

# Demographic Factors as Antecedents Towards Turnover Intentions Among Secondary School Teachers in Mbarara District

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## Abstract

The study examined demographic factors as antecedents towards turnover intentions for secondary school teachers in Mbarara District. The study was conducted by collecting quantitative data from over 600 teachers in 64 secondary schools in Mbarara District. The data collected were analysed for variation of turnover intentions with demographic factors including age, gender, work experience, religious affiliation and teacher qualifications. Kruskal Wallis and t-tests were conducted to examine turnover intention scores with the demographic factors of teachers. Study results showed that demographic factors are actually antecedents of turnover intentions among secondary school teachers in Mbarara District. It is thus suggested that schools should plan to accommodate the different demographic factors of their staff to minimize turnover intentions among teachers. Additionally, schools should constructively manage professional growth and development of teachers without increasing turnover. Increasing job responsibility for teachers who attain better qualifications and performance-based incentives can equally reduce attrition and turnover intentions among secondary school teachers.

**Keywords:** Demographic Factors, Turnover intentions, Teachers.

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## 1. Introduction

Turnover intentions among secondary school teachers has been perceived as one of the most serious operational challenges educational managers have had to deal with (Oke, Ajagbe, Ogbari, Adeyeye, 2016). It relates to the tendency of teachers to leave the jobs currently held (Goswami & Jha, 2012). Past studies have indicated that turnover is costly to organisations in terms of the separation costs (Iqbal, 2010); replacement costs of departed employees and training costs of new employees (Arindrajit & Michael, 2010). This is the reason why turnover has been the focus of attention for scholars and researchers alike (O'Connor, 2018). Several factors increase towards turnover intentions among employees (including teachers). Such factors include perceived organizational justice (Cantor, Macdonald, & Crum, 2011); human resource management practices (Long, Perumal, & Ajagbe, 2012) and perceived psychological contract breach (Blomme, van Rheede, & Tromp, 2010). This shows that much of the research has been focused on the relationship between turnover intentions and other factors other than demographic factors. This study thus examined the influence of demographic factors in predicting turnover intention among secondary school teachers in Mbarara District; Uganda.

Demographic trends in Uganda indicate that there are few highly educated and skilled teachers (UNESCO, 2015). Additionally, the teachers entering the workforce are relatively younger in age and require mentoring by senior teachers as they settle into the teaching vocation (Gyezaho, 2014). The amount of teaching jobs exceeds the available teachers amidst the declining number of science teachers (Nsubuga, 2013). All these factors formulated the interpretations of turnover intentions among secondary school teachers as a consequence of the demographic factors of teachers in such schools. To examine such a relationship, this study was conducted.

Furthermore, the changing work environment requires schools to have clear career development prospects for teachers, straightforward organizational policies and guidelines, good quality and quantity of the relationship between the employee and school administrators, and recognition and respect of employee exceptionality, needs and desire (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2010). Therefore secondary school managers must be aware of the factors that must be improved to ensure sustainable job retention for teachers. In all cases, schools have to value the teachers regardless of their age, marital status, gender or religious affiliation sort of which turnover intentions exceed the acceptable levels.

### 1.1 Objectives and significance of the study

The study diagnosed demographic factors as antecedents to turnover intentions among secondary school teachers in Mbarara District. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between demographic factors (such as gender, marital status, age and educational levels together with religious affiliations) and turnover among secondary school teachers in Mbarara District. The paper illuminates the antecedents that influence turnover intentions among secondary school teachers. This is very fundamental for management, policy planning and implementation purposes in secondary schools in Uganda. It is thus envisaged that the findings of the study will

influence policy formulation for better performance of secondary schools in Uganda.

### *1.2 Hypotheses*

The study hypothesized that teacher age, gender, experience, professional qualifications and religious affiliation predict turnover intentions among secondary school teachers.

## **2. Related literature**

### *2.1 Teacher turnover*

Teachers constitute an important resource for schools; they make a difference to students, stakeholders like parents, other employers, school management committees or school board of governors (Emoja, 2016). This is because teachers are key players in creativity, self-direction, continuous learning, provide technical knowledge for schools; they have a variety of skills and take on various tasks (including class teachers) such as being heads of departments and being in charge of career guidance for students (Malihah, 2010). While only a few teachers with such qualities exist, those with such qualities are desirable in schools; they differ from other teachers with the same job titles and comparable background characteristics (Nsubuga, 2013).

Even with the best teachers, schools cannot retain each and every teacher; some teachers inevitably leave their work places in schools leading to turnover (Candle, 2010). Iqbal (2010) defines turnover intentions as a conscious determination to seek for other available job opportunities in other potential organizations. The employee takes a planned move to freely leave the organization. Thus, turnover and its related intentions constitute a behavioral intention that actually predict actual employee turnover; they are rational decisions made by employees in relation to their current jobs. The decisions determine employee continuity with the current jobs or to leave the job and seek for better job opportunities elsewhere.

Greenberg (2011) proposed the unfolding model of voluntary turnover as a way of understanding turnover intentions. During productive working years an unexpected event can trigger an employee's thinking faculty to focus only their job. Usually such an event comes in unexpectedly and this is what Greenberg termed as the shock to the system. Rapid changes in technology, merger and economic hardships can initiate employee decision to quit the organization or remain loyal to the current employers. Additionally decision frames act as a point of reference when employees are coming to terms with their cherished organization. Uncertainty, fear of what will happen next, knowing how problems have been handled in the past, and availability of other job alternatives are some of the factors employees consider before deciding to stay or quit their current job.

Reasons for employee attrition include: poor employee/manager relationship, failure to use core skills, not able to impact the organization's goals, mission, lack of control over one's career, failure to grow in one's chosen career, employee/organization values mismatch, lack of resources to do the job, unclear expectations, lack of flexibility and salary/benefits concerns. Additionally, employee turnover is linked to factors such as poor management style, lack of career development opportunities, lack of appreciation for employee contribution to the organization, and inability to use core skills. In such situation employees seek out for organisations that will offer skills development, career opportunities and better finance rewards. Employees consider the institutional reputation and the available type of work (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012).

While several studies have examined turnover intentions in relation to job related factors, examination of employee factors that influence turnover is equally important. Employee turnover intentions and actual turnover are both significantly associated with age, gender, job tenure, level of education, organizational commitment and job satisfaction among other (Jonathan, Thibeli, & Darroux, 2013a; Kosi, et al., 2015). Intentions to quit hence points to the fact that employees not committed to the job and derive only job dissatisfaction from their work. Ali, ZhongBin, JianPing, Ali, & Sultan (2018) found out that commitment and job satisfaction were significant predictors of turnover intent. Employees who work for highly successful organization had superior commitment and lower turnover intentions.

Biswakarma (2015) in a study that investigated employees' job engagement and turnover intentions in Nepalese private commercial banks found out that turnover intentions did not differ significantly with employees' experience. This is in agreement with the findings of Shannon, Nathaniel, Laura, Elina, Natasha, and Shelby (2017), young and experienced teachers display similar intent to leave the profession.

According to Mampane (2012), teacher turnover has been recognized as one of the major hindrances that limited attainment of the millennium development goals South Africa. This led to the South African government embarking on strategies of retaining teachers for example by focusing on teacher development. The strategies however did not decrease in teacher turnover significantly. Certainly, the turnover was a result of personal attributes to teachers. For example, a survey of 127 secondary school teachers in Dodoma- Tanzania noted low affective and normative commitment, moderate continuance commitment and high intention to leave. Commitment predicted 33.8 % of the variance in teacher intention to leave. Affective and continuance commitment were the best predictors of intentions to quit among teachers. Teachers who don't have degree level education were more likely to leave than teachers with degrees. Teachers with diploma and certificate level

training were still young and could find employment in other sectors. Intentions to quit teaching were high among the younger teachers who are less than 35 years. These younger teachers are still viable in the job market, have little commitment to teach and no associated benefits linked to long job tenure to lose such as pension (Jonathan et al., 2013a).

Kosi, Sulemana, Boateng, and Mensah (2015) in a cross-sectional survey of 203 teachers in Tamale Metropolis, Ghana noted that teachers had a high intention to quit the teaching profession. This intention to quit was even easy to translate into actual turnover incase teachers got better alternative jobs apart from teaching. An intention to quit was negatively associated to both motivation and job satisfaction. Motivation and job satisfaction predicted 63.4% of the variance in teacher intention to quit. Intentions to leave varied with respect to gender and education level. Teachers who are non-degree holders had higher intentions to leave contrast to teachers who are degree-holders. Better educated teachers were more committed and had better job career track like managerial jobs compared to non-degree holders only had opportunities to further their educational aspirations. Intention to leave decreased as teachers' age. Older teachers are working towards advancing in their teaching career and better long-term incentives such as pension while younger teachers struggle to fit into the challenging teaching vocation (Jonathan, Thibeli, & Darroux, 2013b).

In their study of 300 teachers in rural South Africa, Kabungaidze, Mahlatshana, and Ngirande (2013) found out that age, job tenure, job dissatisfaction and subject specializations predicted teacher turnover intention and the decision to quit the teaching profession. Younger teachers (below the age of 25 years) had higher turnover intentions than older teachers (more than 45 years). Older teachers are more likely to commit themselves to the teaching profession longer than younger teachers. Teachers with a longer teaching experience had slighter turnover intentions. Science teachers had high turnover intentions than humanities and language teachers. Science teachers are in high demand with many job opportunities available hence the noted high turnover intentions. The preceding shows that attraction, recruitment and retention of competent teachers are of great concern worldwide. There is a discrepancy among teacher demand especially in sciences, teacher supply and turnover. The education sector needs to work hard to reduce attrition among teachers. However, these studies are not prominent in Uganda.

## 2.2 Demographic factors

According to Hayes (2015) factors such as employee's age, gender and level of education are significant factors that influence turnover intentions among employees. In addition to such factors, Nhema & Mutenheri (2016) suggest that religious affiliation influence turnover intentions among employees. All these agree with the earlier study findings of Mohammed & Almalki et al., (2012) that statistically significant associations exist between turnover intentions and demographic variables of gender, age, education level, religious affiliation and level of experience. These are the factors that have been grouped as demographic factors and their influence on turnover intentions is reviewed as follows;

### 2.2.1. Age

According to Teclaw, Osafuke, Fishman, Moore, & Dyrenforth (2014), age of an employee has varying effects on turnover. It has often been reported that turnover intentions are high among young employees than with older employees (Shannon, et al; 2017). For example, in a study of 2119 registered nurses from 16 small, medium and large-scale hospitals in Germany, it was found out that age was related to nurses' tendency to leave their organization; and younger nurses were more likely to leave their organizations or the profession than did their mature colleagues (Simon, Müller, & Hasselhorn, 2010). A related study was conducted by Almalki, FitzGerald & Clark (2012) on 508 primary health care (PHC) nurses in Saudi Arabia and reported that overall turnover rates were higher for younger nurses compared to older ones. All these results can be explained basing on the fact that older employees would rather choose to remain employed with an organization than search for newer job opportunities (Wren, Berkowitz, & Grant, 2014). Couch (2011) reported that in the case of German, turnover intentions among employees tend to reduce beyond the age range of the mid-30s. This qualifies the assertions of Wren et al., (2014) that age influences employee's perception of satisfaction and their intention to retain jobs. Could such results be replicated in the secondary school sector? This is indicated in this study.

### 2.2.2. Gender

The influence of gender on turnover intentions has been found to be inconsistent. According to Blomme, van Rheede & Trom (2010), not only are the theoretical perspectives for the effects of gender on turn over intention not fully developed but the empirical findings are lacking as well. While there are studies that found gender not to be significantly related to turnover (Iqbal, 2010; Ajayi, & Oluwole; 2018), others such as (Hannah, 2015) found that female employees had greater turnover intentions. The results of Hannah (2015) study on accounts' professions concurred with the views of Miki & Yuval (2011) that women were more likely to leave teaching than men. However, Roopnah & Sanmukhiya (2018) in a study on employees in a five star hotel in Mauritius reported that males have greater intention to leave than females. This shows that past study results about turnover intentions for male and female employees have been inconsistent.

Also, in a study among 187 surviving employees of downsized organizations in Malaysia, it was reported that there was no significant difference in turnover intention for the males and the females (Ho, Sambasivan, & Liew, 2013). However, in a longitudinal survey of 6,199 employees by Lee (2012), married women were found to have higher turnover rates than men. This was attributed to family reasons and domestic commitments. The lack of relationship or inconsistent relationship between gender and turnover is that gender probably interacts with other demographic variables (Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014) or probably the relationship is contingent on the type of organization (Khanin, Turel, & Mahto, 2012), occupation, industry, culture or country. With such variations, this study investigated turnover intentions for secondary school teachers in Mbarara District.

### 2.2.3. Experience

Turnover intentions have been found to be influenced by employee working experience and this has been reported in different past studies. Waititu (2010) while analysing factors that influenced turnover intentions for teachers in public high schools in Limuru District-Kenya reported that employees with more years at work are unlikely to leave the teaching profession unlike those with fewer years in the job. Such findings are in agreement with the theoretical assertions of Uludag et al., (2011) that employees with long working experience have a lower turnover intentions compared to inexperienced ones. Inexperienced teachers decide to leave teaching profession based on their school experiences as teachers. This is because as the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (2016) suggests, new teachers should be supported by the administration and should be given better teaching assignments. Provisions should be put in place to ensure that new teachers encounter fewer student behavior problems, are supplied with more equipment and supplies. They also desire collaboration time during the school day and more professional growth opportunities. These desirables are usually not immediately realised at work which forces them to think of quitting their work places.

Past studies reported that newer teachers deal with a significant amount of stress and multiple studies have shown that approximately one-half of new teachers quit within their first 5 years of teaching (Thierry & Simon, 2013). School location can also impact stress, with teachers from schools in urban communities reporting higher stress levels than other regions (Jensen, Sandoval-Hernández, Knoll & Gonzalez, 2012). In other cases, factors such as overpopulated classrooms, lack of resources, burdensome workload, and infringement of personal time have been reported as typical stressors within the teaching profession. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2011) examined direct and indirect factors that relate to motivation to leave the teaching profession and found that the lack of belonging and emotional exhaustion mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and motivation to leave the profession. Work related stress has been shown to increase the prevalence of stress-induced illnesses among teachers and this may lead to turnover (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

### 2.2.4 Qualification

Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Bentein (2013) assert that as the employees' level of education increases, marketability increases which increases turnover intentions. Additionally, more educated employees tend to seek employment opportunities with new organizations compared with those with lower educational qualifications (Wren et al., 2014). This is consistent with the views of Islam, Khan, Ahmad, & Ahmed (2013) who assert that turnover intentions are more likely for individuals with advanced levels of education.

Employees with degrees are more knowledgeable and are perceived to be of high quality (Jayasingam & Yong, 2013). Jayasingam and Yong found lower instances of turnover among knowledge workers but the possibility of a relationship existed between turnover intentions and an employee's education level and supervisory status (Islam et al., 2013). Well-educated workers and knowledge workers sought employment opportunities through knowledge-intensive firms, or firms that conducted intellectual work (Islam et al., 2013).

Past studies reported that more academically able teachers are more likely to quit the teaching at an early time. Waititu (2013) for example reported that employees with more education were most likely to leave an organization. On the other hand, Assefa (2011) found out that there was no statistically significant relationship between teachers level academic qualification with turnover intentions. Furthermore, the findings of Shehnaz & Hadi (2017) that education level does not have any significant association with turnover intentions. In trying to explain the results of their findings, Kesen (2016) suggested that higher education level makes an individual more marketable. These reports show that the relationship between education level and turnover intent is certainly not conclusive. The study clarifies on such inconsistencies.

### 2.2.5 Religious affiliation

Religious affiliation has been found to exert significant influence on positive workplace behaviours (Khalid, Rahman & Madar, 2013). This is because behavior in humans is influenced by beliefs, expectations, values and other mental perceptions (Allameh, Amiri, & Asadi, 2011) which are central to religion. It is for this reason that employee behaviour has been found to be linked to their values and belief system (Sanoubar & Moghadam, 2013). This clarifies why Osman-Gani, Hashim & Ismail (2010) supposed religious beliefs to exert a significant influence on individuals' decision making and behavior with regard to turnover.

According to Narehan, Azlyantiny, Feridah, Abdul Aziz & Sharrifah (2015), employees may leave their workplace when they are not given the opportunity to practice their religious belief. More than often, employees

consider their job as a religious calling which also means religious obligation and it is expected that this factor can lead to increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment and reduce in turnover intention. Consequently, if such factors are not considered, turnover intentions rise.

In Uganda (an African country) the belief system is rooted in religion yet religion is a central aspect of African culture and this has considerable effects on behaviours in different contexts. According to Salem & Agil (2012), the principles of Islam serve as a code of conduct for its adherents particularly in the workplace. Thus, while religion may help to promote desirable work behaviours, one may infer that it would help to prevent negative work behaviours like turnover intention. With such considerations, the influence posed by religion on the turnover intention of secondary school teachers in Mbarara was examined.

### **3. Methodology**

Using a quantitative approach, and correlation design, data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire with constructs on demographic factors and turnover intentions. The scales adopted for the study included standardized instruments with known psychometric properties about turnover intentions. The reliability of the scale was 0.85 as adapted from Cook and Wall (1980) and measured Validity and reliability of items in each item in the questionnaire were established using Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Cronbach alpha, respectively.

Data were collected from teachers in all the 64 secondary schools in Mbarara District. Mbarara Municipality had 26 schools including six government-aided schools and 20 private but registered owned schools. Kashari had 19 secondary schools (six government-aided schools and 13 private and registered schools), and Rwampara had 19 secondary schools (seven government-aided schools and 12 private and registered schools). All the 626 teachers working in the secondary schools of Mbarara District were included in the study population. Analysis involved use of frequency counts and means at descriptive level. At inferential level, independent samples t-test and Kruskal Wallis test were used to test the study hypotheses.

### **4.0 Findings**

#### *4.1 Description of Respondents*

The participants consisted of 394 males and 232 females, in the age-range of 20-29 years (41.7%), though 12 teachers (1.9%) were 60 years and over and Catholics by religious affiliation (45.5%). Results showed that teachers had various relationship statuses. Majority of the teachers were married (53.5%), with a teaching experience of 1-5 years (44.9%) while a small number (6.2%) had over 21 years of teaching experience. Largely teachers in the sampled populations were qualified at a bachelor's degree (66%) and only 4.2 % had attained a master's degree. These respondents' demographic characteristics are summarized as shown in the Table 1 below;

Table 1: Demographic Data

Category		N (%)
Gender	Males	394 (62.9)
	Females	232 (37.1)
Age	20-29	261 (41.7)
	30-39	203 (32.4)
	40-49	107 (17.1)
	50-59	43 (6.9)
	60+	12 (1.9)
	Religious Affiliation	Protestant
	Catholic	285 (45.5)
	Moslem	34 (5.4)
	Born-again	40 (6.4)
	Others	12 (1.9)
Marital status	Single	225 (35.9)
	Married	335 (53.5)
	Cohabiting	40 (6.4)
	Separated	15 (2.4)
	Widow/widower	11 (1.8)
Work experience in years	1-5	281 (44.9)
	6-10	188 (30.0)
	11-15	72 (11.5)
	16-20	46 (7.3)
	21+	39 (6.2)
Education level	Diploma	187 (29.9)
	Bachelors	413 (66.0)
	Masters	26 (4.2)
Additional professional training in past	Yes	422 (67.4)

#### 4.2 Turnover intentions

Means and standard deviation of the study measure (commitment and turnover intentions) were calculated. These scores were used in the analyses. The results are shown in Table 2 below;

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of turnover intentions

	Range	M (SD)
Turn over intentions	4-20	12.75 (4.24)

From Table 2 above, it is evident that the teachers had a high average turnover intentions (12.75) and their views about turnover did not differ greatly as shown by a comparatively low score of standard deviation (SD = 4.24). To understand the variation of turnover intentions with demographic variables, further analyses were carried out as shown in the following sub sections;

#### 4.3 Age and turnover intentions

Respondents were grouped into age groups of 20-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, 50-59 years and over 60 years age brackets. Table 3 shows ANOVA results for turnover intentions with the different age groups;

Table 3: ANOVA results showing how turnover intentions varied with respondents' age groups

Age group	Number (percent)	F	Sig (2-tailed)
20-29	261 (41.7)	0.752	0.038
30-39	203 (32.4)		
40-49	107 (17.1)		
50-59	43 (6.9)		
60+	12 (1.9)		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>626 (100)</b>		

Table 3 suggests that mean turnover intentions differ with respondents' ages. Teachers in the age bracket of 20-29 years had the highest turnover intentions to retain (41.7%) which could be explained by decreased commitment at a younger age. Those in the 30-39 age bracket then followed (32.4%). The over 60 years' age bracket had the least turnover intentions (1.9%). These results were supported by the ANOVA results with the F value was 0.752 and its sig. value was 0.038 at the 95% confidence level. This value is less than the rejection level of 0.05 meaning that turnover intentions differ with age at the five percent level of significance.

#### 4.4 Gender and turnover intentions

Respondents were also classified according to their gender. Table 4 shows t- test results on variation turnover intentions between male and female teachers in Mbarara District;

Table 4: Independent samples t - test results showing variation of turnover intentions with sex

Respondents' Gender	Number (Percent)	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Males	394 (62.9)	3.524	0.000
Females	232 (37.1)		

According to Table 4 more males (62.9%) had higher turnover intentions than females (37.1%) showing that turnover intentions differed with the sex of the respondent. This was supported by the t- value of 3.524 whose significance (p) value was 0.000 which is less than the rejection level  $\alpha = 0.05$ . This implies that there is a significant difference in turnover intentions between male and female teachers at the five percent level of significance.

#### 4.5 Work experience and turnover intentions

Variation of respondents' turnover intentions with work experience was also analysed using Kruskal Wallis and t-test. Table 5 below shows the results of the analyses;

Table 5: Turnover Intentions and respondents' job experience

Job experience in years	N	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
1-5	281	309.13	17.706	4	0.001
6-10	188	345.77			
11-15	71	319.32			
16-20	46	255.95			
21 and above	39	238.68			

Table 5 shows that teachers a work experience of 6-10 years had  $\chi^2 = 17.706$  and  $p = 0.001$ . This  $p$  is less than the rejection level of 0.005 showing that turnover intentions varied with experience with the least experienced teachers (1-5 years) having higher turnover intentions compared to those with more years of teaching experience.

#### 4.6. Qualification and turnover intentions

Respondents were also grouped in accordance with their level of education qualification. Teachers were classified as being qualified to diploma, bachelor's degree or master's level of qualification. Table 6 below shows Kruskal Wallis test results for the variation of turnover intentions with respondents' qualification;

Table 6: Turnover intentions and respondents' education level of qualification

Education level	N	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
Diploma	187	331.82	6.341	2	0.042
Bachelors	412	308.97			
Masters	26	241.56			

According to Table 6, mean turnover intentions were high for teachers qualified to diploma level (Mean = 331.82) followed by those with bachelors (mean = 308.97) and were trailed by those with Masters Qualification (Mean = 241.56). Kruskal Wallis test results indicate that diploma holders showed  $\chi^2 6.341$  and a  $p$  value of 0.042 which is less than the rejection level  $\alpha = 0.05$ . This implies that there is a significant difference in turnover intentions between teachers qualified to diploma, bachelors and masters qualification at the five percent level of significance.

#### 4.7 Religious affiliation and turnover intentions

Variation of turnover intentions with respondents' religious was also analysed. Table 7 below shows Kruskal Wallis test results for the variation of turnover intentions with religious affiliation;

Table 6: Turnover intentions and respondents' religious affiliation

Religious affiliation	N	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
Protestant	254	293.69			
Catholic	285	331.37			
Muslim	34	360.50	10.599	4	0.031
Born-again	40	271.19			
Others	12	290.42			

According to Table 7, mean turnover intentions were high for Muslim teachers (Mean = 360.50) followed by Catholic teachers (mean = 331.37) and then Anglicans (Mean 293.69) and were trailed by Born- again (Mean = 271.19). Kruskal Wallis test results indicate that diploma holders showed  $\chi^2 10.599$  and a  $p$  value of 0.031 which is less than the rejection level  $\alpha = 0.05$ . This implies that there is a significant difference in turnover

intentions between Anglican, protestant, Muslim, and Born- again at the five percent level of significance.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Age and turnover intentions

Based on the study results (Table 3) turnover intentions differ with age with the youngest teachers being having higher chances of quitting the teaching professions. This could be explained by the fact that teachers with an advanced age have few new employment opportunities. The findings are in agreement with the theoretical assertions of Amutuhaire (2011) who suggested that employees' commitment increases with age and this reduces turnover intentions. Besides such teachers are working hard to get to the peak of their career path. They are future-oriented driven by forecasting a better retirement package, being proud when they see how many students they have mentored and mentoring the novice teachers. In so doing the experienced teachers focus more on the school aspects such as influencing school policies, and engaging themselves in school decision making processes. This cultivates enhanced organizational self-efficacy and reduces turnover intentions among the older teachers. These observations have implications for the education sector in Uganda in general. Reliance on youthful inexperience teachers with fewer experienced teachers can compromise is not sustainable in the future.

Although it was found out in this study that age young employees have high turnover intentions compared to their older counterparts, other studies are opposed to such findings. Jonathan, Thibeli & Darroux (2013) suggest that age is not an important predictor to turnover. Opposed to this study also, other studies reported that older workers are more likely to think leaving their workplace than younger workers (Lee 2013). Such inconsistencies could be explained in terms of other contextual factors that were not controlled in this study. For example, as Yücel (2012) posits that the influence of age on turnover and turnover intentions is an indirect one via job satisfaction or the probability of finding an acceptable alternative.

### 5.2 Gender and turnover

The study results indicated that turnover intentions differed between male and female teachers. This was in agreement the findings of Ajayi, & Oluwole (2018) who reported a statistically significant relationship between turnover intentions with gender. However, the study of Ajayi, & Oluwole (2018) indicted that females had high turnover intentions yet in this study, males had higher turnover intentions. This could be attributed to the great desire for male teachers to move on to better professions with better remuneration. Better remuneration implies that the male teachers will be well positioned to provide for their families. Increased turnover for male teachers is likely to affect the quality of the education services especially when energetic teachers exit the profession. Additionally, the increased exit of male teachers out of the teaching profession implies that male students will have fewer male mentors.

### 5.3 Education level and turnover intentions

This study reported that turnover intentions were higher for the least qualified employees (Diploma holders) and decreased with increase in teacher qualification. These results are opposed to those reported in a study by Sousa-Poza & Henneberger (2012) who found out a significant positive relationship between the level of education and turnover intentions such that turnover intentions increased with level of education. This could be explained by the fact that in this study, the majority of teachers were relatively young and novices in the teaching profession. Also, since only few experienced teachers mentored the young teachers in Mbarara district, it could have also contributed to the high turnover intentions among the young teachers. These results agree with previous scholar who assessed the situation of the teaching human resources in Uganda (Namata, 2013). Attainment of better qualification and experience can also signal the start of the turnover intent. Teachers with such qualities can seek for managerial jobs divers setting such schools, ministries and private sector. All these are good for teaches who are working to advance in their professional career.

Teachers who are qualified to certificate or diploma level are more likely to leave the teaching line of work than teachers who possess degrees. Teachers with certificate or diploma level training are relatively young in age with a lot at their disposal. These teachers can easily switch to other much loved careers, can decide to upgrade to better academic qualifications, can easily find employment in other sectors, they are still feasible in the job market and have a longer time to serve in their cherished career. Lower level qualified teachers have not committed themselves to the teaching calling. More so these teachers don't have any cumulative benefits such pension linked to continuous job tenure (Jonathan et al., 2013a).

Better educated teachers are more committed to their jobs because of the diverse opportunities available to them during their job tenure. Such teachers have the opportunity to be appointed to managerial position available in the school. Better educated teachers work with a purpose and a good focus. They are motivated advance in their career and get better long-term rewards in future such as pension. In essence when teacher attain better qualifications with time their turnover intent tend to diminish (Jonathan et al., 2013b). In explaining the link between teacher education level and turnover intention, several reasons have been advanced. Lack of



opportunities for professional growth and limited opportunities for promotion negatively affect low-level teachers. Such result into intentions to quit (Mutune & Orodho, 2014).

The plight of secondary school teachers in Nigeria is comparable to what secondary school teachers in Uganda are faced with during their active teaching years. Based on subject specialization, Kabungaidze et al (2013) establish that young science teachers who possibly diploma holders were more likely to leave their teaching jobs than humanities and language teachers. This noted turnover especially among science teachers is associated to the high demand for science educators at all levels of society. Science teachers are basically in high demand with enormous job opportunities in almost all sectors.

#### 5.4 Teaching experience and turnover intentions

Intention to quit varied with job experience where teacher with 6-10 years of teaching experience having high turnover intent. One explanation of this is the fact that during this time teachers might have settled in the teaching profession and attained better qualifications. These experienced educators are sought after by many schools and employing bodies. These teachers can seek teaching opportunities in other schools; move on to other careers unrelated to teaching or try to find other employment opportunities (Jonathan et al., 2013b). The results further highlight the plight faced by teachers in Uganda. Teachers distancing themselves from teaching profession, less number of teachers in the district, teacher desire to move on to other careers, lack of experienced teachers to tutor the upcoming professional teachers, increased work load, and relatively fewer female teachers. The findings have the same opinion with previous research (Rwabushajja, 2013; Tumwebaze, 2010).

#### 5.5. Religious affiliation and turnover intentions

Turnover intentions were high among Muslim teachers compared to teachers of various religious affiliations. This is understandable because most of the respondents were Christians teachers with a small number of Muslim teachers. The Muslim teachers could have felt alienated and thus discriminated against based on religious grounds. According to Narehan, et al; (2015), high turnover intentions among employees may be attributed to the lack of opportunity for the teachers to practice their religious beliefs. This is because most of the schools were Christian founded and certainly never paid attention to the belief requirements of Islam as a religion.

### 6. Conclusions

Turnover is common among some categories of teachers for example younger teachers tend to have higher turnover intent than older teachers. Turnover intentions decrease as employees' age. Attainment of higher qualification among teachers can instigate the decision to quit. Additionally, male teachers together with those that are less qualified have higher turnover intentions. Thus, as already indicated in the results' section, demographic factors are really antecedents to turnover intentions among secondary school teachers in Mbarara District.

### 7. Recommendations

This study has shown that turnover intentions vary with demographic data. It thus recommended that with such demographic factors that influence turnover intentions, schools should plan to accommodate the specific needs of each demographic group in their staff. Strategies such as provision of opportunities for professional growth and development, increased job responsibility for teachers who attain better qualification and performance-based incentives can reduce attrition among teachers. Targeted programs such as refresher courses, day care facilities for parents, flexible working hours and comparable remuneration can all lead to a decrease in turnover intention among teachers.

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