RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT AND TEACHER MOTIVATION IN PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN MUKUNGWE SUB-COUNTY, MASAKA DISTRICT. A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.

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Abstract Background

The availability of opportunities for advancement motivates teachers to invest in their professional growth and development, leading to increased job satisfaction and commitment. The study aims to assess the relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher motivation.

Methodology

A descriptive, cross-sectional, and correlational survey design. A qualitative approach was employed in examining the non-numerical findings of the study such as gender and attitudes of the respondents on the study variables were coded and summarized to produce descriptive findings. The quantitative approach was used to analyze and interpret numerical data for meaningful findings.

Results

Most respondents (51%) were in the age range of 20-35 years, followed by 37% in the age range of 36-50 years, and 12% aged 51 years and above. There was a moderately strong positive correlation between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment (Pearson Correlation = 0.629, p = 0.002). This implies that when teachers perceive there are opportunities for advancement within the school, their commitment tends to be higher.

Conclusions

There was a moderately strong positive relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment implying that when teachers perceive there are opportunities for advancement within the school, their commitment tends to be higher.

Recommendations

Private primary schools should provide more opportunities for leadership roles, teaching specialized subjects, and bonuses for advancement to address perceived deficiencies in these areas.

Keywords: Advancement opportunities, Private primary schools, Teacher Commitment

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Background of the Study

Before Uganda gained independence in 1962, education was primarily provided by religious missions and colonial authorities. Missionaries played a crucial role in establishing schools, including primary schools, across the country. Teacher commitment during this period was often driven by a sense of mission and dedication to the service of education (Nichols, 2002). After gaining independence, Uganda faced political and social challenges that also affected the education system. During the early post-independence years, there was a commitment to expanding access to education. The government worked to increase the number of primary schools, and various stakeholders, including private entities and non-governmental organizations,

contributed to this effort (Tumusiime & Kasujja, 2020). The education system struggled, and private schools were relatively scarce. Teacher motivation during this period was likely influenced by broader economic conditions and government policies, impacting both public and private school sectors (Grogan, 2009).

In the 1990s, the Ugandan government, with support from international organizations, initiated education reforms. These reforms aimed at improving the quality of education, including primary education. Private schools, both for-profit and non-profit, became increasingly prominent during this period (Evans & Yuan, 2018). Further, in the 1990s, Uganda underwent economic reforms and liberalization. This period saw an increase in private schools as the government

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encouraged private sector participation in education. Teacher motivation in private primary schools was likely influenced by the emerging competition between public and private institutions (Grogan, 2006).

In private primary schools, the relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment is quite significant. When teachers perceive that there are opportunities for advancement within the school, such as the chance to take on leadership roles, participate in professional development programs, or receive promotions, they are more likely to feel committed to their roles (Crossman & Harris, 2006).

The availability of opportunities for advancement motivates teachers to invest in their professional growth and development, leading to increased job satisfaction and commitment. This, in turn, positively impacts the overall quality of education provided by the school (Tumusiime, 2020). On the other hand, if teachers feel that there are limited or no opportunities for advancement, they may become disengaged and less committed to their work, which can hurt the school environment and student outcomes (Poppe, Strawn, & Martinson, 2003).

The 2000s witnessed a surge in private primary schools as the government continued to promote privatization. The motivation of teachers in private schools was likely tied to factors such as salary structures, job security, and the overall economic climate. School management practices and the reputation of the institution also played crucial roles in motivating teachers (Tooley & Dixon, 2005).

Further, the education sector in Uganda faced challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, low salaries, and varying standards. Teacher motivation in private primary schools may have been affected by these challenges. Efforts were made to address some of these issues through policy reforms, salary adjustments, and professional development opportunities (Tooley, Dixon, & Stanfield, 2008). The study aims to assess the relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher motivation.

Methodology Research Design

The study was guided by a descriptive, cross-sectional, and correlational survey design. Further, the study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches in collecting and analyzing data for this study.

The researcher used a descriptive survey design to explain the findings of the study based on averages, percentages, standard deviation, and frequency tables. The study was cross-sectional since it collected data at a point in time from respondents and took a short period. The study was correlational since it used Pearson correlation to establish the relationship between the study variables in line with the study objectives.

A qualitative approach was employed in examining the nonnumerical findings of the study such as gender and attitudes of the respondents on the study variables were coded and summarized to produce descriptive findings. The quantitative approach was used to analyze and interpret numerical data for meaningful findings.

Study setting

The study was carried out on selected private primary schools in Mukungwe Sub County, Masaka District. Mukungwe is a sub-county in Masaka District, Uganda. It has 6 parishes and 73 villages. Masaka District is located in the Buganda Kingdom in southern Uganda, west of Lake Victoria. The district is bordered by Masaka City to the northwest and west, Kalungu District to the north, Kalangala District to the east, and Kyotera District to the southwest and south. The average altitude of the district is 1,115 meters (3,658 ft) above sea level. The study was carried out in selected private primary schools within Mukungwe Subcounty, Masaka District and these were Mk Junior School, Valley View Primary School, Good Shepherd Primary School, Victory Learning Primary School, Bright Grammar Primary School, Kasana Junior Primary School, Hope primary school, Kids pride primary school, KY primary school and Mother Janet primary school.

The study covered a period of 4 years ie from (2020- to 2023). This period provided substantial information in line with the study objectives, especially on the level of participation in school activities, attendance to school tasks, and the level of intent to stay of teachers.

Study Population

Sekaran (2003) defines a population as the entire group of people, events, or things that a researcher wishes to investigate. In Mukungwe Sub County, there are 15 private primary schools. However, this study only used 10 private primary schools. According to Bainey (2020), 50% of the population is a good representation of the population hence it guided the researcher to select 10 schools (66%). The study was carried out at Mk Junior School, Valley View Primary School, Good Shepherd Primary School, Victory Learning Primary School, Bright Grammar Primary School, Kasana Junior Primary School, Hope Primary School, Kids Pride Primary School, KY Primary School, and Mother Janet primary school.

The study used directors, teachers, and head teachers of the selected primary schools, as the respondents thus the study population. The study used 140 teachers, 10 head teachers, and 10 directors of the selected private primary schools as the population hence 160 participants constituted the study population.

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Table 1: Study population, Sample size, and sampling technique

Category	Population Size	Sample size	Sampling technique
Teachers	140	93	Stratified random sampling
Head teachers	10	10	Census
Director	10	10	Census
Total	160	113	

Source: Masaka District Education Department (2023).

Sample Size

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argue that it is impossible to study the whole targeted population therefore the researcher took a sample of the target population. A sample is a subset of the population that comprises members selected from the population. The sample size was determined using Kreijcie & Morgan's (1970) table of determining sample size. At a 5% level of significance, 113 respondents were selected as the sample size of the study as shown in Table 3.1 above. These included 93 primary teachers, 10 directors of private primary schools, and 10 head teachers of the selected private primary schools in Mukungwe Sub County, Masaka District.

Sampling Techniques

The researcher used stratified sampling and census in determining the respondents of the study.

Stratified random sampling was used to select teachers from various primary schools based on years of service/experience. The teachers possess various homogeneous attributes.

Directors and head teachers were included in the sample size. This was aimed at providing a complete picture without the potential bias that could arise from sampling. Research Instruments

The researcher used a questionnaire and interview guide to collect primary data for this study and a documentary review method to collect secondary data for the study.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire was used as a tool that will aid the gathering of information during the survey. A questionnaire is defined as a carefully designed tool for collecting data by specification of research questions. It is a research instrument that gathers data over a large sample and it gives important information about a population that's why many quantitative researchers use it as the main method of collecting data. In addition, a questionnaire can collect a large amount of information in a reasonable quick space of time and at the same time minimizes bias on the side of the researcher and respondents (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire to gather data from teachers of the selected private primary schools. Open-ended and closed-ended questions were used to access first-hand information. Close-ended questions

were used to give respondents alternative answers and to avoid wasting time in thinking (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

Interview Guide

An interview guide is a written list of questions, open or close-ended, prepared for use by an interviewer in a person-to-person interaction. This may be face-to-face, by telephone, or by other electronic media. In this study, the researcher used an interview guide to collect data from Directors and Headteachers of private primary schools. Face-to-face questions were orally asked to the respondents. This method was employed because it allowed the collection of a lot of information regarding the study objectives.

Documentary Review Checklist

These were mainly secondary sources. Information was sourced from documents related to the area of study. These documents were studied and critically reviewed while keeping the ethical standards in mind. They were used to examine the effectiveness; relevance and appropriateness of the language including those related to the policies and background information of the organization mainly attendance, participation, and loyalty of teachers.

Research Procedure

The study was conducted in a planned way in which the researcher first obtained an introductory letter from the University which she took to the head teachers of the selected private primary schools. The researcher gave out his questionnaires and also arranged for interview sessions with respondents. The researcher then collected the questionnaires after two weeks.

Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy of data obtained in the study to represent the variables in the study. Several methods were used during the process of data collection to ensure quality data for the research. Personal prejudices and biases were avoided, systematic and accurate recording of observations was made, listening carefully, and establishment of trust with the interviewee will be employed to ensure validity. The research instruments were given to third parties for expert judgment and were validated with the help of the supervisor. A Content Validity Index (CVI) was used to

measure the accuracy of the research instrument using the formula:

The researcher established the Content Validity index as 0.85 which she compared with 0.7 as proposed by Amin (2005) who posits, that a research instrument is valid if the Content Validity Index is greater than 0.7.

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Reliability

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent data results or data after a repeated result (Mugenda &Mugenda 2003). This refers to how consistent the research instrument is in collecting the intended information. Amin (2005) contends that the instrument is reliable when it produces the same results when it is used repeatedly hence ensuring dependability and precision. To ensure reliability, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires on 5 respondents before going to the field, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha (a) was used to compare findings from the first and the second test which was 0.84 as

calculated using the SPPSS program. This was compared with 0.70 as suggested by (Amin, 2005), and declared that the research instruments were reliable.

Data Analysis and Processing

Qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed, interpreted, arranged, and tabulated. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS software. Results were presented in the form of frequency tables and interpreted accordingly.

Univariate analysis was carried out for individual variables using mean, frequency tables, graphs, and standard deviation. Correlation analysis was carried out using the Pearson correlation coefficient to establish the relationships. Regressions analysis was used (multiple regressions) to establish the relationship between teacher motivation and teacher commitment in private primary schools in Masaka District

Results

Table 2: Response Rate

Respondents	Sample size	No. of questionnaires	Response rate (%)
		returned	
Teachers	93	87	93.5%
Head teachers	10	8	80%
Director	10	5	50%
Total	113	100	88.5%

According to the findings in Table 2, the total response rate for the study was 88.5%, calculated by dividing the total number of questionnaires returned (100) by the total sample size (113). This indicates a relatively high level of participation from the target population.

Among the 93 teachers sampled, 87 returned their questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 93.5%. This is the highest response rate among the three groups, indicating a high level of engagement and interest among the teachers. Out of the 10 head teachers surveyed, 8 returned their questionnaires, yielding a response rate of 80%. While slightly lower than the response rate for teachers, it still reflects a significant level of participation.

Among the 10 directors approached, only 5 returned their questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 50%. This is

notably lower compared to the response rates for teachers and head teachers.

In conclusion, the high response rates among teachers and head teachers suggest that these groups were generally more willing to participate in the study. This indicates a higher level of interest or perceived relevance of the research topic to their roles within the private primary schools in the Masaka district.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The researcher used gender, age, marital status, and level of education as demographic characteristics of the respondents and the findings are as follows.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	53	53%
Female	47	47%
Total	100	100%
Age (years)		
20-35	51	51%
36-50	37	37%
51+ years	12	12%
Total	100	100%
Marital status		
Single	32	32%
Married	63	63%
Separated	3	3%
Widowed	2	2%
Total	100	100%
Level of education		
Certificate	38	38%
Diploma	48	48%
Bachelors	14	14%
Total	100	100%
Length of service		
0-3 years	34	34%
4-7 years	51	51%
8+ years	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Based on the demographic characteristics presented in Table 3, for the study on teacher motivation and commitment in private primary schools in Masaka district, the following were observed.

Gender

Among the respondents, 53% were male, while 47% were female. This indicates a slightly higher representation of male teachers in the sample. The gender distribution reflects a reasonably balanced representation, which suggests that the study's findings may apply to both male and female teachers in private primary schools in the Masaka district.

Age

The majority of respondents (51%) were in the age range of 20-35 years, followed by 37% in the age range of 36-50 years, and 12% aged 51 years and above. The distribution suggests a relatively younger workforce within the private primary schools in Masaka district, with a significant proportion falling within the 20-35 age range.

Marital Status

The largest proportion of respondents (63%) were married, followed by 32% who were single, 3% separated, and 2% widowed. The high percentage of married respondents may indicate stability and commitment, which could potentially influence their motivation and commitment levels in their teaching roles.

Level of Education

In terms of educational qualifications, 48% of respondents had a diploma, 38% had a certificate, and 14% had a bachelor's degree. The majority of respondents had either a diploma or a certificate, indicating that many teachers in private primary schools in Masaka district may have completed vocational or technical training programs.

Length of Service

Regarding length of service, 51% of respondents had been in service for 4-7 years, 34% for 0-3 years, and 15% for 8 years or more. The distribution suggests a relatively experienced teaching workforce, with a significant proportion having served for 4-7 years.

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In conclusion, the demographic characteristics provide insights into the composition of the teaching workforce in private primary schools in Masaka district. The relatively young age distribution indicates a dynamic workforce, while the predominance of married respondents suggests potential influences of family responsibilities on teacher motivation and commitment. The educational profile, with a majority having diplomas or certificates, highlights the importance of vocational and technical training in preparing teachers for their roles. The distribution of length of service indicates a mix of experienced and relatively new teachers, which may

have implications for their levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment.

Opportunities for Advancement in Private Primary Schools in Masaka District

To explore the relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment in private primary schools in the Masaka district, the researcher used descriptive analysis of responses that were captured using a Likert 5-point scale where 5- Strongly Agree (SA), 4- Agree (A), 3-Not sure (NS), 2-Disagree (D), 1-Strongly Disagree (SD), Mn- Mean, Std-standard deviation

Table 4: Opportunities for Advancement in Private Primary Schools in Masaka District

•	Mean	Standard deviation
Private schools often allocate resources for professional development for their teachers		0.4
Private schools offer leadership opportunities for teachers to take on roles		0.3
Private schools offer teachers the chance to teach specialized subjects		0.1
Some private schools offer bonuses to teachers as an advancement		0.4
Some private schools provide monetary reimbursement to teachers seeking to further their education	4.2	1.4
Private schools often encourage collaboration among teachers for their academic growth		0.3
Teachers are given salary advance for their advanced learning		0.2
Teachers are provided with additional responsibilities		0.8
Some private schools offer counseling positions to teachers		0.5
Average Mean		0.5

According to findings in Table 4, on the statement "Private schools often allocate resources for professional development for their teachers", the mean score of 4.6 indicates a high agreement among respondents that private schools in Masaka district allocate resources for professional development, with relatively low variability (standard deviation of 0.4).

The statement "Private schools offer leadership opportunities for teachers to take on roles" had a mean score of 2.4 suggesting a disagreement among respondents regarding the availability of leadership opportunities for teachers, with low variability (standard deviation of 0.3).

The statement "Private schools offer teachers the chance to teach specialized subjects" had a mean score of 2.2 which indicates a disagreement among respondents regarding the availability of opportunities for teachers to teach specialized subjects, with very low variability (standard deviation of 0.1).

The statement "Some private schools offer bonuses to teachers as an advancement" had a mean score of 2.8 which suggests disagreement among respondents regarding the provision of bonuses to teachers as advancement, with moderate variability (standard deviation of 0.4).

The statement "Some private schools provide monetary reimbursement to teachers seeking to further their

education" had a mean score of 4.2 indicating a high agreement among respondents that some private schools provide monetary reimbursement for teachers seeking further education, with relatively high variability (standard deviation of 1.4).

The statement "Private schools often encourage collaboration among teachers for their academic growth" had a mean score of 4.3 indicating a high agreement among respondents that private schools encourage collaboration among teachers for academic growth, with low variability (standard deviation of 0.3).

The statement "Teachers are given salary advance for their advanced learning" had a mean score of 2.6 which suggests disagreement among respondents regarding the provision of salary advances for advanced learning, with low variability (standard deviation of 0.2).

The statement "Teachers are provided with additional responsibilities" had a mean score of 4.1 which indicates a relatively high agreement among respondents that teachers are provided with additional responsibilities, with moderate variability (standard deviation of 0.8).

The statement "some private schools offer counseling positions to teachers" had a mean score of 1.2 which indicates strong disagreement among respondents regarding

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the provision of counseling positions to teachers, with moderate variability (standard deviation of 0.5).

Based on these findings, private schools in Masaka district generally allocate resources for professional development, encourage collaboration among teachers, and provide additional responsibilities, which could positively impact teacher commitment.

Page | 7 teacher com Overall, wh

Overall, while there are some positive aspects regarding opportunities for advancement in private primary schools in Masaka district, there are also areas that require improvement to enhance teacher commitment and satisfaction.

During the interview with one of the directors, he said "We often offer teachers the chance to take on leadership roles within the school community for positions like department heads, curriculum coordinators, or extracurricular activity coordinators". The director mentioned offering teachers the chance to take on leadership roles within the school community, such as department heads, curriculum coordinators, or extracurricular activity coordinators. This indicates that private primary schools in Masaka district provide opportunities for teachers to advance their careers by assuming leadership positions. Teachers who take on leadership roles may feel a greater sense of responsibility and commitment to their work, as they are entrusted with additional duties and contribute to the overall management of the school.

Another director said "We encourage our teachers to invest in professional development programs by sponsoring them for workshops, seminars, conferences, and training sessions focused on teaching methodologies, curriculum development, educational technology, and classroom management. However we do not cater for their advancement in education" According to one of the directors, private primary schools in Masaka district encourage teachers to invest in professional development programs by sponsoring them for workshops, seminars, conferences, and training sessions. This demonstrates a commitment to supporting teachers' growth and skill development. However, the director mentioned that they do not cater to teachers' advancement in education, suggesting that while opportunities for professional development are provided, advancement in formal education may not be fully supported.

One head teacher said, "We offer half sponsorship to our selected teachers to do specific courses and further their education". One head teacher mentioned offering half sponsorship to selected teachers to pursue specific courses and further their education. While this indicates some level of support for teachers' educational advancement, it also suggests that financial constraints may limit the extent to which private schools can sponsor teachers for further education. Nonetheless, providing partial sponsorship can still motivate teachers to pursue higher education and enhance their qualifications.

The opportunities for advancement described by the directors and head teachers, such as leadership roles and professional development programs, are likely to have a positive impact on teacher commitment. Teachers who are given opportunities to grow professionally and assume leadership responsibilities are likely to feel more engaged, motivated, and committed to their roles. However, the level of commitment may also depend on the extent to which schools support teachers' advancement, including financial support for further education.

Table 5: Correlational Findings on the Relationship between Opportunities for Advancement and Teacher Commitment

		Opportunities for advancement
Teacher	Pearson Correlation	0.629**
commitment	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002
	N	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There was a moderately strong positive correlation between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment (Pearson Correlation = 0.629, p = 0.002). This implies that when teachers perceive there are opportunities for advancement within the school, their commitment tends to be higher.

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating a high level of confidence in these relationships.

Discussion

To examine the relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment. To achieve this

objective, a null hypothesis of no significant relation between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment was tested. The results revealed that there was a significant relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment. This implies that when teachers perceive there are opportunities for advancement within the school, their commitment tends to be higher. The study identifies various types of advancement opportunities, including professional development programs, leadership roles, specialized subject teaching, bonuses, monetary reimbursement for further education, collaboration among teachers, salary advances for advanced

learning, provision of additional responsibilities, and counseling positions. These findings resonate with literature highlighting the importance of diverse advancement opportunities in fostering teacher commitment (Crossman & Harris, 2006).

The study suggests a moderately strong positive correlation between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment, indicating that when teachers perceive opportunities for growth and advancement, their commitment tends to be higher. This aligns with previous research emphasizing the significance of advancement opportunities in increasing job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment among teachers (Poppe, Strawn, & Martinson, 2003).

Literature highlights the role of leadership practices, supportive school culture, and collaborative decision-making in creating an environment conducive to teacher advancement and commitment.

Comparative studies, such as those comparing public and private school teachers' advancement opportunities and commitment levels, provide insights into potential differences between sectors. While private schools may offer certain advantages in terms of advancement opportunities, public schools may have their unique strengths. Understanding these differences can inform strategies to enhance teacher commitment across both sectors (Boateng, 2023).

Conclusions

There was a moderately strong positive relationship between opportunities for advancement and teacher commitment implying that when teachers perceive there are opportunities for advancement within the school, their commitment tends to be higher.

Recommendations

Private primary schools should provide more opportunities for leadership roles, teaching specialized subjects, and bonuses for advancement to address perceived deficiencies in these areas.

Private primary schools should invest in continuous professional development initiatives to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge for their roles and provide avenues for career advancement.

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List of abbreviations

COVID -19 Coronavirus disease 2019 CVI Content Validity Index

SPSS Statistical Package for Social

Sciences

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Conflict of interest

There was no conflict of interest declared.

Author Biography

Cate Nabaggala Nansubuga is a student of the Master of Educational Planning and Management at Team University. Dr. Muhammad Ssendagi is a lecturer at the School of Graduate Studies and Research of Team University.

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