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Headteachers' Leadership Role of Ensuring Fair and Just Compensation on Retention of Teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan

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Abstract: This study aimed at examining how the headteachers' role in ensuring fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan. The study was guided by Herzberg Two-Factor theory of motivation. The target population included 22 primary schools, 366 teachers, 22 principals and 1 director of education in the Catholic Diocese of Wau. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select 10 primary schools out of a total of 22. One hundred and ten teachers were sampled using stratified and simple random sampling, while 10 headteachers and 1 Director of education were sampled purposively. The study collected data using questionnaire and an interview guide. To assess the reliability of the quantitative instrument, the study employed the test-retest method. The data from the two schools were correlated, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.903, which indicated that the instruments were dependable and suitable for use. To ensure the credibility and dependability of the qualitative instrument, the researcher maintained an audit trail and conducted member checking. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Qualitative data from interviews were transcribed, coded, and grouped into thematic categories. The findings were presented through bar graphs, pie charts, and tables. Thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data, organizing it into themes aligned with the research questions, and the results were reported narratively with the inclusion of direct quotations. The findings reveal that headteachers' leadership to some extent, ensure a fair and just compensation. However, challenges like a lack of standardized fair and just compensation hinder sustainable retention. Further, it indicated that some teacher quitted their teaching jobs due to low salaries. The study recommends that the Diocese implement standardized compensation structures to promote long-term commitment and stability in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese.

Keywords: Headteacher, Leadership, Fair and Just Compensation, Incessive, Salary and Retention

1.1 Background of the Study

Headteachers play a significant role in the running of schools. They are the motor that moves the whole system to function effectively. One of the main roles of headteachers is to motivate the entire school community to achieve the goals of the institution. They have the role of hiring, training and retaining staff in the institution for a long time for better performance. Retention of employees, however, is becoming a challenge with time to many educational institutions (Abdullahi et al., 2022). Teachers in schools experience burnout and get demoralized when they

do not get the necessary support from the school administration (Trung et al. 2021) and for this reason, many teachers quit their jobs in search of another or even quit their profession for greener pastures. Without a stable workforce it may be difficult to guarantee quality education in any country. For this reason, retention of teachers is becoming an urgent need more than ever in educational institutions (Rasanen et al., 2020; Williams et al., 2022; Gezel, 2020; Sims and Jerrim, 2020).

Every institution requires a leader in order to succeed. Nandasinghe (2020) recognizes that leadership is a key element in the success of any organization. Effective leadership is one of the most critical components that lead an institution to effective and successful outcomes. Good leaders may influence the behaviour of their employees by keeping them motivated to attain the goals of the institution. Yavuz Aksakal and Ulucan (2024) observe that the role of a leader is to guide followers to achieve personal goals as well as the goals of the institution. Helping the employees achieve their goals motivates them to achieve the goals of the institution as well. That is why headteachers need to be attentive to the personal goals of their teachers to help in achieving them, and this is likely to make the teachers happy and committed in realizing the goals of the institution. Manoppo, Adda, Rossanty and Farid (2024) point out that enthusiasm is very important because it makes teachers to be active and creative in classroom and exhibit extraordinary talents. Enthusiastic teachers are capable of going beyond their duties and they sacrifice their time and energy for the sake of the institution and are less likely to abandon their job or show a withdrawal behaviour. Having enthusiastic teachers is a treasure in an educational institution.

Retention of employees is becoming a serious problem across the globe. Many studies have been conducted globally, continentally, and regionally on the role of leadership on the retention of staff. Teachers are quitting their profession at an alarming rate. For example, Williams, Williamson, and Siebet (2022) report that in the United States of America, the attrition rate is higher in high-poverty schools. In the Netherlands, almost 59% of primary schools send their students home due to a shortage of teachers caused by attrition (Gezel, 2020). Schools that fail to retain their teachers risk facing serious challenges in offering quality education for their learners. Therefore, ensuring fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of teachers by reducing dissatisfaction and making teachers feel valued and fairly rewarded for their efforts.

Sims and Jerrim (2020) report that England faces persistent teacher shortages due to poor salaries and a lack of incentives across schools, which diminishes teacher morale and commitment. Similarly, in Finland, about 50% of teachers expressed intentions to leave the profession, with most being new entrants who cited lack of fairness and inadequate support as key reasons for dissatisfaction. Rasanen et al. (2020) established that ensuring fairness and support for teachers is therefore essential to enhancing motivation, satisfaction, and retention. Fairness involves equitable pay, transparent promotion opportunities, balanced workloads, and access to professional development, while support entails providing adequate teaching resources, mentoring for new teachers, and creating an inclusive environment where teachers' contributions are recognized and valued. When schools uphold these principles, teachers feel respected and motivated to remain in the profession, leading to greater commitment, lower turnover, and improved quality of education.

Reddy (2020) revealed that when new teachers do not get adequate support from their headteachers, they may easily become discouraged and quit their jobs. In this context, ensuring

fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of new teachers by providing them with a sense of financial security, appreciation, and stability, which encourages them to remain committed as they grow in the profession. Teacher retention is closely linked to leadership. A good leader sets an example, provides guidance, encouragement, and instruction, which can serve as the greatest impetus to the school system (Owusu-Acheaw & Bakker-Edoh, 2020). Motivation, in this sense, refers to the environmental factors that create interest, stimulate, maintain, and direct behaviour toward achieving career goals. When headteachers ensure fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of teachers, they create a work environment where staff members feel recognized for their contributions. Such motivation improves morale, reduces burnout, and encourages teachers to stay longer in their schools. In Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, headteachers play a crucial role in determining teachers' job satisfaction through transparent and equitable reward systems. By ensuring fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of teachers, headteachers not only address financial aspects but also promote trust, justice, and a sense of belonging among the teaching staff. This practice ultimately enhances institutional stability, improves teaching effectiveness, and upholds the Catholic education mission of nurturing holistic growth and excellence among learners.

In Russia, the crisis of teacher turnover is due to bureaucratic reporting and poor remuneration, which forces teachers to search for work in other organizations to provide a decent living for their families (Metveev, 2021). When teachers are poorly paid, they tend to get demotivated and look for a place where they will be compensated fairly. An employee's salary is an important factor in retention, and a compensation package can influence an employee's intention to remain or to go to another institution (Yeboah, 2020). To solve the crisis of retention, headteachers need to pay attention to how they compensate their teachers for the work they do.

In Vietnam, the high turnover rate in institutions of higher learning was attributed to poor headteachers' leadership in ensuring fair and just compensation for teachers (Trung et al., (2021). Adil et al. (2020) affirmed that inadequate and inequitable compensation remains a major cause of teacher dissatisfaction, leading to absenteeism, reduced productivity, taking longer breaks, and even early departures from the profession. Similarly, Wang et al. (2019) emphasized that fair and just compensation plays a crucial role in promoting teacher stability, motivation, and long-term retention. The headteacher's leadership role in this context involves advocating for equitable pay structures, ensuring timely salary payments, and establishing transparent incentive systems that reflect teachers' qualifications, workload, and contributions. Effective headteachers also create a culture of fairness by recognizing teacher performance, providing allowances or bonuses where possible, and fostering open communication about remuneration policies. When teachers perceive compensation as fair and just, they feel valued, respected, and motivated to remain committed to their schools, which ultimately enhances retention and improves institutional performance (Wang et al., 2019)

Nguyen (2020) reveals that ensuring fair and just compensation is vital in increasing retention, especially among young employees in Vietnam's organizations. This is because young employees often aspire to advance their education and become influential members of society. Similarly, young teachers are motivated to progress in their careers, for instance, a secondary school teacher may aspire to become a lecturer and eventually a professor. This aligns with Maslow's theory of self-actualization, which emphasizes the human desire for growth and fulfillment. Anggraini et al.

(2019) further noted that fair treatment and recognition in the workplace contribute significantly to employee satisfaction and long-term commitment. In this regard, the headteacher's leadership role is critical in ensuring fair and just compensation by creating transparent salary structures and recognizing teachers' achievements. When headteachers advocate for equitable pay, they not only address teachers' financial needs but also support their psychological and professional aspirations, thereby enhancing motivation, job satisfaction, and retention within the school or organization.

Research conducted by Bunnell and Poole (2020) in international schools in China shows that annually about 15–17% of teachers quit their jobs due to the lack of fair and just compensation, which remains a key factor influencing teacher retention. Ensuring fair and just compensation means that teachers are paid equitably according to their qualifications, experience, and workload, without discrimination or favoritism. When headteachers demonstrate fairness in salary distribution, benefits, and rewards, teachers feel respected, valued, and motivated to remain in their positions. Conversely, when pay disparities exist or compensation policies are perceived as unjust, teachers lose trust in school leadership, leading to dissatisfaction and eventual turnover. Therefore, the headteachers' leadership role in promoting fair and just compensation is essential to retaining teachers, as it fosters a sense of belonging, equity, and professional commitment within the school community.

In Africa, the situation of teacher turnover is critical. For instance, Adil et al. (2020) found that there is a high turnover of teachers in Nigeria due to poor working conditions and the overcrowding of classrooms, which leads to teachers' burnout and the intention to leave the job. In Ethiopia, the causes of teacher turnover are attributed to low remuneration, poor leadership, and the long distance of schools that keeps the teachers away from their families. The same problem is also confirmed by Melesse (2021) that most teachers in Ethiopia leave their profession due to inadequate salary, low social status and lack of administrative support. In Kenya, Mbiu (2019) reports that private school teachers in Kiambu district abandon their profession due to too much stress that they go through at the beginning of their profession.

In South Sudan, the situation of teacher shortage is critical. Wambede (2020), in their report to the United Nations on education in South Sudan, call the situation of teacher shortage chronic because teachers who are mostly untrained are overwhelmed by the number of students. They revealed that the ratio of pupils to qualified teachers is 117:1, and that is a bad indicator for education. Mading (2015) conducted a study in Central Equatoria, Juba to investigate the reasons for teacher attrition, and the author found that most teachers left their jobs because of low salaries, large class sizes, heavy workload, lack of training, accommodation and transport issues, and security concerns. Similarly, the report of the Education Office (2023) showed that classrooms in the Catholic Schools in Wau Diocese were overcrowded; in some of those schools, there were up to 140 pupils in a class. Consequently, many teachers quit their jobs to look for greener pastures. When classrooms are overcrowded beyond capacity and teachers do not get the necessary support, they tend to get discouraged and leave their jobs.

In a challenging profession such as teaching, teacher motivation is highly recommended for retention. Leadership is one of the main factors that motivate people to leave or to stay in any institution, because people leave leaders, but not institutions Artaya et al., 2021). Leaders have a great influence to make the staff remain in the institution even if there is a better offer elsewhere.

When effective leadership is lacking, the likelihood of high employee turnover increases significantly. Retention is all about the desire to keep the valued employees for a longer period of time in the institution (Arman, 2021). Retention may be possible only if leaders have a way to influence motivation, performance, and the commitment of their teachers in their institution. In order to reduce turnover and increase the number of aspiring educators and retain effective ones, headteachers need to find out what motivates teachers to remain committed to the institution and profession (Afe, 2022). They also need to find out what successful headteachers do in order to retain their teachers and reduce the voluntary intention to leave the institution. The reviewed literature highlighted headteachers' leadership role in the retention of teachers. Effective headteachers' leadership is grounded in ensuring fair and just compensation, which plays a crucial role in the retention of teachers. Fair and equitable pay not only reflects recognition of teachers' professional value and effort but also promotes job satisfaction, motivation, and long-term commitment to the school (Allegretto, 2022). However, several studies explored headteachers' leadership and teacher retention, but few studies have specifically focused on how headteachers' leadership in ensuring fair and just compensation influences teacher retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan. Therefore, by emphasizing the importance of fair and just compensation, this study sought to provide insights that can help headteachers strengthen their leadership practices, promote fairness and equity, and enhance teacher retention within their schools (Lynch, 2012).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Headteachers' leadership role plays a significant part in ensuring fair and just compensation, which directly contributes to teacher retention. Teachers are the most valuable asset in any educational institution, and without them, quality education cannot be guaranteed. When headteachers advocate for equitable pay, timely remuneration, and recognition of teachers' efforts, they help build a sense of satisfaction and loyalty among their staff. Successful headteachers use fair and just compensation as a motivational tool to influence teachers to remain committed and dedicated to the goals of the institution (Ahmed et al., 2023). Fair treatment in salary distribution and incentives fosters trust between teachers and school leadership, thereby minimizing turnover and strengthening the school's stability. However, from the literature reviewed concerning teachers' retention, it is evident that headteachers of Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan, face significant challenges in retaining qualified teachers due to issues related to inadequate compensation. For example, between 2018 and 2023, records from the Education Office of the Diocese show that the Diocese lost approximately 12% to 15% of its qualified teachers annually (Nyok (2023; and Education Office, 2023). Many teachers cite low pay, lack of allowances, and poor reward systems as reasons for leaving their schools. When compensation is perceived as unfair or insufficient, teachers become demotivated, leading to absenteeism, reduced productivity, and eventual resignation. As a result of these challenges, Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese are experiencing a scarcity of qualified teachers, forcing schools to employ untrained or underqualified personnel to fill the gap. This situation undermines the quality of education and the reputation of Catholic schools, which have historically been known for excellence in teaching and moral formation. If the issue of fair and just compensation is not adequately addressed, the Diocese risks weakening its educational mission and diminishing the evangelizing role of its schools within the greater Bahr el Ghazal region. Therefore, this challenge has impelled the need to study how headteachers' leadership in ensuring fair and just compensation can enhance teacher retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese. Understanding this relationship will help identify practical strategies that

headteachers can use to improve remuneration systems, motivate teachers, and strengthen institutional commitment. Consequently, this study will investigate the headteachers' leadership role in ensuring fair and just compensation as a key factor influencing the retention of teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan (Nyok, 2023).

1.3 The Study Objective

This study was guided by the following objective:

To examine how the headteachers' role of ensuring fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study may benefit various categories of people. First and foremost, the Ministry of Education will be provided with practical ways to retain teachers in schools in Wau County. Then the headteachers and administrators of Catholic Schools in Wau Diocese may be able to curb and prevent teacher turnover in their schools. Moreover, they will be equipped with knowledge and skills on how to create a healthy work environment for teachers in their schools. Through this study, different strategies may be provided to retain teachers in their work. Finally, the students and the community may ultimately benefit from the implementation of the recommendations of the research.

Besides the different agents of education, scholars and academicians may find published work exploring the situation of Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese in terms of headteachers' leadership role on retention of teachers. Thus, the gap identified through the literature review, together with the suggested area for further studies, may provide direction for academic debate. Lastly, the Salesian Sisters working in Sudan, South Sudan, and the author may find practical insights on the way to retain their staff and offer quality education in their various missions.

1.5 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The scope of the study refers to the parameters under which the study will be operating; that means, clarifying the subject, the extent of coverage of concepts employed in the objectives of the study and the timeframe to set the context of the research in the context (Akanle, Ademuson & Shittu, 2020). The study focused only on the headteachers, teachers and a Director of Education in Catholic Primary Schools in the Diocese of Wau. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using a questionnaire and interview guide. Delimitations are self-imposed restrictions to the study, and they act as boundaries to the study and ways in which the findings may lack generalizability (Miles, 2019). This study was restricted to the Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese due to time constraints. For this reason, the findings may not be generalized to the whole of the Bahr el Gazal region. Although several studies have been conducted on headteachers' leadership roles on retention of teachers, this study was restricted to the following leadership roles: training and development, fair and just compensation, and creation of a positive work environment. Although the problem of retention may affect all employees in the Diocese, this study focused on teachers only. While other stakeholders could have been considered for the study, due to the information that is being sought, only the director of education in the Diocese, headteachers and teachers participated in this study.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a network of interlinked concepts that together provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon or phenomena (Chernysheva, 2024). It is a visual illustration of a study's main theoretical ideas. As such, it is always introduced in the form of a graphical or schematic diagram depicting the key concepts and their relationships (Van der Walddt, 2020). For this reason, there is a need for a conceptual framework at the start of a study plan to pin down main ideas, conceptualize these and show their interrelationship. The conceptual diagram is demonstrated in Figure 1.

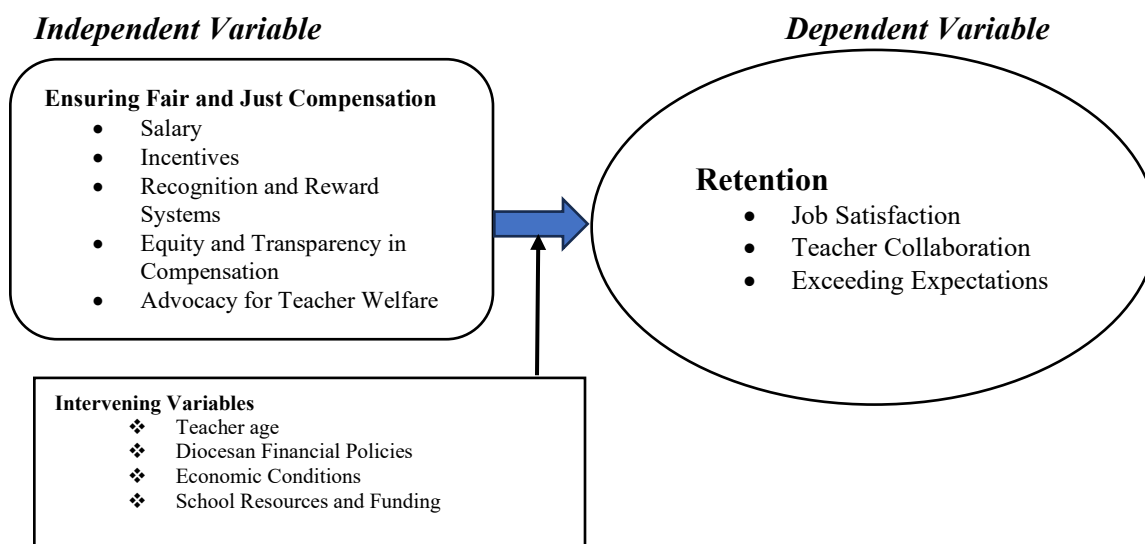


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework*

Source: *Own Conceptualization, 2025*

1.7 Literature Review

In this section, the theoretical framework and empirical review are presented.

1.7.1 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on the Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, developed by the American psychologist Frederick Herzberg in 1959, which builds on the earlier works of Maslow and Alderfer (Almaitah et al., 2017). Herzberg sought to identify the elements within the workplace that influence employees' attitudes toward their jobs, distinguishing between factors that lead to job satisfaction and those that cause dissatisfaction. Using the critical incident technique in his initial research with 303 engineers and accountants, Herzberg found that positive feelings were linked to the content of the job including achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and growth while negative feelings were linked to the context of the job, such as company policies, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, and salary (Bevins, 2018). Herzberg categorized these elements into two groups: motivators (satisfiers), which are intrinsic to the job and lead to satisfaction, and hygiene factors (dissatisfiers), which are extrinsic and prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily motivate. This theory is closely related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, simplifying it into two levels: hygiene needs, which correspond to lower-level needs, and motivation needs, which align with higher-level needs (Artaya et al., 2021).

In the context of this study, the theory provides a foundation for understanding how the headteachers' role in ensuring fair and just compensation influences the retention of teachers in

Catholic primary schools in Wau Diocese. Fair and timely remuneration, equitable treatment, and supportive supervision represent key hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction and promote teacher stability. Conversely, recognition, opportunities for professional growth, and delegation of responsibility serve as motivators that enhance teacher satisfaction and commitment. Therefore, applying Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, this study posits that when headteachers maintain fair and just compensation systems while also fostering recognition and professional development teachers are more likely to experience both satisfaction and loyalty, thereby reducing turnover rates. The theory thus offers a relevant lens for examining how equitable compensation practices contribute to teacher motivation and retention in Catholic primary schools within the Wau Diocese.

The Theory of Herzberg's two-factor also known as the motivation-hygiene theory offers the most significant theories related to job satisfaction and retention (Alrawahi et al., 2020). The theory offers a suitable basis to study retention. For instance, headteachers can focus on building the capacity of teachers to improve their standards, which is important for enhancing job satisfaction and retention. Thus, employee career advancement can influence job satisfaction positively and increase staff commitment (Hosen et al., 2024). Another strength of the theory is that it gives importance to motivation from within the employees themselves (Marietta, Arigno and Okemasisi, 2022). Intrinsic factors are effective in maintaining and creating lasting positive effects on job satisfaction, commitment and retention (Bhagwandeem, 2021). Therefore, headteachers need to increase those factors that motivate intrinsically and improve working conditions that may cause dissatisfaction so that teachers may feel enthused and committed in their jobs and, hence, remain in the institutions where they work.

However, scholars have critiqued Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory for placing greater emphasis on motivators while overlooking the crucial role of hygiene factors particularly fair and just compensation in influencing employee motivation and retention. Ahmed, Birmah, and Mustapha (2023) revealed that rewards such as equitable pay, conducive working conditions, and fringe benefits are powerful determinants of job satisfaction, especially among employees in lower-level positions. For example, when schools within the same locality offer different salary scales to teachers with the same qualifications and grade levels, those receiving lower pay are likely to feel demotivated and dissatisfied. This demonstrates that inequitable compensation undermines teacher morale and increases turnover rates. In support of this view, Thandar (2022) asserts that fair compensation, recognition, and supportive working conditions are vital for enhancing employee satisfaction and retention. Thus, external factors like fair pay cannot be ignored in sustaining motivation.

Furthermore, the theory has been criticized for its rigid distinction between motivators and hygiene factors. Marietta, Aringo, and Okemasisi (2022) observed that employees may experience both satisfaction and dissatisfaction from the same factors, including pay and recognition, suggesting that fair compensation serves not only as a basic need but also as a source of motivation. Consequently, headteachers must ensure that teachers are fairly and justly compensated to enhance their sense of value, commitment, and willingness to remain in the institution. While Herzberg's theory identifies the importance of compensation as a hygiene factor preventing dissatisfaction, it does not fully explain how leadership practices related to pay equity and reward distribution influence teacher motivation and retention. Therefore, Chapter Two further reviews the Path-Goal Theory to explore how headteachers' leadership behaviors particularly in ensuring fairness and

justice in compensation can directly shape teachers' motivation, satisfaction, and long-term retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese.

The theory of Two-Factor Theory of Motivation is relevant to this study as it emphasizes the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in influencing employee satisfaction and retention. Herzberg categorized factors that affect motivation into motivators (intrinsic) and hygiene factors (extrinsic). Among the hygiene factors, fair and just compensation plays a vital role in preventing job dissatisfaction and promoting stability within an organization (Bevins, 2018; Artaya et al., 2021). According to Ahmed, Birmah, and Mustapha (2023), fair pay, equitable benefits, and proper working conditions are powerful determinants of employee satisfaction, particularly in lower-level occupations such as teaching. When teachers perceive that their compensation is fair compared to others with similar qualifications, they are more likely to remain committed to their institutions. Conversely, inequitable or delayed payments often lead to frustration, low morale, and eventual turnover. This is supported by Thandar (2022), who asserted that salary, recognition, and fair policies are critical for enhancing job satisfaction and retention.

In the context of Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, ensuring fair and just compensation serves as a key hygiene factor in teacher retention. Headteachers have the responsibility to advocate for equitable salaries, timely payments, and other non-monetary benefits such as food provisions or recognition programs. These practices align with Catholic Social Teaching, which upholds justice and dignity in labor. By ensuring fairness in pay and benefits, headteachers not only reduce dissatisfaction but also create a supportive environment that fosters loyalty and long-term commitment among teachers. Therefore, this study applies Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation to explain how ensuring fair and just compensation as a hygiene factor contributes significantly to the retention of teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan.

1.7.2 Empirical Review

Remuneration is all income in the form of money, direct or indirect goods received by employee in return for service provided to the institution (Ismail, 2020). According to Reddy (2020), remuneration is a compensation which can be in form of salaries, payment allowances, incentives, and bonus for achievements. Simply put, it is a wage or a benefit that an employee receives for the service done. Employees are compensated according to their qualification and talents (Abdullahi et al., 2022). For example, a trained teacher who, with some years of experience delivers the content satisfactorily and offers other services apart from teaching will be compensated differently from a new teacher with no experience. That is, compensation is supposed to correspond to the work done by the employees. Compensation is an important element in retention of teachers (Wambede, 2020); compensation can either make teachers remain or quit their jobs. Compensation package provided by an institution is supposed to motivate, attract and retain employees to improve performance (ManieshiFonseka, 2019). Unfortunately, many schools are unable to retain their employees due to poor compensation.

Studies related to the impact of compensation on teacher retention have been reviewed, and the results manifest that there is an association between compensation package and retention of teachers. Elraya and Semlali (2023) conducted an empirical study to explore the impact of total reward strategies on talented employees' sustainable performance, satisfaction, and motivation in Switzerland using a quantitative research approach. A survey was conducted, and data were collected from inhabitants of 47

countries and economies; 153,682 teachers participated in the study. The outcomes showed that there was a positive connection between total sustainable rewards and sustainable employee performance, satisfaction and motivation. The study by Elraya and Semlali was purely quantitative. It lacked qualitative data that could have helped the authors to understand in depth factors other than remuneration that may influence the retention of teachers. To bridge this gap, the current research employed both quantitative and qualitative data in order to comprehend deeply the phenomenon under study. Besides, it also investigated whether fair and just compensation could influence retention of teachers in the Catholic Primary Schools in Wau, South Sudan.

Jean-Charles (2023) conducted a study on issues affecting teachers' retention in schools in Haiti. Predictors of retention that were considered in the study were: curriculum implementation, assessment, financial compensation, training and organizational culture. The study used a quantitative approach, and under quantitative, a descriptive design was used. The target population consisted of 344 teachers of 17 selected primary schools. Teachers were selected conveniently to participate in the study; the author visited 17 schools and asked teachers to volunteer to participate in the study. The volunteers were 172 teachers. The findings reveal that assessment, financial compensation and organization culture were significant predictors of teacher retention. The study by Jean-Charles focused its investigations on curriculum implementation, assessment, financial compensation, training and organizational culture on teachers' retention. However, these are not the only predictors that may influence retention in an educational institution. For this motive, there was a need to carry out a similar study, but focusing on predictors such as provision of teachers' professional development opportunities, ensuring fair and just compensation, creating a positive work environment and encouraging teacher autonomy and participation to determine if they have an influence on retention of teachers.

Manieshfonseka (2019) carried out research on the influence of remuneration on retention in a leading construction industry in Sri Lanka to analyse how various remuneration methods in the remuneration policy of Acwell Engineering are affecting the motivation of employees and workers. A quantitative approach was adopted for the study where 50 participants were randomly selected to respond to the questionnaires. The data was then analysed through the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the findings revealed that employees' motivation at Acwell Engineering is dependent upon the remuneration methods. This study was conducted in the construction industry in Sri Lanka, a country in Asia, with a small sample. This makes it challenging to generalize the finding to other settings. To bridge this gap, the current study was conducted in Wau, South Sudan and the researcher used a larger sample to study how remuneration could influence teachers' retention.

Adil, Rao and Ayaz (2020) carried out a quantitative study to find out the effect of the reward system on job satisfaction and employees' retention in private universities in Afghanistan. The study employed a descriptive survey. With the aid of a closed-ended questionnaire data was collected. Administrators and teachers of the six private universities in Jalalabad city were selected conveniently. The target population of these universities was 512 and a sample of 275 participants was selected using the Taro Yamane formula. The study established that the reward system has a significant positive association with job satisfaction and employees' retention in private universities. The authors proposed that the reward system should be reviewed and updated as per the current labour market to entice, motivate and retain qualified employees for the future success of academic institutions. The reviewed literature employed a convenience sampling technique to select participants for the study. Convenience sampling can be subject to biases since the researcher selects a population that can be accessed easily, and this can restrict

the generalizability of the findings. The current study employed a purposive sampling technique, stratified and simple random sampling to select the participants. This enabled the author to consider gender and other characteristics of the target population. The reviewed study was also conducted in universities in Afghanistan, while the current one was carried out in primary schools in Wau, South Sudan.

Marozva et al. (2024) conducted a study exploring the factors affecting the retention of millennial academics in South Africa. The study used a cross-sectional qualitative research approach using semi-structured interviews to collect data. For example, 14 millennial academics were chosen to represent various public higher education institutions in South Africa. The findings revealed that five factors need to be considered for the retention of millennial academics: career advancement, work environment, rewards, leadership and work-life balance. This research was purely qualitative; the study used a very small sample to explore factors affecting the retention of teachers. The voice of 14 participants cannot represent various higher education institutes in South Africa and cannot be generalized to other contexts. To bridge this gap, the current study used a bigger sample, and a mixed methods approach was employed to study in depth the influence of remuneration on retention of teachers.

Ekpe and Ofeimun (2024) carried out research to examine whether or not good reward systems could enhance job commitment at private secondary schools in South Nigeria. The authors adopted a quantitative approach and collected data through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 341 participants. The study established that adequate reward had a significant influence on job commitment. The employees who are well compensated tended to show more commitment in their jobs unlike those who are not well compensated. The study by Ekpe and Ofeimun was conducted in Nigeria in private schools, where one may assume that teachers are well-paid and compensated. The setting of the current study differs in that it was conducted in church-based schools in Wau, South Sudan, where life is too expensive, and the school fees collected from the parents barely pay teachers' salaries till the end of the scholastic year.

Owusu-Acheaw and Bakker-Edoh (2020) conducted a study on the influence of job motivation on retention of teachers in basic schools in Somany Circuit in Ghana. Teachers' turnover was so common that they did not remain in their job for more than three years, despite the different interventions such as a single salary spine and the best teacher award scheme, put in place. The study, therefore, set out to investigate if teachers were not encouraged adequately. The design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey. A sample of 170 teachers was chosen for the study using stratified random sampling. The findings show that teachers in public basic schools in Somanya were highly motivated; however, they perceived their way of promotion and pay as low. When responding to questions, the respondents disagreed that salary and financial reward, leave remunerations, good retirement plans, promotion, job security, and chances for extra pay, among other concerns did not affect their level of motivation. The reviewed study lacked qualitative data that would have enabled the participants to express their views concerning their retention. Perhaps, there were other factors apart from the salary that made them resign from their job. So, to bridge this gap, the current study used a mixed methods approach to explore the impact of headteachers' role of ensuring fair and just compensation on the retention of teachers.

Kamau, Muathe and Wainaina (2021) conducted a study with the aim of investigating the effects of compensation, career management, performance appraisal and training on turnover intention in public secondary schools in Murang'a County. The study targeted 3,752 teachers from 304 public secondary

schools in the County. The study employed a multistage random sampling technique to select 400 teachers from 40 schools in the County. A sample of 15 principals was selected randomly from the 40 schools for an interview. The findings revealed that teachers, predominantly those who are not in administration, were dissatisfied with their jobs. They were dissatisfied with compensation and the employees' promotion policy; hence, they were thinking of leaving their jobs. The study by Kamau, Muathe and Wainaina is similar to the current one in that it looked at predictors of teacher retention from the perspective of compensation, training, and promotion. However, the study is different because it was conducted in Kenya, a country that is economically stable compared to South Sudan. The current study was conducted in South Sudan, a country that is economically unstable. It is also different because, besides professional development and remuneration, it also investigated how the role of creating a positive work environment, and encouraging teacher autonomy and participation, impacted retention.

Wambede (2020) conducted a study on remuneration and staff retention in private secondary schools in Mbale municipality in Uganda. The aim of the study was to find out if remuneration had any association with teacher retention in private secondary schools in Mbale Municipality. A cross-sectional survey design was used with both quantitative and qualitative data. Information was gathered from 190 teachers through a closed-ended questionnaire and 13 principals and 13 proprietors through an interview guide. The findings reveal that there exists a strong association between salary and teacher retention. The reviewed study was conducted in Uganda, in a country that is politically and economically stable and being conducted in private schools may indicate that the population of the study was made up of middle-class people. So, the concept of remuneration might vary according to the geographical location. The current study investigated the effect of remuneration on teachers' retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau, South Sudan. Lubembella and Mwila (2024) conducted a study in Lindi district in Tanzania to investigate the factors that influence retention in public secondary schools. The authors used a convergent design in a mixed methods approach. The participants of the study were 60 students, 30 teachers and 3 principals. The authors found that several factors affected the retention of teachers in Lindi, among them were low salary and benefits, inadequate professional development opportunities, poor work-life balance and harsh work environment. The study is similar to the current one in that the authors employed a mixed methods approach. However, it differs in that this study used a convergent design while the current study used an embedded design in mixed methods with a larger sample. The participants were made up of teachers, headmasters and the director of education in the Diocese. So, students were excluded from the study.

Mabor (2018) conducted a study in Lake State, South Sudan to determine the impact of compensation on job satisfaction of teachers. The researcher employed a mixed-method approach. The research was carried out in four Girls' Primary Schools within Rumbeck town and 42 out of 47 teachers were purposively selected to take part in the study. One inspector, four headteachers and eight senior teachers were purposively selected for the interview. The findings reveal that teachers were dissatisfied because they were not being compensated appropriately. All the participants cited the issue of low salaries, irregular salary payment as well as failure by the government to increase the remuneration of teachers. Although the reviewed study was conducted in South Sudan, the findings might not be generalizable to Catholic Schools in Wau because the researcher sampled only four primary schools within Rumbek town and it was also conducted in public schools. The researcher also used a purposive sampling technique, which can be liable to being biased. To fill this gap, there was a need to conduct a similar study in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese with a bigger sample of participants selected randomly and purposively to examine the influence of fair and just compensation on retention of teachers. Therefore,

this study aimed to investigate how headteachers' role in ensuring fair and just compensation affects teacher retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan. It addressed gaps in prior research by examining how equitable remuneration, a key hygiene factor in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, influences teachers' motivation and their decision to remain in their schools. By focusing on fairness, timeliness, and adequacy of compensation within faith-based educational settings, the study sought to offer insights for headteachers and Catholic education authorities to develop effective compensation strategies that enhance teacher satisfaction and stability.

1.8 Methodology

This study used an embedded design in a mixed methods approach that enabled the study to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The approach enabled the researcher to examine how fair and just compensation contributes to the retention of teachers. It also helps the researcher to collect data from various respondents namely: principals, teachers and the director of education. These assisted in getting a wider view and a deeper understanding of the research problem. The study took place in the selected Catholic Primary Schools, located in Wau Diocese, South Sudan. The target population included all primary schools, all teachers, all principals and 1 director of education in the Catholic Diocese of Wau in South Sudan. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select 10 primary schools out of a total of 22. A total of 110 teachers out of 366 were sampled using stratified and simple random sampling, while 10 headteachers and 1 Director of Education were sampled purposively.

Data collection instruments and procedures included a questionnaire and an interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and results were presented using charts and tables. The qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Spearman's rho was used to establish the relationships between the variables of the study. The researcher ensured ethics throughout the process.

1.9 Findings

Response Rate of the Participants

The researcher administered the research instruments, that is, the questionnaire and in-depth interviews, to teachers and headteachers, respectively. The questionnaires were mainly used to collect quantitative data from the larger group of research participants, that is, teachers, while interview guides were used to collect qualitative data from the sampled headteachers drawn from a sample of 10 primary schools associated with Wau Diocese in South Sudan. Table 1 shows the response rates of the study participants.

Table 1: Response Rate of the Participants

Participants	Sampled participants	Actual Participants	Response Rate
Teachers	110	102	93%
Headteachers	10	6	60%

Source: Field data, 2025

As shown in Table 1, the researcher distributed 110 questionnaires to teachers in selected Catholic primary schools operating under the Wau Diocese of South Sudan. Out of these, 102 questionnaires were duly completed and returned, yielding a 93% response rate, which was considered adequate for analysis.

In addition, 10 school headteachers were targeted for interviews, of which 6 (60%) participated, while 4 were unavailable due to business commitments. According to Javali and Javali (2024), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting, 60%–69% is good, and any rate above 70% is excellent for representing the population and supporting generalization of study findings. Thus, following the recommendation of Javali, the response rate of teachers (93%) and principals (60%) was excellent for the data analysis and reporting.

Demographic Information of the Participants

The study sought to establish participants' personal characteristics, such as gender, professional qualification levels for teachers and headteachers, number of years of teaching in the school, or the number of years served as a headmaster/headmistress, and the average size of the classes taught by the teachers. In doing this, the researcher sought to find out how the personal characteristics of the participants could be intertwined with the influence of the headteachers' leadership role on retention of teachers in primary schools operating under Wau Diocese, in South Sudan.

Gender Distribution of Teachers

The study sought to find out the gender of the teachers in order to establish whether there was a difference between male and female participation in the delivery of education services in primary schools operating under Wau Diocese, South Sudan. The findings are presented in Figure 2.

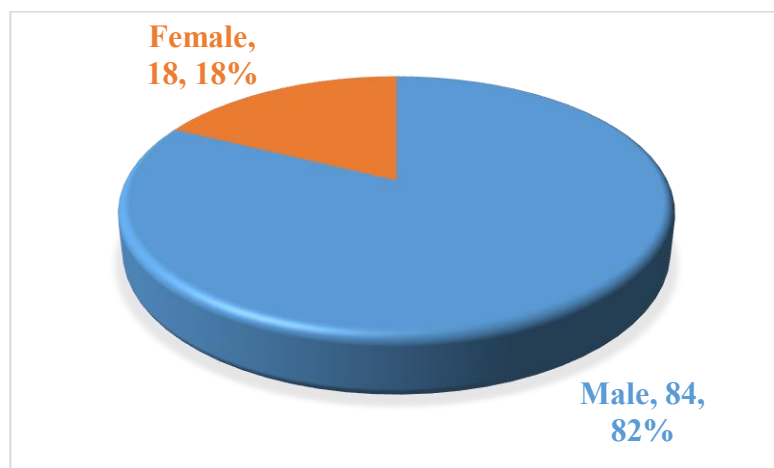


Figure 2: *Gender Distribution of Teachers*

Source: *Field data, 2025*

According to Figure 2, the gender distribution among the 102 teachers in the sample reveals a highly unbalanced representation, with female teachers comprising 18% (18), while male teachers make up 82% (84). This uneven distribution suggests that it is males who are overwhelmingly represented in the teaching staff of the primary schools run by Wau Diocese in South Sudan. One of the interpretations of this scenario is that with a large region of the target area of study (Wau, Kwajok, Awil and Raga) experiencing a harsh socioeconomic environment, coupled with cultural influences and incidents of insecurity, men are likely to be considered to take on roles that include travelling to teach after acquiring some training as compared to women who may be required to focus on homestead duties. However, the infusion in the sample of some gender balance by the few women who were part of the study also meant

that research findings would not miss out on issues that could be specifically gender-related (female in this case) and have an impact on the research objectives that are under investigation.

Distribution of Teachers and Headteachers by Academic Qualifications

In presenting the distribution of respondents' academic qualifications, the researcher provides a concise overview of the participants' educational backgrounds. This overview helps contextualize the study by showcasing the respondents' level of expertise, ensuring that the data is both valid and relevant. Additionally, it facilitates the analysis of potential patterns between academic qualifications and other study variables, such as retention of teachers or leadership role effectiveness. The information is crucial in verifying the credibility and accuracy of the research findings. Data relating to academic qualifications was accessed from 102 teachers and 6 headteachers, and a summary of the collected data is presented in Figure 3.

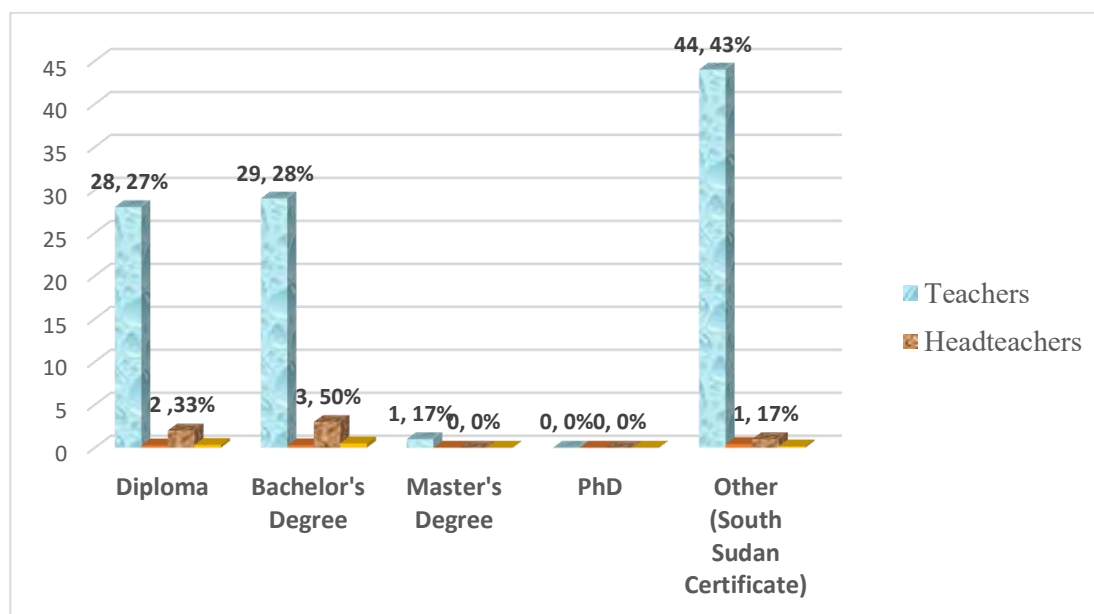


Figure 3: *Distribution of Teachers and Headteachers by Academic Qualifications*

Source: Field data, 2025

From Figure 3, for the 102 teachers that participated in the research, 28 (27%) had a diploma level of education, while an almost equal number, that is 29(28%), had a Bachelor's degree. Only 1(17%) of the teachers had a Master's degree, while none (0%) had a PhD qualification. However, a large number of teachers, comprising 44 (43%), indicated that they had possessed a different qualification (other) that was neither a diploma nor a degree, and which in most cases was described as the South Sudan Certificate (untrained teacher with secondary school qualification). From the 6 headteachers who were involved in the research, 3(50%) had a Bachelor's degree, none (0%) had a Master's or PhD degree, and 1 (17%) indicated 'other' by stating that he was a student at the university, therefore essentially being considered as a holder of a secondary school qualification (South Sudan Certificate). The findings of the research that indicate that a good number of teachers in primary schools under Wau Diocese of South Sudan are holders of certificate level of education has been supported by a survey done in Catholic Primary Schools by the Education Office in the Diocese, where 90% of teachers teaching in primary schools in the diocese were found to hold senior four certificate, 3% were diploma holders, 3% were degree holders in

education, and 3% held general degrees (Education office, 2023). The finding, therefore, indicates that there is a severe shortage of trained or qualified teachers who are required to deliver quality education in primary schools that operate under the Wau Diocese in South Sudan. The few teachers available are often overworked, leading to burnout and further decline in the quality of instruction.

Length of Service of Teachers and Headteachers in Primary Schools under Wau Diocese, South Sudan

By inquiring about the respondents' working experience, the researcher assumed that this factor could influence the study's results. Additionally, the researcher sought to determine the teachers' years of teaching experience and the headteachers' length of time that they had held the position of a headmaster/headmistress, in order to understand how varying levels of experience might affect the research outcomes. Teachers with different years of experience contribute diverse perspectives to the study, where, for instance, older teachers may have different views on headteachers' leadership role and its impact on teachers' retention as compared to newer teachers. In addition, the length of time that the research participant had served as a headteacher will determine the experience he or she has in matters relating to teacher retention. Table 2 provides a summary of this data.

Table 2: *Length of Service of Teachers and Headteachers in Primary Schools under Wau Diocese, South Sudan*

	Teachers		Headteachers	
	F	%	f	%
0 – 4	61	60%	6	100%
5 – 10	31	30%	0	0%
11 – 15	4	4%	0	0%
16 – 20	5	5%	0	0%
21 years and above	1	1%	0	0%
Total	102	100%	6	100%

Source: *Field data, 2025*

The data in Table 2 provides insights into the length of time that teachers and headteachers had worked in the primary schools under investigation in the study. It indicates that most of the teachers, that is 61(60%) had not worked in the schools for a long time, that is, had been there for no more than 4 years (0 – 4). Thirty-one (30%) of the teachers had worked in the schools for a period ranging from 5 to 10 years, while a comparatively fewer number of teachers, that is, 4(4%), 5(5%) and 1(1%) had worked at the schools they taught for periods ranging from to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, and 21 years and above, respectively. Regarding the headteachers' length of stay in their respective schools of work, all the 6 headteachers (100%) indicated that they had been in the school for a period not exceeding 5 years (0 - 4). Given that the majority of the research participants, that's is 91 (92%) of the teachers and 6 (100%) of the headteachers had not stayed in their respective schools of work for ranging no more than 10 years, while very few, that is 10% (9) of the teachers and 0% (none) of the headteachers, had stayed for more than 10 years, may be an indication of high turnover of academicians (teachers and headteachers) in primary schools in the area of study (primary schools run by Wau Diocese, South Sudan). This interpretation is supported by the survey carried out in Catholic Primary Schools by the Education Office

in the Diocese (Education Office, 2023), which concluded that retention of teachers has been a challenge for many years leaving schools in the hands of untrained teachers in primary schools in the target area of study. So, having 60% of teachers in the schools for less than four years not only hinders the delivery of quality education, but it also means that many students may not receive the level of support they need to thrive academically.

The Size of Classes Taught by Teachers

The size of the class that teachers handle is directly associated with how effectively the teacher can deliver lessons to learners. Large classes impede the teachers' individual attention to students and are normally difficult to manage in terms of control and discipline, apart from the workload that it places on teachers. In addition, large classes can demotivate teachers to the extent that they choose to leave the school or the teaching profession. Therefore, given that the current research was aimed at investigating retention of teachers in primary schools' operation under Wau Diocese, it was important to look at the sizes of classes taught. Figure 4 has a summary of the data.

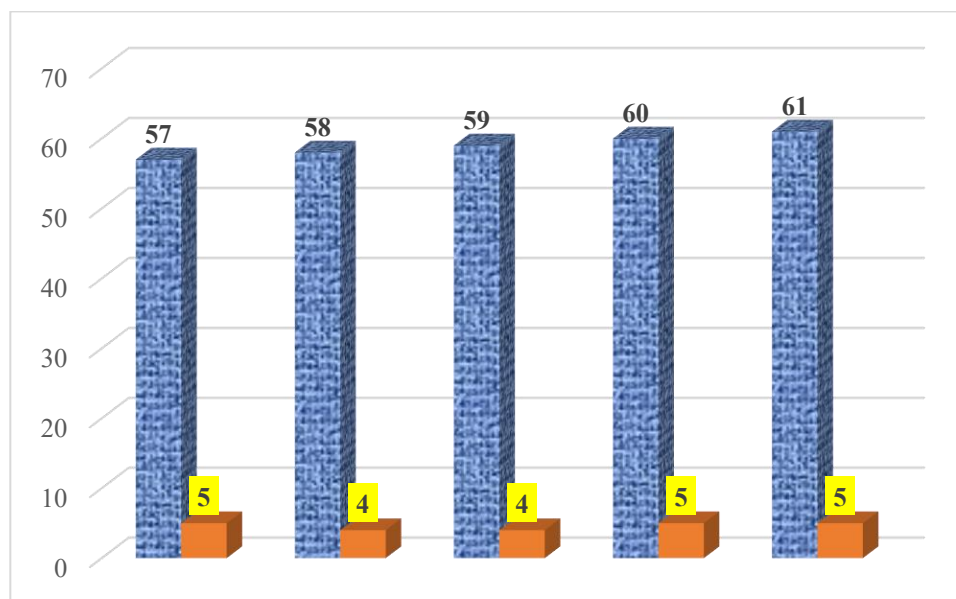


Figure 4: *The Size of Classes Taught by Teachers*

Source: Field data, 2025

The summary data in Figure 4 indicates that a half of the sampled teachers, that is 51(50%), taught classes with over 60 students. From the other half of the teachers who participated in the research, 22(22%) handled classes having students ranging in number from 51 to 60, while 15 % (15) of the teachers had classes with 41 to 50 students. Twelve (12%) of the teachers had classes with 30 to 40 students, while only 2(2%) of the teachers had classes that had 30 or less students. This finding indicated that the majority of teachers, that is (50%) handle classes that have an excessive number of learners (above 60), and indeed some of the respondents did indicate that the number of learners can reach 100 in a single class, such that effective delivery of learning is affected and there is immense workload on the teachers. Overwhelmed teachers are more likely to experience burnout, absenteeism or even leave

their profession altogether. Frequent teacher turnover disrupts the continuity of learning and reduces students' sense of stability, further, harming retention.

Headteacher Role of Ensuring Fair and Just Compensation and Teachers' Retention

The objective of the study was to examine the headteachers' role in ensuring a fair and just compensation to influence retention of teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese. To achieve this, the author administered questionnaires to teachers and conducted interviews with principals. Using a five-point Likert scale, Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Undecided (UD), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA), teachers indicated their level of agreement with statements reflecting their beliefs about professional development and staff retention. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Role in Ensuring Fair and Just Compensation and Teachers' Retention

Statement	SD		D		U		A		SA	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Teachers (n = 102)										
Fair and just compensation of teachers is one of the key factor in teacher retention.	17	16.7	35	34.3	-	-	40	39.2	10	9.8
My salary is paid on time and it meets my basic needs (housing, feeding, medication, clothing and education of my children) and this motivates me to continue with my work.	13	12.7	30	29.4	-	-	49	48.0	10	9.8
When I compare my salary with other employees who are of the same grade like me, I feel that my employer is fairly paying me.	17	16.7	30	29.4	2	2.0	33	32.4	20	19.6
We are given an incentive based on performance and at Christmas and Easter (Eid for the Muslims) we are given a bonus on top of our salary.	14	13.7	30	29.4	-	-	43	42.2	15	14.7
I am convinced that good compensation can influence the intention of teacher to remain in the institution.	14	13.7	19	18.6	1	1.0	28	27.5	40	39.2

Source: Field data, 2025

Table 3 indicates that 39.2% of teachers agreed and 9.8% strongly agreed that fair and just compensation is a key factor in teacher retention, while 16.7% strongly disagreed and 34.3% disagreed. This suggests that most teachers acknowledge compensation as a key factor in retention, even though a significant proportion feel it is not adequately practiced in their schools. These results are supported by studies by Lubembella and Mwila (2024), and Wambede (2020), who revealed strong associations between fair compensation and teacher retention. It further pointed that teachers who receive competitive and timely salaries and compensation are more likely to remain in their jobs, demonstrate higher levels of commitment, and perform better in their teaching roles.

Regarding timely payment and adequacy of salaries to meet basic needs, 48.0% agreed and 9.8% strongly agreed, whereas 12.7% strongly disagreed and 29.4% disagreed. This indicates that while many teachers receive their salaries on time and find them somewhat sufficient, a notable minority still experience dissatisfaction, which could affect their motivation and commitment. These results align with studies by Ekpe and Ofeimui (2024), which stated that inadequate or irregular salaries lead to dissatisfaction and teacher turnover. In addition, when comparing their salaries with employees of similar grades elsewhere, 32.4% agreed and 19.6% strongly agreed that their pay is fair, while 16.7% strongly disagreed and 29.4% disagreed. This shows that perceptions of fairness in pay vary considerably among teachers, suggesting that salary competitiveness remains an issue for some schools. Headteachers were interviewed and one of them said:

As a headteacher, I believe that fair and just compensation is essential for retaining teachers. Many of my colleagues and I have seen how low salaries discourage teachers from staying in the profession. Some teachers struggle to meet basic needs like food, clothing, and medical care. However, despite recognizing this challenge, limited funding and economic instability make it difficult to provide fair and competitive pay (Interview, 15th May 2025).

On answering the same question, one headteacher noted:

In my school, salaries are paid on time, and teachers appreciate this consistency because it helps them plan better. Timely payment creates a sense of reliability and trust between the school administration and teachers. However, even though salaries are punctual, they remain insufficient to cover the rising cost of living, which continues to affect teachers' morale and overall commitment (Interview, 18th May 2025).

Another headteacher explained:

When I compare our teachers' salaries with those of employees in similar positions elsewhere, I realize that our pay structure is still low. Many teachers feel that their earnings do not reflect their qualifications, workload, and responsibilities. However, due to the high inflation and fluctuating value of the South Sudanese Pound, adjusting salaries regularly to match market rates has become increasingly difficult (Interview, 19th May 2025).

Another headteacher explained:

As a headteacher, I have observed that while teachers appreciate regular salary payments and occasional allowances, they still face financial stress that affects their motivation. The economic challenges in the country have made it hard for the diocese to maintain competitive compensation packages. However, we continue to advocate for salary reviews and better incentives to ensure teachers feel valued and motivated to stay in their schools (Interview, 18th August 2025)

Results in table 6, regarding on incentives and bonuses, 42.2% agreed and 14.7% strongly agreed that they receive performance-based rewards or bonuses during festive periods, while 13.7% strongly disagreed and 29.4% disagreed. This implies that while some schools provide incentives to boost morale, such practices are not uniformly applied across all institutions. On the other hand, the results show that 27.5% agreed and 39.2% strongly agreed that good compensation can influence teachers' intention to remain in the institution, while 13.7% strongly disagreed and 18.6% disagreed. These findings align with a study by Wambede (2020), who stated that remuneration had a strong association with teacher retention. The study further pointed out that well-compensated teachers tend to demonstrate higher job satisfaction, stronger commitment, and a reduced likelihood of leaving the profession. This strongly

affirms that fair and motivating remuneration contributes significantly to teacher retention. Conversely, inadequate incentives and bonuses or remuneration often led to frustration, low morale, and high turnover rates, particularly in faith-based and low-resource schools. Headteachers were interviewed and one of them said:

As a headteacher, I have noticed that some schools provide performance-based incentives and bonuses to motivate teachers. These rewards help boost morale and encourage commitment among staff. However, such incentives are not consistent, and many teachers in my school still complain about the absence of transport allowances or medical coverage, which affects their overall motivation (Interview, 15th May 2025).

On answering the same question, one headteacher noted:

In my experience, structured and transparent incentive systems are key to improving teacher satisfaction. Where these exist, teachers tend to work harder and stay longer in their positions. However, the lack of a standardized policy across schools means that some teachers feel neglected or unfairly treated, reducing the overall impact of incentives on retention (Interview, 18th May 2025).

Another headteacher explained:

I strongly believe that good compensation has a direct influence on teachers' willingness to remain in their schools. Teachers often tell me that if their salaries were increased, they would not consider leaving the profession. However, budget limitations and delayed funding from the education authorities make it difficult to implement such increments consistently (Interview, 19th May 2025).

Another headteacher explained:

I have observed, teachers value not only salary but also other forms of support, such as help during personal challenges, training opportunities, and responsibility allowances. These create a sense of care and belonging within the school community. However, without sufficient financial resources and policy backing, sustaining such support systems becomes a major challenge for many headteachers like me (Interview, 20th May 2025)

Based on the findings, the results show that fair, timely, and competitive compensation supplemented with performance-based incentives significantly influences teacher retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese. The results revealed that while a considerable proportion of teachers acknowledged the importance of fair remuneration, however, many expressed dissatisfactions with current pay levels and the inconsistency of incentive provision across schools. This indicates that compensation practices vary widely, with some schools maintaining fair and timely payments, while others struggle to provide adequate and motivating remuneration.

The findings further showed that headteachers recognize the critical role of good compensation, timely payment, and supportive allowances in retaining staff. However, they emphasized that inadequate salaries, lack of standardized incentives, and limited financial resources constrain their ability to motivate teachers effectively. The findings reveal that teachers within the Diocese are inadequately compensated, a situation that has a significant implication for staff morale and retention. This lack of fair compensation not only affect teachers' commitment to their duties but also undermines the overall quality of education delivered. It is there for essential for the Diocese to re-evaluate its remuneration policies to ensure teachers are fairly rewarded. The Diocese need to standardize and institutionalize fair and transparent compensation systems, integrate performance-based incentives, and ensure consistent

and timely salary payments. Strengthening these measures would enhance teacher motivation, satisfaction, and long-term retention, thereby improving the stability and quality of education across Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese.

1.10 Conclusion

The study concluded that fair and just compensation plays a crucial role in influencing teacher retention in Catholic Primary Schools in Wau Diocese, South Sudan. The findings reveal that while most teachers recognized the importance of equitable and timely remuneration, a substantial proportion expressed dissatisfaction with the adequacy and consistency of current compensation practices. Many teachers reported that irregular salaries, low pay, and lack of standardized incentives negatively affected their motivation, morale, and long-term commitment to their schools. Interviews with headteachers further confirmed that limited funding, economic instability, and the absence of uniform diocesan policies hindered efforts to provide fair and competitive compensation. However, schools that ensured timely salary payments, introduced performance-based incentives, and provided non-monetary benefits such as recognition awards and food provisions reported higher levels of teacher satisfaction and retention. These findings are consistent with studies by Lubembella and Mwila (2024), Ekpe and Ofeimui (2024), and Wambede (2020), which established that fair and motivating remuneration significantly enhances teacher retention and performance.

1.11 Recommendations

The study recommends that the Catholic Diocese of Wau, in collaboration with school management, should review and standardize its compensation policies to ensure fairness, transparency, and equity across all schools. The Diocese should also institutionalize performance-based incentive systems, guarantee timely salary disbursements, and strengthen financial management structures. Such measures will enhance teacher motivation, reduce turnover, and promote long-term stability and educational quality in Catholic Primary Schools within the Wau Diocese. Furthermore, the Diocese should develop clear compensation systems that guarantee timely salary payments, competitive pay, and consistent performance-based incentives to improve teacher morale and commitment.

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