

**MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AND TEACHER RETENTION IN PRIVATE
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

By

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15/05310

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT)
OF KCA UNIVERSITY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL OF
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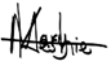
OCTOBER 2025

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been previously published or submitted elsewhere for award of a degree. I also declare that this contains no material written or published by other people except where due reference is made and author duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the effect of motivational factors on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to explore the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools, to find out the effect of financial reward on teacher retention in private secondary schools, to determine the effect of career advancement on teacher retention in private secondary schools, and to establish the effect of the working environment on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was anchored by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Self Determination Theory (SDT), and Social Exchange Theory. The research employed a descriptive research design. The study targeted 76 registered private secondary schools in Kiambu County, with a total of 1,140 teachers. The sample size was determined using the Yamane Formula, resulting in a sample size of 92 teachers. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling. Data was gathered using structured questionnaires. A pilot study was done to enhance the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and multiple linear regression were utilized to determine the relationship between variables. The analyzed data was presented through frequency tables and charts. The research revealed that various motivational factors significantly influenced teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. Recognition demonstrated a strong positive relationship with teacher retention, with a coefficient of 0.211 (Beta = 0.216) and a significant t-value of 2.605. Financial rewards also had a positive impact, recording a coefficient of 0.187 (Beta = 0.202) and a t-value of 2.562. Career advancement contributed positively to teacher retention, with a coefficient of 0.326 (Beta = 0.342) and a t-value of 4.127. Similarly, the working environment exhibited a statistically significant positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.298 (Beta = 0.314) and a t-value of 3.506. The study concludes that motivational factors play a critical role in promoting teacher retention in private secondary schools. It is recommended that school management adopt deliberate strategies such as enhancing recognition systems, providing competitive financial rewards, creating career development pathways, and improving the working environment to strengthen teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my beloved parents, Mr. & Mrs. James Waweru Ndirangu whose unwavering support, love and encouragement have been the cornerstone of my academic journey. To my mother and father your sacrifices, prayers and belief in my potential have inspired me to pursue excellence and persevere through every challenge. Your constant words of wisdom and your boundless care have shaped the person I am today.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

KNBS	-	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
NACOSTI	-	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SDT	-	Self Determination Theory
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TSC	-	Teachers Service Commission
UK	-	United Kingdom
USA	-	United States of America
VIF	-	Variance Inflation Factor

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Career Advancement:** Refers to the opportunities provided to teachers for professional growth and promotion, including leadership roles, training programs, further education sponsorship, and structured pathways for career progression, which affect their commitment to remain in the school (Kilonzo, 2022).
- Financial Reward:** Refers to the monetary benefits teachers receive from their employer, such as salaries, bonuses, allowances, and other financial incentives (Kariuki, 2020).
- Recognition:** Refers to the acknowledgment and appreciation of teachers' efforts, achievements, and contributions by school management. It includes verbal praise, awards, certificates, and public acknowledgment aimed at motivating teachers to remain in their current schools (Arol & Aydin, 2021).
- Teacher Retention:** Refers to the ability of private secondary schools to maintain their teaching staff over time without high rates of resignation or turnover (Migwi & Michubu, 2024).
- Working Environment:** Refers to the physical, social, and administrative conditions within a school that directly affect teachers' daily experiences and job satisfaction. This includes classroom infrastructure, leadership support, collegial relationships, workload and communication practices (Wanjiru, Karanja & Muceke, 2023)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a complete description of the research, including the background context, statement of the problem, study objectives, and the main research questions. It also highlights the research's significance and scope.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teacher retention is a pressing issue in the global education landscape, significantly affecting the quality of education delivered to learners. Low retention rates among teachers disrupt students' learning experiences and drain educational resources, consequently prompting educational administrators to explore the motivational factors that influence teachers' decisions to remain in or leave their positions (Ingersoll, 2020). Statistics show that teacher retention rates are low in many nations, suggesting a worldwide issue that cuts beyond national boundaries. For instance, over 46% of newly hired teachers in the USA leave the field within the first five years due to a range of factors, including inadequate support from administration and insufficient opportunities for professional growth (McCormack, Gilmour & Smith, 2021). This high turnover rate constitutes a significant loss in educational investment and impacts students' academic outcomes (Loeb, Darling-Hammond & Luczak, 2020). In Canada, similar patterns emerge, with nearly 30% of teachers citing inadequate compensation and lack of recognition as pivotal reasons for leaving the profession (Ginsberg, 2020). However, research tends to focus broadly on education with limited specific insights into private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya, which have different operational dynamics and motivational challenges.

The extrinsic factors such as competitive salaries, career advancement opportunities, and conducive working environments, also substantially influence decisions to stay in the profession (Ingersoll, 2020). For instance, in the United States, studies reveal that teacher dissatisfaction stemming from inadequate remuneration and lack of administrative support contributes to high turnover, particularly in underserved areas (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Similarly, in Australia, motivational strategies focusing on improving work conditions have been linked to reduced attrition rates among secondary school teachers (Brown & Lambert, 2021). Although these regional studies touch on motivational elements, they generalize the education sector without exploring specific geographical settings.

In Finland, renowned for its robust educational practices, studies reveal that teacher motivation is closely tied to professional autonomy and supportive school environments (Soini, Pyhältö & Pietarinen, 2020). Teachers who felt empowered to make instructional decisions and were part of a collaborative school working environment demonstrated higher retention rates. This finding is pivotal because it highlights how motivational factors like professional development and empowerment lead to long-term professional commitment. In Australia, a comprehensive survey indicated that teachers with strong collegial support were 27% likely to stay in their positions than those who felt isolated, emphasizing the necessity of a supportive work environment (Rice, 2022). The study explored how such disconnects may also have existed in the Kenyan private school context, particularly in Kiambu County, and how motivational factors contributed to this issue.

The dynamics of teacher retention extend to developing countries. In India, research indicates that approximately 35% of teachers reported considering leaving their jobs due to factors like lack of professional development opportunities, inadequate salaries, and poor working conditions (Sarkar, 2021). A study by Ahmad, Iqbal and Halim (2022) have shown that teachers

in Pakistan exhibit similar patterns, with around 50% citing financial instability and lack of career progression as significant motivators for leaving their roles.

Regionally, African countries face unique challenges related to teacher motivation and retention. In Nigeria, research indicates that teachers' motivation is heavily influenced by salary adequacy and recognition, with many leaving the profession due to unattractive remuneration packages (Akinfolarin & Akinboade, 2022). Over 60% of educators reported that poor remuneration was a primary catalyst for their exit from the profession, further highlighting the urgency to address motivational factors impacting teacher retention (Okeke & Amaele, 2020). In South Africa, teacher retention is similarly challenged, as the teachers who engage in continuous professional development tend to report higher job satisfaction and, consequently, increased retention rates (Fraser, 2022). The motivational factors such as professional development opportunities and supportive leadership are critical in retaining teachers, especially in rural and under-resourced schools (Mthembu & Ngcobo, 2023). Despite these insights, a common knowledge gap persists regarding how these motivational factors interact within specific regional contexts and how they influence retention in private secondary schools, which were often driven by different incentives compared to public institutions.

In Rwanda, teacher retention remains a concern, with motivations varying between passionate teachers and those driven by limited alternatives (Zeitlin, 2020). Muvunyi (2016) noted that government efforts to improve teachers' welfare through better pay and working conditions have aimed to address attrition. However, despite policy interventions, high turnover persists, particularly in private institutions, which often lack the resources and support systems found in public schools (Tarifa, 2019). These regional studies emphasized that while motivational factors

are universally important, their relative influence and effectiveness are shaped by local economic, social, and policy contexts.

In Kenya, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector has exacerbated existing challenges related to teacher retention. A survey conducted by the Kenya Private Schools Association (2022) revealed that 60% of teachers in private secondary schools cited inadequate salaries and benefits as significant factors contributing to their decision to leave. Karanja, Mwangi and Waweru (2023) highlighted that many teachers experienced increased stress and burnout during the pandemic, leading to a heightened desire to leave the profession. This situation emphasizes the significance of addressing both motivational and psychological factors to foster a more resilient teaching workforce.

Private schools in Kenya often struggle to retain teachers due to factors such as low salaries, lack of career advancement opportunities, and inadequate recognition elements that are well-documented as key motivational factors affecting retention globally and regionally (Mugo & Murithi, 2021). In Kiambu County, the challenge is compounded by rising student enrollment, which increases workload without commensurate increases in remuneration or support, thereby affecting teachers' motivation (Njoroge, 2023). Although prior studies have identified motivation as a critical determinant of teacher retention in Kenya, there remains a significant research gap regarding specific motivational factors affecting private secondary school teachers at the local level in Kiambu County. Most existing studies tend to generalize findings across regions, leaving a gap in understanding the nuanced local dynamics that influence teacher retention in private institutions.

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2021) reports that private secondary schools in Kiambu County have a teacher retention rate of about 40%. This was much higher than the 15%

national average for public schools. The trend raised concern about the factors that affect teachers to leave or stay. This research examined how both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators affect teacher retention in private secondary schools in the region.

1.1.1 Motivational Factors

Motivational factors, as defined by Darling-Hammond (2022), encompass the external and internal forces that drive individuals to engage in specific actions or activities. Motivational factors are important in the teaching setting because they influence teachers' dedication, job satisfaction, and retention in educational institutions. These factors encompass a wide range of aspects, including recognition, financial reward, career advancement, and working environment. The effective teacher retention strategies are vital, as high retention rates have a direct positive correlation with student learning outcomes and overall school performance.

Recognition involves acknowledging and appreciating teachers' efforts and achievements, which fosters a sense of value and belonging. In the teaching profession, recognition manifested in numerous forms, including verbal appreciation, awards, or acknowledgment from peers and administrators (Abdullah & Ma'arof, 2020). Research shows that when teachers feel recognized for their contributions and achievements, their sense of value increases, leading to improved job satisfaction and loyalty. A research by Arol and Aydin (2021) highlights that schools that implement recognition programs experience a significant reduction in teacher turnover, suggesting that acknowledgement of effort plays a vital role in retaining educators in their positions.

Financial rewards, encompassing salaries, bonuses, and other monetary incentives, are pivotal in retaining teachers. Adequate remuneration not only addresses the financial needs of teachers but also conveys a sense of value for their efforts and contributions (Deci, Olafsen & Ryan, 2019). Kariuki (2020) found that inadequate compensation led to feelings of being

unsupported and unappreciated among teachers in private secondary schools, resulting in lowered retention rates. In many cases, financial incentives like bonuses or salary increases, are directly linked with increased job satisfaction among teachers. In Kenya, with a considerable disparity in salary scales between the private and public sectors, the need for competitive salaries in private schools becomes paramount. A study by Mutiga (2023) indicated that teachers in private institutions who feel relatively compensated are 35% likely to remain in their roles than their counterparts who perceive inadequacy in their financial rewards.

Opportunities for career advancement, such as promotions and professional development, play a crucial role in teacher retention. Teachers who perceive a clear pathway for professional growth and development are likely to remain devoted to their roles. A research by Kilonzo (2022) indicates that private secondary schools that offer professional development programs and opportunities for advancement tend to have lower turnover rates. This is especially important in the context of private school, where many teachers want to improve their qualifications and abilities. The availability of mentorship programs and leadership training significantly impact teachers' decisions to remain in their positions, as they feel invested in their professional journey (Mokaya, Ochieng & Waweru, 2020).

Employee morale and cohesiveness are greatly influenced by the working environment, which encompasses the overall atmosphere, support systems, and day-to-day practices within an institution (Wanjiru, Karanja & Muceke, 2023). Retaining teachers requires a positive working environment that promotes support, innovation, and collaboration. A study by Karanja and Oloko (2023) found that teachers in private schools with collegial relationships and supportive leadership reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those working in rigid or unsupportive environments.

1.1.2 Teacher Retention

Teacher retention is the capacity of schools to keep their teachers, which promotes a stable and consistent educational setting. High retention rates indicate a stable and experienced workforce, while low retention rates signify frequent turnover and instability. Retaining qualified and experienced teachers ensures continuity, enhances educational quality, and contributes to the overall development of students (Buchanan, Prescott & Schuck, 2021).

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2019), many nations face significant shortages of qualified teachers, with some regions experiencing turnover rates exceeding 10% annually. This challenge is particularly acute in low- and middle-income countries, where financial constraints, inadequate professional development opportunities, and challenging working conditions contribute to high attrition rates (Ingersoll et al., 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, teacher attrition rates can reach up to 20%, undermining efforts to improve access to quality education (UNESCO, 2020).

The Learning Policy Institute (2021) reports that 8% of teachers leave the profession annually, with higher rates among early-career teachers in United Kingdom. This turnover imposes financial and administrative burdens on school systems and hampers student achievement. Conversely, some countries like Singapore and Finland have implemented policies fostering teacher satisfaction and professional growth, resulting in lower attrition rates (OECD, 2021). Despite these efforts, the global trend indicates that teacher retention remains a pressing issue, affecting both developed and developing countries. A study conducted in the Philippines highlighted that teacher retention rates hover around 80%, with significant dropout among those teaching in underserved communities due to low salaries and heavy workloads (Lara & Garcia,

2022). This emphasizes the importance of understanding the factors influencing teacher retention to formulate targeted interventions that improve morale and reduce turnover.

A research by Waweru and Karanja (2022) highlighted that low retention rates among teachers adversely affect student performance and the overall quality of education. Statistical evidence from various countries illustrates the global challenge of teacher retention. For instance, a study conducted by Ingersoll in 2020 revealed that more than 46% of teachers in the United States leave their positions within the first five years of their careers, often citing factors such as insufficient opportunities for professional development and a lack of support from school administration as reasons for their departure. This pattern resonates with the findings in Kenya, where similar issues are prevalent; teachers increasingly seek work environments that provide adequate support and recognition (Kilonzo, 2022). Furthermore, a study in Nigeria indicated a turnover rate of about 24% among teachers, with economic factors and poor school conditions cited as primary reasons for leaving (Adeyemi, 2022).

In Kiambu County, recent statistics indicate that nearly 40% of teachers in private secondary schools leave their positions on an annual basis (Mugambi, 2022). Such low retention rates not only disrupt classroom continuity but also challenge the implementation of effective teaching strategies, directly impacting student performance and satisfaction (Migwi & Michubu, 2024). As educational institutions strive to provide consistent quality education amid these challenges, it becomes paramount to identify the motivational factors affecting teacher retention in this specific context.

1.1.3 Private Secondary Schools in Kiambu County

Kiambu County, located in central Kenya, has experienced significant growth in the private secondary school sector over recent years (Karanja, 2023). The proliferation of private schools in

the region is driven by increasing demand for secondary education, driven by population growth and perceptions of higher quality education outside the public system (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2021). As of recent data, the county boasts a total of 303 secondary schools, comprising 227 public and 76 private institutions (KNBS, 2021). These private schools cater to a significant portion of the student population, contributing to the county's overall educational development. The total enrollment in these secondary schools stands at 89,065 students, with a nearly equal distribution between males (44,777) and females (44,288). This reflects a gross enrollment rate of 69.3% and a net enrollment rate of 61.8%, indicating that while a substantial number of school-age children are attending secondary school, there is still room for improvement to achieve universal enrollment (Ministry of Education, 2022). These schools vary widely in size, infrastructure, and academic performance, with many newly established institutions competing to attract students in a competitive educational landscape (Njenga & Wainaina, 2020).

Statistical data from the Kenya Education Management Information System (EMIS) (2022) indicates that private secondary schools in Kiambu account for approximately 45% of the total secondary school student enrollment in the county. This high enrollment share underscores the crucial role that private schools play in providing accessible and alternative education options for families, especially in urban and peri-urban areas of Kiambu. Furthermore, the growth of private secondary schools has been associated with increased employment opportunities for teachers and administrative staff, although issues of teacher motivation and retention remain prevalent (Mutua, 2021). Despite their importance, there is limited scholarly research focusing specifically on the operational challenges and human resource dynamics within private secondary schools in Kiambu, which underscores the need for targeted studies that can inform policy and practice in the sector.

The teacher workforce in secondary schools in Kiambu County comprises 3,479 educators, resulting in an average student-teacher ratio of approximately 25:1. This ratio aligns with national standards and suggests that, on average, classrooms are adequately staffed to provide quality education. Despite these positive indicators, private secondary schools in Kiambu County face unique challenges. One significant issue is the retention of qualified teachers. Factors such as compensation disparities, limited opportunities for professional development, and varying working conditions influenced teacher retention rates in private institutions. Addressing these challenges were essential for preserving educational quality and ensuring that learners receive consistent instruction from experienced educators.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Education in Kenya faces significant challenges, particularly in the realm of teacher retention, which is critical for maintaining the quality of education in private secondary schools. In Kiambu County, the issue of high teacher turnover has become increasingly pronounced, with recent studies indicating that approximately 30% of teachers in private secondary schools leave their positions within the first five years of service (Ministry of Education, 2023). This alarming statistic not only disrupts the continuity of education but also adversely affects student performance and overall school effectiveness. The high retention rates attributed to various motivational factors, including inadequate salaries, insufficient support from school administration, insufficient recognition and lack of professional development opportunities (Wambua, 2024). Most existing studies have focused on public sector teachers or have adopted broad national or regional perspectives, thus neglecting the unique dynamics and challenges faced by private institutions (Karanja & Waweru, 2022; Mugo & Murithi, 2021). Consequently, there is a critical knowledge

gap regarding the specific motivational drivers that influence teacher retention in private secondary schools at the local level, which impedes the formulation of targeted retention strategies.

Scholarly research indicates a strong link between motivation and teacher retention. Mwangi (2023) found that lack of recognition and limited administrative support significantly influence teachers' decisions to leave private secondary schools. Oluoch (2024) noted that teachers tend to stay longer when they feel supported and see opportunities for growth. However, limited research exists on how motivation impacts retention specifically in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. Ndung'u (2022) highlighted that poor communication from management leads to feelings of disenfranchisement and lower job satisfaction. Karanja and Mutai (2023) emphasize that improving retention requires more than financial incentives; fostering a supportive and valued environment is crucial.

Njoroge (2023) employed a survey design to identify workload and salary as primary motivators, but failed to explore how contextual factors such as school management style or community expectations shape motivation. Contextually, while Kenya's education sector has experienced rapid growth, private secondary schools have often been overlooked in research, especially in counties like Kiambu where private schools form a significant part of the educational landscape (Karanja & Waweru, 2022). The unique operational environment of private schools characterized by resource limitations, competitive pressures, and diverse student populations may influence motivational factors differently compared to public schools. However, existing literature offers limited insights into how these contextual variables impact teachers' motivation and retention decisions locally. This lack of context-specific data constrains policymakers and school administrators from developing effective retention strategies tailored to private secondary school

settings. Thus, this research aimed to investigate the motivational factors that affect teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County.

1.3 General Objective

The general objective of the research was to determine the effect of motivational factors on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The research's specific objectives were;

- i. To explore the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.
- ii. To find out the effect of financial reward on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.
- iii. To determine the effect of career advancement on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.
- iv. To establish the effect of working environment on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

The study questions included;

- i. What is the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya?
- ii. What is the effect of financial reward on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya?

- iii. What is the effect of career advancement on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya?
- iv. What is the effect of working environment on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The research's results have significant implications for numerous stakeholders in the education system.

1.5.1 Government of Kenya

Firstly, for the Government of Kenya, the research will assist policymakers understand the challenges private secondary schools face in retaining teachers. Policymakers will create policies and initiatives that improve teacher motivation and retention, including in the private school sector. This will lead to better educational outcomes since stable teaching personnel are more likely to establish a positive learning environment, which will benefit both students and the educational landscape as a whole.

1.5.2 Teachers Service Commission

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) will also benefit from the insights this study provides. The TSC is responsible for the management and professional development of teachers in Kenya. The TSC may use this knowledge to improve teacher deployment strategies and ensure a balanced distribution of qualified educators across both public and private sectors. The commission can work with private school employers to create training programs. These programs should improve job satisfaction and encourage teachers to stay in the profession.

1.5.3 Principals and School Administrators

Principals and school administrators at private secondary schools will also benefit significantly. They play a vital role in shaping the working environment within their institutions. This includes recognizing and appreciating teachers' achievements, supporting professional development, and encouraging open communication. A positive working environment created through such efforts can enhance teachers' job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes.

1.5.4 Teachers

For teachers, the study holds significant importance as well. Teachers will gain a deeper understanding of how recognition, financial rewards, career advancement opportunities, and working environment affect their job satisfaction and commitment. The research provides a venue for teachers to express their issues and desires about their professional environment, resulting in a more meaningful job experience.

1.5.5 Scholars

Finally, this research contributes to the body of knowledge on teacher retention by giving academics and researchers with concrete data that may be used in future research. The findings will be valuable for scholars interested in exploring workforce motivation in the education sector, particularly in private institutions. Also, the results serve as a foundation for comparative research across different geographical areas or educational systems, contributing to the discussion on effective strategies for retaining talented teachers.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research concentrated on exploring the effect of motivational factors on teacher retention within private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. It sought to investigate how recognition, financial rewards, career advancement opportunities, and working environment

affected teachers' decisions to stay in their professions. The geographical scope of this study was limited to Kiambu County, which was characterized by its vibrant educational landscape, with numerous private secondary schools catering to a diverse student population. There were about 76 private secondary schools in the county. The research covered the last five years (2020-2024). This timeline included a review of trends and changes in teacher retention rates and motivation factors, which allowed for a detailed analysis of the evolving landscape of private secondary education in Kiambu. The study explored how the COVID-19 pandemic, which began impacting educational systems in early 2020, had affected teacher motivation and retention. It also explored the long-term effects of educational policies implemented during and after this period.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter provides a literature review on the factors included in the research study. However, the theoretical framework and empirical review that serve as the foundation for the study are explored. This chapter also presents the conceptual framework and operationalization of variables.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This is a foundational structure that guides research by providing a well-defined perspective, concepts, and relationships that the study intends to investigate. The study was anchored by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Exchange Theory.

2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow developed this motivational theory in year 1943. The theory holds that human wants are structured in a hierarchy, which is sometimes portrayed as a pyramid. This hierarchy is divided into five levels: physiological needs, safety needs, love/belonging requirements, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1943). The fundamental level comprises of physiological demands, which include basic life necessities like food, water, and shelter. Once these requirements are addressed, people want safety and security, which includes both physical safety and mental stability. The third level, love and belonging, emphasizes the value of social connections and community. The fourth level of wants is esteem, which includes the desire for respect, acknowledgement, and a sense of success. Finally, self-actualization refers to the realization of personal potential, as well as the quest of personal progress and peak experiences (Oduor, 2022).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs has been criticized for its overly simplistic and linear approach to human motivation, which may not accurately reflect the complex realities faced by teachers today. Recent studies suggest that teachers often pursue higher-level needs such as esteem and self-actualization even when their basic needs are not fully met, indicating that the hierarchy is not always sequential (Oduor, 2022; Koech & Ng'ethe, 2020). Moreover, the theory tends to underemphasize contextual and cultural factors that influence motivation, such as community values and systemic challenges in education (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The theory offers a useful framework for analyzing the incentives that impact teachers' decisions to stay in their jobs. The theory suggests that if teachers' basic needs are not met, they are less likely to be motivated to stay in their roles. For instance, if teachers are struggling to meet their physiological needs due to inadequate salaries or poor working conditions, they may prioritize finding alternative employment that offers better financial security. Similarly, if their safety needs are compromised such as in an environment lacking job security or supportive administration teachers may feel compelled to leave their positions (Koech & Ng'ethe, 2020).

Moreover, the theory is applied to investigate how intrinsic motivational factors like esteem and self-actualization, play a critical role in teacher retention. Esteem needs relate to recognition, respect, and a sense of accomplishment, which are crucial for educators who often seek acknowledgment of their efforts and contributions (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Teachers who feel valued and respected are more likely to remain in their positions, as they derive satisfaction from their roles. Furthermore, self-actualization might increase teachers' commitment to their jobs by encouraging them to pursue personal and professional development (Kauffman, 2021). Programs that provide professional development opportunities correlate with self-actualization requirements, perhaps leading to higher retention rates since teachers believe they are always

improving in their field. Aligning school policies and practices with the motivational factors identified in Maslow's theory allows educational leaders to cultivate an environment that attracts and retains qualified teachers. This approach ultimately enhances educational outcomes for students.

2.2.2 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg devised the Two-Factor Theory, generally called as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory in 1959. This theory differentiates between two types of elements that influence workplace motivation: hygiene factors and motivators. Salaries, corporate policies, working environment, and job security are all considered hygiene factors. These variables do not always drive people to perform better, but they might contribute to discontent when performance falls short. Motivators, on the other hand, include characteristics such as accomplishment, acknowledgement, accountability, and possibilities for personal development. The existence of motivators increases job happiness and engagement, whereas their absence reduces discontent but restricts total job fulfilment (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, though influential, has been critiqued for its rigid categorization of hygiene factors and motivators, which may not fully capture the nuanced experiences of teachers. Recent research indicates that factors such as salary and recognition can simultaneously act as both hygiene and motivator elements depending on individual perceptions and contextual variables (Mokoena & Du Plessis, 2019; Kraft & Papay, 2019). Additionally, the theory's focus on job satisfaction neglects other important dimensions such as emotional exhaustion and organizational culture, which significantly impact teacher retention (Mokopanele & Steyn, 2021).

The significance of theory extends to various fields, including education and human resource management. It is critical in the education industry, particularly in terms of teacher retention, to distinguish between hygienic factors and motivators. Teachers feel dissatisfied due to low salaries or unfavorable working conditions, which are classified as hygiene factors. Conversely, their motivation is greatly enhanced through opportunities for professional development and recognition, considered motivators (Mokoena & Du Plessis, 2019). This theory stresses the multifaceted nature of teacher retention, stating that only addressing hygienic aspects will not be adequate to maintain excellent educators. To create a supportive and motivating environment, schools must take a balanced approach that addresses both sets of factors (Kraft & Papay, 2019).

Schools that prioritize both hygiene and motivators foster an environment that attracts and keeps great instructors. Addressing hygiene concerns lowered discontent, whereas improving motivators increased job engagement and satisfaction (Mokopanele & Steyn, 2021). These modifications eventually lead to improved educational results for children. Furthermore, studying how different instructors prioritize hygienic issues and motivators enables individualized retention methods that address the specific needs of Kiambu County teachers.

2.2.3 Self Determination Theory (SDT)

The theory was developed by Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci in 1985. This theory highlights the role of intrinsic motivation in human behaviour and suggests that in order to promote motivation, three fundamental psychological needs must be met: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Autonomy is the sense of control over one's actions; competence is the sense of mastery and effectiveness in one's tasks; and relatedness is the need for social connections and belonging.

The theory states that when these needs are met, people are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation, which in turn leads to higher engagement and persistence (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Studies have shown that teachers' autonomy is often limited by rigid curricula and administrative policies, which can hinder the fulfillment of psychological needs despite intrinsic motivation (Mutisya, Muthoni & Wainaina, 2023; Niemann, Schwab & Lutz, 2020). Furthermore, SDT's focus on individual psychological needs may overlook systemic issues such as resource shortages and workload pressures that also critically affect teacher retention (Mokoko, Leibowitz & Smith, 2022).

The theory significance lies in its holistic understanding of motivation, especially in educational contexts where teacher motivation directly correlates with retention rates. In the context of education, particularly for teachers, autonomy manifest as the freedom to make instructional decisions, while competence is developed through professional development opportunities. Relatedness contributes to teacher satisfaction when they feel supported by their peers and administration (Mutisya, Muthoni & Wainaina, 2023). Recognizing these needs allows schools to create environments that not only support their educators but also enhance their job satisfaction and engagement (Niemann, Schwab & Lutz, 2020). Therefore, theory offers a useful framework for comprehending the elements that affect teacher retention, emphasizing the need of encouraging teachers' intrinsic motivation.

The schools that promote autonomy by allowing teachers to have a say in curriculum design or teaching methods may find higher retention rates. Furthermore, providing opportunities for professional development enhances teachers' feelings of competence, while fostering a supportive community strengthen relatedness among staff members (Mokoko, Leibowitz & Smith, 2022). Consequently, understanding and applying this theory in the study can help inform

strategies aimed at improving teacher retention. School administrators may boost teachers' intrinsic motivation by establishing an atmosphere that encourages autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This will ultimately result in improved retention rates and more job satisfaction.

2.2.4 Social Exchange Theory

The theory was developed by George C. Homans in 1958. The theory posits that human interactions are transactions with the goal of maximizing advantages and minimizing disadvantages. Social exchange is defined as the process by which two or more people trade material and immaterial goods and services, with varying costs and benefits. This theory states that people attempt to create equal exchanges in order to maintain relational stability, and they assess their connections by taking into account the perceived balance between their efforts and the rewards they get (Kipkebut, 2021).

Social Exchange Theory's emphasis on rational cost-benefit analyses in human interactions provides useful insights into teacher retention; however, it has been criticized for oversimplifying the emotional and ethical dimensions of teaching. Recent research highlights that teachers' decisions to stay or leave are not solely based on transactional rewards but also on intrinsic values, professional identity, and emotional bonds with students and colleagues (Gichohi, 2023; Zhang, Wang, & Xu, 2023). Additionally, the theory's focus on individual exchanges may neglect broader systemic and cultural influences that shape teacher experiences and retention (Mushtaq & Khan, 2019).

In the educational context, the theory offers valuable insights into teacher retention. Teachers assess their commitment to an institution by comparing the rewards they receive, such as salary, professional development opportunities, and recognition, against the costs they incur, including workload, stress, and time commitment (Gichohi, 2023). A favorable balance arises

when perceived incentives surpass the expenses, making instructors more inclined to maintain their professions (Mushtaq & Khan, 2019). Conversely, turnover is more likely when expenses exceed benefits. Teachers' decisions to stay or go are heavily influenced by this cost-benefit analysis, which highlights how crucial fair exchanges are to fostering work satisfaction and retention.

Teachers who are recognised and rewarded for their successes report higher work satisfaction and are more likely to stay in their employment for longer periods of time (Zhang, Wang, & Xu, 2023). The Social Exchange Theory emphasizes the necessity of creating a supportive atmosphere in private secondary schools. Providing both social and material support enhances the perceived value of teachers' roles and leads to higher retention rates. Additionally, understanding the dynamics of social exchanges guided school leaders in developing effective strategies to motivate and retain teachers.

This theory offers understandings into how various motivational factors affect teachers' decisions to remain in their roles. Acknowledgment and rewards for teachers' classroom efforts significantly enhance the benefits of their profession, thus outweighing perceived costs like workload and stress. Recognizing the importance of social exchanges among teachers enables administrators to foster an environment of collaboration and support, which ultimately boosts overall satisfaction and retention.

2.3 Empirical Literature

The section presented previous literature review on recognition and teacher retention; financial reward and teacher retention; career advancement and teacher retention; working environment and teacher retention.

2.3.1 Recognition and Teacher Retention

Recognition as a motivational factor plays a significant role in influencing teacher retention across various countries. In the United States, research by Johnson et al. (2020) demonstrated that teachers who received consistent recognition from school administrators reported higher job satisfaction and were less likely to leave their positions. Similarly, in Australia, Smith and Lee (2021) found that recognition, particularly through formal awards and positive feedback, fostered a sense of belonging and professional pride, thereby reducing turnover intentions. However, critiques of these findings suggest that recognition must be perceived as genuine and meaningful; superficial or inconsistent acknowledgment may have little to no impact. Nairuba (2020) pointed out that lack of recognition contributes to teacher dissatisfaction, especially in private secondary schools where teachers often feel undervalued despite their efforts. This aligns with the current study's focus on whether recognition can serve as a retention tool in private schools in Kiambu County.

Bennel and Akyeampong (2022) argue that authentic recognition such as opportunities or peer acknowledgment is more impactful than superficial praise. Conversely, Ekabu (2021) emphasizes that recognition alone cannot compensate for other demotivating factors like low salaries or poor working conditions, especially in resource-constrained environments. In private secondary schools in Kiambu, where teachers may feel undervalued due to limited formal recognition programs, understanding how recognition influences retention could inform policies that foster a more supportive working environment. This assessment underlines the importance of integrating recognition within broader motivational strategies tailored to local contexts.

A research by Latham and Saari (2019) looked at how teacher recognition affected Midwest public school teachers' job happiness and retention in United States of America. The

research utilized stratified random selection procedures to target a population of 500 teachers from different districts using a cross-sectional research methodology. A standardized questionnaire that included questions on retention intentions, work satisfaction, and recognition was used to collect the data. Teachers who felt valued by school management were 40% more likely to stay in their jobs, according to the data, which showed a significant association between recognition and teacher retention. The existing research was done in a developing country, whereas the previous study was conducted in a developed country.

A mixed-methods research study by Allen, Smith and O'Connor (2021) explored recognition and its influence on teacher retention in Australian schools. The study targeted a sample of 300 teachers across urban and rural areas, employing purposive sampling techniques to ensure diversity in the sample. Data were gathered through surveys and focus group discussions. The findings indicated that teachers who received consistent recognition and feedback expressed greater job satisfaction and commitment to their schools. However, the study highlighted a notable gap in qualitative data concerning individual teacher experiences, which could provide deeper insights into the specific forms of recognition that are most impactful. The variability in educational environments between Australia and Kenya necessitates further exploration tailored to the Kenyan context.

In India, Singh (2020) conducted a qualitative case study concentrating on the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private schools. The research design involved interviews with 40 teachers from various private institutions in Delhi. Sampling was achieved through convenience sampling. The study revealed that public acknowledgment, professional development opportunities, and financial bonuses significantly affected teachers' motivation to continue their careers. Teachers reported that recognition enhanced their sense of belonging and commitment to

their schools. Despite these findings, the exploratory nature of the study limits its generalizability, a critical drawback when applying its findings to the Kenyan educational context, where different recognition practices may prevail.

A longitudinal study by Nkosi (2022) examined the role of recognition in teacher retention within South African township schools. The research employed a cohort of 200 teachers across several provinces, using random sampling for selection. Data were collected via surveys and retrospective interviews over two years. The findings indicated that formal recognition, such as awards and performance appraisals, significantly impacted teachers' desire to stay in the profession. However, the study revealed a lack of focus on the role of peer recognition and informal acknowledgment, suggesting that further investigation into the nuances of recognition in diverse educational contexts is necessary. This gap was particularly relevant for understanding the complex dynamics influencing teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kenya.

A research conducted by Mwangi, Ndirangu and Wambui (2023) addressed the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Nairobi County. Employing a correlational research design, the authors targeted a sample of 150 private school teachers using simple random sampling techniques. Data were gathered through structured questionnaires. The findings revealed a significant connection between recognition and teacher retention, with those who felt appreciated also reporting higher levels of job satisfaction. Nonetheless, the study was limited to urban settings and did not account for variances observed in rural areas like Kiambu County.

2.3.2 Financial Reward and Teacher Retention

Financial reward remains one of the most debated motivators influencing teacher retention worldwide. In the United States, Ingersoll (2019) pointed out that competitive salaries are essential

for attracting and retaining qualified teachers, especially in high-cost areas. Similarly, in Ghana, Nartey (2020) found that teachers' decisions to stay in their positions were strongly correlated with salary levels, which were often perceived as inadequate relative to other professions. In Kenya, Ngersoll (2021) highlighted that poor salaries paid to teachers in private schools are a principal reason for high attrition rates, with many teachers leaving for better-paying opportunities elsewhere. This supports the argument that financial incentives are crucial for retention, especially in environments where teachers face economic hardships.

In Mexico, a research done by Martinez and Gonzalez (2020) explored the impact of financial incentives on teacher retention in secondary schools. The research employed a cross-sectional design and focused on a sample of 400 teachers from various states, using stratified random sampling to ensure diverse representation. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire that assessed factors such as financial rewards, job satisfaction, and intentions to remain in their positions. With 65% of respondents saying that financial incentives were a major factor in their choice to stay, the findings demonstrated that instructors who got larger financial prizes were far more likely to plan to stay in their positions. However, the study identified a qualitative data gap that may provide more information on the particular kinds of financial incentives that teachers find most valuable.

In Germany, Schaefer, Meyer and Becker (2021) conducted a mixed-methods study exploring the effects of financial rewards on teacher retention in public schools. The target population included 350 teachers from various regions, and sampling was achieved through purposive techniques, focusing on those with varied levels of financial compensation. Data gathering instruments were semi-structured interviews and online surveys. The research found that although there was a strong correlation between financial incentives and teacher retention, other

important criteria included work satisfaction and possibilities for professional growth. Despite the promising results, the researchers pointed out that the findings' generalizability was constrained by their regional emphasis, indicating the need for further extensive study. This contextual gap is essential when considering the different economic frameworks in Kenya.

A study by Al-Zahrani and Roudah (2023) examined the effect of financial rewards on teacher retention in private schools in Kuwait. The research adopted a descriptive research design and analyzed a sample of 200 teachers chosen through random sampling techniques. Data were collected via questionnaires designed to assess financial compensation, teacher motivation, and retention rates. Findings indicated that financial rewards significantly impacted teachers' decisions to remain in their roles, particularly among newly hired teachers. Approximately 70% of participants reported that competitive salary packages motivated them to stay in their positions. Nonetheless, the study failed to explore variations among different socio-economic backgrounds, which could influence perceptions of financial rewards, presenting a gap relevant to the Kenyan educational landscape.

Adeyemi (2022) did a quantitative research in Nigeria to look at the connection between teacher retention in both public and private schools and financial incentives. A survey research design was employed, and 300 instructors were chosen using stratified random selection to guarantee variety. The study utilized structured questionnaires to examine various aspects of financial rewards and their impact on teachers' retention decisions. The results showed a strong positive correlation between financial incentives and teacher retention, with 80% of respondents citing salary as a key factor in their choice to stay in the profession. However, the research primarily focused on urban teachers, thus neglecting rural settings where financial issues may

differ markedly, creating a gap that needs further exploration within the context of Kiambu County.

Karanja and Mutai (2023) conducted a research on the impact of financial incentives on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The research adopted a correlational research design. A total of 150 teachers were chosen through simple random sampling. Data were gathered through standardized questionnaires, focusing on financial compensation, job satisfaction, and retention intentions. The results indicated a strong link between financial rewards and teacher retention, with educators emphasizing the significance of competitive salaries and benefits in their career decisions. However, the study was limited to urban contexts and did not address disparities faced by teachers in rural areas, emphasizing the need for targeted research that encompasses various environments, such as Kiambu County.

Ekabu (2022) notes that while salary increases can improve retention temporarily, they may not address underlying issues such as career development. In fact, Bennel and Akyeampong (2023) suggest that non-monetary motivators, like recognition and a positive work environment, can sometimes have a more sustained impact on teacher retention. This critique indicates that in the Kenyan private school context, where resource limitations are prevalent, a balanced approach that combines fair compensation with other motivational factors may be more effective. The current study explored whether financial rewards are perceived as sufficient and meaningful motivators for teachers in private secondary schools in Kiambu County.

2.3.3 Career Advancement and Teacher Retention

=Opportunities for career advancement are vital motivators that influence teacher retention across different countries. In the UK, Day and Gu (2020) found that teachers who perceived clear pathways for professional growth and promotion were more likely to remain in their roles.

Similarly, in South Africa, Mthembu (2023) reported that career development initiatives, such as leadership training and specialized certifications, contributed positively to teachers' commitment and retention. However, critiques of these findings highlight that organizational structures and policies often limit access to advancement opportunities, especially in private schools where resources for professional development are scarce (Karanja & Waweru, 2022). In Kenya, Nairuba (2023) observed that limited career growth prospects in private secondary schools contribute significantly to teacher attrition, as teachers seek better opportunities elsewhere.

In the Netherlands, De Rijke, de Klerk, and Schaeffer (2020) investigated the link between professional progression and teacher retention. The research utilized a mixed-methods research approach. The target population comprised of secondary school instructors from diverse urban and rural institutions, with a sample size of 300 educators chosen using stratified random selection. Data were gathered using structured surveys supplemented with in-depth interviews, emphasizing the qualitative experiences of teachers regarding career progression. The findings showed that teachers who saw clear paths for career growth, such as new responsibility and professional development opportunities, were more likely to stay in their jobs. However, challenges related to bureaucratic obstacles in career progression were noted to dissuade retention, highlighting a contextual gap regarding administrative support in career advancement.

In Pakistan, a study by Mahmood, Ahmed and Ali (2021) investigated the effect of career advancement on teacher retention in public and private schools, employing a cross-sectional research design. The target population included 500 teachers from various educational institutions across major urban centers, sampled using simple random sampling techniques. Data collection involved structured questionnaires that assessed both the perceived opportunities for career growth and the actual retention rates of teachers. Findings indicated a significant correlation between

perceived opportunities for advancement and teacher retention rates, suggesting that teaching professionals in Pakistan who experience supportive professional development measures are more likely to stay in their roles. However, the research noted that disparities between public and private schools in terms of advancement opportunities create inconsistencies in retention, indicating a methodological gap in examining diverse school types and their impact on career advancement strategies.

In India, a study done by Nayak, Kumar and Gupta (2023) explored the challenges and opportunities related to career advancement affecting teacher retention. The target population comprised 40 teachers distributed across various private secondary schools in New Delhi, selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their tenure and position within their respective institutions. Semi-structured interviews that probed individual experiences with job advancement were utilized to gather data. According to the study, teachers' dedication to their schools was hampered by a lack of recognition and insufficient professional development opportunities. Teachers expressed a keen desire for advancements tailored to their personal and professional goals, suggesting significant implications for retention strategies. However, the findings reveal a contextual gap in understanding the broader systemic issues affecting teacher motivation across different region like Kenya.

In Ghana, Acquah, Osei-Tutu and Yawson (2022) conducted a quantitative study to explore the association between career advancement opportunities and teacher retention in rural and urban secondary schools. Utilizing a correlational research design, the researchers surveyed 250 teachers selected via stratified random sampling. The data collection instrument comprised a standardized questionnaire, assessing the teachers' perceptions of career development and their retention intentions. The results showed that teacher retention rates in Ghanaian schools were considerably

raised by prospects for promotional development. There is a knowledge gap on how geographic location affects career advancement chances, since the study found that rural teachers faced distinct obstacles when it came to accessing professional development in comparison to their urban colleagues.

In Kenya, a study by Otieno and Abok (2024) utilized a descriptive survey design targeting private secondary school teachers in Nairobi County. Employing simple random sampling, they collected data from 150 teachers using a questionnaire focused on career progression opportunities and retention motivations. The results showed that career advancement programs and teacher retention were positively correlated, confirming the critical role that professional development plays in keeping talented teachers on staff. Nonetheless, the study pointed out that systemic issues, such as inadequate funding for professional development programs, undermine career advancement efforts, indicating significant contextual challenges that need to be addressed.

Bennel and Akyeampong (2023) warn that overemphasizing career progression without addressing other factors like remuneration and recognition may lead to disillusionment. In the context of private secondary schools in Kiambu County, understanding whether teachers view career advancement as a feasible motivational factor may help inform strategies to improve retention through structured professional growth pathways, even within resource constraints.

2.3.4 Working Environment and Teacher Retention

The working environment, which includes the relationships, support systems, and daily practices within a school, plays a crucial role in influencing teacher motivation and retention. In New Zealand, Day et al. (2021) demonstrated that a positive working environment marked by collaboration and support enhances teachers' sense of belonging and reduces turnover. Similarly, in Singapore, Tan and Lee (2022) found that a supportive school setting strengthens professional

commitment and promotes stability among teachers. These studies highlight that the working environment influences motivation beyond financial incentives by shaping teachers' perceptions of their professional experience.

In Ghana, Owusu and Boateng (2023) assessed how the working environment affects teacher retention in public junior high schools. A descriptive survey design was used with a sample of 250 teachers drawn randomly from different regions. Data were collected using structured questionnaires that evaluated aspects such as administrative support, work-life balance, and resource availability. The study found that a positive working environment marked by strong leadership, teacher autonomy, and open communication significantly influenced retention. However, the researchers noted that cultural norms and economic disparities across regions could impact how teachers perceive their working environment, potentially influencing retention decisions more than institutional practices.

In South Africa, Molefe, Dlamini, and Nkosi (2023) conducted a mixed-methods study examining the relationship between the working environment and teacher retention in public secondary schools. The study employed a survey design, targeting 400 teachers from both urban and rural areas selected through stratified random sampling. Quantitative data were collected using standardized questionnaires measuring perceptions of the working environment, while qualitative insights were obtained through interviews with 30 selected participants. The results showed that schools that fostered collaboration, continuous professional development, and recognition had higher retention rates. Nonetheless, the study identified a methodological gap in analyzing the varied experiences of teachers in urban versus rural contexts, which could affect the generalizability of the findings.

Okello, Mburu, and Wanjala (2022) investigated the influence of the working environment on teacher retention in public primary schools in Kenya. Using a case study approach, the study involved 60 teachers from five schools selected purposively for their distinct working environments. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, allowing for in-depth exploration of teachers' experiences. The findings revealed that supportive leadership, open communication, and collegial relationships significantly improved teacher retention. Teachers reported that a positive working environment contributed to job satisfaction and strengthened their commitment to remain in their schools. However, the study noted a contextual gap in understanding how varying school locations and resource availability influenced the working environment and, consequently, retention.

In Kenya, Mutiso and Njeri (2023) examined the association between the working environment and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Nakuru County. Using a descriptive correlational design, the study involved 200 teachers selected through stratified random sampling. A standardized questionnaire was used to assess key elements of the working environment, such as teamwork, support structures, and opportunities for growth. The findings indicated that a healthy working environment characterized by professional respect, collaboration, and development opportunities had a significant positive effect on teacher retention. However, since the study was conducted in private secondary schools in Nakuru County, its findings could not directly apply to public secondary schools in Kiambu County, where the current study is focused.

In Kenya, Karanja and Waweru (2022) observed that private secondary schools with participative leadership and a nurturing environment experienced lower levels of teacher turnover, suggesting that the working environment is a key factor in staff retention. However, critics point

out that establishing a positive working environment requires consistent effort and resources, which may be scarce in private schools operating under financial constraints (Mugo & Murithi, 2021). Ekabu (2023) adds that for a working environment to effectively motivate and retain teachers, it must be inclusive and aligned with their values and professional expectations. The current study examined whether teachers in Kiambu perceive their working environment as motivating and how this perception affects their decision to remain in their roles.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gap

This chapter has explored several theoretical frameworks; Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and Social Exchange Theory that provide foundational perspectives on motivation and retention. The empirical review examined key variables influencing teacher retention in private secondary schools, including recognition, financial rewards, career advancement, and working environment.

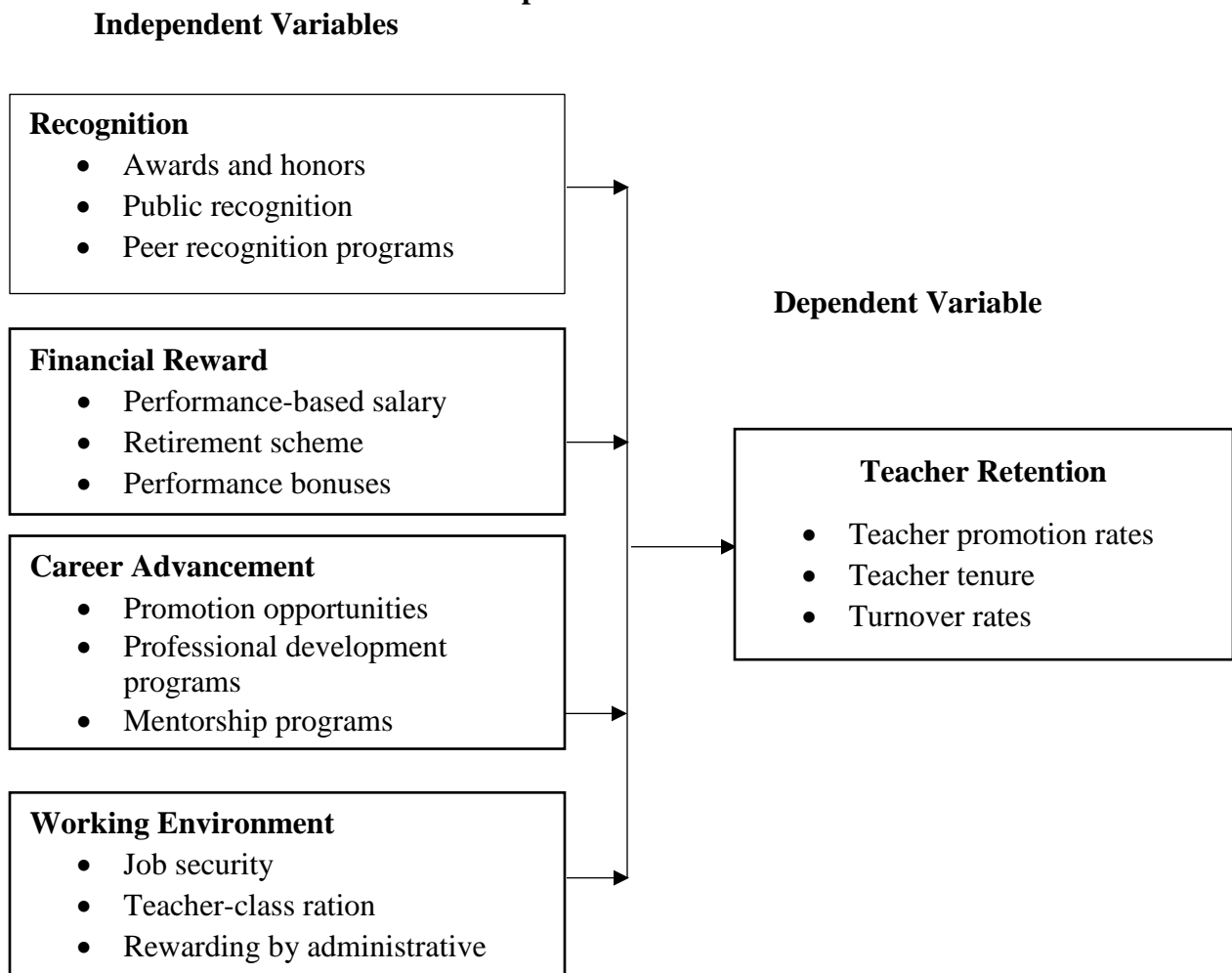
The literature indicates that recognition significantly influences teacher motivation and retention, with studies from the U.S., Australia, India, South Africa, and Kenya demonstrating that genuine acknowledgment enhances job satisfaction and commitment (Johnson et al., 2020; Smith & Lee, 2021; Mwangi et al., 2023). Similarly, financial incentives are consistently identified as critical motivators; inadequate salaries often drive teachers to leave, whereas competitive pay promotes retention (Ingersoll, 2019; Nartey, 2020; Karanja & Mutai, 2023). Opportunities for career advancement and a positive working environment are also recognized as vital factors that contribute to teachers' decision to stay, with evidence from South Africa, the Netherlands, Ghana, and Kenya supporting their importance (Mthembu, 2023; De Rijke et al., 2020; Owusu & Boateng, 2023; Mutiso & Njeri, 2023).

Despite the wealth of international and local studies, there remains a notable research gap regarding the specific context of private secondary schools in Kiambu County. Most existing research predominantly focuses on urban centers like Nairobi or broader national contexts, with limited emphasis on rural or peri-urban areas such as Kiambu. Furthermore, there is insufficient exploration of how these motivational factors interplay within the unique socio-economic and institutional dynamics of private secondary schools in Kiambu. Notably, gaps persist in understanding teachers' perceptions of motivation and retention strategies tailored to this specific environment, especially considering resource limitations and varied school management practices. This study aimed to fill this gap by focusing on private secondary schools within Kiambu County, investigating how recognition, financial rewards, career development, and the working environment influence teacher retention. It endeavors to provide context-specific insights that can inform targeted policy interventions and school management practices aimed at improving teacher retention in this vital sub-sector of Kenya's education system.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an analytical tool that serves as a guide for study, showing the relationships between various variables within a study. It provides a visual representation that explains how different factors interact and influence one another, helping to clarify the study approach. The independent variables are the motivational factors; recognition, financial reward, career advancement, and working environment. The dependent variable in this study is teacher retention. Figure 2.1. show an illustration of the study's conceptual framework.

FIGURE 1
Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher (2025)

2.6 Operationalization of Variables

This is a process of defining and measuring the concepts involved in a research study.

TABLE 1
Operationalization of Variables

Variables	Indicators	Measure	Type of scale
Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awards and honors• Public recognition• Peer recognition programs	5-Point Likert scale	Interval scale
Financial Reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary increases• Retirement benefits• Performance bonuses	5-Point Likert scale	Interval scale
Career Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion opportunities• Professional development programs• Mentorship programs	5-Point Likert scale	Interval scale
Working Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job security• Workload• Administrative support	5-Point Likert scale	Interval scale
Teacher retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher engagement level• Teacher tenure• Turnover rates	5-Point Likert scale	Interval scale

Source: Researcher (2025)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlined the methodology that was utilized in this study, which included the research design, population targeted, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, pilot study, validity, reliability, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This research employed a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is a methodological approach aimed at systematically describing characteristics, behaviors, or phenomena as they naturally occur, without manipulating variables (Dubey & Kothari, 2022). It focuses on providing an accurate portrayal of the subject under study by collecting detailed information that helps in understanding the current status or relationships among variables (Kothari, 2020). Descriptive research design was effective in collecting quantifiable data that could be used to describe existing conditions, relationships, and trends without manipulating the environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This approach was particularly useful when seeking to identify characteristics or patterns within a specific population or phenomenon, making it well suited for this study. The design enabled the researcher to explore and describe the current motivational practices and how they influenced teachers' decisions to stay or leave their respective schools. Sekaran and Bougie (2022) noted that descriptive research provides a snapshot of variables and their relationships at a single point in time, which aligns with the objective of this research. Furthermore, the design facilitates a structured approach to data gathering and analysis, ensuring reliability and comparability across the selected sample.

3.3 Target Population

The target population denotes to the group of people or items that have similar traits that are pertinent to the study and from which the researcher hopes to draw conclusions (Willie, 2024). In this research, the target population comprise of all teachers employed in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. According to the Kiambu County Directorate of Education (2023), there are 76 registered private secondary schools in the county, employing an estimated average of 15 teachers per school, amounting to a total of approximately 1,140 teachers. These teachers form the core workforce in the private education sector and are directly affected by motivational practices within their institutions. As such, they are well positioned to provide relevant results into the factors affecting their retention. The inclusion of all teachers across private schools ensures a diverse representation in terms of age, experience, school management practices, and geographical location within Kiambu County, which increases the reliability and applicability of the research's findings.

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

This research utilized a multi-stage sampling technique involving both schools and teachers. In the first stage, simple random sampling was utilized to choose schools out of the 76 registered private secondary schools. This technique reduced selection bias and improved sample representativeness by guaranteeing that every school had an equivalent chance of being selected. In the second stage, proportionate stratified random sampling was employed to select teachers from the sampled schools. Each school formed a stratum, and the number of teachers selected from each was proportionate to its total teaching staff. Within each selected school, individual teachers were chosen through simple random sampling.

To determine the sample size of schools, Yamane's formula (1967) was applied.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population of schools = 76

e = margin of error (10%) = 0.1

Given that the population size of 1,140 is relatively small, a 10% margin of error is appropriate. As the population size increases, the margin of error is often reduced without requiring a proportional increase in sample size.

$$n = \frac{76}{1 + 76 \times 0.1^2} = 43$$

Thus, a total of 43 schools were selected.

Next, the sample size of teachers was determined by use of same formula:

$$n = \frac{1,140}{1 + 1,140 \times 0.1^2} = 92$$

Therefore, 92 teachers were selected from the 43 schools. Proportional allocation was applied so that larger schools contributed more respondents than smaller ones.

3.5 Research Instruments

The research relied on primary data. The data was gathered by structured questionnaires. Structured questionnaires were suitable for gathering standardized data from a large sample and are ideal for descriptive studies (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2021). The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions organized into sections based on the study objectives, namely recognition, financial rewards, career development and working environment. The items in the

questionnaire are developed using a five-point Likert scale, which allows participants to express the extent of their agreement or disagreement with given statements. This format is not only easy to administer and analyze but also enhances the reliability of responses (Bryman & Bell, 2022).

3.6 Pilot Study

A pilot study was done prior to the actual data gathering to test the clarity, relevance, and reliability of the research instrument. According to Connelly (2020), a pilot sample size ideally constituted about 10–20% of the final study sample. In this study, 20% was used, meaning that 18 teachers were selected from private secondary schools that were not part of the main study. These schools were within the Kiambu County but were purposely excluded from the main study to avoid bias or contamination of the results. The findings from the pilot study helped in identifying the ambiguities in the questionnaire, tested the average completion time, and evaluated the effectiveness of the Likert scale items. Feedback from the participants was utilized to revise items for clarity and eliminate redundant questions. Conducting a pilot study not only improved the quality of the instrument but also increased the likelihood of collecting accurate and valid data (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2022).

3.7 Validity of Research Instrument

Validity refers to how well a research tool evaluated what it was proposed to assess. The three types of validity were assessed, which included content validity, construct validity, and face validity. Content validity was ensured by aligning each questionnaire item with the specific objectives of the study and the key motivational constructs drawn from literature (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2020). The researcher also sought expert opinions from university supervisors and academic professionals in human resource management to evaluate whether the items adequately

covered all relevant aspects of motivational factors and teacher retention. Their feedback was utilized to refine the wording, format, and comprehensiveness of the instrument.

Construct validity was addressed by grouping related items under consistent themes such as financial rewards, recognition, career development, and working environment. This ensured that each construct was distinctly represented and measured consistently (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022). Additionally, face validity was achieved by pre-testing the questionnaire among a small group of respondents to confirm that the instrument appeared to measure the intended phenomena from the perspective of the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

3.8 Reliability of Research Instrument

To ensure reliability, the study utilized Cronbach's alpha coefficient to evaluate the internal consistency of the research instrument in the pilot study. Tavakol and Dennick (2020) stated that a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or above was deemed acceptable for indicating good internal reliability. The responses from the pilot study ($n = 9$) were analyzed using SPSS to calculate reliability scores for each section of the questionnaire related to the motivational factors. High internal consistency indicated that the items in each factor measured the same underlying concept. This helped ensure the consistency and accuracy of the responses in the main study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2021).

3.9 Data Analysis

The collected data was primarily quantitative in nature and was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Descriptive statistics like percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations were utilized to summarize the demographic characteristics of participants and the extent of agreement on various motivational factors.

Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and multiple linear regression, were utilized to determine the relationship between motivational factors (independent variables) and teacher retention (dependent variable). Regression analysis helped in identifying the most influential factors predicting retention outcomes. The findings were displayed using tables, charts, and graphs for clarity and ease of interpretation.

The multiple regression equation is;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where;

Y= Teacher retention

β_0 - intercept coefficient

X_1 – Recognition

X_2 – Financial reward

X_3 – Career development

X_4 – Working environment

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4 = regression coefficients

ε_i – error term (extraneous variables)

3.10 Diagnostic Tests

Before carrying out inferential statistics like regression analysis, it was crucial to perform diagnostic tests to verify that the data met the assumptions of the selected statistical models. This study conducted three important diagnostic tests: normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. These tests helped ensure the findings were reliable, valid, and robust.

3.10.1 Normality Test

The normality test was utilized to explore whether the distribution of the dependent variable and residuals approximated a normal distribution (Field, 2022). To assess normality, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was applied. Acceptable normality supported the reliability of p-values and confidence intervals in subsequent analysis. If normality was violated, the research considered data transformation techniques or non-parametric alternatives to ensure the robustness of the results (Wooldridge, 2020).

3.10.2 Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity occurs when two or more independent variables in a regression model were strongly correlated, potentially skewing the estimation of the individual effects of predictors (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022). The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values were computed in order to detect multicollinearity. Significant multicollinearity problems were often indicated by a VIF number more than 10 or a tolerance value less than 0.1 (Field, 2022). Ensuring minimal multicollinearity was crucial as it allowed for the accurate assessment of the unique contribution of each motivational factor to teacher retention (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2022).

3.10.3 Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity is a key concept of linear regression that was broken when the variance of the residuals in a regression model varied across different values of the independent variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022). The presence of heteroscedasticity could lead to inefficient estimators and misleading significance tests. In this study, heteroscedasticity was tested using the Breusch-Pagan test and by visually inspecting scatter plots of standardized residuals against predicted values. In a homoscedastic relationship, residuals were evenly scattered around the horizontal axis with no discernible pattern.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

This research fully complied with established ethical guidelines throughout the study. Approval was obtained from the Graduate School at KCA University, which had issued a formal authorization letter for the study. Additionally, a research permit was secured from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) in line with Kenyan regulations.

Informed consent was acquired from all participants before data gathering. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation was entirely voluntary, and no names or identifying information were involved in the questionnaires. The data gathered was stored securely, with access limited to the research team. These measures were in line with ethical research standards outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2023) and ensured that participants' rights were safeguarded throughout the research process.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

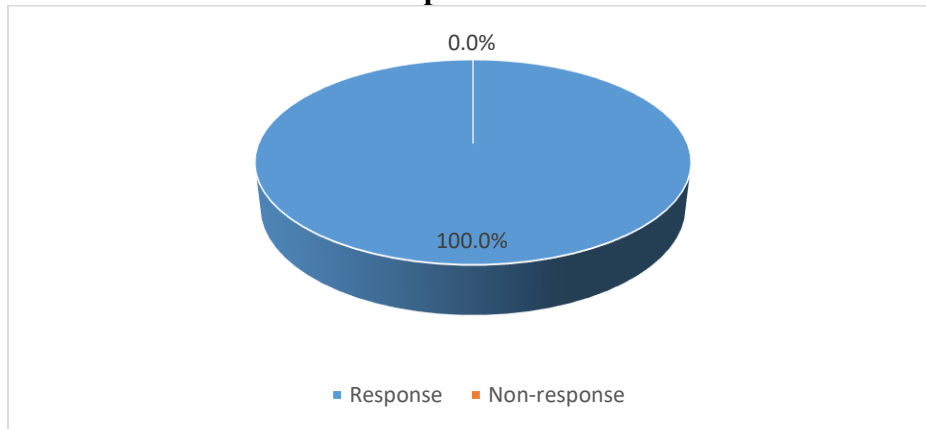
4.1 Introduction

This section outlines the results and discussion. It highlights the results related to how motivational factors affect teacher retention in private secondary schools within Kiambu County, Kenya. The chapter starts with an overview of the respondents' background information before presenting the findings as per the study's objectives. The analysis is supported by both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to interpret the data effectively.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 92 questionnaires were distributed to the targeted respondents, and all of them were fully completed and returned, yielding a 100% response rate. This level of participation is considered outstanding and highly beneficial for the study's analysis. According to Pitura (2023), a response rate of 50% is acceptable, 60% is regarded as good, and rates of 70% or higher are deemed excellent. Given this context, the attained response rate in this research is exceptional. The detailed results are shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2
Response Rate



4.3 Reliability Results

Cronbach's alpha is one of the most widely utilized metrics for evaluating internal consistency reliability, with values ranging from 0 to 1. Generally, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or above is considered acceptable, with values closer to 1 representing higher reliability. The findings on reliability is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Reliability Statistics Output

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Teacher Retention	3	0.867	Highly Reliable
Recognition	3	0.803	Reliable
Remuneration	3	0.812	Reliable
Career advancement	3	0.845	Highly Reliable
Working environment	3	0.879	Highly Reliable
Overall Scale	15	0.841	Highly Reliable

The results in Table 2 show that all study variables recorded Cronbach's Alpha values above the recommended threshold of 0.7, confirming that the instrument used was internally consistent and reliable. Teacher retention ($\alpha = 0.867$), career advancement ($\alpha = 0.845$), and working environment ($\alpha = 0.879$) achieved very high reliability, while recognition ($\alpha = 0.803$) and remuneration ($\alpha = 0.812$) also demonstrated strong reliability. The overall scale reliability of 0.841 further reinforces the robustness of the instrument in measuring motivational factors and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. These findings are consistent with Muindi and Muthoni (2022), who emphasized that instruments with alpha values above 0.8 are considered highly reliable, thereby confirming the stability of the measurement tools used.

4.4 Demographic Information

Comprehending the demographic attributes of the participants is crucial for placing the study's findings in context. Demographic data like gender, age, educational level, and years of teaching experience provide valuable insights into the background of the participants and help identify patterns or correlations relevant to the research objectives.

4.4.1 Respondents' Gender

Gender is a fundamental demographic variable that often influences various aspects of employment, including motivation and retention, especially in the education sector. Understanding the gender distribution among teachers provides insights into potential gender-based differences in motivational factors and retention rates. The results of the gender distribution are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3
Participants' Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	39	42.4
Female	53	57.6
Total	92	100.0

The findings in Table 3 reveal that out of a total of 92 participants, 39 (42.4%) were male, while 53 (57.6%) were female. This shows a higher representation of female teachers in private secondary schools within Kiambu County. The predominance of female teachers aligns with broader trends in the education sector, where women tend to constitute a significant proportion of teaching staff, especially in secondary education (Kinyua & Wambua, 2020). This gender distribution could have implications for motivational strategies, as female teachers may respond differently to various motivational factors compared to their male counterparts. Omondi (2019)

found that female teachers often prioritize intrinsic factors like professional development and work-life balance, which could influence their retention decisions.

4.4.2 Age of Participants

Age is a critical demographic factor that influences teachers’ motivation, career development, and retention. Different age groups may experience varying motivational needs and professional aspirations, which can impact their decision to remain in the teaching profession. The findings on age category are displayed in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Distribution of Participants by Age Category

Age Group	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
20 – 25 years	23	25.0
26 – 35 years	22	23.9
36 – 45 years	16	17.4
46 – 55 years	13	14.1
Over 55 years	18	19.6
Total	92	100.0

Table 4 shows that the participants are distributed across various age groups, with the youngest group (20–25 years) representing 25.0% of the sample, followed closely by the 26–35 years group at 23.9%. The middle-aged group of 36–45 years accounts for 17.4%, while those aged 46–55 years make up 14.1%. The oldest group, over 55 years, comprises 19.6% of the respondents. The high representation of teachers in the 20–25 and 26–35-year age brackets suggests a relatively youthful teaching workforce in private secondary schools. This aligns with findings by Wambui (2021), who reported a youthful demographic among teachers in Kenyan private schools, which could influence motivational factors like career development opportunities,

salary progression, and work-life balance. Younger teachers often seek mentorship, growth prospects, and job security, which are critical factors linked to their retention (Kariuki & Njoroge, 2020).

4.4.3 Level of Education

Educational qualification is a crucial factor influencing teachers’ motivation, professional development, and retention, especially within the context of private secondary schools. Therefore, understanding the educational qualification levels of teachers provides valuable insights into the workforce and helps tailor motivational strategies to enhance retention. The results are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Level of Education

Qualification Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Certificate	5	5.4
Diploma	22	23.9
Bachelor’s degree	39	42.4
Master’s degree	17	18.5
PhD	9	9.8
Total	92	100.0

The results presented in Table 5 shows that the largest proportion of teachers, 42.4%, hold a Bachelor’s degree. This is followed by teachers with diplomas at 23.9%, and those with Master’s degrees at 18.5%. Teachers with certificates make up the smallest group at 5.4%, while PhD holders constitute 9.8% of the respondents. The results reveal that most teachers in private secondary schools possess undergraduate-level qualifications, aligning with national trends observed in education sector in Kenya. Wambui (2021) reported that most teachers in private secondary schools hold bachelor’s degrees or diplomas, reflecting the country's emphasis on

higher education as a prerequisite for teaching positions. The significant proportion of diploma holders suggests that many teachers have acquired professional qualifications that prepare them for classroom instruction, whereas the smaller percentage of certificate holders indicates entry-level or less formalized training. Moreover, the presence of teachers with Master's degrees (18.5%) and PhDs (9.8%) suggests a workforce that values continuous professional development and advanced specialization. This aligns with findings by Mugendi (2020), who noted that higher educational attainment among teachers correlates positively with motivation and commitment, given the opportunities for career progression and professional growth.

4.4.4 Working Experience

Working experience, often measured in years of service, is a critical factor influencing teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and retention. Teachers with varying levels of experience tend to have different motivational needs and perceptions of their work environment. The results are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6
Respondents' Working Experience

Years of Service	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1–5 years	24	26.1
6–10 years	27	29.3
11–15 years	21	22.8
Over 15 years	20	21.7
Total	92	100.0

The results presented in Table 6 indicates that 29.3% of respondents have worked for 6–10 years, making it the largest group. Teachers with 1–5 years of experience constitute 26.1%, while those with 11–15 years account for 22.8%. Teachers with over 15 years of experience make up 21.7%. The findings reveal a relatively balanced distribution of teaching experience, with a

slight dominance of teachers in the 6–10 years category. This aligns with studies by Wanjala and Mutua (2020), which observed that private secondary schools in Kenya often have a workforce composed of mid-career teachers with moderate experience levels. These teachers are likely to be motivated by opportunities for professional growth and recognition, which are critical factors influencing their retention (Kipkebut & Koskei, 2021).

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

This part outlines the descriptive results on recognition, financial reward, career advancement and working environment on teacher retention. The utilized scale was 5-likert which include; 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Moderately Agree, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.

4.5.1 Recognition

The first objective of the research was to examine the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study evaluated the respondents’ level of agreement with various statements related to recognition. The findings are displayed in Table 7.

TABLE 7
Findings on Recognition

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Awards and honors motivate me to remain in my school.	18.5%	19.6%	15.2%	22.8%	23.9%	3.14	1.46
Public recognition from management influences my decision to stay.	16.3%	18.5%	22.8%	23.9%	18.5%	3.10	1.35
Peer recognition encourages my continued service.	18.5%	20.7%	17.4%	20.7%	22.8%	3.09	1.44
Average						3.11	1.42

The results in Table 7 indicate that recognition is a significant motivational factor influencing teachers' retention in private secondary schools. The first statement, "Awards and honors motivate me to remain in my school," shows that 22.8% of participants agreed and 23.9% strongly agreed, totaling 46.7% in favor of the statement. Meanwhile, 38.1% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. With a mean score of 3.14 and a standard deviation of 1.46, the findings suggest that while a notable proportion of teachers consider awards and honors as key motivators, there is still a segment that remains unconvinced. This aligns with findings by Mutua and Orodho (2019), who argued that recognition in the form of awards provides teachers with a sense of achievement and status, thereby enhancing their commitment to remain in schools. Similarly, a study by Kimani and Kombo (2021) noted that symbolic rewards such as certificates and honors significantly boost morale and foster long-term loyalty among teachers in private institutions.

The second statement, "Public recognition from management influences my decision to stay," revealed that 23.9% of teachers agreed and 18.5% strongly agreed, with a combined total of 42.4% indicating positive endorsement. However, a considerable portion (34.8%) expressed disagreement or strong disagreement, while 22.8% moderately agreed. With a mean of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 1.35, the data reflects moderate support for management recognition as a retention factor. These findings resonate with Wanjiru (2020), who emphasized that managerial acknowledgment fosters a sense of belonging, enhancing retention by making teachers feel valued within the organization. Moreover, Njoroge and Gathungu (2022) highlighted that recognition from school leadership enhances teacher satisfaction, which in turn mitigates turnover intentions, especially in competitive private school environments.

The third statement, "Peer recognition encourages my continued service," had 20.7% of teachers agreeing and 22.8% strongly agreeing, totaling 43.5% with positive responses.

Conversely, 39.2% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 17.4% moderately agreed. With a mean of 3.09 and a standard deviation of 1.44, this item shows that peer acknowledgment plays a moderate but relevant role in teacher retention. This observation corroborates the findings of Oduor and Simiyu (2021), who asserted that collegial support and peer acknowledgment foster a collaborative school culture that strengthens teachers' emotional attachment to their institutions. In addition, Kariuki (2023) found that schools with a strong culture of peer recognition experience lower attrition, as teachers feel integrated into a professional community that appreciates their contributions.

Overall, the average mean of 3.11 and a standard deviation of 1.42 across all three recognition statements underscores recognition as a moderately influential motivational factor in teacher retention within private secondary schools in Kiambu County. This is consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which classifies recognition as a "motivator" that enhances job satisfaction and commitment when present (Herzberg, 1968; applied in recent educational studies by Al-Salmi, 2022). In practice, the findings suggest that private schools need to strengthen both formal (awards and management recognition) and informal (peer recognition) mechanisms to motivate and retain their teaching staff.

4.5.2 Financial Reward

The objective two of the research was to find out the effect of financial reward on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The research evaluated the respondents' level of agreement with several statements related to recognition. The findings are displayed in Table 8.

TABLE 8
Findings on Financial Reward

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Salary increases improve my commitment to this school.	16%	23.9%	15.2%	22.8%	21.7%	3.10	1.41
Retirement benefits are important in my decision to stay.	30.4%	15.2%	16.3%	17.4%	20.7%	2.83	1.54
Performance bonuses motivate me to remain at this school.	23.9%	17.4%	15.2%	23.9%	19.6%	2.98	1.47
Average						2.97	1.47

The results presented in Table 8 reflect the significance of financial rewards in influencing teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. The statement, “Salary increases improve my commitment to this school” shows that 22.8% of teachers agreed and 21.7% strongly agreed, totaling 44.5% of respondents who expressed a positive outlook on salary increments. The mean score of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 1.41 further suggest a moderate level of consensus among respondents. This finding implies that salary increments serve as a crucial motivational factor that enhances teacher loyalty and reduces turnover intentions. These results are consistent with the research by Nyaga and Wambugu (2020), who found that competitive salary structures positively influenced employee retention in the education sector. Similarly, Omollo (2021) emphasized that when educators perceive their salaries as fair and progressively increasing, they are more likely to remain dedicated to their institutions.

The statement, “Retirement benefits are important in my decision to stay” had the highest level of disagreement, with 30.4% strongly disagreeing and 15.2% disagreeing, totaling

45.6% of teachers who downplayed its influence. Only 17.4% agreed and 20.7% strongly agreed, indicating that slightly over a third of teachers valued retirement benefits in retention decisions. The mean score of 2.83 and a higher standard deviation of 1.54 suggest greater variability in opinions. These results imply that while retirement benefits are important, they may not be the most immediate concern for teachers in private secondary schools, especially when compared to more immediate incentives such as salaries and bonuses. This aligns with the findings of Njoroge (2023), who observed that employees in younger age brackets prioritize short-term financial incentives over long-term retirement benefits. Similarly, Wekesa and Odhiambo (2022) highlighted that retirement benefits are more influential for older staff nearing the end of their career rather than for younger teachers still focused on immediate financial stability.

The third statement, “Performance bonuses motivate me to remain at this school” received mixed views. A total of 43.5% (23.9% agreed and 19.6% strongly agreed) supported the motivational impact of bonuses, while 41.3% (23.9% strongly disagreed and 17.4% disagreed) rejected the claim, with a mean score of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 1.47. These results show that while performance-based bonuses may encourage some teachers to stay, others perceive them as inconsistent or insufficient. This is in line with a study by Gathungu and Wachira (2021), who found that while bonuses can drive short-term motivation, their inconsistency may lead to dissatisfaction if not fairly and transparently administered. Likewise, Muriithi (2023) argued that performance bonuses must be coupled with recognition and professional development opportunities to yield sustained motivation and retention among teachers.

On average, the three financial reward indicators yielded a mean score of 2.97 with a standard deviation of 1.47, showing moderate influence on teacher retention. The findings suggest that while financial rewards are important, they may not fully explain teacher retention trends

unless integrated with non-financial motivational strategies like recognition, career growth opportunities, and supportive work environments.

4.5.3 Career Advancement

The third objective of the research was to determine the effect of career advancement on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study evaluated the respondents' level of agreement with various statements related to career advancement. The findings are displayed in Table 9.

TABLE 9
Findings on Career Advancement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Promotion opportunities influence my decision to stay.	14.1%	26.1%	17.4%	19.6%	22.8%	3.11	1.39
Professional development programs increase my loyalty.	19.6%	18.5%	21.7%	20.7%	19.6%	3.02	1.44
Mentorship programs enhance my willingness to stay.	19.6%	30.4%	16.3%	22.8%	10.9%	2.75	1.31
Average						2.96	1.38

The findings in Table 9 provide valuable insights into the role of career advancement opportunities as motivational factors influencing teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The data reveals that promotion opportunities significantly influence teachers' decisions to remain in their current positions, with 22.8% strongly agreeing and 19.6% agreeing, resulting in a combined positive response of approximately 42.4%. Meanwhile, 17.4%

moderately agree, indicating a recognition of the importance of career progression in motivating teachers to stay. These findings align with studies by Kariuki (2020), who emphasized that promotion prospects are crucial in enhancing teachers' commitment and reducing turnover, especially in private education institutions where upward mobility can influence job satisfaction and loyalty.

Similarly, the statement regarding professional development programs specifies a moderate level of influence on teacher loyalty, with an average mean score of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 1.44. About 19.6% strongly agree and 20.7% agree that professional development enhances their loyalty, whereas a notable proportion (21.7%) remains undecided or neutral. This suggests that while professional growth opportunities are recognized as important, their impact on retention may vary among teachers. This observation is consistent with findings by Wambui and Wainaina (2021), who argued that continuous professional development (CPD) is a significant motivator that fosters a sense of competence and commitment, though its effectiveness depends on the quality and relevance of the programs offered.

The third variable, mentorship programs, shows a somewhat lower influence on retention, with a mean score of 2.75 and a standard deviation of 1.31. Only 10.9% strongly agree that mentorship enhances their willingness to stay, while 30.4% disagree, indicating a mixed perception of mentorship's role in motivating teachers. The results suggest that mentorship programs may not be uniformly effective or accessible across schools, which aligns with research by Otieno (2022), who noted that well-structured mentorship initiatives can improve teachers' confidence and job satisfaction, but their success heavily depends on implementation quality and institutional support.

Overall, the average score of 2.96 and standard deviation of 1.38 reflect a moderate to positive perception of career advancement factors as motivators for teacher retention. These findings corroborate the study by Kimani et al. (2023), which highlighted that career growth opportunities, including promotions and professional development, are vital for motivating teachers and reducing turnover in private secondary schools. When teachers perceive a clear pathway for career progression, their commitment and willingness to remain in their current roles increase, ultimately contributing to improved school stability and performance.

4.5.4 Working Environment

The fourth objective of the research was to explore the effect of working environment on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study evaluated the respondents' level of agreement with various statements related to working environment. The findings are displayed in Table 10.

TABLE 10
Findings on Working Environment

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Job security encourages me to continue working here.	15.2%	16.3%	19.6%	22.8%	26.1%	3.28	1.41
Workload is manageable and supports my retention.	17.4%	21.7%	25.0%	16.3%	19.6%	2.99	1.37
Administrative support motivates me to stay.	12.0%	26.1%	21.7%	19.6%	20.7%	3.11	1.33
Average						3.12	1.37

The results in Table 10 highlight the role of the working environment in shaping teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. On the statement, “Job security

encourages me to continue working here,” 22.8% of participants agreed and 26.1% strongly agreed, giving a total of 49% who affirmed job security as an important motivational factor, while 15.2% strongly disagreed and 16.3% disagreed. With a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 1.41, the findings suggest a moderately positive perception of job security. This indicates that although job security is valued, it is not guaranteed for all teachers in private schools, where contractual employment and performance-based contracts are common. These findings support the argument of Oduor (2022), who observed that job security directly influences teacher retention by reducing turnover intentions. Similarly, Ngugi and Mungai (2022) found that teachers who feel secure in their positions are more committed and motivated, while those facing uncertainty are more likely to leave for public schools or other professions. This correlation shows that job security remains a strong determinant of retention in the education sector.

On the statement, “Workload is manageable and supports my retention,” 25% of respondents moderately agreed, while only 16.3% and 19.6% agreed and strongly agreed respectively, compared to 17.4% who strongly disagreed and 21.7% who disagreed. This produced a relatively lower mean of 2.99 and a standard deviation of 1.37, indicating that many teachers view workload as a challenge to their retention. These findings suggest that unmanageable workloads negatively affect teacher motivation and increase attrition rates. Similar results were reported by Gitonga and Njuguna (2020), who found that heavy workloads in private schools contribute to teacher burnout, dissatisfaction, and higher turnover rates. Likewise, UNESCO (2021) highlighted that excessive teaching loads without corresponding support mechanisms lead to stress and diminished teaching quality, which in turn undermine teacher retention. This aligns with the broader literature that emphasizes the importance of manageable workloads in sustaining teacher motivation and commitment (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2019).

The statement, “Administrative support motivates me to stay,” received 19.6% agreement and 20.7% strong agreement, while 26.1% of respondents disagreed. The mean of 3.11 and a standard deviation of 1.33 demonstrate a moderate perception of administrative support as a retention factor. This indicates that while some teachers feel supported by school administrators, a significant proportion perceive limited administrative support. Effective administrative support is widely recognized as a critical motivational factor influencing retention, as highlighted by Nyaga and Gichohi (2023), who found that supportive leadership fosters a sense of belonging and professional growth among teachers. Similarly, Onyango (2022) argued that administrators who engage teachers in decision-making processes and provide mentorship significantly reduce teacher attrition. Also, study by Ingersoll and Strong (2021) emphasizes that supportive school leadership enhances job satisfaction, reduces stress, and improves teacher retention. The results therefore suggest that administrative support, though present, needs to be strengthened in private secondary schools in Kiambu County to sustain teacher motivation.

The overall average mean of 3.12 and standard deviation of 1.37 from the three indicators reflect a moderate perception of the working environment as a motivational factor influencing teacher retention. The results collectively suggest that while job security and administrative support moderately enhance retention, workload management remains a significant challenge. These results resonate with the broader literature, which emphasizes that a supportive and stable working environment is vital for retaining qualified teachers, especially in competitive educational markets where private schools must compete with public schools (Mwangi, 2023; Kimani & Mbugua, 2021).

4.5.5 Teacher Retention

The research aimed to explore the teacher retention rate in private secondary schools located in Kiambu County, Kenya, by assessing the level of agreement among participants regarding the different statements on retention. Table 4.11 displays the results.

TABLE 11
Results on Techer Retention

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
I am engaged and committed to my teaching role.	19.6%	13.0%	23.9%	19.6%	23.9%	3.15	1.44
I plan to work at this school for many more years.	16.3%	18.5%	21.7%	23.9%	19.6%	3.12	1.37
I rarely think about leaving this school.	16.3%	22.8%	18.5%	22.8%	19.6%	3.07	1.38
Average						3.11	1.40

The results in Table 11 highlight teachers' perspectives on their retention intentions and commitment to their teaching roles. Overall, the findings show an average mean of 3.11 with a standard deviation of 1.40, indicating moderate levels of commitment and retention intentions with noticeable variability in responses. These results reflect the influence of motivational factors such as recognition, job satisfaction, and organizational support in shaping teachers' decisions to remain in their schools.

The first statement, "I am engaged and committed to my teaching role," received a mixed distribution, with 19.6% strongly disagreeing, 13.0% disagreeing, 23.9% moderately agreeing, 19.6% agreeing, and 23.9% strongly agreeing, yielding a mean of 3.15 and a standard deviation of 1.44. This shows that while a significant proportion (43.5%) of teachers affirm their engagement,

nearly one-third express disengagement. These results align with Onyango and Achieng (2021), who noted that teacher commitment is strongly tied to intrinsic motivation such as passion for teaching and extrinsic motivators like supportive work environments. Likewise, a research by Waweru (2022) in Kiambu County emphasized that motivated teachers who feel recognized and supported are more likely to remain committed to their schools, underscoring that retention strategies must address both professional and psychological needs.

The second statement, “I plan to work at this school for many more years,” indicates moderate long-term retention intentions, with 16.3% strongly disagreeing, 18.5% disagreeing, 21.7% moderately agreeing, 23.9% agreeing, and 19.6% strongly agreeing, resulting in a mean of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 1.37. This suggests that only about 43.5% of teachers plan to stay long-term, while a combined 34.8% express intentions to leave. These findings mirror those of Njoroge (2023), who reported that job security, career growth opportunities, and competitive remuneration are key determinants of teacher retention in private schools. Additionally, Kim and Lee (2021) argued that long-term commitment to a school is strongly influenced by the availability of professional development programs and promotion pathways, which motivate teachers to envision a sustainable career within one institution.

The third statement, “I rarely think about leaving this school,” reflects the highest level of ambivalence, with 16.3% strongly disagreeing, 22.8% disagreeing, 18.5% moderately agreeing, 22.8% agreeing, and 19.6% strongly agreeing, producing a mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 1.38. Here, only 42.4% of teachers show a tendency to remain loyal, while another 39.1% are already considering leaving, suggesting high turnover risk. This agrees with Kariuki and Njuguna (2019), who noted that lack of adequate motivational factors such as fair remuneration and workload balance often increases teacher attrition in private secondary schools. Moreover,

Mugambi and Muriithi (2023) highlighted that frequent thoughts of leaving reflect organizational gaps in retention strategies, particularly in non-state schools where contractual terms are less secure compared to public institutions.

4.6 Diagnostic Tests

The diagnostic tests done were normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

4.6.1 Normality Test

Normality testing is a fundamental step in quantitative research, particularly when using regression analysis, as it ensures that the data are appropriately distributed to meet the assumptions of parametric statistical tests. According to Ghasemi and Zahediasl (2019), normality indicates that the residuals of the model are symmetrically distributed around the mean, which allows for more accurate estimations and valid inferences. In SPSS, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is one of the widely applied methods for assessing whether data deviates significantly from a normal distribution (Mohd Razali & Wah, 2020). A non-significant p-value (greater than 0.05) suggests that the variable is normally distributed, thus meeting the regression assumption. The results are displayed in Table 12.

TABLE 12
Results for Normality Test

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Teacher Retention	0.073	92	0.217
Recognition	0.066	92	0.200
Financial Reward	0.082	92	0.173
Career Advancement	0.071	92	0.206
Working Environment	0.078	92	0.189

The results in Table 12 show that all the study variables met the normality assumption. For teacher retention, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic was 0.073 with a significance value of 0.217, which is above the 0.05 threshold. This specifies that the distribution of teacher retention data did not significantly differ from normality. Similarly, recognition had a statistic of 0.066 with a p-value of 0.200, financial reward recorded a statistic of 0.082 with a p-value of 0.173, career advancement had a statistic of 0.071 with a significance of 0.206, while working environment recorded a statistic of 0.078 with a p-value of 0.189. Since all significance values are greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data for all motivational factors and teacher retention were normally distributed.

4.6.2 Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity arises when independent variables in a regression analysis are strongly correlated, complicating the evaluation of their individual effects on the dependent variable (Bayman & Dexter, 2021). Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values are the most common diagnostic measures used to detect multicollinearity. A VIF value above 10 and a Tolerance value below 0.1 typically indicate a serious multicollinearity problem. The Table 13 present results on Multicollinearity.

TABLE 13
Results on Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Recognition	0.743	1.346
Financial Reward	0.711	1.406
Career Advancement	0.682	1.466
Working Environment	0.758	1.319

The findings in Table 13 show that recognition had a Tolerance value of 0.743 and a VIF of 1.346, while financial reward had a Tolerance of 0.711 and VIF of 1.406. Career advancement posted a Tolerance of 0.682 and a VIF of 1.466, and Working environment had a Tolerance of 0.758 and a VIF of 1.319. All the VIF values are well below the threshold of 10, and all Tolerance values are far above 0.1. These results confirm that there is no evidence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. This means that each predictor; recognition, financial reward, career advancement, and working environment contributes unique information to the model without excessively overlapping with the others (O'Brien, 2019).

4.6.3 Heteroscedasticity

Heteroscedasticity is the presence of unequal variances of error terms across different levels of the independent variables in a regression model. When heteroscedasticity is present, the standard errors of the regression coefficients become unreliable. The Breusch-Pagan test is used to identify heteroscedasticity by examining whether the variance of residuals depends on the independent variables. The results are displayed in Table 14.

TABLE 14
Heteroscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan Test) Results

Test Statistic	df	Sig.
5.832	4	0.212

The findings in Table 14 show that the test statistic is 5.832 with 4 degrees of freedom, and the associated p-value (Sig.) is 0.212. Since this p-value is greater than the common significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis of homoscedasticity that is, the variance of the residuals is constant across different levels of the independent variables (Hair et al., 2019). This

indicates that there is no statistically significant evidence of heteroscedasticity in the regression model examining the motivational factors influencing teacher retention.

4.7 Correlational analysis

Correlational analysis is a statistical technique employed to investigate the strength and direction of the association between two or more variables. It offers insights into the relationship between alterations in one variable and variations in another, with correlation coefficients varying from -1 to +1. A positive correlation means that when one variable rises, the other usually rises too, while a negative correlation indicates a reverse relationship. Significance levels, typically denoted by p-values, determine whether these relationships are statistically meaningful, with p-values less than 0.05 indicating a high level of significance in this context.

TABLE 15
Correlational Analysis Output

Variables	Teacher Retention	Recognition	Financial Reward	Career Advancement	Working Environment
Teacher Retention	1				
p-value	—				
Recognition	.482**	1			
p-value	.000	—			
Financial Reward	.516**	.463**	1		
p-value	.000	.000	—		
Career Advancement	.601**	.498**	.533**	1	
p-value	.000	.000	.000	—	
Working Environment	.554**	.472**	.489**	.515**	1
p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	—

N = 92; Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 15 reveal that recognition had a moderate, positive, and statistically significant correlation with teacher retention ($r = 0.482$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that teachers who

feel recognized and appreciated are more likely to remain in their current positions. Recognition whether through verbal appreciation, awards, or other forms of acknowledgment strengthens teachers' sense of belonging and job satisfaction, thereby enhancing retention.

Financial reward also demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with teacher retention ($r = 0.516$, $p = 0.000$). This finding indicates that adequate and timely financial compensation is an important motivator that encourages teachers to remain in their positions. In the context of private secondary schools, where teachers may compare their pay with peers in other institutions, competitive remuneration plays a critical role in reducing turnover.

Career advancement showed the strongest correlation with teacher retention ($r = 0.601$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that opportunities for professional growth, promotions, and continuous training are strongly associated with teachers' decisions to remain in their schools. Teachers who perceive a clear path for advancement are more motivated, committed, and less likely to leave for alternative opportunities. This underscores the importance of school management investing in professional development programs to enhance retention.

The working environment was also found to have a positive and statistically significant correlation with teacher retention ($r = 0.554$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that when schools provide supportive, safe, and conducive working conditions such as manageable workloads, adequate facilities, and supportive leadership teachers are more likely to stay. A positive working environment not only fosters better teacher performance but also reduces job dissatisfaction and turnover.

Overall, the correlation analysis demonstrates that all the examined motivational factors; recognition, financial rewards, career advancement, and working environment are positively and

significantly associated with teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. The findings reinforce the theoretical understanding that improving motivational factors enhances staff stability, thereby contributing to better learning outcomes and institutional performance.

4.8 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a powerful statistical technique used to examine the relationship between independent variables and a dependent variable. In this study, regression analysis was employed to determine the effect of motivational factors; recognition, financial reward, career advancement, and working environment on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 16 outlines the results on Model Fitness

TABLE 16
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742	.550	.532	0.421

Table 16 presents the model summary of a regression analysis done to evaluate the relationship between motivational factors and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The table displays a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.742, indicating a strong positive relationship between the combined motivational factors included in the model and teacher retention. This implies that improvements in factors such as recognition, financial rewards, career advancement, and working environment are associated with increased likelihood of teachers remaining in their positions. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.550, meaning that approximately 55% of the variance in teacher retention can be explained by the set of motivational factors included in the model. This indicates that more than half of the variation in teachers' decisions to stay can be attributed to these variables, highlighting their significant influence. The

adjusted R² value of 0.532 slightly reduces this figure to account for the number of predictors in the model, providing a more accurate estimate of the explanatory power of the model. The adjusted R² suggests that even after considering the complexity of the model, over half of the variability in teacher retention outcomes is accounted for by the motivational factors studied. Additional, ANOVA output are presented in Table 17.

TABLE 17
ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	18.342	4	4.586	25.876	.000b
Residual	15.021	87	0.173		
Total	33.363	91			

Table 17's results reveal that the regression model is statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000 and an F statistic of 25.876, both of which are well below the 0.01 significance threshold. This confirms that the combined influence of the motivational factors; recognition, financial rewards, career advancement, and working environment on teacher retention is not due to chance, but rather represents a true statistical relationship. The regression sum of squares (18.342) is considerably larger than the residual sum of squares (15.021), representing that a greater proportion of the variation in teacher retention is explained by the motivational factors compared to the unexplained variation. Furthermore, results on regression coefficients are displayed in Table 18.

TABLE 18
Results on Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.842	0.232	—	3.916	.000
Recognition	0.211	0.081	0.216	2.605	.011
Financial Reward	0.187	0.073	0.202	2.562	.013
Career Advancement	0.326	0.079	0.342	4.127	.000
Working Environment	0.298	0.085	0.314	3.506	.001

Table 18 presents the regression coefficients, which provide insights into the unique contribution of each motivational factor to teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, while controlling for the effects of the other variables. The constant term ($\beta = 0.842$, $p = 0.000$) represents the baseline level of teacher retention when all motivational factors are held at zero. This implies that, even in the absence of the motivational factors under consideration, there exists a foundational level of teacher retention influenced by other external or inherent factors.

Among the predictors, career advancement opportunities emerge as the strongest determinant of teacher retention, with the largest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.342$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that private secondary school teachers are more likely to remain in their institutions when they perceive clear pathways for professional growth, promotions, and skill development. The finding resonates with human capital theories, which suggest that opportunities for career progression strongly influence job satisfaction and retention.

Also, the working environment indicates a significant and relatively strong effect on teacher retention ($\beta = 0.314$, $p = 0.001$). A supportive, well-resourced, and conducive teaching environment enhances teachers' willingness to remain in their current schools. This highlights the

importance of factors such as adequate facilities, supportive leadership, and positive school culture in ensuring teacher stability.

Recognition is another significant predictor of retention ($\beta = 0.216$, $p = 0.011$). Teachers who feel valued, appreciated, and acknowledged for their contributions are more motivated to stay in their schools. Recognition, whether through verbal appreciation, awards, or professional acknowledgment, plays a vital role in reinforcing teachers' sense of worth and loyalty to the institution.

Lastly, financial rewards also contribute positively and significantly to teacher retention ($\beta = 0.202$, $p = 0.013$). While financial incentives are not the strongest predictor compared to career advancement or working environment, they still play a crucial role in reducing attrition by addressing teachers' economic needs and enhancing their job satisfaction.

Generally, these results demonstrate that all four motivational factors; career advancement, working environment, recognition, and financial rewards significantly influence teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. Career advancement and working environment stand out as the most critical drivers, but recognition and financial rewards remain essential complementary motivators. These findings imply that holistic motivational strategies, which integrate both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, are necessary for sustaining teacher retention in the private education sector.

4.9 Discussion of Findings

The study aimed to explore the effect of motivational factors on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The variables of interest were recognition, financial reward, career advancement, and working environment. The pre-estimation tests carried out on

normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity confirmed that the underlying assumptions were satisfied, making the data suitable for regression analysis.

4.9.1 Recognition

The first objective of the research was to explore the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The findings from Correlational analysis indicated that recognition had a strong positive and significant correlation with teacher retention ($r = 0.482, p < 0.05$). This infers that improvements in recognition practices like appreciation of teachers' efforts, acknowledgment of achievements, and celebrating professional milestones are associated with higher levels of teacher retention. Regression findings indicated that recognition possessed a significant standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.216, p < 0.05$), marking it as one of the most impactful predictors among the four motivational factors analyzed. This indicates that, with other factors remaining unchanged, an enhancement of one unit in recognition results in a 0.216 rise in teacher retention.

These results are consistent with Karanja and Gichure (2021), who emphasized that recognition fosters a sense of value and belonging, which motivates teachers to remain committed to their schools. Similarly, a study by Muriithi (2023) on private schools in Nairobi found that employees who feel recognized are less likely to seek alternative employment, as recognition boosts their morale and job satisfaction. Internationally, Johnson et al. (2020) established that recognition strengthens employee loyalty by creating an emotionally supportive work environment that enhances retention. The private schools compete for skilled teachers, however, recognition practices such as verbal praise, performance awards, and public acknowledgment provide non-financial incentives that make teachers feel appreciated, thereby encouraging long-term commitment.

4.9.2 Financial Reward

The second objective was to determine the effect of financial reward on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The results discovered a solid positive correlation between financial reward and teacher retention ($r = 0.516$, $p < 0.05$), signifying that teachers who receive competitive pay, timely salary disbursement, and performance-based incentives are more likely to remain in their schools. Regression analysis showed that financial reward had a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.202$ ($p < 0.05$), establishing it as the second most significant predictor of retention following recognition. This shows that proper and equitable financial remuneration can decrease turnover intentions, improve job satisfaction, and reinforce teachers' long-term dedication.

These results support the findings of Nyaga (2021), who emphasized that competitive remuneration packages significantly influence employee loyalty in the education sector. Similarly, Orodho and Kamau (2020) highlighted that fair compensation not only meets teachers' financial needs but also reflects institutional respect for their work, thereby reducing attrition. At the international level, Robbins and Judge (2019) found that monetary incentives, including bonuses and allowances, play a critical role in retaining skilled employees, especially in competitive labor markets. Financial rewards act as a tangible motivator that helps schools retain talented teachers in the face of stiff competition from public schools and other private institutions.

4.9.3 Career Advancement

The third objective aimed to establish the effect of career advancement on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. Correlation results showed a significant positive relationship between career advancement opportunities and teacher retention ($r = 0.601$, $p < 0.05$), specifying that schools offering pathways for professional growth and development are

more likely to retain their teachers. Additionally, regression analysis showed that career progression significantly and statistically significantly contributed to teacher retention, with a standardized beta value of $\beta = 0.342$ ($p < 0.05$).

These results are consistent with Kihoro and Njuguna (2021), who observed that professional development opportunities, including training workshops, promotions, and mentorship, significantly improve teacher loyalty and reduce turnover rates. Similarly, Muriithi (2023) emphasized that teachers who perceive a clear trajectory for growth within an institution are more motivated to stay, as career progression signals appreciation of their skills and long-term value. Ingersoll and Strong (2021) reported that structured career advancement systems, such as continuing education programs and leadership opportunities, enhance retention by fostering a sense of purpose and commitment. Career advancement thus serves not only as a motivator but also as a strategic tool for building institutional stability and reducing teacher attrition.

4.9.4 Working Environment

The fourth objective sought to establish the effect of working environment on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. According to the correlation study, higher teacher retention rates are strongly associated with a supportive and positive work environment, revealing a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.554$, $p < 0.05$). Among the motivating factors examined, it had the second highest impact (standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.314$, $p = 0.05$), based on the regression results, yet it remained statistically significant. This infers that while the working environment plays a vital role in encouraging teachers to remain in their institutions, its effect may be secondary compared to factors such as career advancement or remuneration.

These findings align with Orodho (2017), who found that teachers working in schools with adequate facilities, supportive leadership, and collaborative cultures were more likely to stay long-term. Similarly, Muchiri and Kimathi (2020) highlighted that workplace conditions including classroom resources, staff relationships, and administrative support are essential determinants of teacher job satisfaction and retention. Johnson et al. (2022) reported that teachers in schools with safe, resourceful, and collegial environments experience lower attrition rates, as they feel more valued and supported in carrying out their responsibilities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study, draws conclusions based on these findings, and provides recommendations along with suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the Study Findings

5.2.1 Recognition

The first objective of this research was to explore the effect of recognition on teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between recognition and teacher retention. Teachers who received appreciation for their efforts, acknowledgment of their achievements, and positive feedback from school leadership demonstrated higher commitment and loyalty to their institutions. Regression analysis confirmed that recognition significantly contributed to teacher retention, highlighting its critical role in enhancing motivation and reducing turnover.

5.2.2 Financial Reward

The second objective was to examine the effect of financial reward on teacher retention. The results showed a significant positive relationship, indicating that competitive salaries, allowances, and performance-based incentives were key determinants of teachers' decision to remain in their schools. Regression analysis reinforced this finding, establishing that financial reward plays a substantial role in improving retention levels. These results underscore the importance of aligning compensation structures with teacher expectations in order to reduce attrition.

5.2.3 Career Advancement

The third objective sought to determine the effect of career advancement on teacher retention. The study findings demonstrated that opportunities for professional growth, promotions, and training significantly influence teachers' willingness to stay in their schools. Correlation and regression analyses both confirmed a strong and statistically significant effect, showing that teachers who perceive clear prospects for career progression are more likely to remain loyal to their institutions. This highlights career advancement as a strategic tool for minimizing teacher turnover.

5.2.4 Working Environment

The fourth objective was to establish the effect of working environment on teacher retention. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship, suggesting that teachers working in supportive environments characterized by adequate facilities, manageable workloads, and positive collegial relations are more likely to remain in their schools. Regression study validated this impact, since it has a greater influence than other components. This suggests that while the working environment is crucial in promoting retention, its effect may be mediated by other factors such as recognition and financial reward.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that recognition plays a significant role in influencing teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County. Findings revealed that teachers who feel valued through acknowledgment of their contributions, appreciation of their efforts, and fair treatment are more likely to remain committed to their institutions. This highlights the importance of cultivating a culture of appreciation, where both individual and collective achievements are recognized to foster loyalty and reduce teacher turnover.

The study further concludes that financial rewards are a key determinant of teacher retention. The results indicated that competitive salaries, allowances, and other monetary incentives provide teachers with a sense of stability and fairness, thus encouraging them to remain in their schools. This underscores the necessity for school management to design and implement fair and transparent compensation structures that reflect teachers' qualifications, experience, and workload in order to promote long-term retention.

Additionally, the study concludes that career advancement opportunities have a strong and positive influence on teacher retention. Professional development initiatives such as training, mentorship, promotions, and opportunities for further studies were shown to enhance teacher motivation and job satisfaction. This finding stresses the need for private secondary schools to invest in structured career growth pathways to ensure teachers see a clear future in their profession within the schools.

Lastly, the study established that the working environment significantly affects teacher retention. Supportive leadership, availability of adequate teaching resources, manageable workloads, and a safe and conducive school climate were found to contribute positively to teacher commitment. Schools that provide a positive working environment are more likely to retain skilled and motivated teachers, which in turn promotes stability and continuity in the learning process.

5.4 Recommendation

Based on the finding that recognition significantly influences teacher retention, the study recommends that private secondary schools in Kiambu County establish structured recognition programs. These should include both formal and informal methods of appreciating teachers' contributions, such as teacher-of-the-month awards, public acknowledgment during school

functions, letters of commendation, and peer recognition initiatives. School leaders should cultivate a culture of appreciation where teachers feel valued for their efforts, which can enhance their morale and commitment to the institution.

Given the significant effect of financial rewards on teacher retention, the study recommends that school management review and enhance their compensation structures. Competitive salaries, timely payment, performance-based bonuses, and allowances such as housing, medical cover, and transport stipends should be prioritized. Schools should also consider adopting differentiated reward systems where teachers who demonstrate outstanding performance or take on additional responsibilities receive financial incentives. This will help reduce turnover driven by dissatisfaction with remuneration.

Considering the positive relationship between career advancement opportunities and teacher retention, the study recommends that schools invest in continuous professional development programs. This can be achieved through regular in-service training, funding for higher education, mentorship programs, and opportunities for teachers to attend educational workshops and conferences. Additionally, establishing clear promotion pathways within the school can motivate teachers to remain loyal, knowing that their career growth is valued and supported.

Finally, since the working environment was found to significantly affect teacher retention, the study recommends that private secondary schools create supportive and conducive work settings. This includes providing adequate teaching resources, improving classroom infrastructure, ensuring manageable workloads, and promoting positive staff relations. Schools should also establish open communication channels, foster collaborative teamwork, and support teachers'

well-being by addressing issues such as stress, burnout, and job insecurity. A favorable work environment not only enhances teacher satisfaction but also strengthens long-term retention.

5.5 Limitations of Study

This research faced several limitations that should be recognized. First, the research was limited to private secondary schools in Kiambu County, which narrowed the geographical scope and reduced the generalizability of the findings. Teacher motivational factors and retention challenges may differ across counties due to variations in school management practices, socio-economic conditions, and cultural settings. Therefore, the results may not fully reflect the situation in other regions of Kenya.

Second, the study relied heavily on self-reported information gathered through questionnaires. Such an approach is prone to response bias, as some teachers might have given answers they considered more acceptable rather than their true experiences, particularly on sensitive issues such as job satisfaction, remuneration, or workload. This may have affected the level of accuracy and objectivity of the data collected.

Lastly, the study focused on selected motivational factors such as remuneration, career growth, working environment, and recognition. Other important aspects that could also influence teacher retention, including leadership style, organizational policies, and government education regulations, were not addressed. This narrowed scope may have limited the comprehensiveness of the analysis in fully explaining all the determinants of teacher retention in private secondary schools.

5.6 Areas for Further Studies

First, comparable study should be conducted in other Kenyan counties to see whether the influence of motivating variables on teacher retention varies by geography, culture, or socioeconomic status. Such comparative study would assist determine if variations in school ownership, county-level education policy, and local economic situations affect the strength of the association between motivating variables and teacher retention. Furthermore, future research could focus on conducting comparative studies between private and public secondary schools to assess whether the same motivational factors have a similar impact on teacher retention across the two sectors. Further studies may also examine specific motivational factors in greater depth, such as the long-term effects of career advancement opportunities or recognition programs on teacher loyalty. This would provide more targeted insights for school managers, policymakers, and stakeholders in formulating effective teacher retention strategies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Your contribution responses and support to this study will be highly appreciated and the information given will be treated with confidentiality.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Age of the respondent

18-25 26-35 36-45 45-55 above 55

3. What is your educational level?

Diploma level

Degree level

Master level

PhD level

4. Indicate number of years you have worked in teaching professional.

1- 5years 6-10years 11-15years

Above 15 years

SECTION B: MOTIVATION FACTORS

Please rate each of the statements below on how motivation factors affects the teacher retention in private secondary schools. For all the statements, 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Moderately Agree, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition					
Awards and honors motivate me to remain in my school.					
Public recognition from management influences my decision to stay.					
Peer recognition encourages my continued service.					
Financial Reward					
Salary increases improve my commitment to this school.					
Retirement benefits are important in my decision to stay.					
Performance bonuses motivate me to remain at this school.					
Career Advancement					
Promotion opportunities influence my decision to stay.					
Professional development programs increase my loyalty.					
Mentorship programs enhance my willingness to stay.					
Working Environment					
Job security encourages me to continue working here.					
Workload is manageable and supports my retention.					
Administrative support motivates me to stay.					

SECTION F: TEACHER RETENTION IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Please rate each of the statements below concerning the teacher retention in private secondary schools. For all the statements, 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Moderately Agree, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I am engaged and committed to my teaching role.					
I plan to work at this school for many more years.					
I rarely think about leaving this school.					

APPENDIX II: TIME PLAN

ACTIVITIES	1st Month	2nd Month	3rd Month	4th Month	5th Month	6th Month
Formulation of the concept paper.						
Drafting of the initial proposal and conducting consultations.						
Revising the proposal and securing supervisor approval.						
Conducting data collection.						
Analyzing the collected data						
Presenting findings and finalizing the project report						

APPENDIX III: RESEARCH BUDGET

ACTIVITY	COST(Ksh)
Pre-testing of questionnaires	30,000
Printing and duplicating the questionnaires	35,000
Local transportation for data collection activities	25,000
Hiring data collection assistant	25,000
Processing and analyzing collected data	55,000
Printing and binding of the final project report	25,000
Contingency cost	10,000
Total Budget	205,000

APPENDIX IV: APPROVAL LETTER FROM UNIVERSITY



Thika Road, Ruaraka
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Pilot Line: +254 20 8070408/9

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BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

KCAU/BPS/2025

Date: Friday, August 01, 2025

**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION (NACOSTI)
P.O BOX 30623-00100
NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: WAWERU MARY WANGECI - REG NO. 15/05310

It is my distinct pleasure to introduce Waweru Mary Wangeci a student at our institution pursuing a Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management) degree in the School of Business.






Mary is conducting a research on the topic: *“Motivational factors and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.”* Her study has been reviewed and approved by the University’s Ethics Review Committee Approval No. KCAU/SERC/SOB0194. The approval period is 21st July 2025 - 21st July 2026.

Any assistance accorded to her is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

**D R. JACKSON ND OLO
DIRECTOR, BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES**

APPENDIX V: NACOSTI PERMIT

 <p>REPUBLIC OF KENYA</p>	 <p>NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION</p>
Ref No: 401344	Date of Issue: 14/August/2025
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Miss.. Mary Wangeci Waweru of KCA University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kiambu on the topic: MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AND TEACHER RETENTION IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 14/August/2026.</p>	
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THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) hereinafter referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of international treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to.
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way;
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBT), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. Neither the license nor any rights thereunder are transferable.
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

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