Exploring factors associated with teacher attrition and retention in primary schools of Mulanje district: A case of Limbuli Zone.

By

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Dedication

This thesis is specifically dedicated to my beloved wife Judith, daughter Yolanda (born during the time of writing), brother, sisters, mother and late father. Their support has made my dream come true.

Declaration

I, *James Alfonso Mandolo,* declare that, the organization and writing of this thesis is entirely my own and has been carried out at Mzuzu University under the supervision of Mr. Mariseni Mwale. It has not been, nor is it being concurrently submitted for any other degree than the degree of Master of Education (Teacher Education) of Mzuzu University.

All reference material contained in here has been duly acknowledged.

(Actual wording may vary)

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Abstract

Rural schools are faced with challenges in retaining teachers. This could affect provision of quality education amongst rural masses where many of the schools are located. Domains related to teacher's work in schools such as teacher personal factors, within community activities, within school activities and classroom activities were investigated. A case study targeting 130 purposefully sampled qualified teachers was employed. Survey items were related to domains that influenced a decision to accept employment, existing working conditions and their impact on a decision to leave current schools. The tool included a demographic section to collect background information of participating teachers and extent to which factors within the identified domains could affect their job decisions.

In the study, teachers accepted employment mainly for reasons that are altruistic-intrinsic in nature and that within school activities and within community activities are domains in which teachers feel challenged. Lack of frequent provision of opportunities for continued professional development and safety of the environment were among factors that could influence a decision to leave a school. Strategies such as provision of continued professional development, improving relations with the parents and provision of various incentives could encourage teacher retention within schools.

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List of Abbreviations

CPD   Continued Professional Development

DEM   District Education Manager

EFA   Education for All

MDGs   Millennium Development Goals

P: QTR Pupil to Qualified Teacher Ratio

PEA   Primary Education Advisor

SCT   Social Cognitive Theory

SPSS   Special Package for Social Scientists

SSA   Sub Saharan Africa

USA   United States of America

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The adoption of United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) over two decades ago has made many governments highlight quality basic education in their policy agenda. This is emphasised in commitments to Education for All (EFA) policy frameworks in 1990 (Jomtien, Thailand) and its subsequent renewal in 2000 (Dakar, Senegal) (Kadzamira & Rose, 2001). Many factors determine quality education. As suggested by experts, number of teachers is among factors that limits quality of an education system (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010), as they enable securing the attainment of the national educational objectives (Siddiek, 2011).

Globally, while governments are focusing on quality education with teachers taking a centre stage, revelation has it that schools are facing problems in retaining teachers. Within Africa for example, studies have shown that teacher retention especially for rural schools has historically been low with teachers migrating to urban schools while others leaving the profession altogether (Lusingu, 2013; Kavenuke, 2013, Pitsoe, 2013 and Egu, Nwuju & Chionye, 2011). For instance, a study among twelve low income countries including Malawi found that rural schools typically experience high staff turnover and have the highest vacancy rates (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). In quantifying the problem, the Improving Education Quality Project (Bennel, 2004, p. 20) found that nearly 25 percent of teachers in schools located within rural areas of Malawi had left their initial schools since the start of the 1999/2000 academic year. While there has been lack of follow up surveys, media reports continue to expose dissatisfaction that teachers working in rural primary schools express, describing their situation as 'a night mare' (Sharra, 2010) while others 'a curse' (Nyondo, 2013).

Surprisingly, although the situation has potential of derailing provision of quality education, a lesser amount of research effort has gone into understanding challenges that threaten teacher retention within schools. For instance, existing studies limit to examining levels of teacher motivation (Kadzamira, 2006) as well as measuring extent of the attrition problem within the profession (Kayuni & Tambulasi, 2007). In these studies, while it is acknowledged that teachers are underpaid (Kayuni & Tambulasi, 2007), other studies assert that teachers who choose to leave the profession or transfer rarely cite money as reason for their departure (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). In contrast, teachers express that their greatest satisfactions are derived from helping students achieve and advance their personal teaching skills, and that their defection mainly arise from factors that block such efforts (Dinham & Scott, 2000).

Identifying factors influencing low teacher retention is therefore instrumental in addressing the problem. Through the use of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1989), this study contributes to the understanding of underlying factors to the problem by modelling the relationship between a decision to leave and teacher's classroom activities, whole school activities, whole community activities and personal factors. Subsequently, formulating an effective strategy to increase retention will involve administrative decisions and provision of technical information can help inform decision-makers. The implication of finding a relationship between teacher retention and these antecedents of school factors are important for policy suggestions that could significantly impact teacher retention.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Mulanje is among districts in Malawi with schools located in rural areas. Additionally, it is where shortage of qualified teachers is huge as evidenced in high pupil to qualified teacher ratios (P: QTR) of 91: 1 (Mulanje District Education Office, 2014). Teacher retention therefore is one of the mechanisms that can be used to address the shortage problem. Since a decision to leave teaching position in a school entails that a teacher had to first report for duties, it could be assumed that teachers come into a school with enthusiasm but unknown factors described as "feelings of intimidation and uncertainty quickly leads to dissatisfaction" (Altman, 2005, p. 2474).

This call for an investigation into factors making schools lose valuable and experienced teachers. Is it about nature of the schools, responsibilities, work environment and so forth that are driving teachers from schools? Efforts to retain more teachers should emphasise on what teachers find attractive to work and remain in the schools (Bennel, 2004). This suggestion makes it crucial for the present study to focus on teachers themselves as their experiences are essential for determining effective retention strategies.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study sought to explore factors associated with teacher attrition and retention in schools of Mulanje District and at same time identify a workable mechanism to increase retention.

1.4 Specific objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives;

1. To identify factors that attract teachers to work in the district.

2. To establish work situational factors within primary schools of the district.

3. To determine the extent these work situational factors influence a decision to leave teaching position.

4. To describe a mechanism for enhancing teacher retention in the district.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is significant as it contributes towards achievement of the desired national pupil to teacher ratio from the current 90: 1 (Ministry of Education, 2010) to the desired ratio of 60:1 or below by 2017/18 academic year (Ministry of Education, 2008).

1.6 Theoretical framework

Retaining qualified teachers in schools can be studied through many theories. For instance, economic labour market theory (Ehrenberg & Smith, 1997) cited in (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2004) as well as resilience theory (Gu & Day, 2013). This study perceives that retaining teachers in the district require a theory that could link psychological functioning of the teacher and school environment to influence a decision to leave or remain in the schools. Choosing to remain or leave may be considered an action a teacher takes in their career practice and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) provides a basis for understanding psychological determinants of such human action.

1.6.1 The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

The SCT defines human action as a triadic, dynamic, and reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behaviour, and the environment (Bandura, 1989). According to this theory, an individual's action is uniquely determined by each of these three factors. While the SCT upholds

the behaviourist notion that response consequence mediates behaviour, it argues that behaviour is largely regulated through cognitive processes.

The strong emphasis on one's cognitions by SCT implies that the mind is an active force that constructs one's reality, selectively encodes information, performs behaviour on the basis of values and expectations, and imposes structure on its own actions (Jones, 1989). Through feedback and reciprocity, a person's own reality is formed by the interaction of the environment and one's cognitions. While this is the case, it should be known that cognitions change over time as a function of maturation and experience. In this case, an understanding of processes involved in one's construction of reality enables human action to be understood, predicted, and changed.

Figure 1: Researcher's diagrammatic representation of triadic interaction of human action determinants based on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1989)

Personal factors
> age
> sex
> goals

determinants of
individual's
action
(*a decision to
leave or remain*)

Environmental factors
> social norms
> influence by others
> accessible social ammenities
> safety of the environment

Behaviour factors
> skills
> practice
> self efficacy
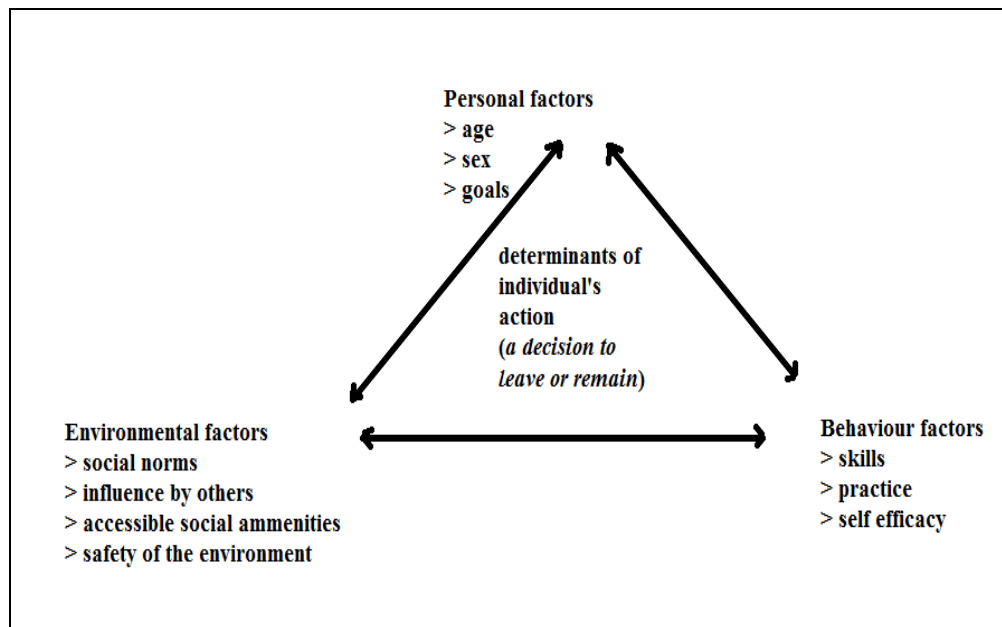
Usefulness of the theory to the study

Integral within the notion of reciprocal determinism is the idea that people have the ability to influence their destiny, while at the same time recognizing that people are not free agents of their own will. This means human beings function as contributors to their own motivation, behaviour, and development within a network of reciprocally interacting influences. Within this SCT perspective, human beings are characterized in terms of five basic and unique capabilities: symbolizing, vicarious, forethought, self-regulatory, self-reflective (Bandura, 1989). It is these capabilities that provide human beings with cognitive means by which to determine behaviour.

Social cognitive theory thus, provides a setting necessary for addressing teacher retention as it offers a more specific application of the theory to teaching career within a school context. In this context, a decision to leave or remain in a school will be a function of teacher personal characteristics such as age, sex, and experience; their behaviour (acquired professional status); as well as environmental influences. The strength of the theory is on its ability to explain how specific social factors impact an individual teacher's perceptions and how these perceptions can affect their behaviour. This is beneficial as it provides basis for development of intervention strategies.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Improving teacher retention in schools is a proactive mechanism for enhancing teacher quality, student achievement, school cohesiveness and a mechanism for minimizing various costs associated with teacher turnover (Lawrence, et al., 2005). In Malawi, it could also contribute towards achievement of national desire to reduce qualified teacher to pupil ratios currently averaging 1:90 in Mulanje District (Mulanje District Education Office, 2014) to the projected 1:60 or below by the 2017/18 academic year (Ministry of Education, 2008). As suggested by authors (Darling-Hammond, 2010), retention of qualified teachers should be considered a top priority for educators if countries are to maintain effective educational programs. School based factors is one reason teachers choose to leave their initial posting (Dinham & Scott, 2000), and research that examines relationship between school conditions and retention may enhance development of strategies for retaining qualified teachers.

This chapter focuses on how information was sourced, current teacher deployment status within the Sub Saharan Africa (SSA), what attracts qualified teachers to accept posting, research on teacher retention and organisational factors associated with attrition and retention. The chapter ends with justifications for the present study.

2.1 Sourcing information

The nature of the topic being addressed dictated expansion of search to include information available via the internet. Broad searches were conducted on Google scholar and Ref-seek to identify relevant materials from reputable sources. Key search terms and phrases included; teacher retention in rural schools, what attracts people into teaching and organisational factors

associated with teacher attrition and retention. This search yielded vast literature. To ensure credibility, only articles from peer reviewed journals were considered.

2.2 The challenge of teacher retention in rural schools

Retaining qualified teachers in rural schools is a major challenge facing most African countries and often results in shortage of competent teachers in these schools. For example, in analysing the state of education within rural schools in Africa, rural schools were particularly more disadvantaged than their urban counterparts (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). These findings have been corroborated by (South African Council for Educators, 2010) who highlighted challenges facing schools within rural areas such as shortage of competent teachers. In Malawi, Improving Educational Quality Project of 2000 (Bennel, 2004, p. 20) shows a 25 percent teacher loss from rural schools by the 1999/2000 academic year. One researcher (Johnson, 2004, p. 12) affirms "…teacher migration most severely affects schools located in …rural communities…"

To understand 'why' teachers leave or remain in their schools, it is of essence to first consider their basis for joining the profession. This will not only give a picture of who is entering the profession but also provide a platform for determining if reasons for joining has anything to do with their eventual leaving or staying.

2.3 What attracts people to teaching in rural schools?

Research on reasons people join the teaching profession has produced wide results. For instance, Bayler and Ozcan (2014) wanted to determine for what reasons individuals choose teaching profession as a career. The study carried out quantitatively among (1,410) teachers revealed that people choose to join teaching for three major reasons; altruistic-intrinsic, extrinsic, and influence by others. The altruistic-intrinsic reasons include teaching is meaningful, enjoy being

with children, to help others, challenging nature of the job, like working in the school environment as well as opportunities for continuing education. The extrinsic reasons include salary, good working hours, better job security, and good career prospects. Influenced by others such as peers, family members and organisations also form basis for individual choice of joining teaching. These findings have also been reported by other researchers (Maphosa et al., 2014 and Johnson, Berg & Donaldson, 2005).

2.4 Research on teacher attrition

Overwhelming evidence suggest the extent of the problem as it continue to attract attention of researchers across the globe. In all, much of it has focused on reasons teachers are leaving school districts and transferring to suburban school districts or leaving the profession altogether. Commonly cited reasons for attrition include personal characteristics of teachers (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2010; and Ingersoll, 2001). For instance, Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft (2010) say teachers leave because of marriage, ill health and child care responsibilities.

While there have been studies linking personal characteristics and teacher retention, influence of external factors on retention has also been common in the literature. Teachers in rural schools face more difficult working conditions than their urban counterparts (Kruijer, 2010). In linking working conditions to attrition, Carroll, Fulton, Abercrombie, and Yoon, (2004) say a teacher may leave his/her initial post when "conditions in their schools do not meet even basic requirements for successful teaching and learning activity" p 8.

Although these researches are comprehensive and interesting, they have done little to reduce outflow of teachers from high-need schools especially in countries such as Malawi. The

challenge has been their focused limit on teacher characteristics associated with attrition and eventual lack of in depth study focusing on school characteristics in relation to a job decision.

2.5   Organisational factors associated with attrition and retention

Ingersoll (2001) took an organizational perspective to show that factors at work—related to teacher characteristics, organizational characteristics and school conditions—have caused turnover to escalate dramatically and create the school staffing problems. Since there has been little empirical evidence of such studies within Sub-Saharan African (SSA) context, generalising such findings could be fallacious due to 'a cultural divide' existing between developed and developing countries. The present study focuses on organisational factors categorised as within classroom, within school level activities and community level activities. In addition, personal factors shall also be examined as researchers have argued on their influence towards job decision (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2010; and Ingersoll, 2001).

2.5.1 Personal characteristic and a decision to leave or remain

Personal characteristics encompass attributes such as age, gender, marital status, rural life experience and qualification. Despite their general perceptions that rural areas tend to have relatively non-expensive living conditions, schools continue to experience problems in retaining teachers. One study (Kersaint, et al., 2007), examined factors that influence retention and resignation among teachers in rural schools within Florida (USA). It drew two thousand eight hundred fifty eight (2, 858) research participants. The study used a questionnaire to examine factors influencing teacher attrition and concluded that personal reasons were greatest among factors influencing teacher attrition. The findings concurred with those of Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft (2010), and Ingersoll (2001) who found personal reasons, such as marriage, ill health, child

care responsibilities and family movements to be the often reported reasons for turnover than either retirement or staffing actions.

In addition, health related reasons have also been reported as affecting rural teacher retention. Regarding HIV and AIDS, its prevalence in rural areas and lack of medical facilities has made rural postings even less attractive to teachers (Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft, 2010). Recent studies reveal primary school teachers as among the affected profession with prevalence rates at 24.2 percent and 21.6 percent for males and females respectively (Ministry of Health, 2012 p 16). Regarding deployment issue, in some cases ill teachers are posted to urban centres to allow them access medical services (Akyeampong and Stephens, 2002). This could add on the gap of teachers from rural areas.

In all these, personal factors including family and ill health provide an equally important avenue for understanding job decisions. While research on these aspects in relation to teacher's job decision within Sub Saharan Africa is comprehensive, a study that focuses on this relationship may be essential in providing knowledge if it has any bearing amongst teachers within Mulanje District.

2.5.2 within classroom activities and a decision to leave or remain

In this study, within classroom activities are identified as those factors that relate to the sources of satisfaction and commitment to teaching from within classroom setting such as positive relationships with students and colleagues. Elsewhere, research on relationship between teacher retention and classroom activities has mainly focused on interactions within classroom and collegial relationships amongst teachers. In particular, one consistent finding is an understanding that a classroom with positive interaction correlates with teacher's decision to remain at school.

Sikes et al., (1985) in (Johnson, Berg and Donaldson, 2005) sought to identify student and teacher relationship that enable a teacher feel they are contributing to student's learning. Multiple interviews were conducted on 48 art and science teachers in England. In conclusion, positive interaction with pupils was found to be of primary importance in teacher's sense of job satisfaction. Relatively, Metz (1993) whose study focused on understanding dynamics of teacher's dependence on students for professional validation, interviewed one hundred and fifty (150) teachers. In this, it was found that teachers with poor interaction with their pupils in class responded with pessimism and self-doubt which correlated with a future plan to leave the school. While positive interaction appears to influence retention, other studies explain that it provides intuitive rewards of being an effective teacher. A study by Johnson and Birkeland (2003) concluded that "…in deciding whether to stay within the school, transfer to a new school or leave their profession entirely, teachers weighed more than anything else, whether they could be effective with their students" p 593.

Also, recognizing the importance of teachers' collegial work in school improvement, Bryk, Camburn and Louis (1999) sought to understand what organizational conditions might promote the emergence of professional communities in a sample of 248 Chicago elementary schools. These researchers conceptualized professional communities as settings in which "interaction among teachers is frequent and teachers' actions are governed by shared norms focused on the practice and improvement of teaching and learning" (p. 753). They found that social trust among faculty members was "by far the strongest facilitator of professional community" (p. 768). Similarly, McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) found that weak professional communities in which "teachers keep their thoughts and practices private," (p. 41) contrasted markedly with strong professional communities, in which "teachers can more readily experience the intrinsic rewards

of teaching, satisfying relationships with colleagues and growth in one's subject area, as well as success in promoting students' learning" (p. 68).

Together, the studies suggest a positive relationship between these social aspects of schooling and teacher retention. Extending this line of analysis with research can enrich our understanding of the relationships among these factors especially within the SSA region where such studies are elusive. While classroom interaction and collegial relationships are important towards improving retention, other studies go beyond by including whole school level activities as necessary towards retention.

2.5.3 Whole school level activities and a decision to leave or remain

School-level activities constitute a variety of activities that engage the teacher outside of the classroom teaching itself such as work-related issues and relationships with administrative staff. They include teacher engagement in continued professional development (CPD), additional school related roles, type of school leadership and availability of resources as in facilities as well as, equipment and supplies. All these have a potential impact on increasing teacher's commitment to an organization thereby increasing retention.

CPD is a means to update teacher's skills and knowledge base. Despite lack of specific studies on CPD and retention in Africa researchers elsewhere points that in increasing teacher's effectiveness, it may make them more satisfied and thus more likely to remain in schools. Garet et al. (2001) examined characteristics of CPD that affect teacher's work. Authors used a proportional probability sample of one thousand and twenty seven (1, 027) mathematics and science teachers to evaluate the Eisenhower professional development programme. The study found that an emphasis on content knowledge and opportunities to learn actively are central to

CPD that enhance teacher's knowledge and classroom practise. In enhancing these important aspects, a teacher feels 'prepared' and is likely to develop commitment. Lewis, Parsad, Carey, Bartfai, Farvis and Summerdon (1999) investigated the relationship between CPD and Teacher's sense of 'preparedness' for different aspects of teaching. Basing on a (NCES) survey of national representative sample of four thousand and forty nine (4,049) teachers, authors found that teachers who underwent CPD focusing on particular content (for example handling of special needs) felt prepared than those who did not. Together, above studies utilising large and longitudinal survey databases, confirm the relation between CPD and sense of preparedness which can increase teacher effectiveness therefore job decision.

Also, engaging a teacher in additional roles may influence retention. According to Johnson and Birkeland (2003), these roles can influence retention in at least two ways. Those who are less experienced may perceive them as opportunities and thus decide to remain and also that teachers holding such roles may experience heightened job satisfaction. First to underscore its impact is Smylie and Denny (1990) through a survey of random sample of non-experienced teachers. The authors found that most teachers perceived some form of benefit from the work of teacher leaders. Of these benefits, many recorded 'professional growth' related to classroom practice while others cited 'an increased sense of professionalism and commitment to classroom teaching' (p 249). In another study of two hundred (200) Israeli teachers in twelve middle schools, Rosenblatt (2001) found majority holding extra roles' such as grade level or subject level coordinator. In this, teachers holding such roles registered significantly higher organisational commitment than those not holding such roles.

In addition, school leadership consistently emerges as an important determinant of retention. Weiss (1999) used an ordinal logistic regression to analyse responses of first year teachers from the schools and staffing survey databases of 1987 to 1988 and 1993 to 1994. In this, new teachers were attentive to whether their principals included them in making decisions about things like curriculum, discipline policy and school budget. The study concluded that "school leadership that incorporates teacher participation influence whether new teachers feel it is worthwhile to do their best and whether they plan to remain in their school locations" (p 866). Similar findings have also been reported. Useem (2003) found that in Philadelphia, schools where new teachers were "unhappy with the school climate and administration practices" (p 18) experienced high turnover rates. In same way, Johnson and Birkeland (2003) report that among fifty (50) novice Massachusetts teachers, those who decide to leave their schools often described their principals as "arbitrary, abusive or neglectful…" p 549.

Furthermore, school resources as in facilities, equipment and supplies affect teacher's ability and satisfaction they desire from their work. In one study, (Carroll et al., 2004) explored how inadequate school resources affect teacher's willingness to remain in school. Relatively, Buckely, Shneider and Shang (2004) used data from the 2003 survey of K-12 teachers in Washington DC to test the extent to which quality of facilities affect teacher's retention. The two studies reported similar findings. Adequate school resources influence teacher retention. Specifically, "…as perceived quality of school facilities improves, ceteris paribus, the probability of retention increases" (Buckely et al., 2004 p7).

In all, whole school level activities such as opportunities for CPD, engaging teachers with additional roles and inclusive leadership style influence job decisions. In these, while literature

points the relationship, lack of substantial data within Sub Saharan Africa especially Malawi to examine such relations provides gap in knowledge for policy makers to design mechanism to improve retention. As such, studies that incorporate such knowledge could be beneficial towards improving retention. Further than this, community within which teachers are working have been found to influence job decisions.

2.5.4 Whole community related activities and a decision to leave or remain

Community level activities encompass a complex set of interactions that include parental support, teacher's involvement in the community and safety of the environment. Research that has targeted influences of whole community on a teacher's retention decision has provided a wide scope of interacting factors. Teacher's involvement in the community has also been identified as "cultural competency or rural fit" (Cowan, 2010). Consistently, literatures identify this as a contributory factor towards accepting and maintaining a teaching post. One study (Lemke, 1994), which focused on factors affecting acceptance and maintaining rural teacher posting found that teachers are often found in a 'mismatch' of social and cultural customs. This finding has been replicated by Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft (2010) who finds that in Malawi and Ghana for instance, student teachers belong to variety tribes and have a variety of first languages. These could affect individual teachers posted in new environments as they could feel 'isolated' both professionally and socially.

Furthermore, literature reveals parental involvement in child's education as contributing towards teacher retention. According to Sheldon and Epstein (2005), parents, family and community involvement in education correlates with pupil acquiring of higher grades, attending school regularly, better social skills and improved behaviour. All these may impact on classroom

activities which have already been found to affect retention. Johnson and Duffet (2004) conducted a survey to seek opinions of parents and teachers on how each view another's role and performance in educating children. The survey interviewed one thousand and two (1,002) teachers and two thousand and eleven (2, 011) parents with children in New York public high schools. According to findings, the frequency of contact between home and school is strongly related to a teacher's overall job satisfaction. Teachers who enjoy excellent relations with parents are much less likely to have considered leaving their schools.

In relation to safety, other studies find that some schools threaten not only teacher's chances of accomplishing their personal goals, but also their sense of physical wellbeing. An analysis of 1999 to 2000 data on crime and safety shows that 71 percent of USA elementary and high schools experienced at least one violent incident in that year (Chandler, 2004). In addition, Quality Counts (2004) indicates that on average, 12.5 percent of students in American High Schools are engaged in a physical fighting on school property and 8.9 percent were threatened or injured with a weapon at school. In relation to retention, of particular interest is finding by the Public Agenda survey (2004). Out of seven hundred twenty five (725) high school teachers interviewed over half indicated taking a risk of physical intervention, while others were reluctant for fear of getting injury. In the Public Agenda survey, 34 percent of teachers reported to seriously considering quitting (Public Agenda, 2004 p 43-44). While studies on school violence and teacher safety in Malawi schools remain elusive, media continue to publish incidents of such (Gondwe, 2015). This gap provides an opportunity to relate if at all safety has any bearing on teacher's job decision.

Overall, personal factors, within classroom, school and community factors have great deal of influence towards teacher's job decisions. While the above studies have been adequate and much of them comprehensive, still more challenges exist in utilising their findings especially within the Sub Saharan Africa.

2.6 Justification for the study

Studies above reveal that field of teacher retention specifically from an organisational perspective has not invited attention of many scholars within the SSA region with exception to personal characteristics of teachers as done by (Miller, 2012; Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010 and Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002). Such cases expose lack of technical information regarding other elements of an organisation such as the happenings within a classroom, within a school as well as within the whole community. Elsewhere, these have been found to relate to a decision to leave or retain in a school.

In addition, unlike studies in developed countries which utilize large, longitudinal datasets, most of the studies done within Africa rely upon surveys of teachers asking about their perceptions of working conditions and motivation (see Bennel & Mukyanuzi, 2005; Kadzamira, 2006 and Urwick, Mapuru, & Nkhoboti, 2005). This survey data could likely produce less accurate models of teacher retention because a teacher's report of motivation and working conditions could be affected by whether or not teachers have plans to leave their schools.

Another challenge noted is on inconsistent findings. While a number of studies link a decision to leave as related to salary and other financial related incentives (Kayuni & Tambulasi, 2007 and Kadzamira, 2006), other studies argue that pay is not the important reason for teacher decision to leave a school. For instance, in their study (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003), find that although

many of the 50 new teachers studied over four years expressed dissatisfaction with pay and the low status it signalled, only one of the 17 respondents who left teaching by year four stated that he did so primarily because of pay. 16 respondents' decisions were influenced far more by poor working conditions such as more orderly schools, better facilities and supplies, better professional development, or smaller classes.

Challenges identified expose the need for a study to supplement available data in addressing teacher shortage as a result of school's inability to retain teachers. This call has been supported by experts who are calling for research with more of disaggregated data which could be used in addressing deployment challenges. For example, Carr-Hill, Katabaro, Katahoire, and Oulai (2002) says "the discussion on the impact of supply and demand (of teachers) is of little use for planning purposes until figures are available that separate out the variety of factors, quantify them and give out a relative weighing" p 76. Through the use of social learning theory, this study adds knowledge on current status of affairs within schools as organisations and how it impacts job decision.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Scott and Morrison (2006) consider methodology a theory (set of ideas about the relationship between phenomena) of how researchers gain knowledge in research contexts, and why. Efforts to increase retention in rural schools require a systematic way of identifying challenges teachers face in these schools. In this, the focus should not only consider methods to use but also consider the logic behind the methods used to successfully address the challenge.

3.1 Research paradigm

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2009) describe research paradigm as a set of beliefs and assumptions through which we look at the world. The main paradigms are the positivist, interpretive and the critical paradigms. Cohen, et al., (2009) state that within positivist paradigm, researchers "strive for objectivity, measurability, patterning, construction of laws, rules of behaviour and observed phenomena" p26. According to them, the interpretive approach has the intention of understanding the world of human experience whereby meanings and interpretation are important. In the critical paradigm, according to Cohen, et al., (2009) "expressed intention is deliberately political and the emancipation of individual is a key and the main issue is not to understand situations but to change them" p26.

The interpretive paradigm is characterized by a concern for the individual, and the central essence of this paradigm is to understand the world of human experience (Cohen, et al., 2009 p21). Therefore, the interpretative paradigm will guide towards identifying factors related to teacher retention and attrition within rural schools of Mulanje district.

3.2 Research design

The design that has satisfies the above meta-theory is case study. Mertens (2005: p 229) says "this is a method for learning about a complex instance based on a comprehensive understanding of that occurrence obtained by extensive description and analysis of that instance taken as a whole and in its context". The strength of this design lies in its potential to enable the study of things in detail and with case studies; it is possible to gain a unique perspective of a single individual or group (Denscombe, 2003).

To understand the situation on the ground, the design employed both qualitative and quantitative aspects. There are two reasons for the choice; first, it will allow the study to look closely at teachers' experience through both open and close ended questions. Second, with this study, focus will not be limited in describing the experiences of the teachers but also in explaining "why" a decision to leave develops. In other words, after dealing with question of "what things are like", the study will seek explanations of what might cause such phenomenon.

3.3 Research site

The study area is located in southern region of Malawi within the Shire Highlands Educational Division (SHED). The division comprises four districts namely; Mulanje, Thyolo, Chiradzulu and Phalombe. According to Educational Statistics (Ministry of Education, 2010 p 26) the division has 539 schools. Of these, 538 schools (99.8 percent) are located within rural areas while 1 school (0.2 percent) are within semi – urban area. These schools are staffed with 4, 809 trained teachers with a pupil population of 503, 210.

From these districts, the study focuses on Mulanje as it is faced with challenges in retaining teachers within its primary schools (Mulanje District Education Office, 2014; Ministry of

Education, 2010; and Sedere, 2005). The district has thirteen (13) primary school cluster zones one of which is Limbuli located to the south eastern part of the district, bordering with the Republic of Mozambique.

Maps for the site have been provided on Appendix A.

3.4 Study population.

According to Davies (2007), population refers to the category of people (or animals or objects) about whom a researcher intends to write and draw a sample. The population of this study is made up of primary school teachers working within the Mulanje District. The district has a total number of 2, 290 trained teachers in its 160 public primary schools (Mulanje District Education Office, 2014).

3.5 Sampling technique

Different sampling methods were used to come up with the district, zone and teacher participants. Merriam (1998) describes sampling as a method used to select a given number of people or things from a population. This is an important aspect of research as it enables application of conclusions to that population (Davies, 2007).

3.5.1 District sample

Mulanje District was selected purposively because it is affected by low teacher retention rates as evidenced in high pupil to qualified teacher ratios (P:QTR) averaging 91:1 compared to other districts within same division (Mulanje District Education Office, 2014). Purposive sampling is based on "assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Mertens, 1998 p: 61).

3.5.2 Zone sample

Limbuli primary school cluster zone (Limbuli Zone) was selected to participate in the study. Its purposeful selection was based on some unique features befitting "rural status". Ndengu (2012) argues that the guiding principle in purposive sampling technique is "what common characteristics bind the sample together so as to provide one with the necessary data" p 45. First, the zone is about 30 kilometres east of Mulanje Boma (District administration headquarters). Second, between Mulanje Boma and Limbuli zone, there is Mulanje Mountain which acts as a physical barrier to accessing a number of services. In addition, most of the schools lie along eastern cliffs of Mulanje Mountain and at the same time along bordering areas with the republic of Mozambique.

3.5.3 Participants sample and size

According to Mulanje District Education Office (2014), the zone has 230 trained teachers. As argued by Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2009), one answer to "how big a sample one must obtain, is how accurate one wants the results to be" p 97. There are many conditions that researchers need to consider when coming up with a size. Amongst these are; research design, variables involved, participant attrition and respondent mortality (Cohen, et al., 2009). In addition, the study aimed at attaining a sample that could be identical to the entire population as accurately as possible since "drawing conclusions about the population is an important component of any research" (Lodico, et al., 2006 p 248). To achieve this purpose, the study included all thirteen (13) primary schools within the zone, sampling out ten (10) teachers from each school.

The sampling strategy employed in selecting participating teachers was probability sampling. The choice was based on its flexibility to draw randomly from the wider population and also that "it is useful if the researcher wishes to make generalisations, because it seeks representativeness of the wider population" Cohen, et al., (2009 p 101). Specifically, the study adopted stratified random sampling method which divided the population into homogenous groups based on sex, each containing subjects with similar characteristics. This sampling technique being a useful blend of randomisation and categorisation enabled both quantitative and qualitative aspects of this research to be undertaken.

3.6 Instrumentation

Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire that was distributed among participating teachers.

3.6.1 Questionnaire for teachers

This was developed basing on data gathered from literature study and expert contribution during piloting phase. The questionnaire was developed to reflect all work environments which have the potential to influence attrition and retention such as within classroom activities, whole school level activities, community level activities and personal factors. Section 1 sought for respondents' demographic information which mainly captured gender, age bracket, prior experience with rural areas, years at their current school and level of qualification. Section 2 sought for respondent's reasons for accepting and remaining in the profession at their current school. Section 3 sought for their contribution on effective retention strategy. In sections 2 and 3, some questions included Likert-scaled items to seek for respondent's evaluation of different

issues which are considered to associate with teacher's decision to leave or remain at a school while others were open ended to allow respondents to freely express their thoughts.

3.6.2 Piloting the Research Instruments

Research instruments were pretested through a random sample of six respondents in Salima District (Nsalula primary school) and Mulanje District (Gambula primary school). This was to determine effectiveness and validity of research instruments. Pilot data was analysed and results were used to modify and improve the items before the instruments were rolled out to the entire population.

3.6.3 Validity of research instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) argue that validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inference, which are based on the researcher's results. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) add "being mindful about sources of analytic biases" (p 293). In the first place, both quantitative and qualitative research questions were pilot tested to help improve face validity as well as seeking assistance from experts to improve on content validity. During data collection exercise, the researcher used several techniques to increase accuracy including explaining the situation regarding teacher retention, challenges and the need for the present study. Participants were also given time to fill questionnaires at their own suggested time so they cover all items in the questionnaires and reduce "researcher's effects" (Miles, et al. 2014 p 294).

3.6.7 Reliability of research instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) say reliability is a measure of the degree to which an instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. Using the four spheres of teacher retention influence as identified in the literature, the study designed a survey instrument with questions that reflect

both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the research objectives. In ensuring internal consistency, the instrument was pilot tested and modified basing on expert contribution. Additionally, in an attempt to ensure reliable results, the instrument included open ended question items to triangulate findings from likert type questions.

3.7 Data analysis technique

Data collected by a questionnaire was of two folds as it included both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research. This dictated adoption of specific techniques for analysing each type of data.

Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics through Special Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). According to Lodico, et al. (2006), descriptive statistics provide "a method of quantifying the characteristics of the data, where their centre is, how broadly they spread, and how one aspect of the data relates to another aspect of the same data" p255. The descriptive statistical tools such as means and standard deviations helped the researcher to quantify and interpret the data.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data from open ended questions. In thematic analysis, data is analysed by themes which emerge from the data and are not imposed upon by the researcher (Dawson, 2002). Initially, it involves open coding and then moves in to selective coding. The whole purpose is to develop categories and themes that address research questions (Ndengu, 2012). Responses were placed into spheres of influence based on contributions from the literature. For instance, Bayler and Ozcan (2014) influence for accepting employment was used for question ten (10) while questions eleven (11), twelve (12) and thirteen

(13) were categorised into four influencing spheres based on contributions from (Ingersoll, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2010 and Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010).

3.8 Ethical considerations

Research ethics were adhered to before, during and after the study. First, permission was sought from the Ministry of Education through the District Education Manager (DEM) of Mulanje District as well as concerned head teachers in the involved schools. Regarding individual teacher participants, they were first informed about the whole study and its purpose, then given consent forms which aimed at ensuring that participants have a clear understanding of what they are getting involved in. Having understood and subsequently signing the consent forms, the researcher proceeded by giving them questionnaires. Throughout the study, their contributions were kept as anonymous as possible through identifying the questionnaires with numbers instead of teacher names.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The study sought to gather data from primary school teachers to address four research objectives. Eleven factors were related to teachers' decisions to accept employment. Fourteen factors were related to current working situations as well as on their influence on teachers' decisions to leave their schools. The factors were later categorized into respective sub groups as identified within the review of literature to determine how they ranked as influencing decisions to accept employment as well as extent to influence a decision to leave their current schools.

4:1 Data collection procedure

Data collection exercise was done from 6th January to 18th February, 2015. This involved the researcher seeking permission from the District Education Manager (DEM), Primary Education Advisor (PEA) and Head Teachers in participating schools. At each school, the researcher first made an introduction to Head Teachers where arrangements to meet teachers were made. On the agreed date, the researcher briefed teachers about the study where issues of confidentiality and voluntary participation were stressed. Those who agreed were given forms to sign showing their willingness to participate. Out of the planned 130 research participants, 121 participants completed the questionnaires making a total return rate of 93.1 percent. The remaining 9 questionnaires (6.9 percent) were not completed due to sickness and personal reasons. Details of activities and dates of visit, specific schools and questionnaires distributed have been summarized on appendix B.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of the research participants

4.2.1 Distribution of respondent by gender

Teachers were asked to indicate their gender. Out of 121 participants, 86 (71 percent) were males while 35 (29 percent) were females. Research by Steiner-Khamsi and Kunje (2011) showed that such gender composition is not new as the male to female teacher ratio was found to be 3:1 respectively. From findings, there are few female teachers within Limbuli zone than their male counterparts. The findings have been displayed in the figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Gender of research participants.
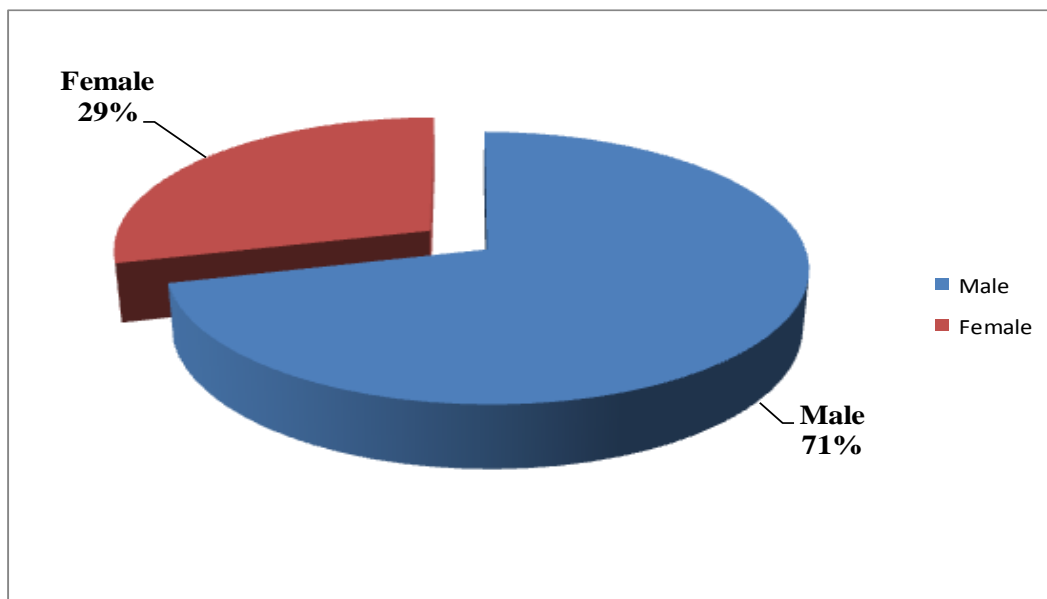
4.2.2 Distribution of participants by age group.

The researcher also sought for age ranges of the participants. The data collected was summarized and displayed in the Table below.

Table 1: Showing distribution of participants by age group

Respondent age	Number of teachers	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Below 25	11	9 %	9 %
25 to 30	55	46 %	55 %
31 to 34	11	9 %	64 %
35 and above	44	36 %	100 %
Total	121	100 %	

From the table above, 55 (46 percent) teachers were aged between '25 and 30' closely followed by those 'above 35' age group with 44 (36 percent) teachers. The other two categories were no more than 11 teachers (9 percent) each. For instance, those below 25 were 11 (9 percent) while those of between 31 and 34 were 11 (9 percent) as well. From this, majority are within the 25 to 30 as well as those above 35 years. Cumulatively, over 64% of the respondents were 34 years and below, suggesting that majority were in their productive age bracket. The figure below display the findings.

Figure 3: Distribution of participants by age group
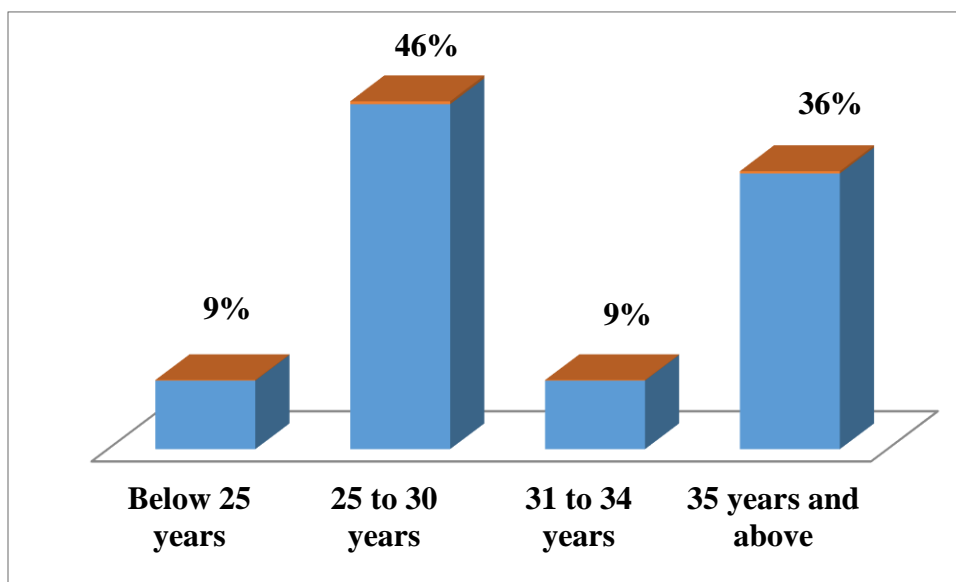
4.2.3 Distribution of participants by marital status

Teachers were also requested to provide data regarding their present marital status. Out of the 121 participants, 2 teachers (2 percent) did not provide their responses. The remaining 119 (98 percent) provided responses which varied from single, married, widowed and divorced. In all, majority 103 teacher participants (85 percent) indicated being married. Eleven (11) teacher participants (9 percent) said were single. Three (3) participants (2 percent) said were divorced, while other two (2) participants (2 percent) indicated that they were widowed. Comparatively, the data shows that most respondents (85%) were married suggesting that majority of the respondents in Limbuli zone, have responsibilities which could motivate them to remain in schools and work. The data has been presented in figure below.

Figure 4: Marital status of teachers
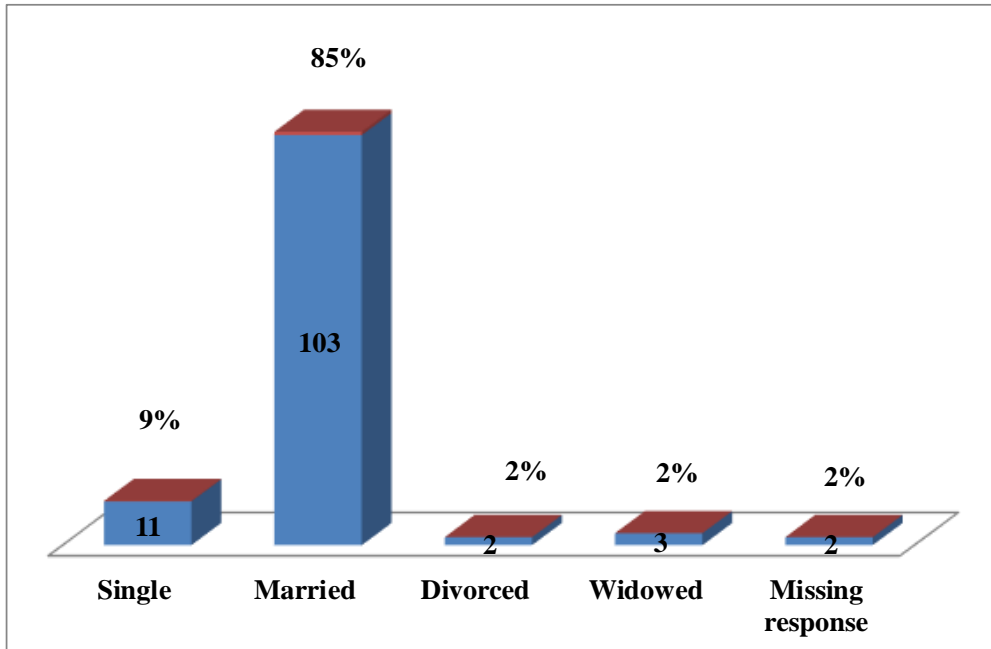
4.2.4 Prior experience with rural life

Working within rural area could be a challenge to other teachers. As suggested by Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft (2010), prior experience is one of the suggested requirements for retaining teachers within such locations. Teachers were asked as to whether they had any prior experience to rural life before they were posted. Out of 121 participants, 5 percent of them did not provide responses. The remaining 95 percent of participants chose to respond. Among the respondents, 79 percent of them responded positively while 16 percent responded with a 'no'. This shows that majority of the participants had prior experience with rural life and that the rural environment in Limbuli zone might not be a new thing to them. Figure below represent the responses to prior experience with rural life.

Figure 5: Responses to rural life experience.
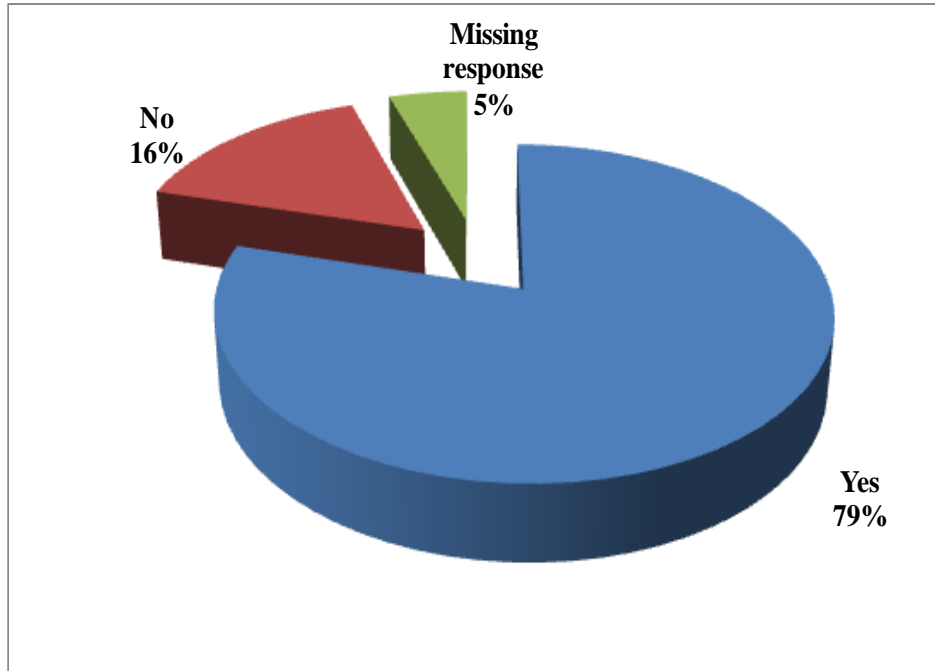
4.2.5 Meaning attached to rural life by participants

The study also sought to find out what meaning do participants attach to 'rural life'. As the question was open-ended, thematic analysis was used to categorise meanings attached to rural life from teaches. Out of 121 participants, 110 chose to respond. All responses to the question have been provided on Appendix H. The table below provides summarised categories of meanings attachment to word 'rural life' from participants.

Table 2: Showing meaning participants attach to term 'rural life'

Attached meaning to rural life	Number	Percentage	Example of comments
Location of an area	46	42%	o staying far from urban areas o long distances to buy basic necessities
Unavailability of social service in an area	31	28%	o remote area with poor communication o difficult life with no electricity, good markets and houses
Socio economic activity of an area	19	17%	o people depend on subsistence farming o people focus on business than school
Cultural practices followed in an area	14	13%	o strict observation of traditions and customs of cultural groups o life of doing primitive activities

Data in the table shows meanings that teachers attach to rural life as experienced in communities they work. Such an understanding is necessary because it means they have an idea of conditions they may experience within their work places. For instance, teachers within the zone know that schools they work are far away from urban areas i.e. (Mulanje Boma, Luchenza town, Limbe town and Blantyre city), they will have to travel far to access some basic necessities.

Additionally, the places they work have challenges in terms of communication and other social amenities such as electricity, markets and good houses. Furthermore, teachers are aware of economic activity of the people whose children they will teach as well as local cultural traditions and customs.

4.2.6 Years teachers have stayed in their present school

Participants were also asked to state the number of years they have been at their school. All participants responded to the question by stating the years in present schools. From responses, 80 percent of the teachers said have stayed between 1 and 5 years. Ten percent indicated to have stayed between 11 and 20 years. Eight percent indicated to have stayed between 6 to 10 years while 2 percent responded to have stayed above 20 years. Comparatively, over 80% of the respondents had stayed for a period of five years and below. This is an indication that there is teacher instability on job within Limbuli zone as teachers leave by the time they have five years' experience at the school. The findings have been displayed in the figure below.

Figure 6: Number of years teachers have stayed at present schools
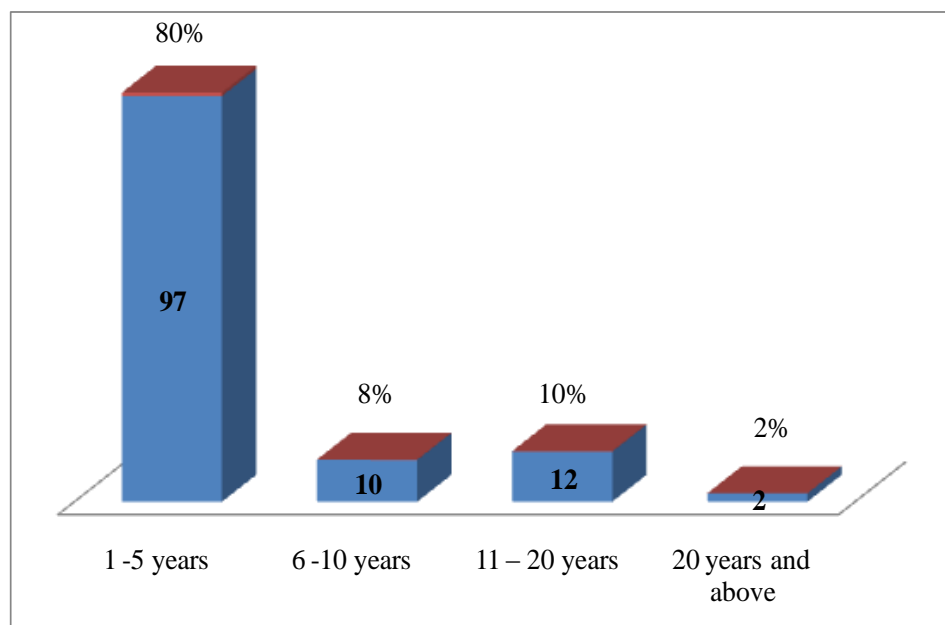
4.2.7 Years participants have worked as primary school teachers

Participants were asked to indicate total number of years they have spent as primary school teachers in public schools. All participating teachers provided a response to the question. Teachers who have worked for less than five (5) years formed 53 percent. This was followed by those within 11 to 20 years with 25 percent. Those above 20 years totalled 17 percent followed by those with six (6) to ten (10) years with 6 percent. The data means 53 percent of teachers have teaching experience of not more than five years. Figure below displays the findings.

Figure 7: Number of years teachers have worked in public schools
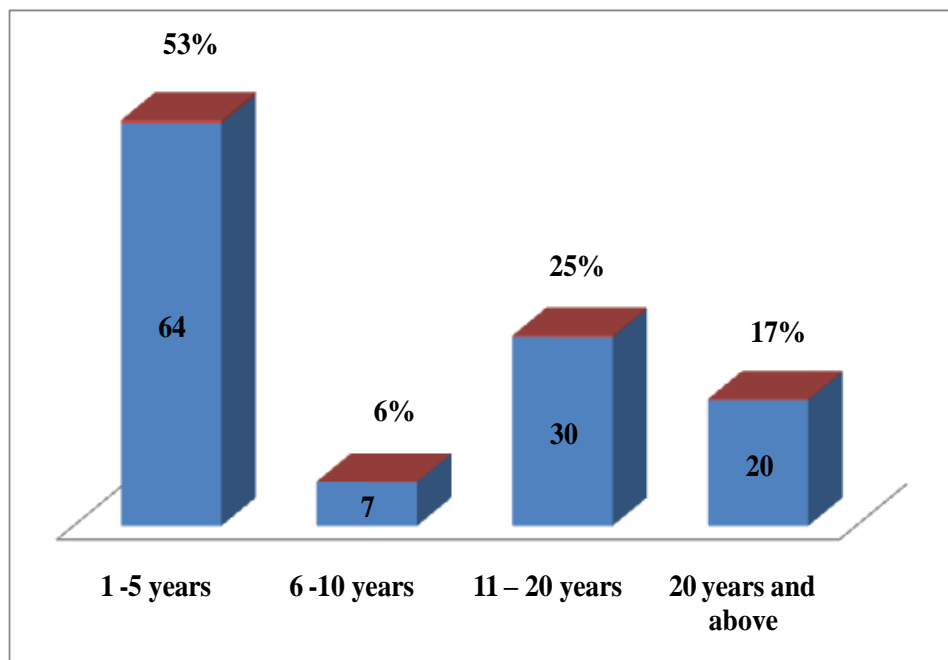
4.2.8 Classes taught by the teacher participants

Teachers within Limbuli zone were asked to indicate classes they teach. From the data gathered, 17 percent teach in standard 8. Fifteen percent teach in standard 1. Standards 6 and 7 had 12 percent each. Twelve percent of them teach standard 2 while 11 percent teach standard 5. Least is standards 3 and 4 with 10 percent each. The interesting finding was that no teacher reported to handling classes of different grade levels. The data has been presented in the figure below.

Figure 8: Classes taught by teacher participants
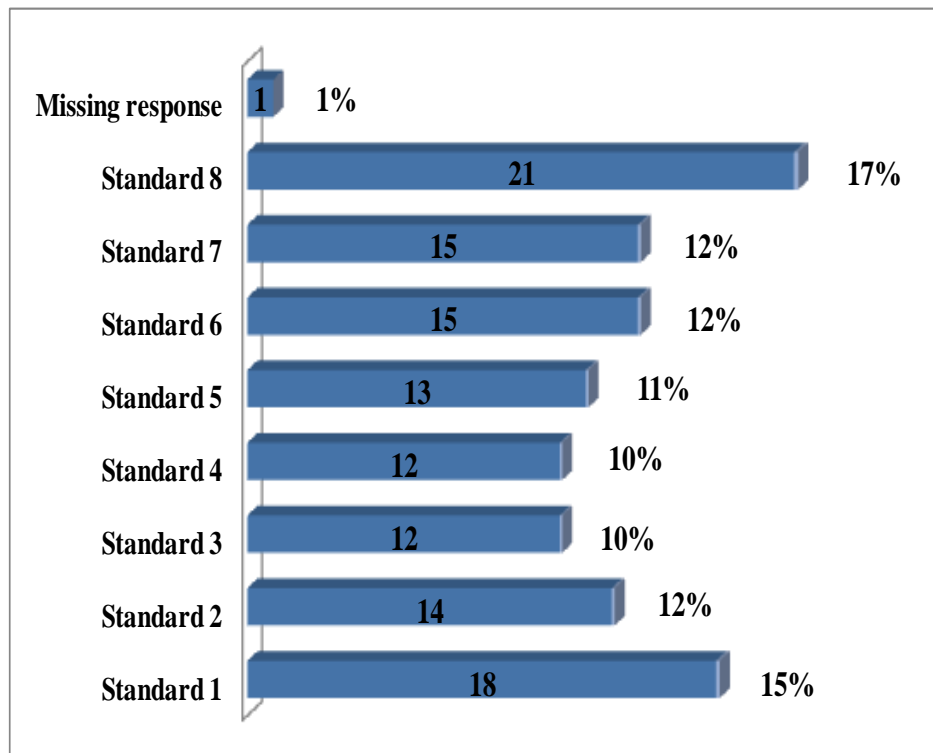
4.2.9 Teaching Qualification

Last on demographic characteristic was teaching qualification. The levels of qualification sought were Certificate in primary school teaching, Diploma in primary school teaching and Bachelor degree in primary school teaching. None option was also added to carter for those without any of

the stated qualifications. Out of 121 participants in the study, all stated as having a Primary School Teaching Certificate. As argued by experts, qualified teachers are determinants of quality education (Bayler & Ozcan, 2014 and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010). In this, their participation helped in exposing challenges and subsequent suggestions on effective retention strategy which could be applied to qualified teachers. Figure below shows qualification of participating teachers.

Figure 9: Teacher Qualifications
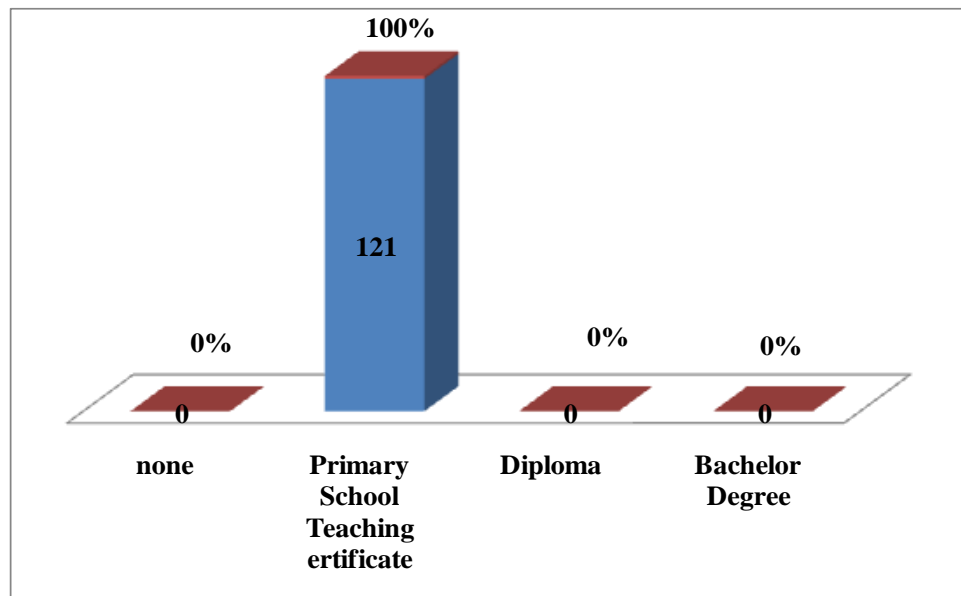
4.3 Accepting employment

4.3.1 Factors Influencing Teachers' Decisions to Accept Employment

Teachers were asked on what influenced their acceptance to work in Limbuli zone. They were provided with eleven factors relating to a decision to accept employment identified from existing literature as well as from expert contributions during piloting. They were asked to rate the extent of each of the provided factors towards their acceptance of posting. The question adopted a

Likert scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant 'no influence' and 5 meant 'a very large influence'. Findings have been tabulated into frequencies and percentages in the table below.

Table 3: Factors influencing job acceptance

| | Influencing Factor | Response | | | |
		Influence Level	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
a	Good reputation of the school	No influence	45	45	38.1 %
		A little influence	14		
		Some influence	24	73	61.8 %
		Good deal of influence	19		
		Very large influence	16		
b	Satisfied with salary and (rural allowance) incentive	No influence	55	55	46 %
		A little influence	32		
		Some influence	14	63	53.3 %
		Good deal of influence	10		
		Very large influence	7		
c	Family and home is closer to the school	No influence	77	77	65 %
		A little influence	15		
		Some influence	5		34.7 %
		Good deal of influence	7	41	
		Very large influence	14		
d	Engage in agricultural practices	No influence	86	86	72.8 %
		A little influence	13		

		Some influence	10	32	27.2 %
		Good deal of influence	7		
		Very large influence	2		
e	Spouse is employed within the area	**No influence**	**93**	**93**	**78.8 %**
		A little influence	7	25	21.2 %
		Some influence	3		
		Good deal of influence	1		
		Very large influence	14		
f	Availability of teaching and learning materials at the school	**No influence**	**42**	**42**	**35.5 %**
		A little influence	33	76	64.5 %
		Some influence	22		
		Good deal of influence	14		
		Very large influence	7		
g	I enjoy rural life style	**No influence**	**55**	**55**	**46. %**
		A little influence	30	64	54. %
		Some influence	15		
		Good deal of influence	10		
		Very large influence	9		
h	This is the only job opportunity I have	**No influence**	**35**	**35**	**29.6 %**
		A little influence	14	83	70.4 %
		Some influence	15		
		Good deal of influence	14		
		Very large influence	40		

i	I enjoy working in the school environment	No influence	31	31	26.3 %
		A little influence	22		
		Some influence	22	87	73.7 %
		Good deal of influence	21		
		Very large influence	22		
j	I was influenced by peers/ family members	No influence	77	77	65.3 %
		A little influence	13		
		Some influence	15	41	34.7 %
		Good deal of influence	5		
		Very large influence	8		
k	Desire to work with young people	No influence	33	33	27.9 %
		A little influence	13		
		Some influence	17	85	72.1 %
		Good deal of influence	18		
		Very large influence	37		

Table 3 shows what influenced teacher decision to accept posting within the zone. Column 5 in the table was derived by summing up frequencies for 'no influence' and 'a little influence, some influence, good deal of influence and very large influence'. No influence was used to identify lower side of the factor in influencing a decision while remaining influence levels were used to get the upper side of the factor in influencing a decision.

It was found that seven factors out of eleven factors that were summed up to measure level of influence had higher cumulative frequencies and percentages lying on the side that represents

high levels of influence on accepting posting within Limbuli zone. These included; item i- 'I enjoy working in the school environment' with 73.7 percent, item k- 'desire to work with young people' 72 percent, item h- 'this is the only job opportunity I have' 70.4 percent, item f- 'availability of teaching and learning materials at the school' 64.4 percent, item a- 'good reputation of the school' 61.8 percent, item g- 'I enjoy rural life style' 54.2 percent, and item b- 'satisfied with salary and (rural allowance) incentive' 53.3 percent.

On the other hand, teachers were not influenced by 'family and home is closer to the school' with frequency of 34.7 percent, 'I was influenced by peers and family members' 34.7 percent, 'engage in agricultural practices' 27.7 percent, and 'spouse is employed within the area' 26.8 percent. Findings of influencing factors have been summarized and arranged in descending order in the figure below.

Figure10: Reasons for job acceptance
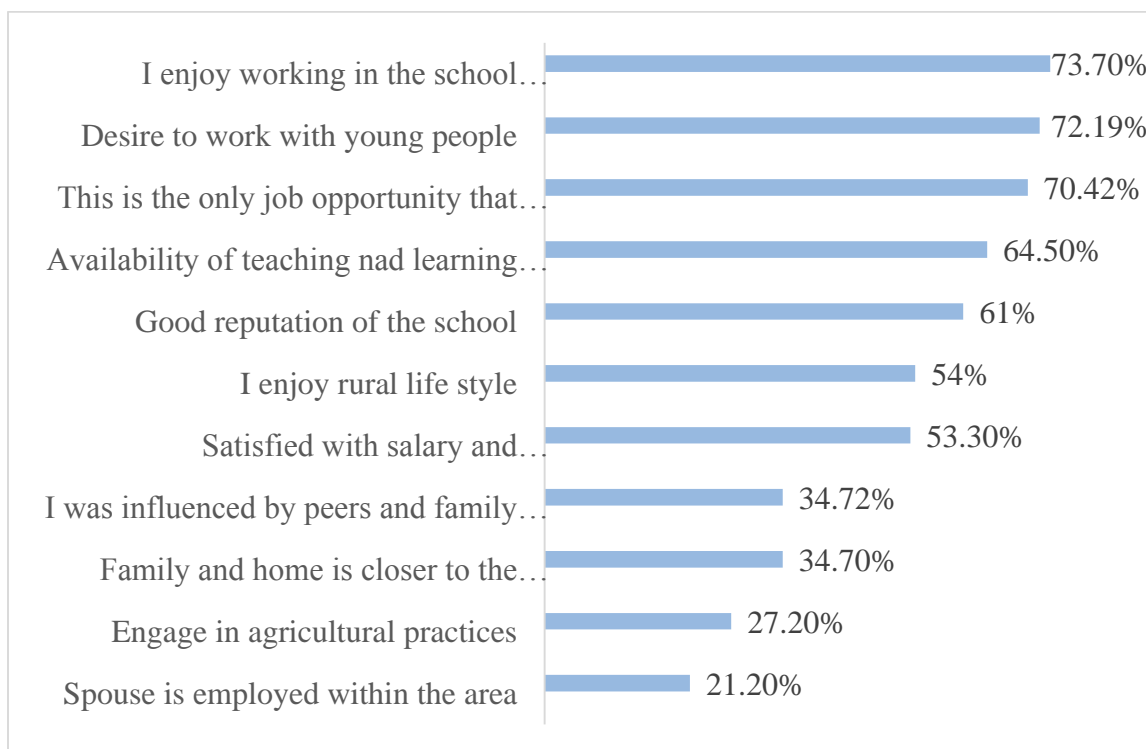
Responses to Open-Ended Question

Teachers were also given the opportunity to add factors that influenced their acceptance of posting which were not among the eleven factors. Out of 121 research participants, 41 teachers (33 percent) chose to respond. They gave comments all of which totalled 70. Bayler and Ozcan (2014) reasons for accepting employment served as a useful framework for organizing these comments. In their study, they found reasons people accept employment as falling within three categories. Altruistic-intrinsic reasons, extrinsic reasons and influence of others. The main reason for categorizing them into such was to enable calculation of their means to identify the category with highest influence.

Table 4**:** Written comments on influences for accepting employment

Example of comments	Sphere of influence
o Parents' appreciation during open days. o Desire to help achieve national goals of education. o Accepting my profession.	Altruistic-intrinsic reasons
o Exposure to business o Social services are closer o Good weather condition	Extrinsic reasons
o Forced by administrators o Not given chance to choose school o Due to political issues	Influenced by others

In their contributions, teacher comments stressed the spheres identified by Bayler and Ozcan (2014) that influence career choice. Some teachers gave comments such as exposure to business,

closeness to social service institutions such as markets as well as good weather condition all of which fall under extrinsic reasons. Others gave responses related to altruistic-intrinsic factors. Comments given included 'accepting my profession', 'desire to help achieve national goals of education', and 'parents appreciation during open days'. Those having have been influenced by others had comments such as 'forced by administrators', 'not given chance to choose schools' and 'due to political issues'. (Complete comments found in Appendix I).

4.3.2 Establishing work environments within primary schools

Teachers were provided with fourteen factors (14) to express their opinions regarding working situation as existing within their schools. In this, statements depicting various aspects of working situations within the school environment were identified through existing literature and expert opinion during piloting. The findings have been summarized in table below.

Table 5**:** Teacher's work environment existing within schools

	Working situation	Response	Number	Cumulative Number	percent
a	I have good relations with pupils	Strongly Disagree	4	14	11.7 %
		Somewhat Disagree	10		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	16	16	13.4 %
		Somewhat Agree	32	89	74.7 %
		Strongly Agree	57		
b	I have good relations with	Strongly Disagree	0	2	1.6 %

	colleagues	Somewhat Disagree	2		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	11	9.2%
		Somewhat Agree	36	106	89 %
		Strongly Agree	70		
c	I am satisfied with my own effectiveness in class	Strongly Disagree	4	6	5.4%
		Somewhat Disagree	2		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	13	13	10.9%
		Somewhat Agree	40	96	80.9%
		Strongly Agree	56		
d	I have opportunities for continued professional development	Strongly Disagree	13	23	19.3 %
		Somewhat Disagree	10		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	12	10 %
		Somewhat Agree	38	87	73.1%
		Strongly Agree	49		
e	I am engaged in extra roles within our school	Strongly Disagree	29	46	36.6 %
		Somewhat Disagree	17		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	12	10%
		Somewhat Agree	34	61	51.2 %
		Strongly Agree	27		
f	There are adequate	Strongly Disagree	25	55	46.2 %

	instructional materials	Somewhat Disagree	30		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	23	23	19.3 %
		Somewhat Agree	29	40	33.6 %
		Strongly Agree	11		
g	There is inclusive leadership at school	Strongly Disagree	13	30	25.2 %
		Somewhat Disagree	17		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	17	17	14.2 %
		Somewhat Agree	40	72	60.5 %
		Strongly Agree	32		
h	I have excellent relations with parents	Strongly Disagree	10	28	23.5 %
		Somewhat Disagree	18		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	33	33	27.7 %
		Somewhat Agree	42	58	48.7 %
		Strongly Agree	16		
i	I have a safe work environment	Strongly Disagree	20	38	31.9 %
		Somewhat Disagree	18		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	23	23	19.3 %
		Somewhat Agree	40	58	48.7 %
		Strongly Agree	18		
j	I am involved in our	Strongly Disagree	43	66	55.4%

	community's activities	Somewhat Disagree	23		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	18	18	15.1 %
		Somewhat Agree	23	35	29.4%
		Strongly Agree	12		
k	Teachers have adequate influence of policies and practice e.g. discipline issues	Strongly Disagree	3	23	19.3 %
		Somewhat Disagree	20		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	16	16	15.9 %
		Somewhat Agree	38	80	67.2%
		Strongly Agree	42		
l	Am satisfied with level of control and autonomy in my classroom	Strongly Disagree	5	15	12.6%
		Somewhat Disagree	10		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	17	17	14.2 %
		Somewhat Agree	51	87	73.1 %
		Strongly Agree	36		
m	There are good buildings at this school	Strongly Disagree	25	48	40.3 %
		Somewhat Disagree	23		
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	14	14	11.7 %
		Somewhat Agree	28	57	47.8%
		Strongly Agree	29		
n	There is sufficient	Strongly Disagree	8	16	13.4 %

administrator support	Somewhat Disagree	8		
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	24	24	20.1 %
	Somewhat Agree	44	79	66.3%
	Strongly Agree	35		

Table 5, shows how teachers rated their working situation within Limbuli zone. Column 5 in the table was derived by summing up numbers and percentages for 'strongly disagree and somewhat disagree' as well as 'strongly agree and somewhat agree' to get a cumulative number and percentage. Neither agree nor disagree was left as it was because it neither falls to sides of high levels of agreement to individual factors nor the side of low levels of disagreement to individual factors.

It was found that nine factors out of fourteen had their cumulative frequencies and percentages lying on the side that represents high levels of influence on agreeing to existence of working situations within Limbuli zone. These included; item b-'I have good relations with colleagues' with 89 percent, c-'I am satisfied with my own effectiveness in class' 80.9 percentage, a-'I have good relations with pupils' 74.4 percent, d- 'I have opportunities for continued professional development' 73.1 percent, l- 'I am satisfied with level of control in my classroom' 73.1 percent, k-'teachers have adequate influence of policies and practices' 67.2 percent, g-'there is inclusive leadership at our school'60.5 percent, and e-'I am engaged in extra roles within our school' 51.2 percent.

On the other hand, teachers did not agree to existence of five factors describing working situation within their schools. The factors were; h-'I have excellent relations with parents' 48.7 percent, 'I

have safe work environment' 48.7 percent, m-'there are good buildings at the school' 47.8 percent, 'there are adequate instructional materials at the school' 33.6 percent and j-'I am involved in our community's activities' 29.4 percent. Findings have been summarized below.

Figure 11: Factors related to teacher's work
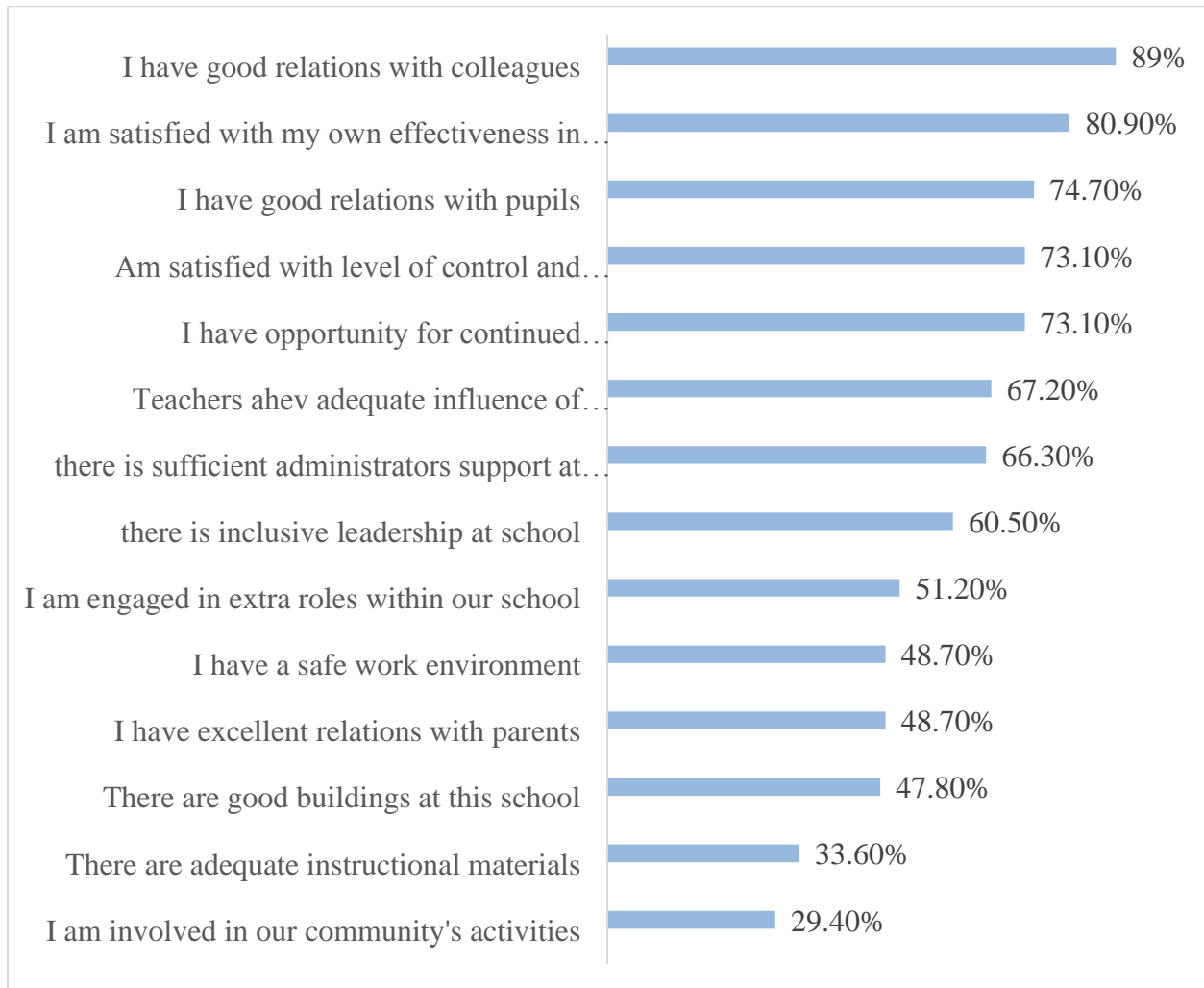
Open question responses

Teachers were also allowed to list some aspects of work situation they observe but were not included among the fourteen factors. Out of 121 participants, 28 teachers (23 percent) chose to respond giving the total of 56 responses. These comments were categorized into 'within classroom', 'within school', 'within community activities' and 'personal factors' to allow determination of categories with frequent responses. (Complete responses to open ended question 11 are on Appendix J).

Table 6: Categories of work environments from open ended questions

Example of comments	Spheres of influence
o Lack of seriousness of learners. o Lack of respect to teachers. o Presence of naughty learners.	Within classroom
o Insufficient teaching and learning materials o Biasness when delegating duties by the Head Teacher. o Some teachers not familiar with new policies.	Within school
o Poor relationship between teachers and community o Most PTA members are uneducated o Harsh community	Within community activities
o Nice geographical area o School surrounded by perennial rivers o Nice environment to live in	Other factors

From the table, teachers provided comments regarding their observed working environments. The comments were organised within spheres of influence existing within schools. Under within classroom environment for example, teachers observe lack of seriousness among learners, lack of respect and presence of naughty learners. Under within school environment, teachers observe insufficient teaching and learning materials, biasness when delegating duties by administrators and that some teachers are not familiar with new policies. From within community sphere of influence, teachers observe poor relationship between teachers and community, most PTA are uneducated and also a harsh community.

4.3.3 The extent these work situation factors could influence a decision to leave

The fourteen factors in 4.3.2 were also used for teachers to rate the extent for each factor on their decision to leave their schools. The question adopted a likert scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant 'no influence' while 5 meant 'very large influence'. Frequencies were calculated and summarized as shown in the table below.

Table 7: Factors influencing a decision to leave a school

| | Attrition Factor | Response | | | |
		Influence Level	Frequency	Cumulated Frequency	Percen tage
a	Relations with pupils	No influence	62	62	53.9%
		A little influence	11		
		Some influence	15		
		Good deal of influence	16	53	46 %
		Very large influence	11		

b	Relations with colleagues	No influence	44	44	38.2%
		A little influence	15		
		Some influence	21		
		Good deal of influence	19	71	61.7 %
		Very large influence	16		
c	Satisfaction with own effectiveness in class	No influence	51	51	44.3 %
		A little influence	17		
		Some influence	12		
		Good deal of influence	18	64	55.6%
		Very large influence	17		
d	Opportunities for continued professional development	No influence	20	20	17.3 %
		A little influence	10		
		Some influence	15		
		Good deal of influence	26	95	82 %
		Very large influence	44		
e	Engaged in extra roles a school	No influence	57	57	49.5 %
		A little influence	23		50.4 %
		Some influence	16		
		Good deal of influence	10	58	
		Very large influence	9		
f	Inclusive leadership practices at school	No influence	47	47	40.8 %
		A little influence	25		
		Some influence	18	68	59.2%

		Good deal of influence	16		
		Very large influence	19		
g	Availability of instructional materials	No influence	50	50	43.5 %
		A little influence	22	65	56.5 %
		Some influence	21		
		Good deal of influence	16		
		Very large influence	6		
h	Ability to engage in community activities	No influence	64	64	55.6 %
		A little influence	28	51	44.4 %
		Some influence	17		
		Good deal of influence	5		
		Very large influence	1		
i	relations with parents	No influence	39	39	33.9 %
		A little influence	15	76	66.1 %
		Some influence	14		
		Good deal of influence	23		
		Very large influence	24		
j	Safety of the environment	No influence	31	31	26.9 %
		A little influence	17	84	73.1%
		Some influence	14		
		Good deal of influence	14		
		Very large influence	35		
k	Support from	No influence	41	41	35.6 %

	supervisors	A little influence	27		
		Some influence	14	74	64.4%
		Good deal of influence	18		
		Very large influence	15		
l	Remoteness of the school	No influence	36	36	31.4 %
		A little influence	18		
		Some influence	16		68.6 %
		Good deal of influence	13	79	
		Very large influence	32		
m	Ill health	No influence	45	45	39.1 %
		A little influence	11		
		Some influence	16	70	60.9 %
		Good deal of influence	11		
		Very large influence	32		
n	Marriage	No influence	55	55	47.8 %
		A little influence	10		
		Some influence	10	60	
		Good deal of influence	16		52.2 %
		Very large influence	24		

The table displays working situation which could influence a decision to change posting. Column 5 in the table was calculated by summing up numbers and percentages to get cumulative number and percentage for no influence and influence factors.

It was found that two factors out of fourteen had their cumulative frequencies and percentages lying on the side that represents 'no influence'. These were ability to engage in community activities' with 55.6 percent and 'relations with pupils' with 53.9 percent. Twelve factors had their cumulative frequencies and percentages lying on the side that represents having 'influence' towards a decision to leave. These were; opportunities for continued professional development 82 percent, safety of the environment 73 percent, remoteness of the school 68.6 percent, relations with colleagues 61.7 percent, relations with parents 66 percent, support from supervisors 64.3 percent, ill health 60 percent, inclusive leadership at school 59.1 percent, availability of instructional materials 56.5 percent satisfaction with own effectiveness in class 55.6 percent, marriage 52.2 percent and engaged in extra roles at school 50.4 percent. Findings have been summarized in their descending order in the figure below

Figure 12: Extent of influencing factors towards changing posting
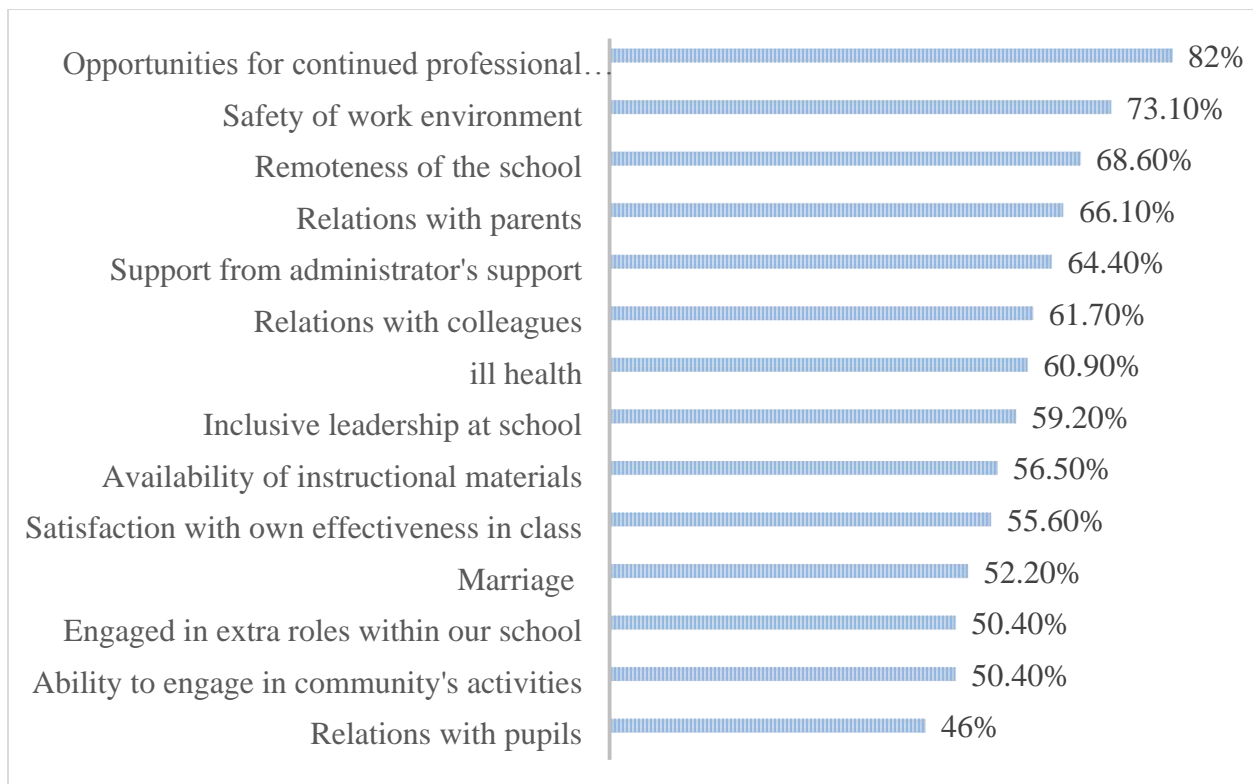
Responses to open questions

Teachers were again provided with an opportunity to list other factors that could influence their decision to leave schools. Twenty six (26) teachers (21 percent) of the 121 participants chose to offer single or multiple comments totalling 62. The comments were organized into within classroom, whole school level, community level and personal factors. The table below shows the responses by category, number and example of comments. (Complete comments are on Appendix K).

Table 8: Categories of work environments that could influence a decision to leave

Sphere of influence	Example of comments
Personal reasons	o Access to health services. o Availability of basic necessities. o Witchcraft among members.
Within community activities	o Village heads are not development conscious. o Availability of teacher houses. o Poor housing.
Within school activities	o Lack of in-service training. o Lack of cooperation amongst teachers. o Dictatorship administration.
Within classroom activities	o Workload. o Desire to learn new skills. o Controlling pupil behaviour.
Other reasons	o Ethnic rivalries. o Promotion. o Leadership from DEM's office.

From the comments, teachers said would leave their schools for personal reasons. Example of comments ranged from 'access to health services, availability of basic necessities' to responses

such as 'witchcraft among members'. Furthermore, others gave 'within community factors' as reasons. Their comments varied from 'village heads are not development conscious, availability of teacher houses to poor housing'. From 'within school factors' teachers provided comments such as 'lack of in-service training, lack of cooperation amongst teachers' as well as 'dictatorship'. Those of 'classroom factors' had their comments including 'workload, desire to learn new skills and controlling pupil behaviour'. Some comments fell outside the school as an organization range. These were placed under other factors and included 'ethnic rivalries, promotion and leadership from DEM's office'.

4.4 How much did each category influence a decision amongst teachers?

When individual factors that were provided to teachers were categorized in their respective spheres of influence, how they ranked as having influenced teachers' decisions to accept employment (question 10) and think of leaving their present schools (question 12).

The eleven (11) individual factors presented to teachers in Section 2, Question 10, were categorized according to their respective spheres of influence (i.e., altruistic-intrinsic, external and influence by others) to identify how they ranked as having influenced teachers' decisions to accept employment in their present school. A mean score for each sphere was calculated basing on percentage of the responses to the individual factors that comprised each grouping.

Table 9: Means of spheres of influence related to acceptance of employment

Category		Factor	Percentage Mean
Extrinsic-	a	Good reputation of the school	49.3

reasons	b	Satisfied with salary and (rural allowance) incentive	
	g	I enjoy rural life style	
	d	Engage in agricultural practices	
Influence by others	j	I was influenced by peers/ family members	40.3
	c	Family and home is closer to the school	
	e	Spouse is employed within the area	
	h	This is the only job opportunity I have	
Altruistic-intrinsic reasons	i	I enjoy working in the school environment	70.1
	f	Availability of teaching and learning materials at the school	
	k	Desire to work with young people	

Each sphere's percentage mean score was ranked in descending order to indicate the amount of influence each had on teachers' decisions to accept employment at their current school (Figure 12). As reported by teachers, the Altruistic-intrinsic reason was ranked highest with an average percent of 70.1. This was followed by Extrinsic- reasons with a mean percentage of 49.3. Least was influence by others with a mean percentage score of 40.3.

Figure13. Rank order of mean scores of factors related to acceptance of employment
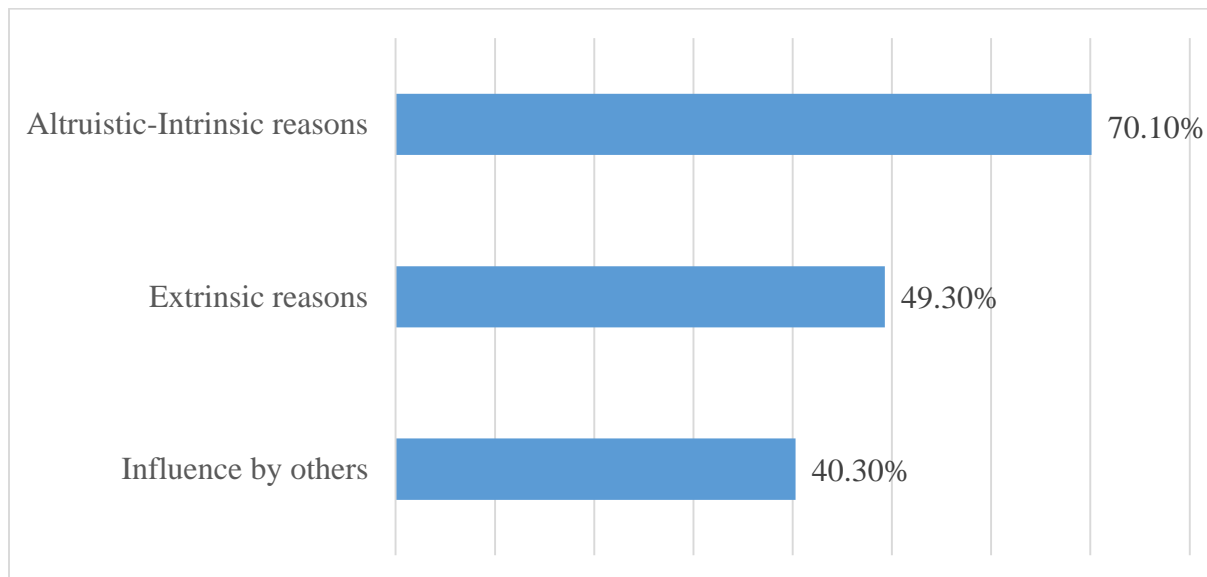
Next, 14 individual factors in Question 12 were categorized according to their respective spheres of influence (i.e., Within Classroom, Whole School-Level and Community Level) to identify how they ranked as having a potential influence for a teachers' decisions to leave their current schools. A mean score for each sphere was calculated based on the responses to the individual factors comprised in each grouping.

Table 10: Categories of factors influencing a decision to leave

Factor		Percentage Mean	Category
A	relations with pupils	55	Within classroom
B	relations with colleagues		

C	Satisfaction with own effectiveness in class		
G	Availability of instructional materials		
D	Opportunities for continued professional development	64.1	Within school
E	Engaged in extra roles at school		
F	Inclusive leadership practices at school		
K	Support from supervisors		
H	Ability to engage in community activities	61.2	Within community
I	relations with parents		
J	Safety of the environment		
L	Remoteness of the school	60.6	Personal factors
M	Ill health		
N	Marriage		

In the table, 'within school activities' have a highest a percentage mean of 55 followed by 'within community activities' with a percentage mean of 61.2. Third was 'personal factors' with a mean of 60.6. And last is 'within classroom activities' with a mean of 64.1. Factors were arranged in their descending order of categories according to their means and presented in a bar graph.

Figure 14: Categories of work situational factors
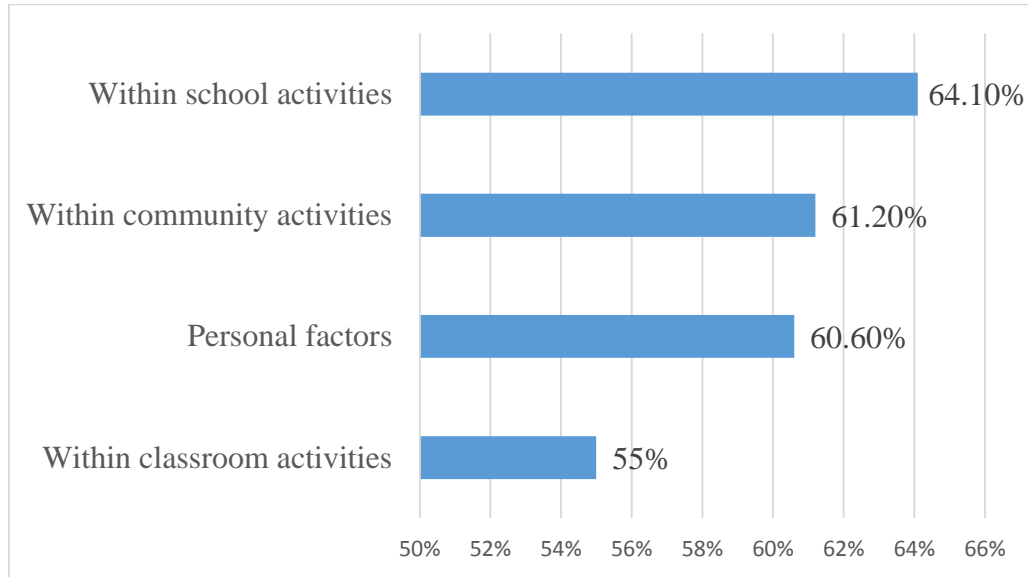
4.5: Effective mechanism for enhancing teacher retention in schools

Teachers were asked to identify effective recruitment and retention mechanisms for the district. Literature has shown that administrators or schools could take measures to retain teachers. Teachers were provided with eleven steps (11) that may help in teacher retention. They were asked to go through these steps and identify 'the most effective', 'second effective' and 'third effective' steps to help retain teachers. Out of 121 participants, 3 participants (2.5 percent) did not respond while the remaining 118 participants (97.5 percent) responded. Findings have been summarized in the table below.

Table 11: Strategies for retaining teachers

Factor		First effective Step		Second effective step		Third effective step	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
A	Mentoring and support programs	2	2%	8	7%	10	8%
B	Involvement in community activities	1	1%	3	2%	1	1%
C	An environment for collegial relations	22	19%	13	11%	11	9%
D	Teacher engagement in extra roles	2	2%	2	2%	2	2%
E	Opportunities for CPD	32	27%	19	16%	10	8%
F	Incorporating leadership	6	5%	6	5%	7	6%
G	Administrator support to teachers	11	9%	12	10%	7	6%
H	Safety of environment	10	8%	15	13%	11	9%
I	Provision of instructional materials	7	6%	16	14%	15	13%
J	Relations between parents and teachers	8	7%	10	8%	20	17%
K	Provision of incentives to teachers	17	14%	14	12%	24	21%
	Total	118	100%	118	100%	118	100%

Frequencies for all steps in each column were summed up to come up with a consensus of steps that could be taken by schools or the district office. As the figures below demonstrate there are several steps that could be taken to attract and retain more teachers.

4.5.1: First effective steps to retain teachers within schools.

Figure 15: First effective retention steps
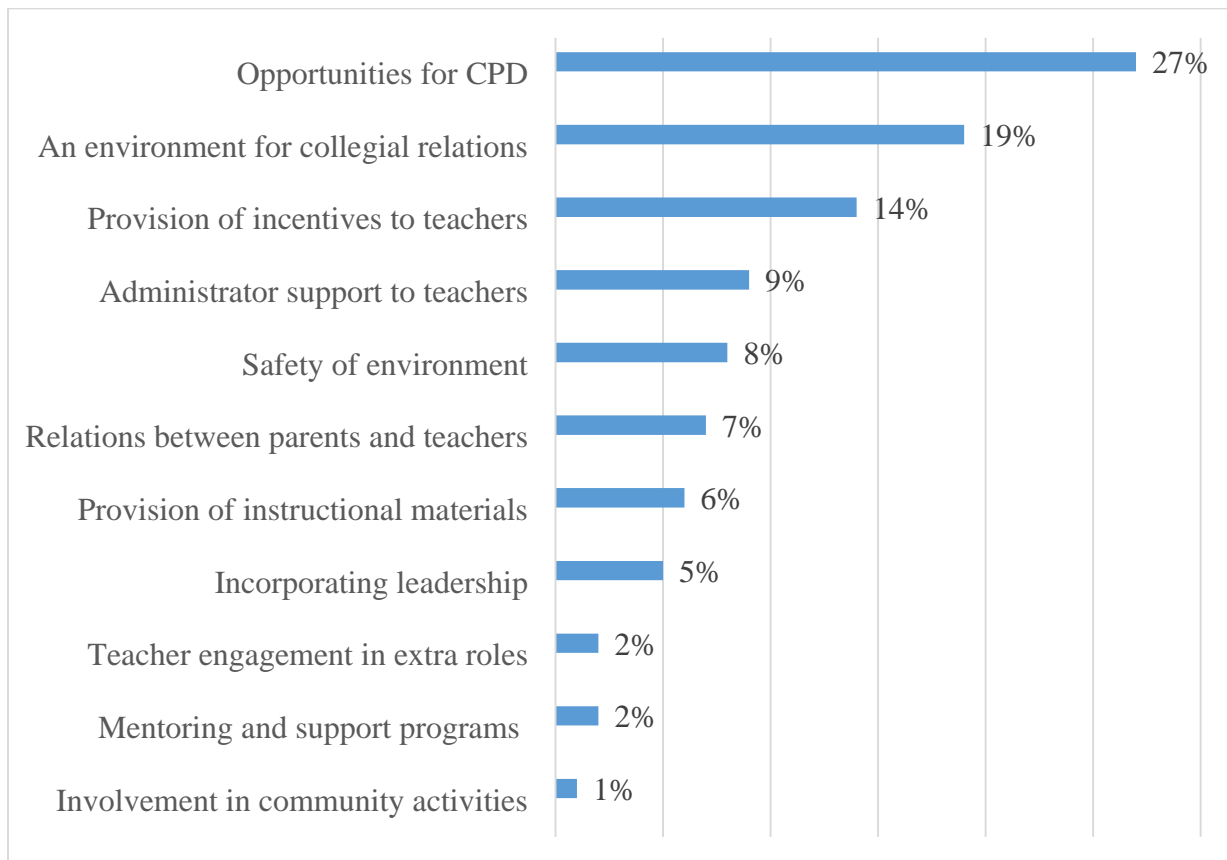
4.5.2:   Second effective steps to retain teachers within schools.

Figure 16: Second effective retention steps
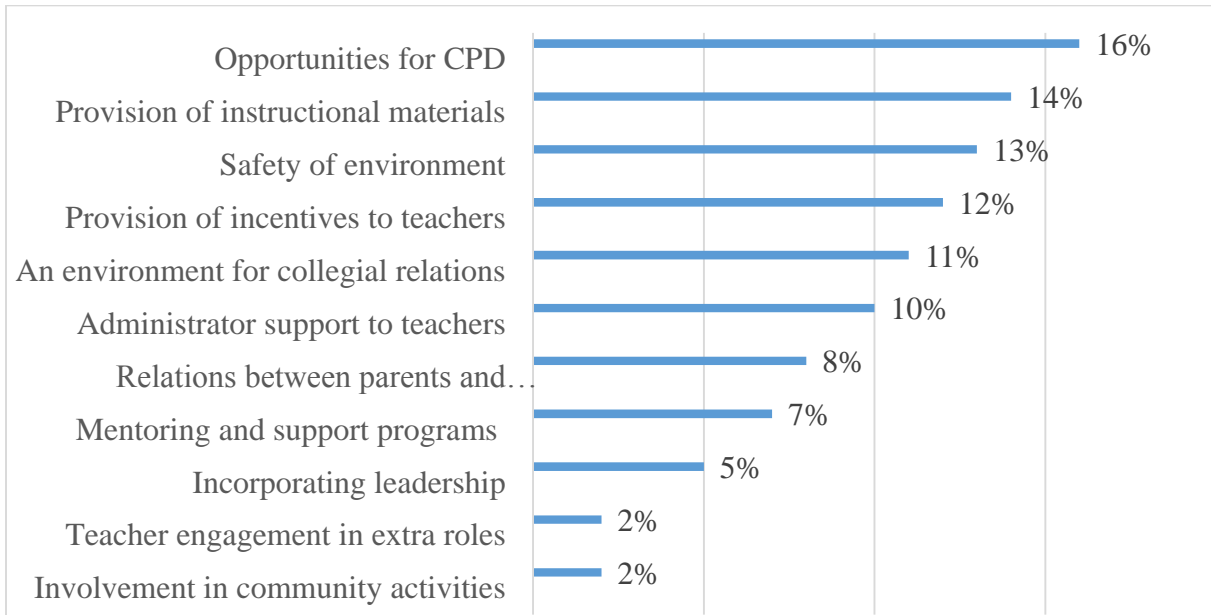
4.5.3: Third effective steps to retain teachers.

Figure 17: Third effective retention steps
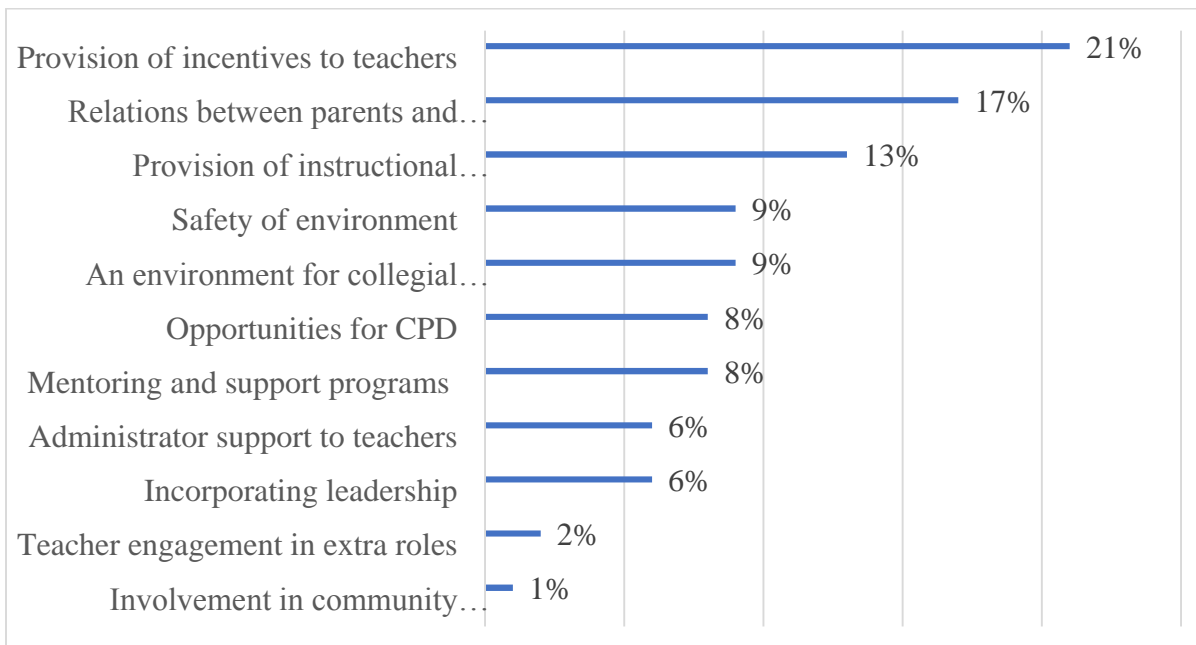
4.5.4 The most effective steps to retain teachers.

In addressing research objective 4, total frequencies for the categories were added and their percentages calculated and presented in descending order. The figure below shows findings.

Figure 18: The most effective mechanism for enhancing retention in the district
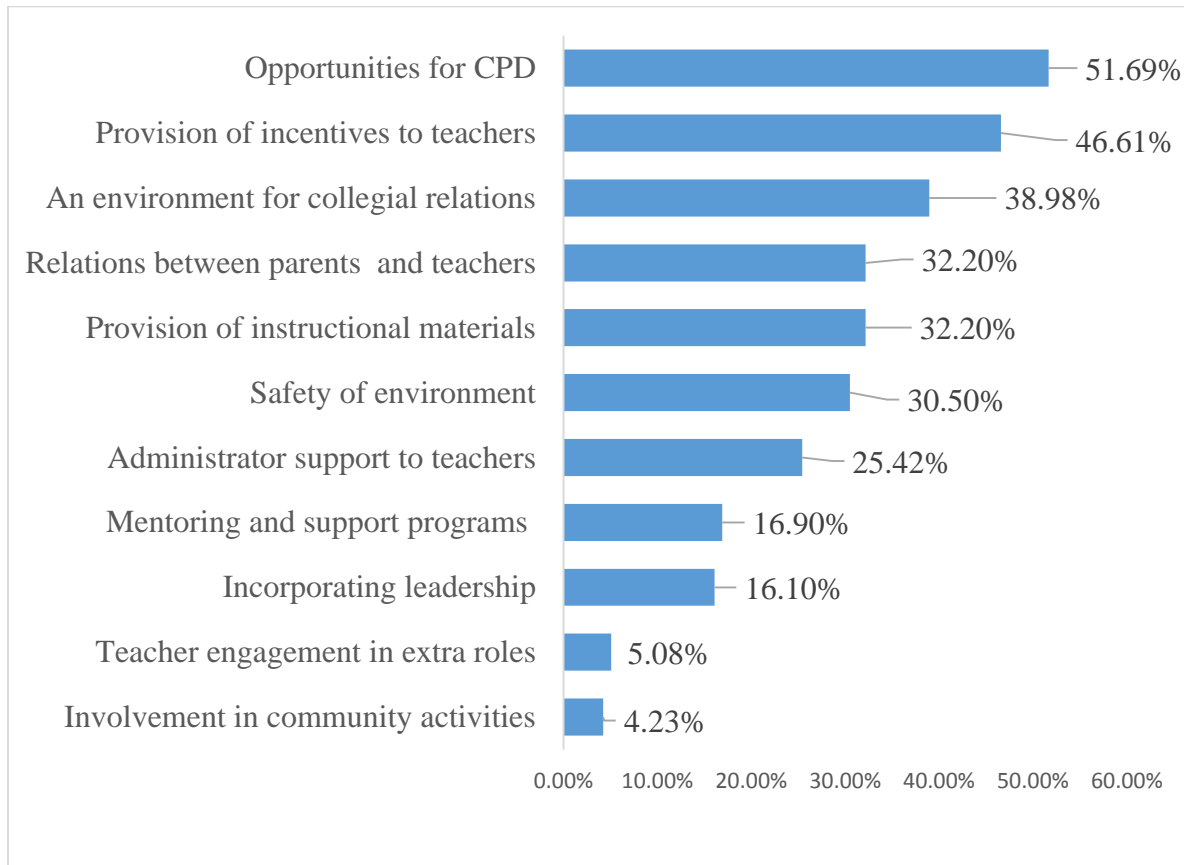
Responses to open ended questions

Teachers were accorded opportunity to suggest mechanisms that could help towards retaining teachers within their schools. Forty six (46) teachers chose to respond representing a (38 percent). Many gave single or more comments all of which totalled seventy four (74). The suggestions were categorized basing on the topic addressed within the given comments. The table below summarises the findings.

Table 12: Teacher comments on improving teacher retention

Category of influence	Example of comments
School factors	o Recognition by your immediate supervisor o Allocate teachers according to their performance. o Provide opportunities for workshops o Monitor and support teachers
Community factors	o Communities should respect themselves by not bewitching teachers. o Communities should assist in alleviating problems of accommodation o Good cooperation between school committee and teachers o Provide incentives for hardworking teachers
Government factors	o Award or promote hardworking teachers based after thorough research on their performance o Establish colleges for Continued Professional Development of rural teachers o Provide loans for teachers to buy motor bikes for transport o Establish a paid double shifting due to high enrolment

In the table above, teacher emphasis was on level of support from the school, community and government. For instance, schools were requested to provide regular workshops, improve on head teacher and teacher relationship, furthermore the community was asked to assist in provision of accommodation to teachers, improve on relations between teachers and the community. Other teachers went extreme by suggesting that "communities should respect

themselves by not witching (sic) teachers". On government, teachers suggested that teachers should be promoted based on merit and automatically, provide college for continued professional development and that government should provide extra care to sick teachers. Some teachers emphasized more on compensation. Suggestions included establish a paid double shifting due to high enrolment, award or promote hardworking teachers based after thorough research on their performance, establish colleges for continued professional development of rural teachers and provide teachers with motorbike loans. (Details on Appendix L).

4.6 Summary of findings

This study of qualified primary school teachers (121) in 13 primary schools within Limbuli zone of Mulanje District sought to identify factors that most highly influenced teachers' decisions to accept employment and are likely to influence a decision to leave teaching in their current schools. The majority of teachers were males (71 %), married (85%) and 79% considered themselves to have a 'rural background'. Ages of participants were distributed across all age groupings. While 80% were in their first five years of teaching at their current school, 53% were in their first three years of public school teaching.

As reported by teachers, among factors that influenced teachers to accept employment more than the others was 'enjoy working in the school environment' and the least was 'enjoy rural life style.' These findings would be consistent with the high percentage of teachers who had a rural background and were willing to work within the schools. A factor identified by teachers as having the least influence on their decisions to accept employment was 'spouse employed within the area'. Others having little influence on teachers' decisions were 'family and home is closer to the school', 'influenced by peers and family members' and 'engage in agricultural practices'.

The situational factors that teachers identified as existing within their work places included 'good relations with colleagues', 'satisfied with own effectiveness in class', 'good relations with pupils'. Teachers however disagreed to 'involvement in community activities', 'adequate instructional materials', 'safety of work environment' and 'excellent relations with parents'. On the level of influencing a decision to leave, teachers identified 'opportunities for continued professional development', 'safety of the environment', 'support from school administrators' and 'excellent relations with parents'.

The factors related to teachers' decisions to accept employment and those related to teachers' work situation and their influence on a decision to leave were further categorized into groups. These groups were named 'spheres of influence' based on contribution from literature. Mean scores for each sphere revealed that for this population of teachers, altruistic-intrinsic reasons ranked highest in influencing teachers to accept teaching positions while influence by others had the least amount of influence. Mean scores for the second group of spheres of influence indicated that within school factors ranked highest in influencing teachers to consider leaving their current schools. Further than that, within classroom factors ranked as having least amount of influence for the teachers to consider leaving present schools.

Supplemental information collected demonstrated that despite teachers' dissatisfaction with their salary and benefits, they are quite satisfied with their chosen profession. Thematic analysis of written comments disclosed a dedication and commitment of these teachers to serve rural children, an appreciation for the unique experience provided in these rural schools as well as contentment with the flexibility and control over various work related tasks in their classrooms.

Data collected and analysed in this research study represent a contribution to the limited research that exists about rural schools and teachers within Malawi and other Sub Saharan Africa. Information gathered clarified an understanding of factors that exist for teachers within rural primary schools of Mulanje District that have greatest influence on teachers' decisions to accept then decide to leave their schools. The data also provided support for the design of retention strategies which could aid the district in identifying teacher candidates who are closely matched to the lifestyles, interests, and attitudes that are consistent with the cultural norms within the community of the district.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to identify factors that are associated with teacher attrition and retention within Mulanje District. As proposed by social cognitive theory, human action is determined by the interaction between an individual's personality, behaviour and the environment by which he or she is surrounded (Bandura, 1986; 1989). As such continual stay in the schools by the majority of teachers could be determined by the interaction of the three determinants: their personality (sex, age and marital status); their behavioural factors (teaching skills, practice and self-efficacy) and their environment (classrooms they teach, present schools and community they stay in). The chapter provides discussion of the study findings, conclusion as well recommendations.

5.1 Research discussion

The discussion was based on research objectives. Specifically, it looks at characteristics of teachers, what attracted them to work in Mulanje District, what sort of working situations teachers found in the district as well as influences of these working environments on decision to leave. The discussion ends with suggested mechanisms for enhancing retention in the district.

5.1.1 Characteristics of teachers

The analysis chapter has provided characteristics of teachers who participated in the study. Majority of teachers are males than females. In addition, they are below 30 years old and are married. These teachers also have an experience with rural lifestyle and to them rural life means; location of a place, limited availability of other social services as well as specific cultural practices and traditions. The majority of teachers have stayed less than five (5) years in their

present schools and have a work experience of not more than five (5) years as public primary school teachers suggesting that they are probably new in the profession. Interestingly, these teachers handle single classes and are qualified. Literature on teacher attrition and retention has consistently focused on gender, age and marital status as major predictors of leavers. For instance, Grissmer and Kirby (1987) cited in (Egu et al., 2011 p1) propose that teachers leave in a predictable U-shaped curve and that this curve is tied to their life cycle and career stages. According to authors, highest rate of attrition occur early in teacher's career (change jobs, attending graduate school, marriage and child birth) and at the end of one's career (retirement, illness and death). While the above proposition could predict potential risk of leaving any time soon owing to factors such as life cycle events (such as attending graduate school and child birth), teachers also appear stable as majority are married, understand the contexts within which their schools exists and are qualified. Such findings provide 'personal traits' and 'behavioural traits' of teachers on which Social Cognitive theory could base in exploring school environments teachers work to identify potential causes to a decision to leave a school.

5.1.2 Factors attracting teachers

To get a comprehensive understanding of what influenced their acceptance, factors related to job acceptance were tabulated and compared. Individual factors were grouped into spheres of influence basing on contribution from Bayler and Ozcan (2014). From findings, teachers stressed that they accepted posting because they enjoy working within school environments, have desire to work with young people, teaching is their only job opportunity, enjoy rural life style and are satisfied with salary and rural incentives. When these responses were categorised, the altruistic-intrinsic category emerged with a large percentage in influencing a decision. Open ended responses enabled widening understanding of reasons for job acceptance. Extrinsic reasons such

as good weather, presence of perennial rivers and availability of teacher houses also enabled influencing acceptance of posting. Throughout the literature, teachers accepting posting basing on altruistic-intrinsic reasons are not new. For instance, Dinham and Scott (2000) reported similar findings when they stated that teachers expressed that their greatest satisfaction are derived from helping students achieve and advance their personal teaching skills. The findings in this study suggests that the majority accepted posting because they have an internal drive to work in the zone and that external factors as in presence of perennial rivers and good weather conditions all contribute in motivating teachers derive their satisfaction within the zone.

5.1.3 Working situation teachers found in the district schools.

In seeking to understand the work environment teachers found, they were requested to provide an evaluation based on provided factors. Teachers evaluated by agreeing or disagreeing to existence of various work aspects within their schools. Teachers agreed to having good relations with work mates, satisfaction with own effectiveness in class, good relations with pupils, opportunities for continued professional development, inclusive leadership within their schools and engaged in extra roles within their schools. They however disagreed to having good relations with parents, safe work environments and good buildings at school, availability of teaching and learning materials as well as involvement in community activities. While the factors helped in providing working situations, open ended responses also enabled revealing additional challenges teachers face within these schools. Some of these challenges were lack of seriousness among learners, lack of respect to teachers, presence of naughty learners, biasness when delegating duties by school authorities, some teachers were not dedicated to duty and poor relationship between teachers and community. Such findings confirm a report by Altman (2005) who related low teacher retention abilities by schools to "feelings of uncertainty and intimidation" p 2474.

5.1.4 How much influence do these working situations have on a decision to leave?

Teachers were asked to describe the extent to which their work situations could have on decisions to consider leaving current schools. As pointed out by SCT, human action is caused by reciprocal interaction between environment, personal factors and behaviour. Teachers pointed out provision of frequent opportunities for professional development and safety of the environment as possible cause to their decision for leaving. Such reasons confirm findings which argue that CPD enables a teacher to feel 'prepared' (Garet et al. 2001) while safety would enable a teacher achieve their personal desires and advance their teaching skills (Chandler, 2004). When responding to open ended questions, majority said would also leave their current schools mainly for personal reasons. Example of comments ranged from 'access to health services, availability of basic necessities to reasons such as 'witchcraft practices amongst community members'. Other reasons were categorized under 'within community' factors. Their comments varied from 'village heads are not development conscious, availability of teacher houses to poor housing'. Third were the 'within school' factors. Their comments included 'lack of in service training, lack of cooperation as well as dictatorship'. Those of 'classroom factors' constituted comments like 'workload, desire to learn new skills and controlling pupil behaviour'. The challenges identified from teachers are not particularly a new phenomenon. Many authors have identified them (Kadzamira, 2006; Kayuni & Tambulasi, 2007 and Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010), the only gap had been relating them to a decision to leave.

5.1.5 Mechanism to retain teachers

In order to enhance retention, teachers suggested a number of strategies; provision of opportunities for professional development, provision of various incentives, improving on relations between parents and teachers as well as enhancing safety of the environment. From

open ended responses, teacher comments stressed on the level of support from their schools and governments. For example, schools were asked to consider providing frequent workshops. Government on the other hand was requested to provide programmes for continued professional development organised by colleges, establish a paid double shifting system in schools to ease on teacher to pupil ratio and provide teachers with loans.

Throughout the literature, these have an impact on a teacher's decision to remain in a school. For instance, when supporting provision of CPD as a mechanism, (Garet et al. 2001) says it enables teachers to feel prepared. Important to note is that while this study focused exploring school based factors and their impact on retention, teachers also suggested provision of incentives such as loans. Specifically, one teacher specifically mentioned 'motor bike loans'. The frequency with which teachers suggested entails its relative importance towards retention. In addition, relation between parents and teachers was also mentioned by teachers. Benefits of such relations have been stressed by Sheldon and Epstein (2005) who argues that parents, family and community involvement in education correlates with pupil acquiring of higher grades, attending school regularly, better social skills and improved behaviour among pupils. These benefits could enhance teacher job satisfaction which has been related to retention decision (Johnson & Duffet, 2004). Teachers also mentioned safety of the environment among list of mechanisms for retention. Throughout literature, studies stress that safety could enable a teacher with chances to accomplish their personal goals and sense of physical wellbeing (Chandler, 2004).

5.2 Research conclusion

From findings, schools particularly those under study have youthful teaching staff. Also, majority have positive attitudes towards their schools. This is evidenced in altruistic or intrinsic

reasons as well as external reasons these teachers have expressed as influencing their decision to accept employment. While this is the case, the school working environment appear to have aspects that could potentially influence a decision to leave. As provided, there is need to increase provision of teaching and learning materials as well as to improve on safety of the teachers.

Teachers stressed that among factors that could influence their continual stay within schools, are those particularly confined towards classroom practice such as provision of continued professional development and provision of teaching and learning materials. As evidenced from literature, these could enable satisfying their altruistic-intrinsic reasons which attracted them to present schools in the first place.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings, following were recommendations which require attention from administrators and community leaders in which schools are located.

First, provide frequent and relevant continued professional development to teachers. From the findings, teachers accept posting for reasons that are altruistic and intrinsic in nature towards their job. These reasons are however affected by lack of frequent opportunities to allow teachers improve their teaching practice through professional development. As such, school administrators should engage teachers to identify challenges relating to their work that may require frequent training to improve their practice.

Second, schools and communities should look into aspect of providing incentives to teachers. As suggested by teachers, such incentives could be through recognising hard working personnel, engaging teachers in additional roles within the schools, providing opportunities for professional

development and enabling environments through which teachers could be assisted in times of personal difficulties as in ill health and bereavement.

Third, school administrators should engage teachers towards creating an environment in which teachers could develop a professional community where they could be helping each other as regards to their professional practice. There are many ways of enhancing professional community amongst teachers. For instance, Bryk et al., (1999) suggest social trust as a strong facilitator of professional community. The benefits of such professional communities could be wide ranging towards professional practice.

Fourth, school and communities in which schools are located should ensure the safety of teachers. This safety could be in many aspects as suggested by teachers including improved pupil discipline, good accommodation, provision of solar panels, good teaching and learning facilities as well as provision of loans in times of need to teachers.

5.4 Areas for further studies

From the findings, it has been found of great importance that some areas be studied further.

1. An in-depth study on type and nature of CPD which could enable teachers feel helpful towards their practice to encourage retention within rural located schools.
2. Another area could be to find out under what conditions schools or districts do to enable development of collegial environment amongst teachers in the District.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Map of Mulanje District showing Limbuli zone, insert map of Malawi showing position of Mulanje district.
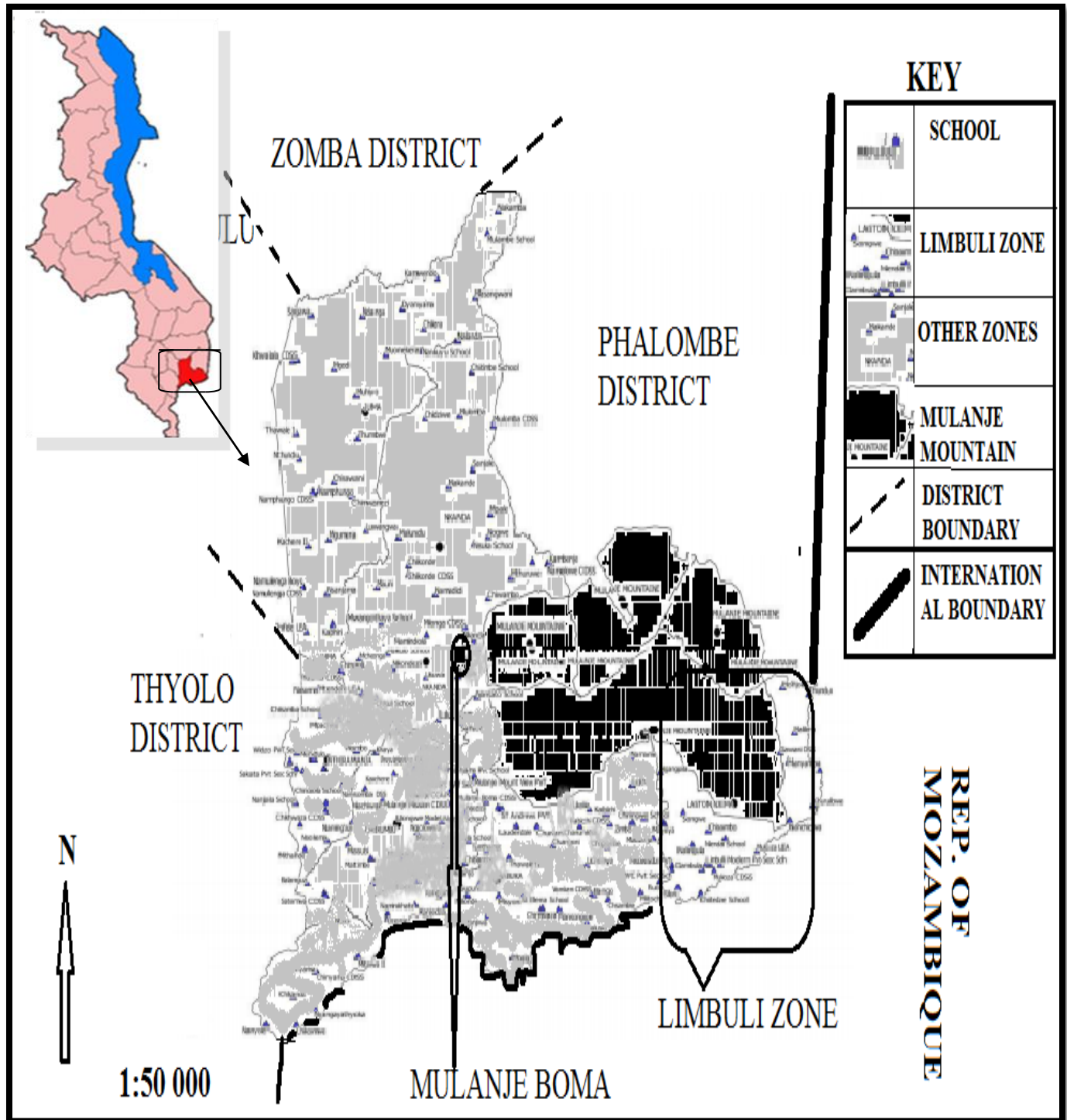
Appendix B: Limbuli Zone teacher profile

MULANJE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE
TEACHER DISTRIBUTION BY GRADE, QUALIFICATION AND GENDER

DIVISION: SHED ZONE: LIMBULI MONTH: SEPTEMBER /2014

SCHOOL	...	GRAND/TOTAL
Mitoci		53
Gombe		41
Silomba		16
Muloza		35
Nanchidwi		15
Mabwawa		25
Mango..		15
Manyenje		15
Thunchu		10
Chuleze		9
Muriwane		15
Amaliro		3
Nenda		10
TOTAL		262

DEMIS

ODL TEACHERS SHOULD BE ADDED TO TOTAL AS TEACHERS BUT NOT ASS. TR.

Appendix C: Details on school visits

Activity and Dates			Primary School	Participant Questionnaire code	Number Collected	%
Introduction	Questionnaire Distribution	Questionnaire Collection				
16th January	19th January	20th January	Siloni	001 - 010	10	7.7
16th January	19th January	20th January	Gambula	011 - 020	10	7.7
19th January	20th January	21st January	Mitawa	021 – 030	10	7.7
19th January	20th January	23rd January	Chitedze	031 – 040	9	6.9
23rd January	26th January	27th January	Muloza	041 – 050	10	7.7
26th January	27th January	2nd February	Nanchidwa	051 – 060	10	7.7
26th January	28th January	5th February	Khurubwe	061 – 070	10	7.7
26th January	28th January	5th February	Manyamba	071 – 080	10	7.7
3rd February	4th February	6th February	Nenda	081 - 090	10	7.7
6th February	9th February	11th February	Chimarila	091 – 100	3	2.3
10th February	11th February	13th February	Malilima	101 – 110	10	7.7
10th February	11th February	16th February	Monjole	111 – 120	10	7.7
13th February	16th February	18th February	Thundu	121 – 130	9	6.9
Total				**130**	**121**	**93.1**

Appendix D: Letter of introduction

MZUZU UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENTOF EDUCATION AND TEACHING STUDIES

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
L u w i n g a
M z u z u   2
M A L A W I

November 30, 2014.

The Education Division Manager,
Shire Highlands Education Division
P. O. Box 7,
MULANJE

Cc: The District Education Manager   The Primary Education Advisor (PEA)
       P. O. Box 43   P.O.Box 52
       MULANJE   **MULOZA**

Copies to the following Primary Schools:
Nenda, Gambula, Manyamba, Muloza, Mitawa, Siloni, Chitedze, Nanchidwa,
Khurubwe, Chimwalira, Malilima, Monjole and Thundu

Dear Sir,

PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA FROM SOME PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LIMBULI PRIMARY SCHOOL CLUSTER ZONE

I am writing on behalf of the Dean of Education of Mzuzu University seeking permission for **Mr. James Alfonso Mandolo** who is our Master of Education (MEd.) Degree student here at Mzuzu University. Mr. Mandolo has finished **Phase One** of his programme and is in **Phase Two** which requires him to conduct a research study which will be followed by Thesis writing.

Mr. Mandolo has chosen eleven primary schools in Limbuli Primary School Educational Zone to conduct his research study titled: *Exploring factors associated with teacher attrition and retention among rural primary schools of Mulanje District.*

1

The eleven primary schools to be involved in the study are: Nenda, Gambula, Manyamba, Muloza, Mitawa, Siloni, Chitedze, Nanchidwa, Khurubwe, Chimwalira, Malilima, Monjole and Thundu

Mr. Mandolo is therefore asking your office to grant him permission to use the eleven primary schools. On behalf of the University Registrar, the Dean of Education and on my own behalf I would like to thank you for the assistance you will provide to Mr. Mandolo.

By copies of this letter The Head Teachers of Nenda, Gambula, Manyamba, Muloza, Mitawa, Siloni, Chitedze, Nanchidwa, Khurubwe, Chimwalira, Malilima, Monjole and Thundu Primary Schools, the District Education Manager; Mulanje and the Primary Education Advisor (PEA) in Limbuli Primary School Cluster Zone are being requested to take note of the development and to assist Mr. Mandolo in his data collection.

Yours Sincerely,

Sam D. Dumba Safuli (PhD)
COORDINATOR MEd. PROGRAMME

Cc: The University Registrar,
       The Dean of Education
       The Head, Education and Teaching Studies Department,

2

Appendix E: Letter of permission

All communications should be
Addressed to the:
District Education Manage

Tel: (265) 1466 635 (DEM)
Tel: (265) 1466 322
Fax   (265) 1466 565
Email: mulanjedem@ymail.com

In reply please quote:
Ref. No: MJ/ED/2/19

The District Education Manager
P.O. Box 43
MULANJE.

9th January, 2015.

TO: JAMES A. MANDOLO,
        MULOZA C.D.S.S,
        P.O. BOX 46,
        MULOZA.

COPY: THE PRIMARY EDUCATION ADVISOR,
      LIMBULI SCHOOL.

RE: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA FROM SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MULANJE DISTRICT

Reference is hereby made to your letter dated 16th January, 2015 in which you requested for permission to collect data from some of our schools.

I am pleased to inform you that approval has been given to you to conduct the research as per your request. However, we would like to ask you to pass a copy of your findings to our office.

It is our sincere hope that you are comply. Wishing you all the best as you carry out this very important activity.

T.L. MKUNDIKA

FOR: THE DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER

Appendix F: Teacher consent form

Introduction

Title of study:

Exploring factors associated with teacher attrition and retention within rural schools of Mulanje district: A case of Limbuli Zone

Purpose of the study

The study seeks to explore reasons why teachers are continuing to leave primary schools particularly in Mulanje district and at same time identify a workable mechanism to increase retention.

Critical research questions:

What is it that makes schools experience loss of valuable and experienced teachers? What is it about teacher's roles, responsibilities, and their environment that is driving them from their schools or chosen profession?

Specific objectives of the study

The study will be guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify factors that attracts teachers to work in the primary schools of the district.

2. To establish work situational factors related to teacher attrition within primary schools.

3. To determine the extent these work situational factors influence a decision to leave teaching position.

4. To describe a mechanism for enhancing teacher retention in the district.

By copy of this questionnaire, you have been selected to participate in the study. You are therefore; kindly requested to answer the questions below displaying utmost good faith. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The study is purely for academic purpose and all information provided will be treated with confidentiality. Your prompt response will be highly appreciated.

—/—

This form was adapted from (British Sociological Association Ethics Code: http://www.britsoc.co.uk/equality/Statement+Ethical+Practice.htm), to be used for this project.

Please answer the following questions by circling your responses:

i. Have you read and understood the information sheet about this study? (YES) NO

ii. Have you been able to ask questions about this study? (YES) NO

iii. Have you received enough information about this study? (YES) NO

iv. Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study? (YES) NO

a. At any time? (YES) NO

v. Without giving a reason for your withdrawal? (YES) NO

vi. Your responses will be made anonymous before they are analyzed. (YES) NO

vii. Do you give permission for members of the research team to have access to your made anonymous responses? (YES) NO

viii. Do you agree to take part in this study? (YES) NO.

Your signature will certify that you have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study having read and understood the information in the sheet for participants. It will also certify that you have had adequate opportunity to discuss the study with an investigator and that all questions have been answered to your satisfaction.

Questionnaire Number.109... Signature of participant:...Afasi....... Date:.11/02/15

Name of participant (optional):....Brenda.....Ansa.....................

Signature of investigator:....................uo... Date:.11...−feb−2015

− 2 −

Appendix G: Teacher Questionnaire
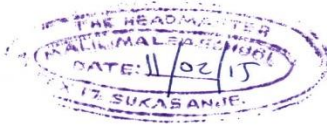
Questionnaire for teachers

Number __109__

Dear Respondent,

The researcher is a post graduate student pursuing a Master of Education in Teacher Education (Med. TE) of Mzuzu University. He is investigating factors related to teacher attrition and retention in public primary schools located within Mulanje district.

This questionnaire is designed to reveal your insights about factors that were important to you as you made career decisions to accept employment and/or continue teaching at your present school. **Section I** asks for background information about you and your school, **Section II** addresses factors that influenced your decisions about your present teaching position and **Section III** explores your opinions about effective teacher recruitment and retention strategies.

By copy of this questionnaire, you have been selected to participate in the study. You are therefore; kindly requested to answer the questions below displaying utmost good faith. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The study is purely for academic purpose and all information provided will be treated with confidentiality. Your prompt response will be highly appreciated.

Instructions: Please fill in or tick where applicable.

Section 1: Background information

1. Gender;   ◯ male   ☑ female
2. Age bracket;   ◯ (below 25), ☑ (25 to 30),   ◯ (30 to 35),   ◯ (35 and above)
3. Marital status; ◯ single,   ☑ married,   ◯ divorced,   ◯ widowed
4. Did you have any prior experience with rural life before your posting; ☑ yes,   ◯ no
5. What is your understanding of rural life
   Means the life style of places where there are no access of electricity, clean water, claser harpitals, good transport and markets
6. How many years have you been at the current school; __1__ years
7. Number of years as a primary school teacher (including those of the current school); __2__ years
8. What class are you teaching this year? ____STD 4____
9. Teaching qualification; ◯ None,   ☑ Primary school teaching certificate,
                          ◯ Diploma in education,   ◯ Bachelor's degree in education

①

93

Section 2: Reasons for accepting and remaining in the profession at the current school

10. Using the scale of 1-5, where 1 means "No influence" and 5 means "A very large influence," how much influence did each of the factors have on your decision to accept employment at this school? (Circle only one number for each item. **Do not** write in a number such as 2.5).

		No Influence	A little Influence	Some Influence	Good deal of Influence	Very large Influence
a.	Good reputation of the school	1	2	③	4	5
b.	Satisfied with salary and (rural allowance) incentive	1	②	3	4	5
c.	Family and home is closer to the school	1	2	3	4	⑤
d.	Engage in agricultural practices	①	2	3	4	5
e.	Spouse is employed within the area	①	2	3	4	5
f.	Availability of teaching and learning materials at the school	1	2	③	4	5
g.	I enjoy rural life style	①	2	3	4	5
h.	This is the only job opportunity I have	1	2	3	4	⑤
i.	I enjoy working in the school environment	①	2	3	4	5
j.	I was influenced by peers/ family members	①	2.	3	4	5
k.	Desire to work with young people	1	2	3	④	5

Other factors

l.	Seriousness Of learners + Parents	1	②	3	4	5
m.	Availability Of Likuni Phala	1	2	3	4	⑤
n.	_____	1	2	3	4	5

②

1. Thinking about working situation as existing in your school, what is your opinion regarding the following statements (Tick appropriately for each item, **Do not** tick more than once per item)

		Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
A	I have good relations with pupils				✓	
B	I have good relations with colleagues					✓
C	I am satisfied with my own effectiveness in class			✓		
D	I have opportunities for continued professional development			✓		
E	I am engaged in extra roles within our school	✓				✓
F	There are adequate instructional materials				✓	
G	There is inclusive leadership at school	ˈ				✓
H	I have excellent relations with parents				✓	
I	I have a safe work environment		✓			
J	I am involved in our community's activities	✓				
K	Teachers have adequate influence of policies and practice e.g. discipline issues				✓	
L	Am satisfied with level of control and autonomy in my classroom					✓
M	There are good buildings at this school					✓
N	There is sufficient administrator support					✓

Other working situations observed

O There is poor dressing of learners

P There is poor sanitation around the school

R There is poor access of network and transport

③

12. Using the scale of 1-5, where 1 means "No influence" and 5 means "A very large influence"; in case you are considering changing posting, how much influence will each of the factors below have towards your decision to leave your current school? (Circle only one number for each item, **DO NOT** write in a number such as 2.5).

		No Influence	A little Influence	Some Influence	Good deal of Influence	Very large Influence
A	relations with pupils	1	2	(3)	4	5
B	relations with colleagues	(1)	2	3	4	5
C	Satisfaction with own effectiveness in class	1	(2)	3	4	5
D	Opportunities for continued professional development	1	2	3	(4)	5
E	Engaged in extra roles at school	(1)	2	3	4	5
F	Inclusive leadership practices at school	1	(2)	3	4	5
G	Availability of instructional materials	1	2	3	(4)	5
H	Ability to engage in community activities	1	(2)	3	4	5
I	relations with parents	1	2	3	4	(5)
J	Safety of the environment	1	2	3	4	(5)
K	Support from supervisors	(1)	2	3	4	5
L	Remoteness of the school	1	2	3	4	(5)
M	Ill health	1	2	3	(4)	5
N	Marriage	(1)	2	3	4	5

Other factors

L. Access of transport _____ 1 2 3 4 (5)

M. Access of network _____ 1 2 3 (4) 5

N. Feer of floods during _____ 1 2 3 4 (5)
rainy season

(4)

Section 3: Effective recruitment and retention strategy

Instruction: Study and use the table in responding to   **QUESTION 13**

Potential strategies that could enhance teacher retention

a.	Mentoring and support programmes for new teachers
b.	Student teacher involvement in community activities
c.	Create desirable environment for strong collegial relations amongst teachers
d.	Increase teacher engagement in extra roles within the school
e.	Provide opportunities for professional development opportunities
f.	Encourage leadership to be incorporating towards teacher's inputs on matters affecting them
g.	Improve on administrator's support to teachers
h.	Improve the safety of teacher's work environment
i.	Provision of adequate instructional materials
j.	Improve on relations between parents and teachers regarding child's education
k.	Increase in incentives provided to teachers in rural areas.

List any other suggestions you have for retention and recruitment of teachers

l. Maintain reallocation of all newly recruited teachers including (IPTE) in rural

m. Improve on teacher-learner ratio in rural areas

n. Establish paid double-shifting due to high enrolment

13. What would be the most effective steps that might encourage teachers to remain teaching at their schools?

(Indicate the letter on the gap in accordance to their importance)

#___h___ the most effective step

#___k___ the second effective step

#___g___ the third effective step

⑤

Thank you for your participation

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Appendix H: Responses to open ended question 5

Questionnaire Number	RESPONSE
001	It is a situation where by one lives in a remote area where most of the things are hard and not found.
003	Somehow bad since no good homes, electricity etc.
004	Life of doing primitive activities.
005	It is the way on how people live in the remote areas.
006	It's not good.
007	It is cheap to live in such a way that most of the commodities are readily available with affordable.
008	It's a hard life.
009	It has a life of hand because there situation depends on business not schooling.
010	Life in rural areas is hard as even to earn a living, work hard was high than low.
011	Rural life is so hard, no banks, no hospitals, not even electricity. You have to travel long distances to acquire your daily needs.
012	Rural life is contained with many shortfalls in terms of where to get basic needs.
013	Simple living, cheap living expensive to move DEM's office. Easy mixing with the parents.
014	In rural life is cheap, access of goods is very low in terms of transport.
014	Its experiences of environment which is not associated with wooden things.
016	Rural life is consist of traditional and social morals that are participated within local people and their indigenous matters.
018	Life is easy and cheaper but if you want to go out transport is expensive.
019	It's a hard life which need someone who has experienced that life before.
020	It's a living standard with low development and most people depend on subsistence farming.
021	It's a hard life.
022	Life without any standard good for life in terms of electricity and good social services for improvement of one's life.
023	The rural life is very hard.
024	Inadequate instructional materials. Engage in agricultural practices.
025	Rural life is life that is hard having no money working in fields and restless.
026	Rural life is very hard to live especially in remote areas.
027	The type of living where by people find it somehow difficult to get everyday necessities.
028	Living or teaching in areas where by life improving facilities are minimal or hard to get.
029	Rural life is very tough.
030	It is the kind of life which is full of hardships with or without adequate social basic requirements.

031	Hard life had of getting necessities for daily upkeep to electricity.
033	Staying in rural areas, using locally resources (simple life).
034	Hard life difficult to get good pipe water, electricity as well as shelter. The having standard is poor tough you have money.
035	Poor living standard (life have full of mysterious.
036	Poor standard of living.
037	Barrier to technological development.
038	It is a type of life whereby you can't get all the human needs. E.g. security, good houses and electricity.
039	Bearing with poor living standards.
040	Living in remote areas where no access of good social is services e.g. electricity, good market, communication and hospital.
042	Is a life where by people stay far from urban areas.
043	Rural life is very tough people travel long distances to get basic needs and also social services in particular.
044	Rural life has many problems and it is not easy to lead rural life.
044	Rural life is about standing on your own by doing some income generating activities.
045	Areas where some basic needs not fully provided to people.
047	Life full of difficulties e.g. electricity, market, good teacher houses.
050	Rural life means living in a place or remote area where it is difficult or impossible to continue professional education due to poor communication.
054	To me, rural life is full of excitement and drama.
055	Living in a simple community, leading a simple life, while experiencing hard times.
056	It is a life where one learns more things about life such as the behaviour of community.
057	Rural life is very difficult because you don't have access to important things in modern life like banks, phone network and reliable hospitals.
058	It is full of hardships where most of the essential items are rare and expensive for example the price of sugar in the rural area is a bit higher than in town.
059	The type of life which is categorized by low standard of living due to lack of essential basic needs high illiteracy levels and poor communication.
061	Rural life means living in a remote area with fewer opportunities enjoyed by others in the country.
062	It is a life where by a person live in the remote area to face different challenges.
063	It's a life with little or no access to social services.
064	I thought it was hard and I cannot manage to be at that remotest area.
065	The life with poor social services.
066	If is better but could have been more enjoyable had some basic necessities (market, safely electricity, and good road network) were available.
068	It's a life that people lack things like social services electricity and also live in a dilapidated houses.
069	The way how people enjoy their living standard and obtain their basic need in

	villages.
070	Rural life is a typical life where by a teacher works in remote areas.
071	Working in rural areas.
072	It is a country side life.
073	It is a difficult way of life in rural area.
074	It is a way of life where by people lives primitively.
075	Ability to accept to dwell in an area with no, insufficient or low quality social services that influence low standards of living.
076	Rural life is extremely difficult but a little bit enjoyable. It is hard in the sense that other services and the basic needs aren't easily accessible.
077	Very good than urban life.
078	Working in remote area where transportation is very difficult that encourage low standard of staying.
079	Rural life is ability to feel low living standard and accept to work where there is sufficiently.
080	This is a style of life which is characterised by strict observation of tradition and customs of diverse cultural groups.
081	Poor accommodation life is very hard to live in rural life and poor communication.
082	Life good in rural area where people access the electricity and health facilities since most the modern technology needs power and nobody can avoid the hospital mostly to those on ARV's.
083	This is life full of problems more especially in health and lack of electricity.
084	Life with challenges due to inadequate social services and economic hardships.
085	It is very easy to earn a living because piece works are not a problem however it is hard to make a living because of envious people who try to pull you behind when you are working hard.
086	Living and working in country side where by most of the necessities are lacking.
087	Underprivileged way of life whereby people have inadequate resources like social services.
088	Prosperity.
089	It's a life style under country side which requires less support and spend few money.
090	An area difficult to access clean water, no electricity, rough roads and poor accommodation.
091	Rural life is life where by people mostly stay in very difficult life and poor life.
093	About the living in rural areas life is crucial since poor development is enhanced.
094	It's a life in remote area where people live with little basic needs.
096	Rural life is very good because some goods are very cheap e.g. food and vegetables.
097	Living with people in rural are most good because most of them are friends.

098	It is a very crucial life since most of the necessities are not available e.g. hospital, markets, maize mill.
100	A way of living in rural areas where people lack some technology facilities.
101	According to my understanding rural life was somehow pain since we gain nothing.
102	A barrier to high standards of living and information.
103	This is life that is experienced in the communities or village.
104	Living in communities without adequate modern technologies.
104	Means the life style in places where there are no access of electricity, clean water, closer hospital, good transport and markets.
105	It means staying in remote area where there are no hospitals, good roads etc.
106	Life in which people living in there have many problems.
107	It is a life living in hard unhappy life most of the time whiles in terms of other commodities life is cheap.
108	Are life that have a lot of problems.
110	It is life full of problems since resources for human beings are very scarce and poor.
111	A very tough life.
112	Rural life has less challenges and easy to live with the teaching profession.
113	Capability to live joyfully in rural area.
114	Life that is difficult to live due to inadequate basic needs and other necessities.
115	Difficult life because it was difficult to find basic needs.
116	The rural life is different from urban life in such a way that we get local things e.g. food to eat.
117	Life with poor standard of living.
118	Somewhat agree.
120	Expensive and uncomfortable to live due to poor communication, accommodation, unsafe water which lead to low standard of living.
121	Very hard.
122	Painful since we get nothing.
123	A life of most problems.
124	We meet with difficult understanding in relation 40 teachers.
125	Life is challenging in terms of technology information, whiles a basic needs the life is simple and cheap.
126	Rural life is hard for teachers due to low salaries.
127	That's staying in rural areas where the cost of living is very hard.
128	Tough life.
129	Life standard is unbearable.
130	It is a life that experience very poor entertainment such as un electrified, lack of network and inaccessible.

Appendix I: Responses to open ended question 10

CODE	Response	Rate
005	Social services are closer to the school.	5
010	Well organised workmates.	4
011	It is a Christian school.	5
011	Near tar market of road.	5
011	Availability of social services e.g. clinics and markets	5
013	Near to main road.	5
013	Exposure to business.	5
013	Parents' appreciation to teachers' work and development activities.	4
014	Nearness to the main road.	5
014	Exposure to business.	4
014	Community participation.	5
015	Good weather of the area.	4
016	Good relationship with the community.	4
017	Near trading centre.	5
017	Improved life standard.	5
017	Easy transportations.	5
019	Availability of teacher's house.	5
019	Enough teachers.	4
024	I am satisfied with schools administration.	5
024	Availability of good teacher houses.	5
025	To help the government in eradicating poverty.	
027	Nearness to health centre.	5
027	Easy transportation.	5
028	Good teacher to learner ratio.	5
043	Inadequate salary to stand urban life.	5
043	Given no chance to choose schools of interest to teach.	5
043	Hope to change in future.	4
045	Not satisfied with the salary.	5
047	Nearness to the tarred road.	5
047	Nearness to the market.	4
053	A force from higher authorities.	5
054	Satisfied with the leadership of the school.	5
054	It is my home district.	4
054	It is my first school to teach.	5
059	It is the home of spouse.	4
059	Accustomed to the school environment.	4
059	Very easy to get farm produce.	3
061	Good working site.	3
062	Good weather condition.	2
062	Availability of food.	3
063	There was no chance to choose other schools.	5

063	Lack of knowledge about the working places.	5
065	The Demo's office influence on selecting schools for posting.	5
065	Ignorant on geographical position of the area.	2
068	Nearness to the market.	5
068	Desire to open a shop.	5
072	There's good deal of security in M.O.E.	4
072	I was influenced by promotions.	3
076	Desire to work away from my home village.	5
081	Availability of perennial rivers	5
081	Exposure to business as it is near the trading center.	4
081	Parent's appreciation during open days.	
087	Experience life at the community.	4
094	Teacher, pupil ratio is good.	5
096	Loan opportunity to teachers.	3
096	Teacher, pupil ratio is good.	5
101	Forced by administrator.	
102	A standing point for academic journey.	4
103	Forced by administrator.	
104	Due to political issues.	
105	Business	
109	Presence of electricity.	5
109	Seriousness of learners and parents.	2
109	Availability of Likuni Phala.	5
124	Accepting my profession.	5
124	To learn more.	5
125	Desire to take part in actively.	5
125	National goals of education in Malawi through teaching in rule areas.	
127	Being forced to accept.	5
129	Availability of basic resources.	4
129	High ratio of selection.	5
130	Forced by the administrators.	5

Appendix J: Responses to open ended question 11

Number	Response
011	Nice geographical area.
011	Availability of cheap materials e.g. food.
011	Nice environment for one to live in.
013	Some teachers are not dedicated to duties.
013	Some teachers are not familiar with new education pupils.
013	There are inadequate desks and classrooms.
014	Not all teachers are dedicated to duties.
014	No enough desks.
014	Some policies are welcomed by teachers, community.
018	Not all teachers are dedicated to duties.
018	No desks for learners.
018	Some teachers are not familiar with new education policies.
027	The relationship between the HT and members of staff not effective.
027	Biasness when delegating fellow teachers by authorities.
027	Bad approaches from the HT.
031	To provide teaching and learning materials.
043	I am involved in non-allowance activities.
043	Embezzlement of government property at school.
043	There are government resources to be used by teachers at school.
047	I have good relations with the community.
050	There are insufficient teaching resources.
050	There's poor relationship between communities and teachers.
054	I have good relationship with some members of the community.
054	There is good water accessibility.
054	There is good road accessibility.
057	Some members of the community are friendly.
057	It's very easy to get food.
058	The school is along the main road.
058	The school is surrounded with perennial rivers.
059	I am very strong in class management.
059	Some teachers regard themselves as best.
059	Some teachers influence the administrators to make administrative issues that are oppressive.
061	The school is close to the road.
061	Cool climatic conditions.
062	Cool climatic condition.
062	Distance from the school to main road.
064	Poor transport.
064	Seriousness of learners.
064	Most of the learners do not respect teachers.
068	Insufficient teaching staff.

068	Harsh community.
068	Presence of more naughty learners.
076	I have a good relation with brothers in Christ.
077	Desire to work in rural areas.
077	To improve education standards in rural areas.
085	Ratio of teacher to pupil is proper held or reasonable.
090	Free accommodation.
090	Free water.
094	There's a good number of learners in each class.
096	There a good number of teachers per class.
096	There's a good number of learners in each class.
102	Intervention by villages.
102	Dictatorship administration.
102	Uneducated PTA members (most of them).
105	Good relationship with PTA S.M.C.
109	There is poor dressing of learners.
109	There is poor salutation around the school.
109	There is poor of network and transport.
124	I have time for preparations.
124	I have good self-esteem at my work.

Appendix K: Responses to open ended question 12

Number	Response
007	Death of the spouse.
008	Availability of good road.
008	Availability of electricity.
011	Control of entry.
011	Qualification.
011	Work load.
013	Availability of clean water.
017	Witchcraft among members.
017	Dictatorship.
017	Lack of cooperation.
018	Availability of clean water.
024	Poor administration.
025	Promotion.
025	Inserts.
027	Transport expenses.
028	Lack of promotion.
028	Being paid too late.
028	Ethnic rivalry.
043	Town life is costly.
043	Delayed ministry transport.
043	Desire to learn new styles.
054	Overstaying at the station.
054	Far from big markets.
054	Numerous dependents at home.
055	Communication e.g. network and road.
055	Availability of necessities.
055	Availability of teachers' houses.
057	No phone network.
057	Bad roads.
057	Village heads are not development conscious.
058	Poor housing.
058	Poor telecommunication network.
059	Lack of infrastructure at school.
059	Administrative decisions.
059	Expensiveness of basic commodities.
061	Network access.
061	Information from media.
061	Poor road condition.
061	Distance from home to school.
061	High living cost e.g. high price of groceries (leaving cost).
063	Access to information.

063	Chances of upgrading.
063	Access to health services.
063	Poor access to information.
065	Access to health services.
065	Prone to natural disasters.
068	To experience life elsewhere.
068	Leadership from the DEM's office.
080	Overstaying.
109	Access of transport.
109	Access of network.
109	Fear of floods during rainy season.
124	To study another environment.
124	To develop another area.
125	Poor administration.

Appendix L: Responses to open ended question 13

Questionnaire	Letter	Comment
002	l	Un warmly welcomed by the officers at the DEMs office.
002	m	Delays of salaries.
005	l	Government to maintain staffing in rural areas
005	m	Community to assist teachers in alleviating problems of accommodatio
005	n	Communities to except themselves on witching teachers
007	l	Provision of promotion based on merit
009	l	Improve on houses like building good houses with solar energy establish
009	m	Build colleges for continuous professional development of rural teachers.
011	i	Good relations with fellow teachers.
011	m	Good relation with communities.
011	n	Recognition by your immediate bases.
013	l	Providing accommodation to teachers
013	m	Provide classrooms to learners under the tree.
014	l	Provision of teachers houses
014	m	Provision of learners classrooms
017	l	Provision of alone to teachers
017	m	Building standard houses to teachers
017	n	Having community clinic near school
018	l	Provide accommodation to teachers
018	m	Provision of classroom blocks
024	l	Head teacher teachers relationship
025	l	Promotion of teachers
025	m	Reasonable salaries
027	l	Regular funded workshops or seminary for teachers
027	m	Payment of teachers' salaries in time
030	l	Setting programmes to train teachers to work in rural areas only
030	m	Expanding electrification of teachers houses programmes
030	n	Construct descent houses for teachers in rural areas
031	l	The government should build more and improved teachers houses
031	m	Recruitment of teachers should be done if there is money
031	n	Teachers' salaries to be given in good time
032	l	Provision of good houses to all teachers in rural area not only for the Head teacher as it currently where by HTs houses are provided with solar panel.
032	m	Teachers in rural area should be given loan to purchase at least motor cycle for easy movement where there are inadequate houses.

032	n	The government should respect the salary of teacher as it is in other ministries like health and defence in the salary should be eliminated.
034	l	Salaries should be given in due course
037	l	Implementation on rural electrification should include schools
038	l	Consider the newly employed teachers' salaries
043	l	Increase rural allowances.
043	m	Provide motor bike loans to teachers.
043	n	Provision of solar panels to teacher houses and school blocks.
050	l	Build many houses for teachers
054	l	Improve on teachers promotions.
054	m	Introduction of professional and chalk allowances.
054	n	Improve on the construction of good teachers houses.
056	l	Very good accommodation to teachers
057	l	Community providing incentive to hard working teachers
057	m	Learners respecting their teachers
057	n	Introduction of professional allowances or government giving extra care to teachers when they are sick
058	l	Teachers should be given loans of low interest rates
058	m	Promoting from one grade to another should be done
058	n	In every 4 years without torturing teachers with registration and interviews respectively where they spend meagre salaries aimlessly
059	l	Allocate teachers according to their performance.
059	m	Discourage teachers to work in schools in their homes.
059	n	Awarding or promoting hard working teachers after through research or their levels of performance.
061	l	Availability of network and media information (radio reception)
061	m	Provision of health services
061	n	Good travelling conditions e.g. construction of bridges.
075	l	Increasing rural allowances
075	m	Providing teachers with allowances
077	l	Improve on rural infrastructure development
077	m	Improve on power supply system by ESCOM
078	l	Promote teachers disregard of years worked
079	l	Introduce some rural allowances to teachers
079	m	In rural areas
093	l	They should prior salary disbursement in time
093	m	They should include them in workshop fluently
093	n	Money lending institutions with fair interest are to be established
095	l	Stop exaggerating public policies by administrators
095	m	Promote or improve transparency and accountability from other funds
095	n	Organise the administration not organize teachers with unlawful powers
097	l	Provide opportunities of workshop to teachers
097	m	Improve teachers' salaries and rural allowances
097	n	Provide teachers with accommodation

098	l	Provide opportunities of workshops to teachers
098	m	Improve teachers' salaries and rural allowances
098	n	Provide teachers accommodation (good).
102	l	Monitoring and support teachers.
102	m	Increase teacher engagement roles within schools
102	n	Provide opportunities for professional development roles.
108	l	Build more teachers houses at rural school and with electricity
109	l	Maintain reallocating all the newly recruited teachers including (IPTE) in rural
109	m	Improve in teacher to learner ratio in rural areas
109	n	Establish paid to double shifting due to high enrolment
116	l	Improve the ratio of teachers to learners.
116	m	Provide enough teaching and learning materials.
116	n	Provision of salaries in time.
122	l	Provision of good houses to teachers
122	m	Cordial relationship between the community and teachers
122	n	Equal treatment to teachers by administrator
127	l	Building more and conducive teachers houses.
128	l	Transparency and accountability among teachers.
128	m	Good cooperation amongst teachers and school committee.
130	l	Considering teachers complaints by the administrators