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Correlates of Teacher Transfer in Rural Schools: A Case Study of Rural Primary Schools in Choma District

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Abstract

Inadequate teachers in rural schools of Zambia is a serious impediment toward equitable and universal access to education. The aim of the study was to determine correlates of human resource transfer in rural primary schools of Zambia in particularly focusing on Choma District of Southern Province. An explanatory factorial was employed enlisting 144 teachers from 10 schools in Choma. Data was analysed using SPSS version 22. Exploratory factor analysis was the main analytic technique. The main findings are that more than three quarters n = 97 (76.4%) of the teachers are unlikely to make a transfer request when compared to only a quarter n = 30 (23.6%) who would not. There is no significant association between likelihood of asking for a transfer based on gender, level of education and age of the teacher. One sample t tests result showed that males and females differed significantly in the asking behaviour. The standard acceptable score for propensity for asking for a transfer was set a priori at ≥ 45. Moreover, male teachers scored significantly higher (μ = 47) and were willing to remain in rural Choma when compared to females (μ = 45.1) who scored lower and were unwilling to remain in rural Choma. Out of fifteen factors that were analysed, only six factors were retained. The regression model shows 48% of the variation and transfer asking behaviour can be explained by the independent variables. The remaining 52 % of the variance is explained by other variables not included in this study. Based on the result the model is fair even though the model indicates that one regressor out of six do influence propensity of transfer asking behaviour in Choma as the p vales is ≤ 0.05 of the ideal α values.

Key Words: Correlates, Teacher Transfer, Rural, Primary Schools.

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Introduction

Inadequate teachers in rural schools of Zambia is a serious impediment toward equitable and universal access to education. Globally, there is a historic challenge in the recruitment and retention of staff in the health sector, especially among nursing workforce (ILO, 2010). In rural and remote regions these challenges are significantly more difficult compared to metropolitan areas, often due to resources disparity between rural-remote and metropolitan areas (Ashley et al., 2018; Lasala, 2017). For New Graduate Teachers (NGTs) undertaking transition in rural and remote settings, it is imperative that efforts are made to aid them transition smoothly due to the lower levels of support available for providing health care in these locations. Although there have been some structures in place, the many problems NGTs face in the transition process in the last decade are complex and interwoven. This paper presents a scoping review of what transition support is reported in the literature for NGTs undertaking their first year of practice in rural and remote settings.

Rural communities typically face challenging social and economic environment often exacerbated by isolation, extreme weather conditions, lack of public transport, difficulty of access to and limited choice of goods and services. Empirical evidence suggests that public goods, such as roads or social welfare facilities, can generate welfare gains in rural areas (Jalan and Ravallion, 2002). Even when infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads are available, access to public services remains poor in rural areas as governments typically struggle to recruit and retain qualified staff in such posts (Dussault and Franceschini, 2007; Mulkeen and Chen, 2008). There are many reasons why for instance teachers are reluctant to be deployed in rural areas. Living in a rural isolated area compared to an urban one is associated with reductions in objective as well as subjective welfare (Fafchamps and Shilpi, 2009). Working conditions can also be harder in rural areas due to professional isolation, and professional advancement more limited as access to training and networking opportunities is more restricted (Hedges, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

As Zambia s moves to set new targets for education parameters as a part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the targets are fettered by two persistent problems in schooling outcomes: the quality of primary education1 and the inequity in access to schools and school inputs linked to inadequate staff. Choma is experiencing a shortage of staff out of an establishment of so many schools in rural areas, about 25 rural schools are less than capacity, (Ministry of Education, Smart Zambia institute 2018). This has been worsened by teachers getting transfers outside Choma District. The consequences have been inequity of teachers in the public schooling system and low pass rates. It is not known what the reasons are. It is also not known whether the reasons are social, psychological or economical. It is also not known the categories of teachers that are leaving. It is for this reasons that this study desires to develop a framework that will be used to keep teachers to a level which is acceptable.

This study is aimed at determining correlates of human resource transfer in rural primary schools of Zambia in particularly focusing on Choma District of Southern Province.

Research Design

This study was conducted in Choma using an explanatory study design as suggested by Bryman (2012). This is a study that relies solely on the application of linear regression when it is not an experimental design. This study drew respondents from 10 schools in Choma.

Population and Sampling

The target population was 225 teachers and there were no exclusion criteria set for this study. Due to the criticality of the issue of teacher retention in rural schools, the kind of challenges that teachers in such contexts face and the way forward, to acquire reliable information we purposefully selected people with experiences and knowledge about the issue under study. Hence, school heads as well as heads of departments and ordinary teachers working in rural schools participated in the study.

The study was done in three zones of Choma which were considered to be remote. Choma Central was not included in the study. The total population of teachers in the three zones was 225. Using Yamane Taro table to determine the sample size based on the sampling error of 0.05, the eligible population was 144.

The researcher was availed a sampling list of teachers by the DEBS office. The list was considered to be 98% reliable. The list had names in alphabetical order. Using the sampling interval of approximately 1 in every third person, the researcher enlisted teachers.

Survey questionnaires were administered to the respondents and each respondent was asked to answer the questionnaire within ten days. The Head Teachers were the central persons for the collection of the questionnaires. Out of 144 questionnaires that were administered, only n = 127 were collected and this gave a response rate of 88.1%. The response rate was ideal to proceed with the analysis. The researcher employed the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) which was affordable. The software SPSS VERSION 21 was used to assess scale reliability of the tool and for parametric analysis. Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) was used (N = 127). The alpha coefficient for the whole scale, containing all items, was 0.94. To test the internal consistency of the subscales, alpha was then calculated for all factors: F1 $\alpha = 0.94$ and F2 $\alpha = 0.84$. As alphas of ≥ 0.70 are considered to indicate reliability (Field, 2017; Nunnally, 1978), the high alpha values obtained suggest that the initial scale produced from the EFA has the potential to be a reliable assessment tool for measuring asking behaviour and the predictors. (Creswell, 2007; Rajashi Mukherjee 2019; Pritha Bhandari 2020).

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to reduce elements for regression analysis (e.g., De Coninck et al., 2020). All items were first checked for normality, and Bartlett's test of sphericity and a Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) test were then conducted. As all items met the acceptable ranges and the sample size met conventional EFA guidelines (Comrey & Lee, 1992) the data was judged suitable to be analysed using EFA. SPSS version 24 was used to conduct the PAF, with delta set to the default value of 0 for the factor rotation, as advised by Costello and Osborne (2005). An oblique factor rotation was chosen as it is expected that any latent factors underpinning this psychological construct will be related (Costello and Osborne, 2005; Crisp and Cruz, 2009). Direct oblimin was chosen as the method for the oblique rotation as it is one of the most widely used approaches

and has been successfully used for self-efficacy scale development in the past e.g., De Coninck et al. (2020). Survey responses (N = 127) were analysed using principal axis factoring (PAF) with direct oblimin (oblique rotation). For this study PAF was chosen as this type of factor analysis can be used to identify the latent variables underlying a construct (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007; Yong and Pearce, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

To conduct this study, the researcher got the necessary permits to conduct research from HSSREC. Permission to conduct the study was requested. Letters clearly stating the purpose of the study were written to Directors of institutions.

Findings

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The teacher sample was composed of males accounting for less than half n = 56 (44.1%) versus n = 71 (55.9%) females. This was a relatively sample of young or youthful employees whose mean age was 38.3 (± 7.5 SD) and a third n = 33 fell within the 35 to 39 years' age group. The mean number of working years in Choma was 12.2 (± 4.1 SD) and distribution was such that about a third n = 45 (35%) had served 1 to 5 years. Ordinary Class Teachers were the most dominant group n = 89 (70.1%) when compared to senior teachers, heads of departments or heads. Diploma and bachelor's degree holders form the backbone of the teacher categories as they both account for n = 101 (86.6%) of the labour force (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Demographic profile of the sample n = 70

Demographic variable	*Frequency*	
	n	*%*
Age group		
20 to 24	1	.8
25 to 29	16	12.6
30 to 34	22	17.3
35 to 39	33	26.0
40 to 44	55	43.3
Gender		
Male	56	44.1
Female	71	55.9
Highest level of education		
Certificate	16	12.6
Diploma	74	58.3
Bachelor's Degree	36	28.3
Master's Degree	1	.8
How long have you been a teacher		
1 to 5 Years	45	35.4
6 to 10 Years	25	19.7
11 to 15 Years	29	22.8
16 to 20 Years	23	18.1
Over 20 Years	5	3.9
Present position		
Head Teacher	4	3.1
Deputy Head teacher	7	5.5
Head of Department	8	6.3
Senior Teacher	19	15.0
Class Teacher	89	70.1

Transfer asking behaviour and background variables

This section is associated with the research question "What is the typification like of teachers who transfer out of Choma?" The first analysis to be done is to profile the asking behaviour. Respondents were

asked "How likely they intended to ask for a transfer out of Choma in the next five years?". They were expected to indicate two categorical options as follows likely to make a request and unlikely to make a request. The distribution of the responses is that more than three quarters n = 97 (76.4%) of the teachers are unlikely to make a transfer request when compared to only a quarter n = 30 (23.6%).

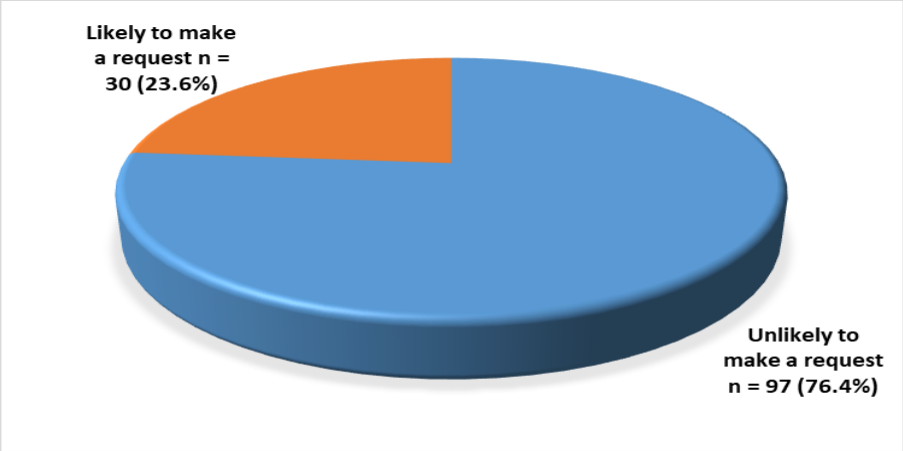

Figure 4.1: Teacher Likelihood of making a transfer request

Typification of teachers who transfer out of Choma

This section covers the research question "What is the typification like of teachers who transfer out of Choma?" When teacher categories were analysed to determine the distribution of teachers on the propensity to ask for permission, the distribution is such that there is no significant association between likelihood of asking for a transfer based on gender, level of education and age of the teacher (See Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Transfer asking behaviour and background variables

	Male N = 56 (44.1%)		*Female N = 71 (55.9%)*		χ^2	*df*	*P value*
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*			
Unlikely to make a request	42	51.6	55	48.4	.105	1	0.745
Likely to make a request	14	41.7	16	58.3			

	Age					χ^2	df	P value
	20 to 24 1%	25 to 29 12.6%	30 to 34 17.3%	35 to 39 26%	40 to 44 43.3%			
Unlikely to make a request	1	10	16	30	40	6.44	4	.168
Likely to make a request	-	6	6	3	15			

	Highest level of education				χ^2		P value
	Certificate	Diploma	Bachelors	Masters			
Unlikely to make a request	14	55	27	1	1.61	3	.656
Likely to make a request	2	19	9	0			

However, one typification emerged. One sample t tests result showed that males and females differed significantly in the asking behaviour. The standard acceptable score for propensity for asking for a transfer was set *a priori* at ≥ 45. Moreover, male teachers scored significantly higher (μ = 47) and were willing to remain in rural Choma when compared to females (μ = 45.1) who scored lower and were unwilling to remain in rural Choma. This is can be shown by the distribution of median scores in box plot (See Figure 4.2) below.

Table 4.3: One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gender	127	1.56	.498	.044
Composite score of factors	127	45.98	6.009	.533

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Gender	35.247	126	.000	1.559	1.47	1.65
Composite score of factors	86.237	126	.000	45.984	44.93	47.04

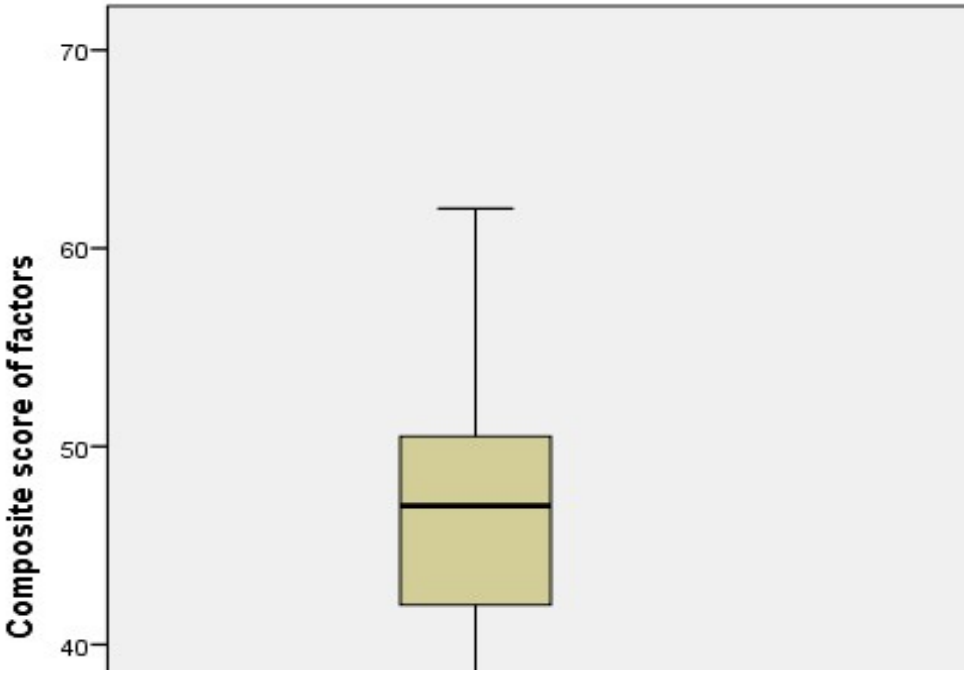

Figure 4.2: Boxplot of scores by gender

Factors associated with teachers leaving rural schools

This section covers the first research question “What factors associated with teachers leaving rural schools in Choma?” In research, "factors" are variables that are believed to influence the outcome of a study and in this case the propensity to ask for a transfer. Essentially the factors act as independent variables that the researcher manipulates or observes to see their effect on the dependent variable; they are considered potential causes or contributors to a phenomenon being studied. In this study, there were fifteen factors.

From the initial descriptive analysis, prior to factor analysis, as shown in Table 4.3, five factors had respondents' summations of strongly agree and agree to be affected exceeding the sums of disagreements to be affected. The factors were ranked and those with affect are as follows (see Table 4.4):

Table 4.4: Descriptive of Ranked factors based on agreements

Factor	Ranking
Lack of equipment and supplies in facilities could be a factor to ask for a transfer	1
Lack of social amenities could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	2
Career Progression	3
The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	4
Poor working conditions in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	5

The distribution of levels of agreements of the fifteen factors appear in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Frequencies of Factors of Transfer Requests

Factors of Transfer requests	Strongly agree to be affected	Agree to be affected	Somehow agree to be affected	Disagree to be affected	Strongly disagree to be affected	Ranking
Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer	25	6	32	50	14	10
Lack of social amenities could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	39	23	14	45	15	2
Lack of equipment and supplies in facilities could be a factor to ask for a transfer	29	42	23	17	16	1
The poor state of functional equipment could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	23	7	29	33	35	11
Housing could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	18	7	41	40	21	12
Potable water and electricity supply could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	8	5	27	43	44	15
Good access of road to town could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	10	7	15	52	43	14
Professional isolation and limited advancement is a factor to ask for a transfer	42	13	32	23	17	6
Challenging Living Conditions could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	40	10	32	21	24	8
Being prepared to stay longer here could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	40	12	36	22	17	7
The stigma and	11	7	40	36	33	13

punishment I have experienced in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer						
The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	40	19	32	14	22	4
Poor working conditions in this place could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	44	14	24	25	20	5
Incentives and Supporting environment could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	23	13	46	19	26	9
Career Progression could not be a factor to ask for a transfer	43	17	34	18	15	3

Factor analysis was done and from Table 4.4, we can see that the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant and that is, its associated probability is less than 0.05. In fact, it is actually 0.001, i.e., the significance level is small enough to reject the null hypothesis. This means that correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table 4.4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.655
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	280.262
	Df	105
	Sig.	.001

The next item from the output is a table of communalities which shows how much of the variance in the variables has been accounted for by the extracted factors. For instance, nine out of fifteen components have the variance in quality of product is accounted for exceeding 60% as shown in bold (See Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Communalities

Component	Initial	Extraction
Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer	1.000	.662
Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.651
Lack of equipment and supplies in facilities are a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.749
The poor state of functional equipment is not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.640
Housing is not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.660
Potable water and electricity supply is not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.537
Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.615
Professional isolation and limited advancement is a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.496
Challenging Living Conditions are not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.607
Being prepared to stay longer here is not a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.635
The stigma and punishment I have experienced in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.738
The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	1.000	.483
Poor working conditions in this place	1.000	.551
Incentives and Supporting environment	1.000	.711
Career Progression	1.000	.686

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

The next item shows all the factors extractable from the analysis along with their eigenvalues, the percent of variance attributable to each factor, and the cumulative variance of the factor and the previous factors. In factor analysis, "total variance" which is the sum of variance explained by all extracted factors, essentially representing the total amount of variability captured by the factors from the original set of variables. Component 1 and 2 have a higher total variance and this indicates that the factors collectively explain a larger portion of the overall variability in the data. In Table 4.6. one would notice that the first factor accounts for 19.7% of the variance, the second 11.1. All the remaining factors are not significant.

Table 4.6: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.969	19.793	19.793	2.969	19.793	19.793
2	1.668	11.121	30.914	1.668	11.121	30.914
3	1.356	9.042	39.957	1.356	9.042	39.957
4	1.165	7.765	47.721	1.165	7.765	47.721
5	1.147	7.644	55.365	1.147	7.644	55.365
6	1.114	7.426	62.791	1.114	7.426	62.791
7	.884	5.893	68.684			
8	.787	5.247	73.931			
9	.764	5.096	79.027			
10	.688	4.587	83.614			
11	.625	4.164	87.779			
12	.546	3.638	91.417			
13	.484	3.229	94.646			
14	.423	2.819	97.466			
15	.380	2.534	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotated Component (Factor) Matrix

The idea of rotation is to reduce the number factors on which the variables under investigation have high loadings. Rotation does not actually change anything but makes the interpretation of the analysis easier. Looking at the table below, we can see the following:

1. Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 4).
2. Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 5).
3. Housing is not a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 3).
4. Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 3).
5. The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 1). (See Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer	-.048	.113	.060	.788	.144	.047
Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer	-.127	.056	.006	.120	.784	-.052
Lack of equipment and supplies in facilities are a factor to ask for a transfer	.063	-.514	.514	.346	-.069	.304
The poor state of functional equipment is not a factor to ask for a transfer	-.374	.419	.201	.000	.306	.437
Housing is not a factor to ask for a transfer	-.079	.079	.625	-.025	-.490	-.127
Potable water and electricity supply is not a factor to ask for a transfer	-.249	.122	-.090	.653	.010	-.160
Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer	-.397	.300	.554	.085	-.092	.213
Professional isolation and limited advancement is a factor to ask for a transfer	.578	.032	-.029	-.081	-.383	.082
Challenging Living Conditions are not a factor to ask for a transfer	.387	-.647	.017	-.190	-.011	-.041
Being prepared to stay longer here is not a factor to ask for a transfer	.713	-.210	-.093	.080	-.139	.219
The stigma and punishment I have experienced in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	.132	-.038	-.070	-.090	-.071	.837
The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	.596	-.140	.130	-.254	.142	.077
Poor working conditions in this place	.672	.200	.027	-.174	-.029	-.164
Incentives and Supporting environment	.246	.026	.712	-.136	.324	-.140
Poor culture of career progression	.255	.736	.180	.214	.000	-.030

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Predictors of Asking behaviour

Following the determination of six factors as critical, in order to predict propensity of transfer asking behaviour, this section affirms prediction. Respondents were asked to rate how likely they intended to ask for a transfer out of Choma in the next five years. The rating was on a five-point Likert scale as follows: 1 for very unlikely, 2 for unlikely, 3 for somehow likely, 4 for likely and 5 for very. A regression was then done to produce correlations, the coefficient of determination and analysis of variance (ANOVA) concerning the six factors. Correlation sought to show the nature of the relationship between dependent and independent variables and coefficient of determination showed the strength of the relationship. Analysis of variance was done to show whether there is a significant mean difference between dependent and independent variables. The ANOVA was

conducted at 95% confidence level. Regression analysis was used to establish the relationship between tax revenue collection at CBP and the predictors that affect variables.

The findings as shown in Table 4.9 of the model summary indicated that there was a very weak positive relationship (R= 0.397) between the variables. The data also revealed that 6.3% of asking behaviour propensity could be explained by predictors under study. Besides, given the R Square value of 0.063 and adjusted R square value of 0.06 it is realized that 48% of the variation in (transfer asking behaviour) can be explained by the independent variables. R^2 was used to find out how well the independent variables can predict the dependent variables. The remaining 52 % of the variance is explained by other variables not included in this study. Further, it is widely accepted in the statistical applications that an R^2 adjusted of above 75 per cent is very good; between 50–75 per cent is good; between 25–50 per cent is fair and below 25 per cent is poor (Sakaran, 2000). Based on the result the model is fair (48%).

Table 4.9 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.219[a]	.048	.000	1.23316	1.429

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer, Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer, Potable water and electricity supply is not a factor to ask for a transfer, Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer, The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer, Poor working conditions in this place
b. Dependent Variable: How likely do you intend to ask for a transfer out of Choma in the next five years?

The ANOVA Table (Table 4.10) below reports how well the regression equation fits the data (i.e., predicts the dependent variable).

Table 4.10 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.186	6	1.531	1.007	.424[b]
	Residual	182.483	120	1.521		
	Total	191.669	126			

a. Dependent Variable: How likely do you intend to ask for a transfer out of Choma in the next five years?
b. Predictors: (Constant), Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer, Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer, Potable water and electricity supply is not a factor to ask for a transfer, Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer, The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer, Poor working conditions in this place

The regression model does not predict the dependent variable “Propensity of transfer asking behaviour” significantly well. How do we know this? When an examination of the "Regression" row and we look at the "Sig." column, this roll indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was run. Here, *p* is 0.424, which is more than the ideal α =0.05, and indicates that, overall, the regression model that it does not statistically significantly predict the outcome variable (i.e., it is not a good fit for the data). The Coefficients table (Table 4.8) provides us with the necessary information to predict propensity of transfer asking behaviour from the six predictors (by looking at the "Sig." column). The model indicates that only one regressor out of six do influence propensity of transfer asking behaviour in Choma as the p vales are $\leq$ 0.05 of the ideal α values.

Table 3: Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.575	.664		5.384	.000
Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer	.168	.091	.175	1.851	.047*
Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer	.044	.082	.048	.537	.592
Potable water and electricity supply is not a factor to ask for a transfer	-.117	.104	-.107	-1.125	.263
Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer	.090	.097	.086	.923	.358
The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer	-.028	.079	-.033	-.349	.728
Career Progression	-.062	.082	-.070	-.758	.450

a. Dependent Variable: How likely do you intend to ask for a transfer out of Choma in the next five years?

In this study, the following are the predictors or regressors of propensity for transfer asking behaviour is linked only to cordial relationship with colleagues and community members.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study sought to answer three research questions before committing to answering the main research question. The main findings are that more than three quarters n = 97 (76.4%) of the teachers are unlikely to make a transfer request when compared to only a quarter n = 30 (23.6%) who would not. There is no significant association between likelihood of asking for a transfer based on gender, level of education and age of the teacher. One sample t tests result showed that males and females differed significantly in the asking behaviour. The standard acceptable score for propensity for asking for a transfer was set a priori at ≥ 45. Moreover, male teachers scored significantly higher (μ = 47) and were willing to remain in rural Choma when compared to females (μ = 45.1) who scored lower and were unwilling to remain in rural Choma. Out of fifteen factors that were analysed, only six factors were retained as shown in table 4.8 and these are:

1. Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members have made me not to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 4).
2. Potable water and electricity supply is not a factor to ask for a transfer on factor (component 4)
3. Lack of social amenities are not a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 5).
4. Housing is not a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 3).
5. Good access of road to town is not a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 3).
6. The poor culture of career progression in this place is a factor to ask for a transfer is substantially loaded on factor (component 1).

The regression model shows 48% of the variation and transfer asking behaviour can be explained by the independent variables. The remaining 52 % of the variance is explained by other variables not included in this study. Based on the result the model is fair even though the model indicates that one regressor out of six do influence propensity of transfer asking behaviour in Choma as the p vales is ≤ 0.05 of the ideal α values.

Interpretation of findings

This study helps to determine the predictors that influence the propensity to ask for a transfer out of the rural setting Choma. Consistent with other studies by Hedges (2002) and Ingersoll (2001) on how to reduce teacher transfer requests, the data from previous research suggests all other factors to be key. However, there are important differences in the response as shown in this study. For instance, the head teachers in this study may have responded more to the need for availability of houses and probably this is because of more responsibilities attributed to head teachers, they needed to be housed within the school as shown (for instance Mulkeen, 2005). The study also showed the need for consideration of efforts to improve social amenities in rural areas facilities.
Cordial relationship with colleagues and community members should not be dismissed as it was critical in this study. The targeted recruitment of the local teachers from specific geographical regions may not be the best way to reduce teacher transfer request. According to Ariko's (2009) study, rural location of schools influenced teacher transfer requests and this is a study whose findings are similar to this. Research has elaborated more cordial relationship with colleagues and the community were a greater proportion of teachers advocated for improvement of human relations and in this way, teacher transfer requests that take into consideration employing teachers from the locality tend to increase, bonding newly recruited teachers and reducing the propensity to ask for transfers (Hedges, 2000; Feng, 2005).

The poor culture of career progression stood out as a factor in this study and has been shown in some studies that teachers would only accept and maintain a rural post if they saw it as temporary, and as a path to a more desirable job or related career progression Mulkeen (2005). Though, studies have shown that conditions of service are critical in transfer asking behaviour (Gaynor, 1998; Eberhard et al., 2000; Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000; Hare and Heap, 2001; Feng, 2005) this finding was rather surprising, because it was expected that in view of the prevailing social economic situation, they could have preferred improved conditions of service.

Measures to Minimising Transfers

Research elsewhere has shown that strategies that have been employed to minimize teacher transfer request seem to work in most of the instances. Some of them which have been received include teacher induction and mentoring. Survey results cited by Hare and Heap (2001) indicate that teacher induction programs are very effective in minimizing teacher transfers. According to the NCREL (2001) survey, adoption of teacher induction and support programmes proved successful in keeping high-quality teachers in the seven NCREL districts. For example, in the state of Michigan the law formally requires that new teachers receive "intensive" professional development or additional training within 15 days of the first three years of teaching. Whereas there is a one year of support as part of the teacher-licensing system in Indiana, other states like Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin provide some funding to encourage districts or groups of districts to develop support programs.

A majority of districts providing teacher support and induction reported that transfers had been reduced by 50% or more (NCREL, 2001). Similarly, Spuhler and Zetler‟s (1995) three-year evaluation of the Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) found that retention rates were higher for those who participated in the mentoring programs. Another strategy that has been found to be successful in minimizing teacher transfer requests is to recruit teachers from the community they belong. NCREL (2001) study revealed that states like Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin have seemed to make the most use of these mechanisms. Under this alternative the rationale is that it is easier to retain people who have deep roots in the community. Craig et al. (1998) argue that the assumption in teacher recruitment from the community is that, when student teachers from within each region are recruited, then it is hoped that personal history and family connections will entice them to return to teach in their home area after they attain their teacher certification.

Hedges (2002) study reveals that in Ghana, a policy that involved posting newly qualified teachers in pairs seems to work well. Those posted with another teacher, seemed to draw strength from the ready-made friendship, especially in hostile communities, even if they had not known each other beforehand.

It is noteworthy from these studies that successful attempts in minimizing teacher transfer requests have been due to teacher induction and mentoring, improvement, recruitment of teachers from the community they belong and the provision of retention bonuses (Council of the City of New York, 2004; NCREL, 2001; Spuhler and Zetler, 1995; Hare and Heap, 2001; Texas Centre for Educational Research, 1999).

Limitations and Significance of this Study

There are notable limitations to the research design that was adopted in this study. First, the methodology focuses on the design of a case. As a result, the real broad provincial picture cannot be ascertained and as such, these findings are not generalizable.

Second, the conceptual variables that were selected in this study appear to be Eurocentric. In theory it would be possible to include local models, by expanding the research assumptions.

However, this study is significant in that it contributes to the literature on teacher transfers.

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, it has been demonstrated that there exist significant relationships in asking behaviour among teachers. Female teaches have the propensity to ask for transfers than male teachers and that undoubtedly the factors that should receive the most attention are improving cordial relationship with colleagues and community members and perhaps ensuring that Choma has social amenities and that school managements and the district education office took note of addressing the poor culture of career progression. Future research should focus on understanding the lived experiences of teachers as one way of understanding the rural life world of a teacher. In terms of local policy application, several other suggestions arising from the research emerge may require consideration. For example, one suggestion is that female teachers who are far from retirement, might be enticed to share their work experience by spending an additional few years in rural and remote regions. Such teachers may accept such opportunities as their responsibilities to dependent children are yet to be established. A new position of 'leading teacher (rural)' or similar, might be created to attract the teachers currently in executive roles. Such a role might entail some teaching responsibilities, along with a leadership role in teaching and administration, and/or be shared in more than one school (Schuck et al., 2016). Other suggestions include trial periods in which teachers could spend a term in a rural and remote school to gain familiarity with the experience.

Recommendation

The researcher offers a recommendation of rural professional experience cautiously; however, as decisions to teach in such areas are determined by other factors, for whether an individual has grown up in the locality (see Gereluk et al., (2020) emphasis should be placed that, teachers be posted in areas where they hail.

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