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The Influence of Direct Monetary Compensation on Employee Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rangwe, Homabay

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Abstract

Employee retention is a critical factor in ensuring the stability and effectiveness of the education sector, where teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the future of learners. High turnover rates among teachers can disrupt learning continuity and compromise educational outcomes. Thus, this study investigated the influence of direct monetary compensation on employee retention, with a specific focus on public secondary school teachers in Rangwe Sub-County, Homa Bay County. The study used Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory as the study's foundations and offered a strong theoretical framework. The study used a descriptive cross-sectional study design to gather quantitative data. Taro Yamane's formula was used to calculate the sample size 205 teachers from the target group, which included 422 public secondary school teachers. To validate the research tools, 20 teachers from Mbita Sub-County participated in a pilot study. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data. The data analysis was evaluated using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and displayed in tables and figures. The reliability test confirmed that the research instruments were consistent and dependable for data collection. Descriptive statistics revealed moderate perceptions of direct monetary compensation ($M = 2.910$) and employee recognition ($M = 2.971$). Correlation analysis showed a moderate positive and significant relationship between direct monetary compensation and employee retention ($r = 0.305$, $p < 0.05$). Regression analysis indicated that direct monetary compensation significantly predicted employee retention ($\beta = 0.177$, $p = 0.000$), although the effect size was relatively modest. The model's R Square was 0.093, and the Adjusted R Square was 0.088, indicating that only 8.8% of the variance in employee retention could be explained by direct monetary compensation. sustainable teacher retention in rural schools. The study recommends that the Teachers Service Commission and school management should establish transparent compensation frameworks addressing salary equity and standardized overtime payment systems. Educational administrators should invest substantially in professional development programs, mentorship systems, clear promotion pathways, and recognition mechanisms addressing the unexplained retention variance. Schools should prioritize improving working conditions through infrastructure upgrades, adequate resources, and reliable utilities while cultivating organizational cultures featuring participatory decision-making and collegial support.

Keywords: *Direct Monetary Compensation, Employee Retention, Public Secondary Schools, Rangwe, Homabay*

1.1 Introduction

Employee retention plays a critical role in the stability and continuity of the education system, particularly in ensuring that learners benefit from experienced and consistently present educators.

Retaining qualified staff requires institutions to foster job satisfaction, which is significantly influenced by strategic remuneration practices (Kainga, 2021). These practices encompass the key components explored in this study: direct monetary compensation on employee retention. Kainga (2021) established a positive relationship between remuneration, career advancement opportunities, promotion, and working conditions, demonstrating that employee satisfaction and retention are closely tied to comprehensive human resource practices. Similarly, Opio (2021) identified that inadequate remuneration strategies, such as low pay, contributed to increased staff turnover, particularly among employees posted in remote areas. These findings underscore the need for equitable compensation structures that consider the challenges of geographical placement.

Although based in the hospitality sector, Akinyi et al. (2024)'s study of five-star hotels in Nairobi demonstrates that a well-structured remuneration strategy is integral to attracting and retaining high-performing staff. The study emphasizes that organizations must integrate employee interests into their strategic plans, a notion that is equally applicable to public education institutions. Mustafa and Ali (2019) further reinforce this perspective, asserting that both monetary and non-monetary rewards must be effectively balanced to reduce employee turnover intentions. This balance contributes to increased loyalty and reduced attrition, which Mumbi (2021) supports through findings that link compensation packages to enhanced job satisfaction.

Insights from other sectors continue to illuminate transferable themes. In the banking industry, Hanai and Pallangyo (2020) found a direct correlation between compensation and employee retention, reinforcing the universality of remuneration strategies across professional domains. Regarding remuneration fairness, Oladimeji (2024) found that organizational and supervisory support significantly influence retention outcomes, aligning with this study's focus on fairness and recognition as critical dimensions of compensation. The purpose of this study was to add to the body of literature by investigating these aspects in the setting of secondary schools in Homa Bay County's Rangwe Sub-County. In addition to addressing geographic discrepancies in previous research, the study's non-urban focus provides evidence-based insights for education administrators and policymakers looking to improve retention through focused compensation schemes. Ultimately, the findings will help inform strategies that improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover among Teachers Service Commission (TSC)-employed educators.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

The retention of teachers employed by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in Kenya has become an increasingly pressing issue, particularly in recent years. According to Oyuu (2024), high teacher turnover has been exacerbated by poor working conditions, low salaries, and limited incentives. The report indicates that an estimated 44 teachers retire, resign, or pass away daily, with many resigning in pursuit of better opportunities. This trend significantly disrupts the continuity of education and poses challenges to the achievement of quality teaching and learning outcomes, especially in rural and marginalized regions. Strikes have emerged as a common response to dissatisfaction with remuneration and working conditions. For instance, in 2024, the Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) threatened a nationwide strike due to substantial reductions in the education budget and the government's failure to honour provisions in the 2021–2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), particularly regarding salary

increments and promotions (Chandianya, 2024). Budgetary cuts have negatively affected teacher compensation, undermined morale and increasing the likelihood of attrition.

Although compensation and rewards are widely acknowledged as central factors in employee retention (Kainga, 2021; Millah & Omuya, 2024), their direct influence on teachers' decisions to remain in their positions especially within rural counties remains underexplored. Orina et al. (2022) identified compensation and rewards as significant motivational elements but did not analyse their direct impact on teacher retention. This points to a conceptual gap in the literature: a lack of empirical studies that investigate how specific remuneration strategies namely, direct monetary compensation, comprehensive benefits packages, remuneration fairness, and employee recognition affect teacher retention.

In addition, there exists a contextual gap regarding how these strategies function within rural public secondary schools. Homa Bay County's Rangwe Sub-County is a pertinent example because little is known about the mechanics of retention in this non-urban area. By investigating the impact of compensation options on teacher retention in Rangwe's public secondary schools, the study will fill these gaps. This study's particular goals are to determine how direct monetary compensation affects teacher retention. The findings of this study offer valuable insights for education policy makers and administrators, enabling them to refine remuneration strategies that support long-term retention of qualified teaching staff and strengthen educational stability in rural communities.

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of the study was to examine the influence of direct monetary compensation on employee retention in public secondary schools in Rangwe, Homabay

2.1 Theoretical Literature

Frederick Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman created Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in 1959. It offers a fundamental framework for comprehending employee happiness and motivation, two factors that are essential to employee retention. The theory emerged from a study involving professionals such as engineers and accountants, examining their attitudes toward their work. As a result of the findings, two types of employment variables were distinguished: hygiene factors and motivators. Achievement, recognition, professional advancement, and the nature of the work itself are examples of intrinsic motivators that contribute to job happiness. On the other hand, hygiene factors such as pay, working conditions, job security, and corporate policies are external elements that do not necessarily boost pleasure but could do so if they are not present. Ghimire et al.'s research from 2024 showed that in order to keep a motivated workforce, both hygienic aspects and motivators are necessary.

Similarly, Millah and Omuya (2024) found that integrating both sets of factors into human resource practices enhances job satisfaction and ultimately improves employee retention. Further evidence from Hanai and Pallangyo (2020), focused on banking institutions, highlighted that equitable remuneration and career development opportunities significantly support retention. While Kainga (2021) discovered that both monetary and non-monetary incentives influence work satisfaction and retention, Onochie (2020) also underlined the significance of competitive pay in the public sector. According to Mabaso et al. (2021), a positive work atmosphere and chances for

advancement complement Herzberg's motivating elements and are essential for retaining talent. Taken together, these studies affirm the relevance of Herzberg's theory in guiding this study's objectives: hygiene factors, such as direct monetary compensation, address retention from a structural standpoint, while motivator factors, including recognition, influence the psychological commitment of employees to the organization.

2.2 Empirical literature

Direct Monetary compensation is an important factor in employee retention as it is linked to the salaries of employees, which determines whether an employee can choose to work in that organization or look for a better opportunity. A study conducted in Igembe North on the connection between reward management procedures and work satisfaction (Kainga, 2021). It was discovered that teachers who are happy with their pay are more likely to remain with the company or quit since pay and work happiness are positively correlated. Similarly (Opio, 2021) A Study on retention and incentives for teachers in hard-to-reach areas in Uganda found that competitive compensation can go a long way to retain teachers and can be related to Rangwe Subcounty, where teachers face geographical and infrastructural challenges, which may affect their retention.

A study on the contribution of employee compensation to their retention in the banking sector (Hanai & Pallangyo, 2020) Found that fair salary is the most important compensation attribute to employees and can affect employee retention. Another study done by (Mustafa & Ali, 2019) A Study on rewards and autonomous motivation, and turnover intention revealed that monetary rewards were positively related to autonomous motivation, which led to employee retention as their turnover intention was reduced. According to a study on the function of big data predictive analytics as a mediator of the effects of hiring and selection, compensation and benefits, training, and development on employee relations (Masputra et al., 2023), training and rewards have an impact on big data predictive analytics, which in turn has an impact on employee retention within the company. In order to increase employee retention, this study highlights the use of data in decision-making on employee compensation schemes

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework.

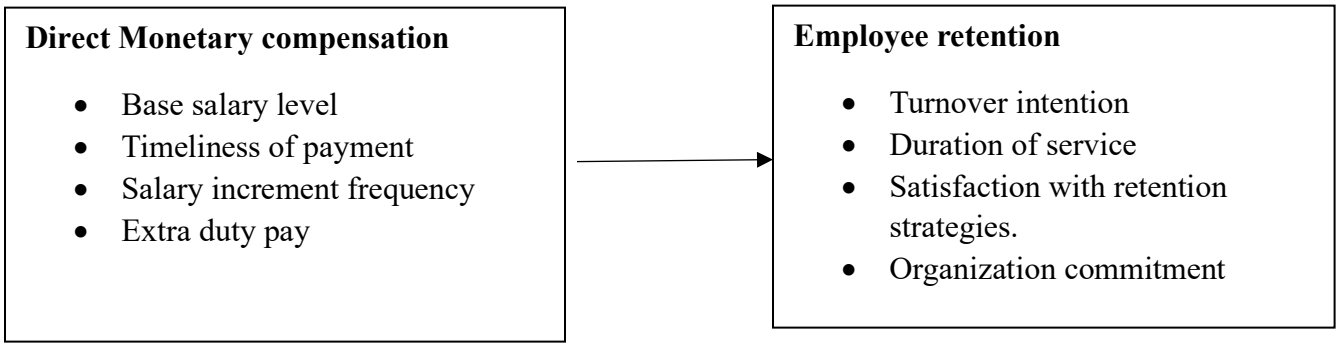

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.1 Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design to examine the relationship between direct monetary compensation and employee retention. Descriptive research designs are useful not only in understanding a variable but also in comparing variables of the study to determine their relationships. (Siedlecki, 2020). The target population for this study were heads of institutions, deputy heads of institutions, senior teachers and teachers at public secondary schools in Rangwe Sub-County in Homabay.

Table 1: Target population:

School level	Heads of institution	Deputy Heads of the institution	Teachers	Total
Secondary Schools	41	41	360	422

Source: Staffing Data Rangwe Sub-County (2025)

The Taro Yamane 1973 formula was used in study to come up with sample size. There were 422 teachers in the population, which was used to calculate the sample size. This is how it was computed.

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + N(e)2}$$

Where:

N is the population size N= 422

n is the sample size

e is the level of precision, e=0.05

$$n = \frac{422}{(1 + 422(0.05)2}$$

n= 205

Stratified random sampling was used within each school to choose participants after the schools were chosen using basic random sampling. Based on their professional positions, teachers were divided into different strata, including head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior teachers and classroom teachers. The research used a structured questionnaire measured using Likert scale. The researcher got approval from Institutional Science Ethics and Research Committee (ISERC) from the university and a National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) permit for data collection. The pilot test was conducted in Mbita Subcounty which is away from the research area hence not captured in final data. The research gave out online links and physical questionnaires to schools that had network challenges and collected them after three days. The

researcher used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyses the quantitative data received. Before data collection, the questionnaire underwent Cronbach's alpha reliability testing to assess internal consistency, and validity tests were conducted to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the instrument.

4.0 Results

This section presents the results of the study that included descriptive statistics on direct monetary compensation and employee retention, followed by inferential statistics comprising correlation analysis, ANOVA, and regression analysis to determine the relationship between direct monetary compensation and teacher retention. The findings reveal both the perceptions teachers hold regarding their compensation and the statistical strength of the relationship between monetary rewards and their decisions to remain in their positions.

4.1 Descriptive statistics

Direct Monetary Retention

The goal of the study was to determine how staff retention at the public secondary schools is affected by direct monetary compensation. The results were presented as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Direct Monetary Compensation

Statement	Mean	Std. D
My base salary reflects the scope and responsibilities of my role.	2.628	1.147
Salary payments at my institution are consistently made on time.	3.771	0.962
My salary has been reviewed and adjusted upward within the last three years	3.202	1.124
I receive financial compensation for approved overtime or additional duties	2.037	2.534
Overall Mean	2.910	1.442

Source: Research Data (2025)

According to the Table 2, the results suggest that instructors' opinions regarding direct monetary compensation (DMC) in public secondary schools are inconsistent. The results indicated that respondents rated timely payment of salaries on a relatively high level (M = 3.771, SD = 0.962), which confirmed that the teachers have a certain degree of trust that the institution will pay very well. Reviews and upward salary adjustments within the past three years received a moderate score (M = 3.202, SD = 1.124), and this indicates some progress, but discontent was evident. Financial compensation for the approved overtime or additional duties received the lowest mean score (M = 2.037, SD = 2.534), signifying a strong disagreement and a wide opinion on the issue of fairly paid additional tasks among teachers. Likewise, the scope and responsibility perception via base salary was low (M = 2.628, SD = 1.147), meaning that not all teachers are satisfied with what they are paid in accordance with their workload.

The overall mean score (M = 2.910, SD = 1.442) reflects that educators consider monetary reward as poor in satisfying their expectations and line of job duties. Again, given the fact that a mean of

close to 3.0 depicts neutrality or moderate dissatisfaction, this implies that salary structures alone cannot be adequate to maintain teacher retention in Rangwe Sub-County. When employees feel that there is a lack of equity, compensation is one of the most potent factors contributing to turnover intention (cf. Bryman, 2021). It would thus suggest that, in addition to ensuring fair pay at the right time, schools and policymakers would have to periodically review salaries and pay adequate compensation when employees have to do additional work in order to make retention more robust.

Monetary compensation and retention were studied previously; findings obtained here are in line with those that were previously acquired. As results obtained by Kainga (2021) revealed, teacher retention in Igembe North has a strong correlation with satisfaction in remuneration, indicating that remuneration remains a key driver. In the same way, Opio (2021) pointed out the importance of competitive compensation in attracting teachers in Ugandan hard-to-reach settings, which is similar to the setting in Rangwe, as infrastructure and location issues make jobs unattractive. Moreover, Hanai and Pallangyo (2020) in the banking sphere showed that fair pays are the most notable characteristics that impact the retention of employees. The studies are beneficial in supporting the existing literature by demonstrating that monetary reward, despite not being enough, acts as a core-determining factor of retention or departure of employees in an organization.

The findings are also in line with the Two-Factor theory, which categorizes salary as a hygiene factor. Herzberg specified that lack of hygiene factors, including poor or unjust compensation, cause dissatisfaction without certifying that their existence produces motivation (Herzberg, 1968, as cited in Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). It can be seen from the low results of base salary reflection and overtime compensation, which is an example of the given dynamic: satisfaction with salary is unequal; it is possible to expect a decrease in satisfaction and growth in turnover. On the other hand, there is also a comparatively high level of timely payment, which is explained by the need to preserve hygienic factors to avoid dissatisfaction. These results therefore confirm the premise offered by Herzberg, that on the one hand, underpayment is inadequate to motivate, and on the other, the lack of it destabilizes retention, and hence requires correction as a core component of a balanced remuneration strategy

Employee Retention

The study sought to ascertain employee retention at public secondary schools in Rangwe The results are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Retention

Statement	Mean	Std. D
I am considering leaving my current role in the foreseeable future.	3.016	1.102
I have served in this organization for a considerable length of time	3.936	0.887
The organization's employee retention practices meet my expectations.	2.846	1.238
I feel loyal to my organization and am committed to staying with it for the long term.	3.255	1.007
Overall Mean	3.263	1.059

Table 3 shows results on employee retention, revealing that there was a moderate teacher agreement on the possibility of them leaving their present job (M = 3.016, SD = 1.102), and this indicates a significant likelihood of turnover intention. On the other hand, they incorporated their long tenure into the organization (M = 3.936, SD = 0.887) as an extremely strong factor. The views of whether retention practices are satisfactory were poorer (M = 2.846, SD = 1.238), indicating that retention strategies currently in use were displeasing. Nonetheless, the loyalty and the commitment to remain with the organization long-term were relatively high (M = 3.255, SD = 1.007), indicating that there is both an institutional attachment and a growing frustration.

The overall average score of (M = 3.263, SD = 1.059) provides average retention of the employees, which demonstrates neutrality. Though teachers are quite loyal and long-serving, the fact that the rating of organizational retention practices is rather low indicates that current approaches are not completely efficient in managing the threat of turnover. This should not mean tenure and commitment are strengths, as schools must work to meaningfully improve compensation, recognition, and development strategies to maintain good retention over the long term. Otherwise, the loyalty that has made teachers stick around could be lost due to discontentment concerning current practices.

The results are consistent with the empirical literature of Onochie (2020) who highlighted that the strength of retention in the public organisations is directly associated with competitive remuneration that is linked to the dissatisfaction highlighted in the unmet expectations of retention practices (M = 2.846). In their turn, Msacky (2024) showed that training and development essentially help to enhance retention, and therefore, such a component as professional growth opportunities may prove effective in managing turnover intention (M = 3.016). Moreover, some of the study findings by Mabaso et al. (2021) demonstrated the importance of employing holistic retention interventions (such as rewards, work-life balance, and career progression) to maintain the motivation and loyalty levels, and the findings are supported by moderate results achieved on the scale of commitment levels (M = 3.255). All these studies together come up in confirmation that for a stable teacher workforce, it is important to improve retention practices by using holistic and equitable methods.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

It determines the relation between direct monetary compensation and employee retention. The study used correlation analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and regression analysis, which all have different data types and research question combinations (Field, 2022; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017).

Table 4: Correlation analysis

		Direct Monetary Compensation
Employee Retention	Pearson Correlation	.305**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	188

The Pearson correlation coefficient between Direct Monetary Compensation (DMC) and Employee Retention is r = 0.305, with a significance level (p-value) of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between the two

variables. In practical terms, this means that as direct monetary compensation increases, employee retention also tends to increase employees are more likely to stay with an organization when they perceive their financial compensation to be fair or attractive. However, the strength of the correlation (0.305) suggests that the relationship, while present and meaningful, is not particularly strong. This implies that direct monetary compensation is only one of several factors influencing employee retention

Regression analysis

The model summary between the dependent variable (employee retention) and independent variable (direct monetary compensation).

Table 5: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.305	.093	.088	.539

The Model Summary provides key statistical information about the relationship between the independent variable (Direct Monetary Compensation) and the dependent variable (Employee Retention). In this model, the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.305, indicating a positive but weak linear relationship between direct monetary compensation and employee retention. The R Square value is 0.093, which means that approximately 9.3% of the variance in employee retention can be explained by direct monetary compensation alone. The Adjusted R Square is 0.088, a slightly lower value that accounts for the number of predictors in the model, suggesting the model's explanatory power would remain consistent even if more variables were added. The Standard Error of the Estimate, which is 0.53853, reflects the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line; lower values indicate a better fit, so this result suggests moderate dispersion. Overall, while the model shows that direct monetary compensation has a statistically measurable effect on employee retention, the effect is relatively weak, and other factors likely play a significant role in influencing employee retention.

Table 6: ANOVA - Model Significance Test

Source	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Regression	5.523	1	5.523	19.044	.000
Residual	53.944	186	.290		
Total	59.467	187			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Direct monetary compensation

The ANOVA table 6 evaluates whether the regression model is statistically significant. The regression sum of squares is 5.523, indicating the amount of variation in employee retention that is explained by direct monetary compensation. The Residual Sum of Squares is 53.944, representing the unexplained variation that is, the part of employee retention not accounted for by

monetary compensation. The Total Sum of Squares is 59.467, which is the total variability in employee retention across all observations. With 1 degree of freedom (df) for the regression and 186 df for the residual (total df = 187), the Mean Square for Regression is 5.523, and for the residual, it is 0.290. The F-statistic is 19.044, which measures how well the model explains the variance in the outcome relative to the residual variance. The significance value (Sig.) is .000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the model is statistically significant. This means that direct monetary compensation has a significant effect on employee retention, and the relationship observed in the sample is unlikely to be due to chance.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	SE	β (Beta)	t	p
Constant	2.748	.125	-	22.066	.000
Direct Monetary Compensation	.177	.041	.305	4.364	.000

The model equation becomes;

Employee Retention = 2.748 + 0.177Direct Monetary Compensation

The regression coefficient results indicates that the Unstandardized Coefficient (B) for the constant is 2.748, which means that when direct monetary compensation (tDMC) is zero, the predicted value of employee retention is 2.748. This serves as the model's baseline. The B value for tDMC is 0.177, indicating that for every one-unit increase in direct monetary compensation, employee retention increases by 0.177 units, assuming all other factors remain constant. The Standard Error for this coefficient is 0.041, which is relatively small, suggesting the estimate is precise. The Standardized Coefficient (Beta) is 0.305, reflecting a moderate positive relationship between direct monetary compensation and employee retention when all variables are standardized. The t-value of 4.364 and the significance value (Sig.) of 0.000 indicate that the effect of direct monetary compensation on employee retention is statistically significant in other words, there is strong evidence that monetary compensation has a real and measurable impact on retention. Since the p-value is well below the 0.05 threshold, we can confidently conclude that direct monetary compensation plays a significant role in influencing employee retention in this model.

4.3 Discussion of the Results

The study found that direct monetary compensation significantly influences teacher retention in Rangwe Sub-County, yet explains less than ten percent of retention variance. The regression model reveals a baseline retention level existing independently of salary, indicating that teachers remain in their positions primarily due to unmeasured factors such as vocational commitment, community ties, professional relationships, and intrinsic job satisfaction. While compensation matters statistically, the modest effect size demonstrates that substantial salary increases would produce only marginal improvements in retention rates, challenging the conventional assumption that pay is the primary retention driver in rural schools. Teachers expressed significant dissatisfaction with salary equity and overtime compensation, though they appreciated consistent payment timing. This pattern aligns with Herzberg's hygiene factor theory, where inadequate compensation causes

dissatisfaction without its presence necessarily motivating retention. The paradox of long-tenured yet dissatisfied teachers harboring turnover intentions reveals that current retention stems from inertia or external constraints rather than effective institutional practices. This fragile equilibrium could collapse if alternative opportunities emerge or frustrations intensify, demanding comprehensive retention strategies addressing both monetary and non-monetary factors influencing teacher commitment.

5.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that monetary compensation, while necessary, is insufficient for sustainable teacher retention in rural schools. The finding that salary explains less than ten percent of retention variance fundamentally undermines policies assuming retention problems can be solved primarily through pay adjustments. The substantial baseline retention existing independently of compensation reveals that teachers are held by complex factors including intrinsic satisfaction, community commitment, and professional relationships that current frameworks inadequately address. Though inequitable pay drives dissatisfaction, fair compensation alone cannot ensure long-term retention. Current retention practices operate through passive circumstance rather than strategic design, with teachers remaining despite organizational efforts rather than because of them. The combination of tenure alongside dissatisfaction and turnover intentions represents an unstable situation requiring immediate transformation. Educational authorities must shift from reactive salary adjustments to proactive, multidimensional strategies addressing professional development, working conditions, recognition systems, and organizational culture that collectively determine teacher commitment in challenging rural contexts.

6.1 Recommendations

The study recommends that the Teachers Service Commission and school management should establish transparent compensation frameworks addressing salary equity and standardized overtime payment systems. Authorities should conduct regular benchmarking ensuring teacher pay reflects rural teaching challenges and actual responsibilities. While maintaining timely payment practices, institutions should implement structured salary review processes accounting for inflation and career progression. However, compensation reforms must form only the foundation of comprehensive retention strategies. Educational administrators should invest substantially in professional development programs, mentorship systems, clear promotion pathways, and recognition mechanisms addressing the unexplained retention variance. Schools should prioritize improving working conditions through infrastructure upgrades, adequate resources, and reliable utilities while cultivating organizational cultures featuring participatory decision-making and collegial support. Policymakers should commission longitudinal research identifying specific non-monetary retention factors and develop evidence-based frameworks integrating competitive compensation with hardship allowances, housing support, healthcare benefits, and accelerated career progression for teachers serving challenging rural areas.

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