



# **A Study on the Impact of Teacher Turnover on Performance in the Ministry of Education – Malawi. A Case of Secondary School Teachers in The Central West Education Division (CWED)**

*Miriam M. Banda<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Madhu<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1,2</sup>DMI St John Baptist University

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of teacher turnover on performance in the Ministry of Education. A Case of Secondary school teachers in the Central West Education Division (CWED). The study was conducted at the Ministry of Education which is located in Lilongwe. The study was guided by these objectives namely: to investigate the factors that lead to teacher turnover in this ministry; to assess the impact of teacher turnover for the ministry's performance and to assess the role of the Ministry of Education of Malawi in the sustainability of its human resources to maximize the performance of the organizations.

A case study design was used because of the nature of the study. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis was also opted for in this study. The data collection methods comprised documentary sources, interviews and questionnaires which were instituted by the researcher.

**Keywords:** Teacher Turnover, Performance, Education

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## **1.Introduction**

Education is a fundamental part of the young people's preparation for their future lives and a central pillar in nations' development. Turnover can be considered from different perspectives depending on the subject in question. Among teachers, turnover refers to the rate of departure among staff engaged in schools for a given time frame. Teacher turnover can be obtained by identifying the stock of teachers through government departments, principals of schools and even teachers themselves. Teacher turnover poses a threat to the education sector by limiting or reducing the availability of qualified teachers to undertake teaching services.

Employee turnover is a critical challenge in the world among public and private organizations; however, the problem varies across countries and organizations. Different literatures reveal that many business organizations have been experiencing the high rate of employee turnover and this increases from time to time due to job-related and non-job-related factors.

These factors are in the basis of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, training opportunities, poor working condition, fringe benefits and supervisor support, nature of organizational climate, job fit and clarity in job expectation (Almamun& Hasan, 2017: 67).

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## **2.Review of Literature**

The study reviewed relevant literature to form a basis for the study in assessing staff turnover towards the performance of public institutions as an attempt to understand the root cause of staff turnover and its impact on the performance of public institutions so as to maximize the effectiveness and employee retention.

In Malawi, various studies have been conducted about the causes of employee turnover in public and private organizations. For examples, a study by Mbwana (2013) pointed out that employee turnover is inevitable because workers always struggle for personal satisfaction including: sufficient salary, professional development opportunities, promotions and personal freedom at work. Likewise, a study by Haji

(2013) that assessed the factors affecting employee promotion in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Youth, Women and Children Development in Malawi found that labour turnover was high due to poor concern about and care for employees by their organizational superiors. Also, the majority of the employees are not promoted by their management due to under-implementation of Performance Appraisal, Scheme of Services with poor budget allocation for the workers' payment. In most cases, employees' dissatisfaction caused by mismatching job satisfaction and working conditions such as unclear systems of promotion, favoritism, poor compensation for overtime, lack of employees' participation in decision making and unsystematic job rotation reduces work morale and commitment of the employees as well as overall performance (Kombo, 2015: 55).

With reference to Malawi; before 2011, there was serious staff turnover among teachers (the employees of MoE). The problem created an acute shortage of competent teachers in science, mathematics, and other social science subjects (Geography and History). This situation worsened the problem of poor performance among public secondary schools which in turn, led to mass failure among secondary students.

**Table 1.0 below shows the intensity of the challenges from NECTA results obtained from the concerned schools for the period of 2014 to 2017:**

SN	Name of School	Year and Percent of Student Failure in National Examination				Average
		2014	2015	2016	2017	
1.	Bwaila	36%	10%	30%	41%	29
2.	Chipasula	39%	33%	36%	43%	38
3.	Biwi CDSS	44%	26%	45%	48%	41
4.	Namitete	51%	25%	30%	39%	36
5.	Nkomachi CDSS	40%	25%	37%	30%	33
6.	Mitundu	47%	23%	42%	34%	37
7.	Tsokankanasi CDSS	72%	16%	30%	51%	42
8.	Mitundu CDSS	36%	33%	34%	36%	35
9.	Chitedze CDSS	49%	23%	18%	57%	37
10.	Chigoneka CDSS	83%	15%	42%	32%	43

Excessive loss of teaching staffs within the public institutions (schools) was intensified by disappointment of workers with their working conditions and other non-job-related factors. In addressing this challenge, the government of Malawi under MoE has initiated some strategies for the improvement of public-school teachers' incentives so that their sustainability is much more assured. Among changes in satisfying workers' needs included 50% salary increment particularly for graduated teachers in secondary schools. Again, in 2013 there was salary increase of 15% aiming at improving labour sustainability in public sectors, especially Ministry of Education in Malawi. The most recent important change in workers' salary in public institutions took place in 2017; the government had increased salary to 100% as the minimum salary rate to all employees of public institutions including teachers especially the low-paid teachers of primary schools (MoE report, 2017). Other improvements for public workers in the educational sector included: three years leave allowance, maternity leave allowance as well as in-service and pre-service training programmes to upgrade teachers' professional development in the pedagogical content knowledge. These have been deliberate efforts in reducing mass staff turnover and raising the level of performance in public institutions (schools) including: quality of the service, efficiency as well as resource sustainability.

### ***Conceptual Framework for the Study***

This study was guided by the Conceptual framework of the current model of evaluation proposed by Stufflebeam (2000) that involves four aspects: Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP). Context evaluation tends to assess needs, problems, and opportunities based on defining goals and priorities and judging the significance of the outcomes. Input evaluation assesses the alternative approaches to meet the needs as means of planning programme and allocating resources. Process evaluation assesses the implementation of plans guiding the activities and later explaining the outcomes. Product evaluation identifies instructional and nurturing outcomes both of which help the process on track to determine the impact of staff turnover on the performance of public institutions in the MoE.

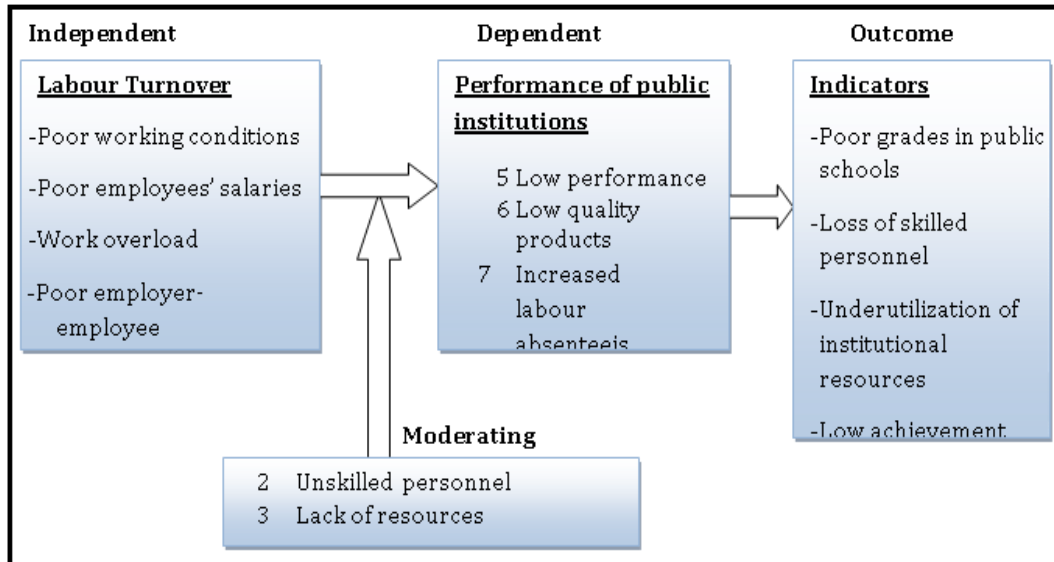
Stufflebeam's (2000) Model is relevant in studying staff turnover and performance of public institutions because any achievement of service offering institutions is determined by inputs, process and output variables. The independent variables are the attributes or determinants which influence the outcome/dependent variables (Creswell, 2012: 65). In this study, independent variables were factors which determine the rate of staff turnover and performance of public institutions including: unpleasant working conditions, unsatisfactory salary, work overload, improper employer-employee's relationship, low level of motivation and unreliable job security.

Dependent variables involved attributes which are influenced by the independent variable to denote some effects or outcomes of the study. They refer to the output factors presumed to be the results of the independent variables. These probably increase or decrease the performance of organization, satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the customers in relation to service provision, and achievement of organizational goals. The proposed conceptual framework is an open system approach based on Inputs, Process and Outputs interaction. The inputs (which mean satisfactory or dissatisfactory factors) have influential role to the outcomes of employee performance of public organizations. The process is a mutual bridge linking the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the organization. Process may play intervening factors in the interrelationship between inputs and outputs.

Therefore, if there is strong policy with achievable inputs (reduced voluntary turnover due to high satisfaction of employees' needs), and well organized process (serious implementation of the practice), this will result into good performance of the public organization including productivity, labour sustainability as well as clients' satisfaction regarding the services. On the other hand, failure in consideration of appropriate inputs with poor process acts as a root cause of labour turnover with under-efficiency and productivity of organization which in turn, leads to disappointment of the clients. The conceptual framework implies that the positive interaction between Inputs, Process and Outputs leads to long-term employee retention and the

successful performance of public organizations. In contrast to this, negative interaction among Inputs, Process and Outputs increases labour turnover leading to lower performance of public institutions (schools). The negative relation between inputs and outputs in the bases of the study results into ineffectiveness of the organizational performance. The outputs involve under performance, low productivity, and poor services delivery, mass failure of students and dissatisfaction of clients. The conceptual framework of the present study is summarized below:

**Figure1.0: Conceptual Frame Work for the Study Showing Staff Turnover and the Performance of Public Institutions in Malawi**



### III. Research Methodology

This chapter described the methodology that was employed in the study; it focuses on the research design, area of the study, the population of the study, sample size and sampling techniques and the methods for data collection. Finally, it presents data analysis plan, reliability and validity of those instruments as well as ethical consideration.

Research methodology involves a process through which information and vital data are collected for the sole purpose of deducing informed results in a piece of research. This process enables a researcher to access all information he needs in a research to answer his research questions (Kumar and Phrommathed, 2005: 38).

#### *Population and Sample Size*

The study involved 686 public employees under MoE under secondary education department in urban district, Malawi. The samples for the study included 10 school heads and 230 teachers from 10 public secondary schools out of 681. Six (6) ministry officials from Six divisions under MoE were taken into account for the study. This made a total of 246 respondents who were working under the Ministry of Education in Malawi. The fulfilment of the proposed sample size was adopted from sample size model from Krejcie and Morgan's Table. Therefore, the sample size formed three distinctive sections: teaching staffs.

(Subordinate employees), school heads (manager at local level) and ministry officials (managers at central level) from whom the relevant data on staff turnover were obtained.

The questionnaire was also administered to staff from various departments under Ministry of Education such as Secondary Education, data base division, salary and finance division, directorate of quality assurance division, Human Resource Management Division and the Education Planning Division in order to achieve the objectives of the study.

#### *Sampling Techniques*

##### **Purposive Sampling**

Gall et al. (2005) defined purposive sampling as the process of selecting cases that are likely to be information-rich with respect to the purpose of a particular study. Information-rich participants are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon under investigation. Purposive sampling was used in selecting 10 public schools for the study located in Malawi urban district. Meantime, the procedure was

applicable to select 10 school heads of public secondary schools. It was further used to pick 05 Ministry officials at central ministry of education. The justification for employing purposive sampling in this study was to obtain participants who were available, willing and interested but also represented relevant data on employee turnover to meet the researcher's objectives (Cresswell, 2012).

**Stratified Sampling**

According to Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2005), stratified sampling involves dividing the population into homogenous groups, with each group containing subjects with similar characteristics. This technique was used to select 230 respondents out of the 671 teacher population. According to Dempsey (2003), stratified random sampling is considered appropriate since it gives individuals equal chance of being selected as a study respondent. It is less biased and easy for generalization of the study findings in large-scale use. Stratified random sampling ensures inclusion in the sample of sub groups, which otherwise would be omitted entirely by other sampling methods because of their small number of population (Kothari, 2005)

**Data Sources**

The study used both secondary and primary sources of data. The inclusion of multiple data sources was an attempt to attain data triangulation for the authenticity of the findings.

**Primary data sources:**

Involved those methods which enable the researcher to collect the original data on his/her own as he/she interacts with participants in the field to explore their perceptions towards the study (Kothari, 2009: 78). Therefore, the

study took into account interview and questionnaires as relevant primary data collection methods.

**Secondary data sources:**

Involved literatures; the works of others have been reviewed for the secondary data in order to gain knowledge or insight on the background of the study, skills in research methodology as well as relevant theories guiding the study

**Data Collection Methods**

**Questionnaires** A study used a set of questions containing open ended and close ended questions to administer to the respondents. The researcher constructed relevant and straight-forward questionnaire for great ease of respondents 'understanding, interpretation and quicker feedback.

**Interview Method** The researcher used interviews as one of the major methods of data collection method. The aim was to explore the respondents' views, feelings, perceptions and experiences about the study. The interview method is useful in collecting data directly through face-to-face interactions from the key informants who provide in-depth information.

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**IV. Analysis and Interpretation**

The data analysis techniques employed in the study was both qualitative and quantitative. both qualitative and quantitative data analysis approach.

**Sampling Techniques**

A total of 246 respondents were selected for the study. During data collection, 37 questionnaire guides were returned unfilled, some respondents (teachers) were not met in their schools because some were part-timers and it was not possible to meet them even after making arrangements on phone and therefore the interview method was partially used. The questionnaire method was mostly used to collect much of the information as per the objectives set. Therefore, only 208 respondents, representing 84.9% were reached.

**Data Analysis Technique****Qualitative Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis: this relies on descriptions in which data are presented in thematic form; the themes are identified before and refined during the analysis of data. For example, interviews from head teachers and ministry officers were guided by a selection of sub-themes, which merge together with major research questions set forth for the study. In open coding, data were put into theoretically defined categories in order to analyze them (Silverman, 1993). It is the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data. This is important for the researcher to realize the saturation of the data when repetitive themes occur. Editing involves a process of improving the quality of information without tampering with the data. Both in the field by checking whether the information has been systematic or done well, and by doing every rectification in the office as follows.

*Poor salaries, Incentives and poor General Working Conditions, Loss of Status of Teachers, Loss of Motivation, Stress, Lack of Administrative Support System, Poor Recruitment and Training Programs, Frequent Changes in the Syllabus and Education System, High Death Rate due to Illness but no Medical Scheme are the most rated causes of teachers' turnovers among secondary school teachers because they were mostly stated in the study.*

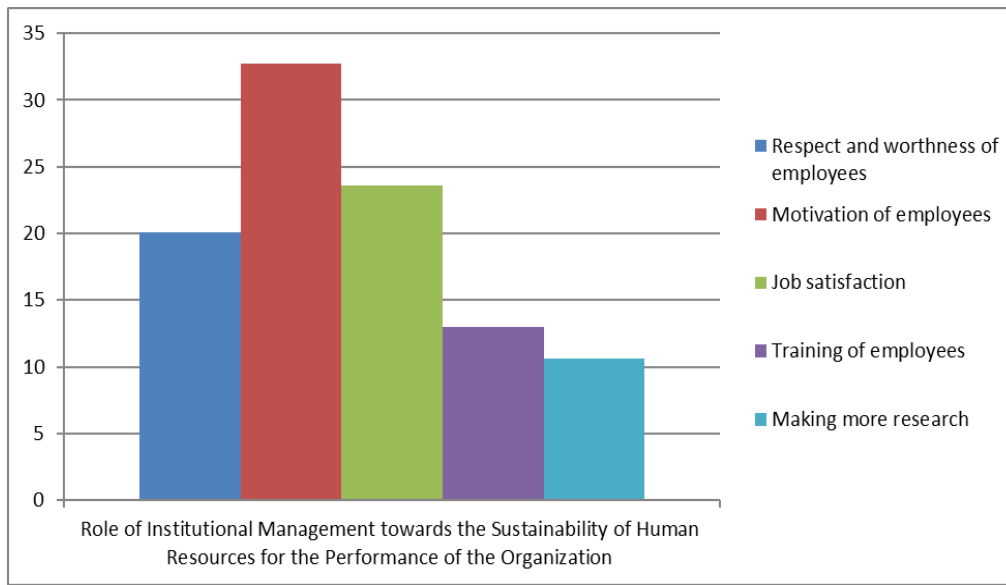
**Quantitative Data Analysis**

SPSS software was used to facilitates tabulation and computation of frequencies, percentages and ratios of the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. Also, graphs were used to present data from questionnaires using Microsoft Excel 2010 for analysis interpretation and discussion.

**Table 1.2 Factors that lead to Teacher Turnovers amongst Secondary school teachers in the Central West Education Division (CWED)**

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Unpleasant working conditions and facilities	23	11.1
Respect and worthiness of employees	36	17.3
Job satisfaction	49	23.6
Motivation of employees	87	41.8
Training of employees	13	06.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 1.2 shows the roles of the Institution management towards sustainability of human resources for the performance of the organization



According to the graph it was clearly shown that 41.8% of staff chose lack of motivation as the main cause of teachers turnover, 23.6% job satisfaction being also the other cause, 17.3% suggested that the job itself lacks worthiness and respect, 11.1% suggested Unpleasant working conditions and facilities where 6.3% suggested lack of training opportunities in field of teaching where if one wants to further his/her studies it is always safe funded hence, discouraging workers which leads to more teachers leaving the professional for greener pastures elsewhere and in the end affecting the performance of the Ministry.

**Table 1.3 Impact of Teacher Turnover amongst secondary school teachers in the Central West Education Division (CWED)**

Impact	Frequency	Percentage
Poor quality of the services provided by the organization	52	25.0
Mass failure of students	66	31.7
Low productivity	48	23.1
Dissatisfaction of clients	42	20.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100</b>

The results showed that the majority of teacher's respondents noted that mass failure of students in secondary schools was the most significant impact of staff turnover as it was scored by 66 respondents representing 31.7%. This implied that when an organization loses its potential manpower, there is drop in academic performance of the clients (students)

Similarly, according to data from the interview guide, mass failure of students was also a very much bigger impact which should be much considered. When staff move from their employment, it becomes a challenge because competent staff in the practices are limited and it is time-consuming to recruit new staff and train them. This is a stiff challenge to the achievement of organizational goals.

Again, poor quality of the services provided by the organization was reported by 52 respondents (25%) as the second impact of turnover. For example, Ministry of Education is one of the reputable organizations in making sure that education is provided to all who are eligible so as to have educated citizens, but due to the problem of turnover it has led to some of the workers leaving their jobs, which leads to quality of service to be drawn down. Since the professionals have left abruptly, this leads to contracting those who demand services from Ministry of Education to think of different alternatives elsewhere.

Another impact revealed that low productivity is a result of staff turnover; this was reported by 48(23.1%) of respondents. The MOE faces challenge of staff compensation because when the expert shifts career or organization into somewhere else, the routine duties are not performed or accomplished

within appropriate time and this results into low productivity in the organization. The junior or novice staff have low capabilities to perform tasks at the expense of the long-experienced ones. From this shortage, staff turnover is the wastage of organizational skilled human resources and resulting to under-productivity.

From the questionnaire responses, teacher turnover also leads to customer (client) dissatisfaction because of the employees being overloaded with work. This means that both employees and customers may not be served as they wish. Therefore, the MOE may lose its effectiveness and efficiency when it is measured at the point of service delivery. This was reported by 42(20.2%) of respondents.

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## V. Recommendations and Conclusion

### *Recommendations*

The following are recommendations that the researcher came up in regard to the study findings: The ministry of Education should take deliberate mechanisms to prevent public institutions from teacher turnover; these include improving staff salary, staff recognition, friendly employer-employee relationship, job motivation and promotion.

- The ministry of Education need to conduct more researches on the cases and effects of turnover in public school institution for good intervention of the problem. This will help to minimize the intensity of the problem and improve the quality of educational service that MoE administers.
- The ministry of Education should play constructive role in sustaining teaching and non-teaching employees from leaving the work place for other work places.
- Most public secondary schools were at academic disadvantage from the persistent turnover among competent teachers. This in turn resulted into general poor performance of secondary students and delay in quality educational services for the students.
- The MoE management has great role to prevent its institution from turnover and loss of organization credit in production. The survival of any public institution depends on the strong support of the management for the inputs of the organization. Among the inputs is skilled workers who need motivation, job satisfaction, respect and worthiness, promotion and researches.

### *Conclusion:*

On the basis of the study findings, the following conclusions were drawn: In this study, employees in public institutions were found to develop negative perception with the way management treat them and from that shortfall, they decide to leave their organization. Teachers are dissatisfied with low pay, lack of recognition, difficult work conditions and low job motivation within their work place. Thus turnover to them is their way to upgrade either professional or economic prosperity.

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