant for shaping and directing a behavior, which leads to an achievement.

On the other hand, Granito and Chernobilsky (2012) defined motivation as an internal condition which initiates behavior and gets people going. It arouses interest and creates the want to achieve. This is very important in academic performance and it propels students to persist in school to the completion of an academic program.

Ori (2011) viewed motivation as an activity which results when an individual believes that behaving in a certain manner leads in an outcome which is desired. A teacher should experience both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in order to maximize their potential at school. School administrators are responsible to ensure teachers are motivated enough, so as to achieve the goals of education. Teachers should fully commit themselves in teaching and guiding students with the aim of expecting good results.

2.4 Wage Administration

According to Schaffhauser (2014) low salary is number one contributing factor to the teacher attrition and turnover. Tirop (2011) had earlier disclosed that the teaching profession is the poorest paying job in Kenya, and lamented that teachers could no longer be detained in the current teaching conditions and terms. Another thing which encourages teachers' turnover and attrition, according to Daniel et al. (2011) was the level of qualification. Those who are highly qualified stand a higher risk of turnover and get more temptations of becoming victims of attrition because they are more marketable to the job market. The most vulnerable, Ondara (2004), said are the Science related teachers. These could be paid better in other ministries or in the private sector rather than sticking to TSC, a body which they felt, disregarded the qualification of teachers, when it comes to their remuneration. Therefore, those concerned in the administration of schools should come up with ways of ensuring that highly qualified teachers are retained for better education progress.

Bennel (2004), discovered that motivating teachers is a psychological process that influences their individual behavior in respect to the attainment of working goals and obligations. This was echoed by Morice and Murray (2003), who identified incentives and salary increment as ways to motivate teachers and make them cultivate the attitude of staying longer in school and in the profession. However, Bennel (2004), disagrees on remuneration as a motivating factor, and says that 'pay' on its own does not make teachers to stay, if other important issues are not addressed. In support of this NCES (1997), discovered that salary and other incentives are not related to the retention. Koech et al.



(2014) supported the idea that salary is not a sufficient reason for teacher job satisfaction. There are other factors which lead to teacher's turnover and attrition.

Along with monetary benefits, Becker (1993), says that teachers prefer non-monetary benefits as factors which influence their decisions to stay in the profession. These include: support from fellow teachers and administrators, adequate class load, availability of teaching resources, the participation in decision making, living conditions, physical facilities in school, student learning attitude, the location of the school, relationship with the parents and the community, as well as the teacher's ability to grow on-the-job-training. This includes profession development and induction programs.

2.6 Religious Commitment

Religious commitment has an impact on teacher retention. Omar (2004) discovered that although the turnover rate of teachers in private schools is twice as high, compared to public schools, some teachers decide to continue teaching in them. Most of those who stay are in private faith based schools, commonly known as *Mission Schools*. This is because of some elements of faith are attached to the stay or there could be some spiritual ideologies which are homogeneous and may induce some deep spiritual connection with the teachers. So the stronger the spiritual connection, the stronger the retention rate. This means some teachers in religious schools choose to remain as a calling and not because of "this is just a job".

In Kenya, Mutune and Orodho (2014), state that being a teacher, in mission schools, was a respected profession during and before the independent Africa. It was considered a noble job. The teacher was considered a leader and a community consultant. Teachers commanded respect and were trusted and respected by the public, students and parents. They played the role of teaching academics, as well as directing the learners on how well to behave, as well as directing them to recognize God as their Creator. This was taught more in faith based institutions. In fact, the mission schools gave birth to what we have today as the public schools. Teachers were there to stay and had a feeling of belonging, in order to help shape up the community.

III. 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 directors 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 & DISCUSSION

4.1 Rating of the Teachers on the Independent Variables

The study sought to assess teachers' ratings of the key factors influencing teacher retention in Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools in Kenya. These factors included school administration, socio-economic status of the school, motivational strategies, wage administration, and religious commitment. The findings present teachers' perceptions of the extent to which each factor is experienced within their schools and how it contributes to retention outcomes.

4.2 School Administration

The findings are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics on School Administration

Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
The school administration protects me against parents' unfair accusations	1	4	3.11	1.07
The administration involves us in decision making	1	4	2.76	1.18
The school administration supported and encouraged me to advance my career	1	4	2.45	1.27
The school administration attends to my personal concerns	1	4	2.88	1.05
I am assigned a manageable teaching load	1	4	3.25	1.08
There is an upward and downward communication in the school between teachers and the administration	1	4	2.89	1.09
The administration provides clear policies in the school, including job description for workers which make me comfortable in the school	1	4	2.55	1.16
School administration	1	4	2.85	0.82
N = 98				

The findings indicate that teachers generally agreed with the statements related to school administration, with mean scores ranging between 2.55 and 3.25. The overall mean score of 2.85 suggests a moderate or average level of satisfaction with school administration practices. This implies that, to some extent, school administration structures and processes support teaching and learning activities in SDA secondary schools. However, the results also indicate that administrative support is not fully optimal, as the moderate rating suggests room for improvement in leadership effectiveness, communication, and teacher involvement in decision-making processes.

Teachers generally expressed moderate satisfaction with school administration in SDA secondary schools, particularly appreciating protection from unfair parental accusations, involvement in decision-making, and the presence of clear institutional policies, including defined job descriptions. These practices were seen as supportive of a structured working environment and are consistent with Acom (2010), who emphasizes that participatory leadership and clear communication enhance organizational effectiveness. However, respondents noted weaknesses in administrative support for professional development and career advancement, reflected in lower ratings for these aspects. Although teachers also acknowledged some consideration of personal concerns and manageable workloads, these were not consistently implemented at an optimal level. This aligns with Freedman and Appleman (2008) and Mbwiria (2010), who stress that career growth opportunities and manageable workloads are critical for teacher satisfaction and retention. Overall, the findings suggest that while school administration is moderately supportive, strengthening teacher development and workload management could further improve retention.

4.3 School Socio-economic Status

The findings are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics on Socio-economic Status

Descriptive Statistics	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
The school is able to provide enough teaching resources	1	4		
The school provides houses for teachers within the school compound	1	4	2.45	1.19
The school has functional staffroom for teachers	1	4	3.24	0.96
The school has a fully equipped laboratory	1	4	3.01	1.03
The school is able to provide transport for teachers staying far from school	1	4	1.35	0.81
School socio-economic Status	1.2	4	2.56	0.62
N = 98				



The findings indicate that teachers generally agreed with most statements regarding the socio-economic status of SDA secondary schools, with an overall mean rating of 2.56 and a relatively low standard deviation (0.62), suggesting that responses were closely clustered around the mean and therefore consistent. However, teachers highlighted key deficiencies, particularly the lack of transport support for staff living far from school (mean = 1.35) and inadequate provision of staff housing (mean = 2.45). In addition, respondents reported insufficient teaching resources, poorly equipped laboratories, and inadequately functional staffrooms in many schools. These findings suggest that socio-economic constraints significantly affect teachers' working conditions and overall satisfaction. This aligns with Bennell (2004), who observed that inadequate school facilities and poor working environments contribute to teacher dissatisfaction and reduced retention. Overall, the results indicate that while some aspects of school support exist, many SDA schools still face structural and resource limitations that negatively influence teacher welfare and performance.

4.4 Motivational Strategies for Teachers

Table 3 shows that teachers in the Adventist schools were subjected to numerous motivational strategies but they tended to disagree with some items.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics on Motivational Strategies

Descriptive Statistics	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Teachers are given motivational incentives during the school prize giving days	95	1	4	2.07	1.16
Teachers' good performance is given certificate of recognition	95	1	4	1.75	1.041
The school provides meals for teachers while at school	96	1	4	3.36	0.975
Teachers get bursary funds for career advancement	94	1	4	1.4	0.884
Teachers' good rapport with parents encourage them to go an extra mile in teaching	96	1	4	2.89	1.004
The school provides financial support to teachers' attendance in seminars and conferences	95	1	4	2.56	1.218
The school organizes in-service training for teachers' professional development	94	1	4	1.65	0.97
Motivational strategies	98	1	4	2.28	0.684

The findings indicate that teachers in SDA secondary schools experienced a moderate level of motivational strategies, with an overall mean of 2.28 and a standard deviation of 0.684, suggesting relatively consistent responses. However, teachers largely disagreed that key motivational incentives were adequately provided. In particular, respondents reported that they were not rewarded during school prize-giving events (mean = 2.07), did not receive recognition certificates or awards for good performance (mean = 1.75), and were rarely provided with bursaries for professional development (mean = 1.40). In-service training opportunities were also reported to be limited (mean = 1.65), indicating weak institutional support for teacher professional growth.

On the other hand, teachers tended to agree that some motivational practices existed in certain schools, such as provision of meals (mean = 3.36), supportive relationships with parents that encouraged extra effort (mean = 2.89), and limited financial support for refresher courses (mean = 2.56). However, interview findings revealed significant disparities in motivational support, particularly in the allocation of bursaries, where pastors were perceived to receive a larger share compared to teachers, despite teachers' heavier workload and direct instructional responsibilities. Teachers also reported delayed salaries in some cases, sometimes extending up to six months, alongside a lack of allowances compared to other church employees. Overall, while some motivational elements were present, the findings suggest that teacher motivation systems were inconsistent and insufficient, contributing to reduced morale and potential retention challenges.

4.5 Wage Administration to Teachers

The findings obtained in Table 4 show that wage administration affected teachers in some ways (mean of 2.71), standard deviation of 0.805. This means that, although they agreed on the stated issues on wage administration, much was still lacking.

**Table 4***Descriptive Statistics on Wage Administration*

Descriptive Statistics	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
The school wage administration and allowances is as per the church policy	95	1	4	2.4	1.206
The school pays the salary on time	96	1	4	2.66	1.272
My monthly tithe deduction gets remitted promptly	94	1	4	3.3	1.046
The school has a policy on salary advance	95	1	4	2.48	1.245
The school provides pay slips once the monthly payments are settled	97	1	4	2.73	1.229
Wage administration	98	1	4	2.71	0.805

The findings indicate that wage administration in SDA secondary schools was characterized by both strengths and significant challenges. Teachers reported that salary payments were often delayed in some schools, with an overall mean of 2.66, indicating partial dissatisfaction with timeliness of remuneration. However, respondents appreciated that monthly tithe deductions were generally remitted promptly to the relevant Conferences or Fields once processed (mean = 3.30). In addition, teachers indicated that pay slips were sometimes issued after salary payments were made (mean = 2.73), although the moderate rating suggests inconsistencies, with some schools either delaying or not consistently providing pay slips.

The study also revealed deviations from the SDA Church Working Policy (2014–2015) regarding wage administration. While the policy allows limited use of tithe for specific categories of workers such as chaplains and Bible teachers, as well as partial salary support in certain school levels, findings suggest that implementation of this policy was inconsistent across schools. Overall, respondents tended to disagree that wage administration was fairly and consistently implemented (mean = 2.40), and similarly indicated that policies on salary advances were either unclear or not applied uniformly (mean = 2.48), raising concerns about potential discrimination and lack of transparency.

When interviewed on whether they were satisfied with the wage administration, teachers stated that *they were not, but they clarified that they did not base their commitment on the pay. What they valued more was appreciation by the administration. That is why in some schools, teachers missed their pay for several months yet they continued teaching, patiently.*

4.6 Religious Commitment of Teachers

Table 5 evaluates the religious commitment of teachers.

Table 5*Descriptive Statistics on Religious Commitment*

Descriptive Statistics	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
I take the teaching profession as a calling from God	98	1	4	3.78	0.601
Being in a church school is my spiritual commitment	95	1	4	3.71	0.682
I integrate faith in teaching by preparing students for the joy in this world and for eternity	98	3	4	3.87	0.341
I am proud of the Adventist Education for it is holistic in nature, preparing the student, academically, physically and spiritually	98	2	4	3.89	0.377
Teaching in a church school enables me exercise my freedom of worship and the observance of the Seventh day Sabbath	96	1	4	3.83	0.516
By teaching in the school of my faith, I have a sense of doing the work of God	97	1	4	3.84	0.472
As I teach in the church school I take God as my supervisor	97	2	4	3.96	0.247
I take my teaching in this school as an act of worship	97	1	4	3.74	0.6
I grow spiritually as I continue teaching in this school	97	1	4	3.63	0.712
The school provides the opportunity to evangelize to students and their parents	97	1	4	3.57	0.66
Religious commitment	98	2.56	4	3.78	0.328

Teachers pointed out that they took the teaching profession as a calling from God, something which made them have a feeling of being coworkers with God. In addition, being in a church school was their spiritual commitment. This means, teaching in these schools made teachers have a sense of fulfilling the great commission of Christ, to make disciples for Him (Matthew 28:18-20). Teachers integrated faith in teaching by preparing students for the joy in this world and for eternity.



Table 18 Teachers strongly agreed that religious commitment was a major determinant of retention in SDA secondary schools, with high mean scores (3.57–3.96) and an overall average of 3.78 indicating strong agreement and low variability ($SD = 0.328$). The findings show that teachers viewed teaching as a divine calling and a form of ministry, describing themselves as coworkers with God and seeing their work as part of fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). They also emphasized that Adventist education provided a holistic approach that integrates academic, physical, and spiritual development, which reinforced their pride and commitment to the institution. Additionally, teachers appreciated the freedom of worship and Sabbath observance within SDA schools, which they noted was not always possible in non-faith-based institutions. The perception that God served as their ultimate supervisor further strengthened intrinsic motivation, encouraging them to work beyond normal expectations with minimal external supervision. The schools also supported their spiritual growth and provided opportunities for evangelism to students and parents, all of which collectively enhanced their attachment to the institutions and strengthened teacher retention.

IV: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that teacher retention in Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools in Kenya is shaped by a combination of institutional, economic, motivational, and religious factors. While school administration contributes to retention through participation in decision-making, clear communication, and protection of teachers, its impact is weakened by limited career development opportunities. Socio-economic conditions of schools, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of teaching resources, and insufficient support services, negatively affect teacher stability. Motivational strategies are unevenly implemented, with limited recognition, irregular training opportunities, and delays in salary payments reducing their effectiveness. Wage administration also presents challenges, particularly salary delays and inconsistencies with policy implementation. However, religious commitment emerges as the strongest retention factor, as teachers perceive their work as a divine calling, which strengthens their dedication and willingness to remain in service despite existing challenges.

4.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that SDA school administrations strengthen participatory leadership practices by involving teachers in decision-making processes and supporting their professional development through training and career advancement opportunities. School authorities and governing bodies should also improve socio-economic conditions by investing in infrastructure, teaching resources, staff housing, and transport support, especially in remote areas. In addition, schools should formalize and consistently implement motivational strategies, including recognition of performance, fair distribution of bursaries, and regular in-service training programs. Wage administration systems should be improved through timely salary payments, clear policies on salary advances, and strict adherence to SDA Church Working Policy to ensure fairness and transparency. Finally, while maintaining the strong positive influence of religious commitment, the study recommends that SDA institutions balance spiritual motivation with adequate financial and professional support to ensure sustainable teacher retention.

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