Teachers’ Retention in Tanzanian Remote Secondary Schools

- Exploring Perceived Challenges and Support
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Abstract


Teacher retention is a global challenge, and many developed and developing countries are struggling to staff and retain teachers in schools, particularly in low-performing, remote, and less desirable areas. In most of these countries, Tanzania in particular, the efficacy of fiscally inclined teachers’ retention strategies continues to be dubious. The aim of this study is to explore teachers’ perceived school level challenges and the support of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The study is inspired by a supportive management theoretical framework, particularly Organizational Support, Leader-Member Exchange and Coworkers’ Exchange. It is motivated by a pragmatic knowledge claim. Data were sequentially collected in three phases using interviews and survey questionnaires. A sample included 258 secondary schools teachers from 28 remote schools in the Dodoma region in central Tanzania. Mixed methods data analysis techniques were used.

The current study identifies younger males of a well-educated and experienced teaching workforce as being the chief staffing in remote Tanzanian secondary schools. Such a teaching workforce is challenging to retain in remote areas, as it is rarely satisfied with the teaching career and highly susceptible to frequently changing employers and working contexts. Moreover, findings show that teachers perceive problems related to housing, social services, conflicts in schools, the inability to influence changes in schools, the teaching and learning situation and limited opportunities as the chief reasons for not remaining in remote schools. Furthermore, findings show that teachers perceive meaningful retention support as being contextually definitive. The catalyst is high quality exchanges amongst teachers which spearhead the development of intra- and extra-role practices, school citizenship behaviours, intraschool social capital (an investment), all of which could bind teachers together, enhancing performing and supporting each other beyond formal contracts. Such a situation triggers teachers’ beliefs that changes, improvement, adaptability and survival within difficult remote environments is possible, and this consequently influences the intention to voice and/or conversely, to exit. Teachers’ empowerment, justice practices and working voicing arenas are important practices for enhancing retention support, especially in remote areas.

Keywords: Challenges, Organizational Support, Remote Schools, Secondary Education, Support, Teacher Retention, Tanzania.
Svensk sammanfattning


Nyckelord: utmaningar, organisationsstöd, avsides belägna skolor, högstadie- och gymnasieutbildning, stöd, att behålla lärare, Tanzania.
Dedication

-To my family-
Acknowledgements

I thank God Almighty for the gift of living to witness this day. My parents, my late father, Boniface N. Rweyendera, and mother, Rosemary Kokushubira. My beloved brother and guardian, Mukyanzi, F. B. (PhD) and his family for being the strong strand under which the genesis of my academic history lives to rest. I extend my sincere appreciations to the World Bank and the University of Dar es Salaam for funding my studies.

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Raymond Mwemezi Boniface,
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Table of Contents

Dedication ........................................................................................................................................... i
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................................. ii
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................................... iii
List of Figures .......................................................................................................................................... vii
List of Tables .......................................................................................................................................... vii
Chapter One: Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Research inspiration, definition of terms and delimitations ......................................................... 1
    1.1.1 Inspirational trajectory ........................................................................................................ 1
    1.1.2 Definition of key terms ...................................................................................................... 3
    1.1.3 Delimitations ...................................................................................................................... 4
  1.2 Educational reforms and teacher retention ...................................................................................... 5
  1.3 Research problem, knowledge gaps and study focus ...................................................................... 8
    1.3.1 The research problem ....................................................................................................... 8
    1.3.2 Knowledge gaps and study focus ...................................................................................... 10
  1.4 Aim, specific questions and rationale ............................................................................................... 13
    1.4.1 Aim ..................................................................................................................................... 13
    1.4.2 Specific questions ................................................................................................................ 13
    1.4.3 Study rationale .................................................................................................................... 13
  1.5 Thesis structure ............................................................................................................................... 16
  1.6 Chapter summary .............................................................................................................................. 17
Chapter Two: The study context ............................................................................................................. 18
  2.1 The system and structure of formal education and training in Tanzania 18
    2.1.1 The strategic importance of secondary education and school heads 19
  2.2 Teacher attrition in Tanzanian secondary schools: A snapshot ................................................... 21
    2.2.1 Forces shaping a teaching career in Tanzania .................................................................... 22
  2.3 Attracting and retaining teachers in Tanzania .............................................................................. 24
    2.3.1 Are the strategies to attract and retain teachers in Tanzania achievable? .......................... 24
    2.3.2 The education sector budget and teachers’ working and living environment .................. 26
    2.3.3 Financial incentives and remote teachers’ attraction and retention in SSA contexts ......... 28
  2.4 Teacher retention and quality education in Tanzania: A recapitulation ......................................... 29
  2.5 Chapter Summary ............................................................................................................................. 31
Chapter Three: Previous research ........................................................................................................... 32
  3.1 Teaching professional and the changing times: Implications for teachers’ work life and retention ................................................................. 32
    3.1.1 Teaching professionalism definitive discourses ................................................................. 33
3.1.2 Teachers’ professional life and work at a crossroads during changing times .......................................................... 35
3.2 Challenges of retaining teachers in remote areas .......................................................... 40
  3.2.1 Demographic factors, job satisfaction, turnover and retention ........................................ 40
  3.2.2 Teachers’ deployment and urban-remote rural imbalances ........................................ 43
  3.2.3 Wastage and alternative employment .......................................................... 44
  3.2.4 School heads’ roles and capacities for school management ........................................ 44
  3.2.5 Female teachers’ retention in remote contexts .......................................................... 45
  3.2.6 The language issue .......................................................................................... 46
  3.2.7 The HIV/AIDS pandemic ................................................................................. 46
  3.2.8 Promotion and advancement opportunity practices ............................................... 46
  3.2.9 Career choice forces, motivation and sense of investment ........................................ 47
3.3 Organizational support and employee retention .......................................................... 48
  3.3.1 Quality exchanges in organizations and employee retention ........................................ 48
  3.3.2 Employees’ relational demography, exchange quality and retention ......................... 50
3.4 Previous research: synthesis and caveats ..................................................................... 52
3.5 Chapter summary .......................................................................................... 54

Chapter Four: Theory .......................................................................................... 55
  4.1 The relations, choices and uses of theories and key concepts ........................................ 55
    4.1.1 Teacher retention, pedagogical practices and choice of theories .................................... 55
    4.1.2 Researching teachers’ retention and (attrition): Challenges and theory usage in this study .......................................................................................... 56
    4.1.3 An overview of theoretical positioning .................................................................. 58
  4.2 Study theoretical frame and rationale ........................................................................ 61
    4.2.1 Specific theories used in the study ........................................................................ 62
    4.2.2 The theoretical fit of the study ............................................................................. 66
  4.3 The Study Conceptual Framework .............................................................................. 67
4.4 Chapter Summary .......................................................................................... 68

Chapter Five: The Methodology ............................................................................ 69
  5.1 Philosophical and paradigmatic inspirations .................................................................. 69
  5.2 Research design ........................................................................................................ 71
    5.2.1 Study area ........................................................................................................ 71
  5.3 Data collection phases, methods, participants and collection protocols ...................... 74
    5.3.1 Pilot study ........................................................................................................ 77
    5.3.2 Surveys ............................................................................................................ 79
    5.3.3 Follow-up interviews ....................................................................................... 79
  5.4 Data analysis ............................................................................................................ 80
    5.4.1 Data analysis techniques ..................................................................................... 81
    5.4.2 Analytical procedures ....................................................................................... 81
    5.4.3 Units of analysis ............................................................................................... 83
  5.5 Analysis of interviews .............................................................................................. 83
    5.5.1 Analytical technique ........................................................................................... 83
  5.6 Analysis of open-ended questions (in questionnaires) ............................................... 85
5.7 Analysis of surveys ................................................................. 87
  5.7.1 Analysis-assisted software .................................................. 87
  5.7.2 Analytical Procedures ....................................................... 87
5.8 Legitimation ........................................................................... 90
5.9 Generalizability/transferability claims ....................................... 92
5.10 Limitations ........................................................................ 93
5.11 Ethical considerations ........................................................... 94
5.12 Chapter Summary ................................................................. 96

Chapter Six: Results .................................................................... 98
6.1 School level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary
 schools in Tanzania .................................................................... 100
  6.1.1 Demographic factors and teachers’ retention in remote secondary
   schools in Tanzania ................................................................. 100
  6.1.2 Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in
   remote secondary schools in Tanzania ..................................... 102
6.2 Teachers’ perceptions of school level support and their influence on
 voicing and/or exiting intentions in remote schools ..................... 109
  6.2.1 Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head in a
   remote school .................................................................... 109
  6.2.2 Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive coworker in
   remote secondary schools ..................................................... 119
  6.2.3 School heads’ perceived classroom teachers’ support and
   retention efforts ................................................................. 123
  6.2.4 Teachers’ perceived school level conditions favouring voice over
   exiting a remote school ...................................................... 127
6.3 Chapter summary .................................................................. 135

Chapter Seven: Discussion .............................................................. 137
7.1 Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote
 schools in Tanzania .................................................................. 137
  7.1.1 Demographic factors and teachers’ retention in remote secondary
   schools in Tanzania ................................................................. 137
  7.1.2 School level sources of low retention in remote schools in
   Tanzania ........................................................................... 140
7.2 Teachers’ perceived school level support and its influence on voicing
 and exiting intentions in a remote school .................................... 150
  7.2.1 Teachers’ perceived school level support for retention .......... 151
  7.2.2 Influence of teachers’ perceived school level support on voicing
   and exiting intentions .......................................................... 159
  7.2.3 Perceived school level conditions favouring teachers’ voicing
   over exiting a remote school in Tanzania ............................. 166
7.3 Chapter Summary .................................................................. 177

Chapter Eight: Conclusion ............................................................. 179
8.1 Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote
 secondary schools in Tanzania .................................................. 179
8.1.1 Demographic factors and teachers’ retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania..........................................................179
8.1.2 School level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania ........................................................................180
8.2 School level support and its influence on teachers’ voicing and exiting remote schools......................................................................................................................181
  8.2.1 Teachers’ perceptions of school level support........................181
  8.2.2 The influence of perceived school level support on teachers’ voicing and exiting intentions..................................................182
  8.2.3 Perceived school level conditions favouring teachers’ voicing over exiting a remote school in Tanzania........................................183
8.3 Implications of the findings .........................................................................................................................................................184
8.4 Future research areas.........................................................................................................................................................192
References ......................................................................................................................................................................................195
Appendices ..........................................................................................................................................................218
List of Figures

1. System and Structure of formal Education and Training in Tanzania.......................................................... 20
2. Theoretical connectivity, relationship and rationale.................. 62
3. Study conceptual framework........................................................... 67
4. Sequential mixed design................................................................. 72
5. School level support (SLS) and voicing intention: a discussion logic.......................................................... 159

List of Tables

1. Sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques across study phases.............. 74
2. Thematizing and quantitizing of interviews................................ 85
3. Thematizing and quantitizing of open-ended questionnaire questions............................................................. 86
4. School heads’ perceived collegial support and retention effects.. 89
5. Five SPSS output tables from Table Four combined................. 89
6. Example of Table Five results being qualitized......................... 90
7. Summary of major results............................................................... 98
8. Classroom teachers’ demographic characteristics in remote secondary schools in Tanzania................................. 101
9. Responses to teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary school contexts in Tanzania...... 102
10. Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head in remote schools contexts........................................... 110
11. Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive coworker in remote schools ......................................................... 119
12. School heads’ perceived classroom teachers’ support and retention effects............................................................ 124
13. Conditions for teachers’ voicing in a remote school................. 128
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Research inspiration, definition of terms and delimitations

1.1.1 Inspirational trajectory

I trace the genesis of my vested interest in teachers’ deficit back to my own school times. I did not witness any single year during the six years of my secondary education pass with a sufficient number of qualified teachers. The deficit ranged between two and five teachers every year. In this “remote” school of mine, even those teachers who kept making replacement, the majority were not qualified. Despite being unqualified, they did not stay long. The replacement normally took long, sometimes even a year.

Schooling was not interesting. Many students, especially in the ordinary “O” level dropped out of school, lost interest in many subjects, and of course failed in the final national examinations. I remember that in my “O” level class, more than ninety percent could not make it to the advanced level (A level) secondary education. I found a similar or even worse situation at the A level. There was only one unqualified teacher. We had to “borrow” a qualified teacher from a neighbouring school. Time was short and the subjects demanding. Schooling was indeed a struggle for “the survival of the fittest”. The few of us who managed to make it invested widely in “tuitions”.

A good teacher makes a lot of difference. Although Advanced Level Mathematics was not an easy subject, we had a knowledgeable and devoted teacher. He supported us to learn better, despite many classes on his shoulders. Consequently, we performed better in this subject even without much tuition. He was my inspiration towards the teaching career. I equally wanted to inspire many good students to be intrinsically motivated for the teaching profession, thereby addressing teachers’ deficit problem and learning difficulties amongst students.

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1 Tuitions refer to extra teaching, normally done during vacations, with extra payment. Teachers, mostly in urban areas, teach different subjects depending on students’ needs.
Upon completing my four years’ (2001-2005) Bachelor’s Degree in Education and Commerce, from the School of Education (SoED) at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) I received the opportunity to proceed with a Master’s Degree in Educational Management and Administration (MEMA). While doing my Master’s, I was offered a job at the UDSM, SoED, as a tutorial assistant in 2007. Although I could not go to teach at a secondary school, yet, at the university I am still a teacher, and my inspiration stands.

Through teaching Human Resources Development and Management courses, reading technical reports in national and scholarly publications, I became much more aware of teachers’ deficit inside and outside Tanzania. Equally, I witnessed a good number of teachers graduating at different universities and colleges in the country, the majority of whom quit the teaching profession. Moreover, I gained solid experience from doing research on remote schools.

In 2007, I had the opportunity to become an administrator and researcher for three years (2007-2010) in the Research Programme Consortium on Implementing Educational Quality in Low Income Countries (RPC-EdQual) project. Apart from administrative duties, I was involved in “action research” in the three districts of Kibaha Rural, Kibaha Urban and Mkuranga with several school heads in several schools. These schools had teachers’ deficit problems as well as being semi-remotely located.

In 2009, I was involved in a countrywide study involving “assessing the impact of training on District Academic Officers (DAOs) and Statistical & Logistical Officers (SLOs)” It was during my intensive visit to the entire Morogoro region that I became critically aware of the acute shortage of teachers. Contrary to my earlier belief, I was shaken during the interview with one of the ward education coordinators (WEC), who plainly told me of a co-school with over three hundred students in his ward which for over three years had been run by only three male teachers. These teachers were responsible for all activities from management to teaching. The question is: How do they manage? In another study in 2010, I visited remote areas in nine districts (scattered over three regions) in the North East of Tanzania.

My visits to remote schools definitely left me convinced that the teaching and learning environments in those areas are not attractive. The deterioration in students’ achievements at different educational levels in the country (cf. URT, 2013), which is directly linked to teachers’ problems, including attrition, is not surprising. My observation is that teachers’ attrition problem will persist until their retention is thoroughly considered. Therefore, my critical question has been how to feasibly retain teachers, especially in remote contexts.

2 This was DFID five year (2005-2010) funded project with six countries involved in the partnership: http://www.edqual.org/ 3 The feasibility/practicality of teachers’ retention strategies in this study context mainly means the extent to which they could be implemented within school level resources, and not respondents’ perspective orders.
1.1.2 Definition of key terms

Teacher Retention: Teacher retention in this study context is defined as the capacity to keep, first, teachers trained in the teaching profession up to their retirement age, and second, in their posted teaching locations and schools.

Organization: An organization is taken to mean a social entity created and sustained by collective human interaction. In this way, people are enabled to achieve objectives and satisfy needs that could not be attained or satisfied through the efforts of individuals alone (Jaques & Clement, 1991; McAuley et al., 2007).

Schools as Organizations: As noted by Jaques and Clement (1991), schools are regarded as organizations as they consist of groups of people including, first, educators, learners, principals, school managing teams, school governing boards and parents; secondly, who work together in different ways - learning, teaching, managing, leading, supporting; third, whose tasks involve meeting shared goals - educating young people, that is providing teaching and learning. Looking at schools as organizations is vital towards understanding both how they work, and the challenges for leading and managing them. Notably, every organization has its structure\(^4\) and culture\(^5\) (Jaques & Clement, 1991).

School Level Support, and Perceived School Level Support
In the context of this study, school level support is broadly taken to mean the support from school heads (SHs) and classroom teachers (CTs) at a specific school. It also includes the support from the immediate community surrounding the school. School level support depicts the school commitment to care and retain teachers in their respective schools. Therefore, a support offered to a classroom teacher from a school head is taken to mean school level support translated as perceived school level support by a classroom.

\(^4\) School structure simply explains what people do and how they relate to each other in the organization. Two basic structures, Bureaucratic and Participatory, are common. It is often noted that schools and education departments are often hierarchical and bureaucratic. However, with the changes in legislation and the introduction of new policies, the new approach to school management is that schools should be flatter and more open in their organization (Jaques & Clement, 1991).

\(^5\) School culture simply means ‘the way things are done here’. Culture refers to various aspects of life in school: first, different schools create different feelings, with each school having its own culture; second, culture tells us what people do in their daily lives and how they make sense of what they do; third, culture involves the things people take for granted, like how things should be. In organizations like schools, culture has to do with things like: the values, beliefs and attitudes of the educators; how educators and learners dress for school; how people in the organization speak to each other; how quickly educators and learners go to class when the bell rings; what counts as ‘hard work’, how people are expected to act when they are angry or pleased, and so forth. Moreover, rituals form an important part of school culture. In schools there are important rituals that bring people together, such as assemblies, ceremonies, school uniforms and school songs. Other rituals keep people separate, such as age groupings and groupings by gender. Rituals bring meaning to organizations (Jaques & Clement, 1991).
teacher. In the same way, the support offered to a school head by a classroom teacher is taken to mean school level support and is translated as perceived school level support by a school head. School heads and classroom teachers are regarded as school agents.

Normally, a school has two school heads. Hence, in this study, school heads are broadly used to mean Principal Heads and/or Assistant Heads. School heads are also used to mean leaders/supervisors in some situations in this study as in the Leader-Member Exchange model.

Classroom teachers broadly define all other teachers (with the exception of school heads) at the school. This implies that classroom teachers define coworkers/peers/colleagues. In some areas aspects of the study classroom teachers are used as subordinates, for instance in the Leader-Member/Coworkers Exchange models. In this study context, ‘teacher’ broadly means “school head” and/or “classroom teacher”.

**Voice and Exit:** “Voice” is used to mean the possibility of a teacher to remain and search (in different ways) for solutions to his/her dissatisfaction in remote school, while “Exit” means leaving a remote school (Gorden, 1988; Hirschman, 1970; McCabe & David, 1992; Armstrong, 2006). Employee voice therefore covers a whole variety of processes and structures which enable and sometimes empower employees, directly or indirectly, to contribute to decision-making in the firm (Boxall & Purcell, 2003). It is ‘the ability of employees to influence the actions of the employer’ (Millward et al., 2000). The concept covers the provision of opportunities for employees to register discontent and modify the power of management. It embraces involvement, and more significantly, participation.

**Remote Schools:** These are schools which are, first, located far from population centres, and second, poorly equipped. They have inadequate teaching and learning facilities, lack enough teachers, lack enough housing for teachers, have a poor living environment, and difficult cultural situations. Most (but not all) of these schools are located in villages.

### 1.1.3 Delimitations

- First, this study focuses on the school level (school perspective). There is evidence that conditions leading to a high teacher turnover mostly depend on schools as organizations (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006; the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA 2010-ITFTEFA, 2010; Pitsoe & Pertunia, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Xaba, 2003). Yet, this has been accorded little scholarly attention in theories of teachers’ retention (Ingersoll, ibid; Ingersoll & Michael, 2011). Consequently, teachers’ retention efforts
cannot overemphasize ‘organizational sources of low retention’ (Ingersoll, ibid; Ingersoll & Michael, ibid.).

- Second, the study focuses on teachers (that is, school heads and classroom teachers). As these are the ones normally involved in attrition they are in need of high retention attention.

- Third, the study concentrates on remote secondary schools. This is because evidence has consistently shown that teachers’ deficit is more pressing in remote rural and poor social communities (ITFTEFA, 2010; Boyd et al., 2011). In Tanzania, attracting and retaining teachers in remote government schools is reported as a particular challenge (Tanzania Education Sector Analysis 2011-TESA, 2011; United Republic of Tanzania-URT, 2008a). Equally, the reason why the study focuses more on the secondary level sub-sector is that evidence has shown in Tanzania and in general that teachers’ deficit is higher at secondary levels compared to other education sub-sectors (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mulkeen, 2010; URT, 2010a).

- Fourth, the study is interested in feasible/practical (see footnote 3) teachers’ retention strategies that are less dependent on financial support from the central government. It has been observed that many Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, including Tanzania, have been capitalizing on “unachievable monetary oriented teachers’ retention policies” (Mulkeen et al., 2007; URT, 2008a, 2010a). This perspective is further developed in the sections that follow.

1.2 Educational reforms and teacher retention

Knowledge remains the most highly valued commodity of all times. This is partially grounded in rhetoric terms stating that knowledgeable human capital is capable of producing high value-added goods and services, alongside other spillovers of education. Countries’ struggles to ensure that their citizens acquire a quality education are known from time immemorial. The role of teachers in these struggles cannot be overemphasized. However, educational reforms implemented over time bring with them unprecedented consequences for the knowledge industry (education) and teachers alike. This section briefly revisits the encroached contradictions within some education reforms (mainly brought on by globalization) and how they are logically associated with teachers’ retention problems.

Associated reforms

A number of reforms have emerged within the education and training sectors in response to globalization demands. These can be primarily grouped as competitive-driven, finance-driven and equity-driven reforms (Carnoy, 1999; Daun, 1997; Sahlberg, 2004). Competitive-Driven Reforms aim at improving
economic productivity by improving the quality of labour. Such reforms can be translated into four categories: first, decentralization, privatization and school choice; second, standards (students testing, performance, etc.); third, improved management of educational resources; and fourth, improved teacher recruitment and training. *Finance-Driven Reforms* aim at reducing public spending on education. Three reforms are evident in this category: first, the shift of public funding from higher to lower levels of education; second, the privatization of secondary and higher education in order to expand these levels; and third, the reduction of costs per pupil at all levels of education, chiefly by increasing the size of classes in primary and secondary education where the student/teacher ratio is less than 40. *Equity-Driven Reforms* aim at increasing the equality of economic opportunity. It is argued that, since educational attainment is a crucial factor in determining earnings and social position in most countries, providing equal access to high-quality education can play an important role in ‘levelling the playing field’ (Carnoy, 1999; p. 44). Equity-driven reforms broadly intend to: first, reach the lowest-income groups with high-quality basic education; and second, reach certain groups such as women and rural populations, which lag behind educationally.

*Reform rhetoric vs reality: a critical insight(s)*

Against the rhetoric grounding of these reforms, the realities are questionable. In support of structural adjustment loans conditioned by the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a great deal of criticism has been raised which is significantly related to the adverse impact of these reforms on the teaching profession and education system globally, and in Africa especially. In broad terms, these reforms seem not to complement and enhance each other but are strongly misaligned both in rhetoric and reality. For instance, competitive-driven reforms require additional spending on education,

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6 Structural adjustment policies (SAPs) emerged mainly from political and economic problems in the USA and other developing countries in the 1970/80s. Notably, this was a period of worldwide recession, whereby countries experienced debts, negative growth, and financial crises. In the wake of that, international organizations (mostly the WB and the IMF) played crucial roles, particularly through SAPs, in setting policy agendas and carrying out the restructuring of public sectors globally. In Africa, they were promoted and enforced as panaceas in all situations, and in all countries, as ideologies calling for a tiny state apparatus, shrinking bureaucracy, and stingy fiscal policies, privatization, decentralized governance, and currency devaluation (Weber, 2007). Despite their importance, the SAPs under IMF and WB and their conditionalities for loan disbursement had harsh effects on countries’ financing of education, particularly in Africa. There is persuasive evidence that the conditions required by IMF and WB loans were not a particularly effective recipe for equitably sharing the burden for restarting economic growth. ‘…they were almost certain to distribute incomes less equally and reduce the access to and quality of education for the poor’ (Carnoy, 1999, p. 51). Weber (2007) writes that, despite reduction in financial support for social services, public education in particular, being a global phenomenon, with its devastating consequences felt worldwide, they seem to have been more critical in African countries under World Bank SAPs. This has left teaching in most African countries being defined by the ‘struggle to cope’ with situations emerging from those reforms (Weber, ibid.).
including higher teacher salaries and major expansions of the education level. The contrary is observed in finance-driven reforms, as these contribute to a shortage of public resources for education even when more resources could be made available to education when economic growth leads to net gains (Carnoy, 1998, 1999). Carnoy (ibid.) further observed that structural adjustment loans require a reduction of public-sector spending. Since most governments consider educational expenditures as part of that package, this effectively legitimizes policies that reduce the public education effort, even when this may be less than optimal. Moreover, the major emphasis on reducing public spending in favour of private contributions explicitly makes the public sector less responsible for the delivery of educational quality (Carnoy, ibid.). Furthermore, these reforms focus on privatizing teacher markets and increasing class size, which observably continues to send a signal to governments that there is room for increasing teachers’ workload and reducing their pay without adversely affecting pupil performance (Carnoy, 1998, 1999).

It is equally notable that globalization tends to push governments away from equity-driven reforms for two main reasons: firstly, it increases the pay-off to high-level skills relative to lower-level skills, reducing the complementarity between equity and competitiveness-driven reforms; and secondly, in most developing and many developed countries, finance-driven reforms dominate educational change in the new globalized economic environment, and such reforms tend to increase inequality in the delivery of educational services (Carnoy, 1999). However, even the rhetoric and realities of sub-reforms within a single major reform, for instance decentralization reforms within competitive-driven reforms, seem to be incongruent.

Broadly, the need for the availability of enough highly-skilled labour has put pressure on governments to expand their higher education; implicitly, a pressure to increase the number of secondary school graduates ready to attend post-secondary schools as well (Carnoy, 1998). Arguably, enrolment expansions in many countries, including Tanzania, especially in primary and secondary education, partially reflect these global movements. Unfortunately, these education expansion and quality improvements have to be met within

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7 Decentralizing educational reforms, mainly within free market ideologies, are examples of competitive reforms. Rhetorically, they are couched in the need to increase productivity by giving more control to local actors (provinces, municipalities, etc.) over educational decision-making. However, evidence shows that most of them are inexorably entwined with reducing the central government’s financial and management responsibility -‘doing more with less’ - for primary and secondary education (Burbules & Carlos, 2000; Carnoy, 1999). Equally, the culture of educational measurement (testing, standards, sorting, etc.) are in most cases notably used in comparing students, schools, countries, etc., to make policy decisions, for instance, on privatization and choice. However, the culture has some positive implications on education; it has been opposed especially because results have been in most cases used to point fingers than to provide more resources or technical assistance (Carnoy, 1999). The question is what results should be for?
limited fiscal resources, as highlighted earlier on in this discussion (cf. Sahlberg, 2004; Carnoy, 1998, 1999; Burbules & Carlos, 2000).

**Reforms: A challenge to teachers’ retention?**

In the light of the above discussion, it appears evident that educational reforms could be logically associated with problems facing the education sector, including the teaching profession at large and teachers’ retention in particular. Despite some improvements, it is doubtless that the status of teachers, including the teaching profession, continues to decline in most regions of the world (Bayer et al., 2009; Muller et al., 2007; UNESCO, 1998). Bayer and colleagues (2009) document that changes occurring in the education could be expected to (and I think they are) leave many teachers scratching their heads and wondering why they teach. The pains allied with most governments’ efforts to reduce public spending have always fallen heavily on teachers, one reason being that they constitute the major portion of public employees in many countries. Many countries around the world are facing the ‘recruitment and retention crisis’ of teachers (Bayer et al., 2009; MacBeath, 2012, Weber, 2007; Rinke, 2008). International evidence shows that teachers have not only been leaving the profession in unprecedented numbers, styles and trends and for various reasons, a phenomenon depicted differently metaphorically, such as a ‘meltdown exodus scenario’, a ‘hole in the bucket’, or a ‘revolving door syndrome’, but there is also a severe shortage of applicants to the profession as well as of the critical struggle of getting qualified teachers to fill teaching posts, because of attrition (MacBeath, 2012).

In sum, while the need for ‘knowledgeable’ human capital and citizens keeps increasing, the ‘rhetorics and realities’ of educational reforms produced and implemented over time to strategically improve the knowledge industry seem to exist in tension, adversely affecting the very institutions, organizations and agents mandated to produce those knowledgeable people. This jeopardizes teachers’ retention efforts, a situation labelled a ‘crisis’ in many parts of the world to date. Therefore, the important question remains of how to keep teachers (especially qualified ones) in the profession, in different contexts, and especially in schools which are hard to staff. Indisputably, the need for a continuous quest for pragmatic teachers’ retention alternatives within conflicting educational reforms and restructuring cannot be overemphasized.

**1.3 Research problem, knowledge gaps and study focus**

**1.3.1 The research problem**

In the efforts towards achieving global agendas such as Education for All (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and national development
plans such as “the Tanzania development vision \(^8\) 2025”, education continues to be seen as a strategic tool in Tanzania (URT, 2010a). The roles and importance of teachers in these efforts are explicit (URT, ibid.). It is within such contexts that the government has been deliberately and continuously recruiting and training teachers. However, the reported teachers’ deficit in the country to date is extremely amazing as compared to the training trends.

While the available statistical data suggests that about 337,771 secondary school teachers have been enrolled and trained in universities and university colleges (uccs) and teachers’ training colleges (TTCs) in the last seven to ten years in the country (URT, 2008b, 2010a, 2011, 2012a, 2013), yet, by 2013, only 73,407 (49,552 males, and 23,855 females) could be traced in the secondary schools countrywide (URT, ibid.). So, where are the other 264,364 (337,771-73,407)? It is difficult to say, but what is clear is that they must have gone somewhere else, and that is an attrition proxy - ‘a retention problem’.

Teachers’ retention problem is further exacerbated by the lack of clear and reliable data on the demand for teachers, their turnover movement and reasons. Mulkeen (2010), for instance, observed the mismatch between the national requirements of new teachers and the output of newly qualified teachers in many Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, including Tanzania. It has been further reported that “in many SSA countries, the collection of data on teacher attrition is poor… resulting in analyses based on assumed attrition rates and on anecdotal reports (International Task Force on Teachers for EFA-ITFTEFA, 2010, p. vii), that “…school census instruments do not always collect data on teacher attrition. Even if they do, schools are often poorly equipped to determine the reason for departure, the destination of the departing teacher, or to distinguish between inter-school movement and movement out of the profession (ITFTEFA, ibid., p. 3)”. Indisputably, such observations suggest the possibility of unreliable research findings, thus instigating the need for more studies in the area.

Apart from the broader picture, teachers’ deficit becomes even worse when examined at regional, district, school, and subject levels. I use two districts\(^9\) from the Dodoma\(^10\) region for justification. In the Mpwapwa district the Secondary Education Development Programme report shows 100% teachers’ deficit in a number of subjects, including book-keeping, ICT/computing, food & nutrition, agriculture, English literature, general studies, sports and games, fine arts, home economics, and economics. Further deficits include 63% in basic mathematics, 72% in biology, 70% in physics and 51% in chemistry. In the Kondoa district the data indicates 100% teachers’ deficit in the commerce, ICT/computing, book-keeping, food & nutrition, English literature, sports &

\(^8\) \url{http://www.tanzania.go.tz/vision.htm}

\(^9\) The two districts exemplified are among the three districts from where empirical data were collected in the Dodoma region.

\(^10\) This is the region where empirical data were collected. It is one amongst 25 Tanzanian Mainland regions.
games, and economics subjects, followed by 58% in basic mathematics, 85% in civics, 43% in biology, 77% in physics and 48% in chemistry (Secondary Education Development programme—‘SEDP’ Report, Dodoma region, September 2013). While some exceptions exist, the picture of teachers’ deficit is more or less the same across other districts, schools, and subjects in the Dodoma region and other regions in Tanzania. The severity of the problem and its consequences and the need for immediate attention is further captured in the following quotes:

...there is an acute shortage of teachers at all levels and in almost all subjects, including the subjects of the biased curriculum. More specifically the situation is worse for science, mathematics and language subjects. Remote and peripheral areas critically suffer from shortage of teachers...the teaching and learning environment is not motivating, making it difficult to attract, obtain, train, and retain high quality teachers in schools. This situation needs immediate attention... (URT, 2008a, pp. 9, 10).

...Attrition results in a loss of experienced teachers, and a selective loss of the teachers with the highest academic qualifications. As a result of deployment patterns and inter-school transfers, the impact of teacher shortages tends to fall disproportionately in schools in the least desired locations. Remote rural schools and schools serving the poorest children suffer greater teacher shortages, longer delays in replacing teachers, and a greater proportion of unqualified teachers and inexperienced teachers... (ITFTEFA, 2010, p. viii).

“Across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) rural communities are the most challenged in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers....Whilst the quality and status of teachers appears to be falling, so the expectations of community for quality education are rising. This represents a political, as well as policy tension requiring urgent attention (Moon, 2007, p. viii)”

1.3.2 Knowledge gaps and study focus

Certainly, teachers’ deficit, especially in remote areas in Tanzania, is a big problem which needs immediate attention. The question is, how? The few observable strategies\(^\text{11}\) to attract teachers in those areas such as introducing reward systems, fee exemptions for students’ teachers, and increasing attractive incentive packages (URT, 2008a) are questionable. Most of these policies are financially or economically based, minimal, unsatisfactory, and

\(^{11}\) These strategies are critically discussed in section 2.3 (context chapter)
ineffective (Mbiling’i, 2011; Chenelo, 2011; January, 2010). Research evidence indicates that monetary\textsuperscript{12}-related policies and incentives are difficult to implement in retaining teachers in countries like Tanzania, where such a resource is seriously scarce (Mulkeen et al., 2007; URT, 2012a). This is also the case within global educational reforms, where such policies might not be urgent but are easily neglected (cf. Carnoy, 1998, 1999; Weber, 2007). Moreover, the few studies in this area that are specifically identifiable in a Tanzanian context have concentrated on attrition at large (cf. Geu, 2009; January, 2010), while others (cf. Mbiling’i, 2011; Mlavi, 2011; Kilasi, 2010; Mkonongo, 2004; Chenelo, 2011) fail to indicate which retention strategies are visible for retaining teachers in the Tanzanian context. Furthermore, few studies are traceable that precisely explore teachers’ retention in remote areas from school level contexts in Tanzania.

In the light of the above, the current study focuses more on the role of “school level support” in teacher retention in remote contexts. My argument is that school level support, if well understood, could be a more feasible strategy for teacher retention as it capitalizes on “resources” readily available within the school context. Moreover, organizational support, in its broadest sense (cf. Woo, 2009; Chou & Robert, 2008), including support from management, supervisors/leaders, and coworkers/colleagues/peers, is widely acknowledged as an influence on turnover and retention (Leah & Colin, 2013; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Liden et al., 1997; Ballinger, David & Schoorman, 2010). More intriguing is the evidence that, even in the absence of tangible benefits, high-quality relationships (reflected in understanding and friendship or intangible benefits) are valuable for being related to employee well-being (Epitropaki & Martin, 1999, 2005). Good organizational relationships and support would, arguably, embrace employee voicing and, in return, mitigate exit. More recently, Armstrong (2014) writes:

“...the level of job satisfaction is affected by...the quality of supervision, social relationships with the work group and the degree to which individuals succeed or fail in their work (p. 264)”

While Organizational Support (OS) is highly associated with employees’ retention, very few studies are traceable, let alone in Tanzania, as having been employed in education within the African context (Baran et al., 2012). Comprehensive reviews by Baran and colleagues (2012) document a vast majority of organizational support theory (OST)/perceived organizational support (POS) research to have been conducted in the US, which strongly suggests that more studies should be conducted outside the US. They observe

\textsuperscript{12} In Tanzania for instance, there have been continuous confrontations and strikes between teachers through the teachers’ union and the government over the issue of salary and other teachers’ fringe benefits in different times (Rweyemamu, 2013, 2014; Onyango, 2013; Yankami, 2014; Peter, 2012).
that such studies are likely to have profound findings on OST/POS in general.
Again, whereas research suggests that POS, which is a central construct of
organizational support, is closely related to affective commitment, largely
irrespective of culture. The antecedents of POS within cultures may vary, as
different cultures may perceive demonstrations of support differently (Baran et
al., ibid.). For instance, some cultures may perceive group rewards and
supervisor-employee interactions differently in terms of what constitutes
support. More specifically, caveats are persistently lodged about
organizational support and teachers’ retention in remote context schools. For
instance, in Tanzanian literature little is known of “how teachers conceptualize
school level support and its reciprocal effects on teacher retention in remote
schools”. It is equally notable that most prior studies of POS have
concentrated on employees who are not responsible for managing or
supervising others (Baran et al., 2012). However, it has been argued that
supervisors’ own POS may lead to strong support shown to subordinates,
resulting in higher POS and in-role and extra-role performances of
subordinates (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006; Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007). Yet,
much remains unknown of how this supervisor’s POS influences subordinates’
loyalty and retention in different cultural contexts.

Moreover, policies addressing the shortage of teachers in Tanzania seem to
focus more on supply-side solutions, especially enrolment expansion, paying
less attention on the demand side, particularly the ‘revolving door’. However,
getting more teachers into the career pipeline alone cannot address teachers’
deficit problem (Pitsoe & Pertunia, 2012). Evidence shows that many teachers
have continued to flee from the teaching profession immediately after
graduation, instead of going to classroom (URT, 2008a; Rweyemamu, 2013,
2014; Onyango, 2013; Yankami, 2014; Peter, 2012). Suggestions such as
forcing teacher graduates into classes without proper motivation are even
worse. It is like the saying: ‘You can force a donkey to the well, but not to
drink water’. The other teacher retention policy option considered has been to
recruit and/or post teachers from within their local areas of origin. However,
evidence indicates that the policy is hardly attainable, as most teachers usually
do not want to be posted to their home areas due to the burden of extended
family obligations (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005).

Of equal importance are the demographic factors for the teacher workforce
in the secondary school sub-sector in Tanzania. There is plenty of evidence
(cf. Agyeman & Ponniah, 2014; Furnham et al., 2009; Kavanaugh et al., 2006;
Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Schroder, 2008) that teachers’ retention is influenced
by diverse demographic variables. There is paucity in the Tanzanian context
about the demographic characteristics among most remote secondary schools
teachers and about its implication for retention efforts. Although such
information could help in terms of formulating relevant retention strategies, it
has not been systematically mapped out.
1.4 Aim, specific questions and rationale

1.4.1 Aim
The aim of this study is to explore teachers’ perceived school level challenges and the support to retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania.

1.4.2 Specific questions
The study is guided by two specific questions:

1) What are school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania?
   a) What are the demographic characteristics of teachers in remote secondary schools and their implication for retention efforts?
   b) What aspects do teachers perceive as sources of low retention in remote secondary schools?
2) What are teachers’ perceptions of school level support, and how do these perceptions influence their voice and exit intentions in remote schools?
   a) What are classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head and their implications for voice and exit intentions in remote schools?
   b) What are classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive coworker and their implications for voice and exit intentions in remote schools?
   c) What are school heads’ perceptions of a supportive classroom teacher and their implications for retention efforts in remote schools?
   d) Under what “perceived school level conditions” can a teacher voice instead of exit in a remote school?

1.4.3 Study rationale
The reason why this area is worth investigating emanates from the importance of teachers in the successful schooling life of students. Personally, I have witnessed a big loss of potential students who perhaps could have made a difference nationally and globally. However, they drop out of the school system or simply fail their examinations because of an unconducive teaching and learning environment, the lack of teachers in particular. Not only that, but in a country like Tanzania where education is looked upon as a strategic tool towards achieving national agendas like Vision 2025 and many other international ones, the teacher deficit acts as a huge stumbling block. Previous research exists of the importance of teachers in successful students’ learning and of the reason why the retaining of teachers creates a critical situation. I will briefly revisit some in the next few paragraphs.

Teacher retention, for quite some time now, has been a topic of critical focus among academics, researchers, practitioners and policy makers (Guarino
et al., 2004; Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). The core question has been why teachers leave or remain in the teaching career. Researchers in this area have therefore continuously sought to find answers to that question so as to be able to successfully retain teachers, especially 'quality teachers'. This is because research has confirmed that teacher quality makes a difference in student learning (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, 2003; Rowan, Correnti & Miller, 2002; Sanders & Horn, 1998; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997; Akiba et al., 2007; Stronge, et al., 2007; Rowe, 2003; Sumra, 2004). For instance, Coleman and others (1966) concluded that teacher characteristics tend to explain more variance in student achievement than any other school resource. Rowe (2003) as well as Sanders and Horn (1998) document that the teacher may be the “most important factor in the academic growth of students”. Pitsoe and Pertunia (2012), and Ntim (2013) clearly indicate that teachers are not only placed at the centre of students’ success, but also at the heart of education quality and students’ learning outcome debates. Within the fast and frequently changing world to date, few will disagree on the critical role of teachers in preparing young people to face the future with confidence, build it with purpose and become responsible global citizens. This is because teachers are key facilitators of the teaching and learning process, and core implementers of educational plans and programmes (Ntim, ibid.).

Quality education is propounded not only because of its capacity to improve the quality of life for citizens of any nation (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008; Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1997; Sakamota & Powers, 1995; Schultz, 1971; Vegas & Petrow, 2008), but also for its ability to foster wider learners’ capabilities (Brighouse, 2000; Robeyns, 2003, 2006; Unterhalter, 2005, 2007; Walker, 2006; Walker & Unterhalter, 2007). This research evidence possibly explains why there has been a continuous and universal struggle to ensure that all students gain access to qualified teachers who are skilled and committed (Johnson, Jill & Morgaen, 2005; Pitsoe & Pertunia, 2012).

Unfortunately, however, despite researchers’ tireless efforts, to effectively attract and retain quality teachers remains a baffling puzzle (Moon, 2007). In Tanzania, there is plain evidence that teachers assigned in remote rural schools report in low numbers, and even those who are already there seek transfer to urban areas (URT, 2008a; Tanzania Education Sector Analysis-TESA, 2011). Globally, evidence has shown that, despite high-turnover schools serving large populations of low-performing and low-income students, who are in greater need of consistent and supportive school experience (Boyd et. al., 2011), these schools are mostly found to be exposed to inconsistent staffing from year to year to year.

\[13\] Capabilities are the opportunities that individuals have to realize different ‘functionings’ that they may have reason to value (Sen, 1999; 2009).
year, while students are taught by an increasing number of inexperienced teachers (Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005). More alarming with regard to future critical shortage of teachers in Tanzania is the recent failure of most teacher’s training colleges (TTCs) to attract a sufficient number of enrollees (TESA, 2011). Within that context, the question is: Can ‘equality of educational opportunity’ of staffing every classroom in remote schools with a highly qualified and talented teacher (Borman & Maritza, 2008) be attained? How can global educational reforms and restructuring be realized? In the Tanzanian context, for instance, where many students are enrolled in poor schools in remote rural areas, teacher attrition is likely to create social and educational injustice and stratification, hindering learners from nourishing their valued capabilities acquirable from quality education and equality in educational opportunities (cf. Tikly & Barrett, 2010, 2011). As in many parts of the world, the situation in Tanzania is partly a prolonged negative outcome of neo-liberal educational reforms by the World Bank and IMF ever since the 1980s\textsuperscript{14}. However, it becomes even worse when escalated over time by poor quality education or no education at all for the majority of the rural population.

Doubtlessly, teachers’ retention forms an important aspect in teaching resource planning and management practices. Entire employee planning efforts, including training, are totally meaningless if such employees cannot be properly retained. The study is expected to make a number of contributions in the area of teaching human capital planning and management through retention. Some of them are for immediate direct implementation in schools and others as inputs for long-term policy change, particularly teachers’ management and retention in remote Tanzanian secondary schools.

Specific contributions: First, to uncover key demographic factors among majority teachers in remote secondary schools. To discuss, within a broader theoretical framework, the implications of the emerging demographic picture of remote teachers’ retention efforts. Importantly, suggesting strategies relevant to retaining teachers in line with demographic aspects. Secondly, to uncover core and specific teachers perceived as low sources of retention at the school level in remote context. Then, suggesting measures which could be adopted to address them. Thirdly, to uncover and document diverse teachers

\textsuperscript{14} The educational reforms in the 1960s/70s in Tanzania were mainly guided by the Education for Self-reliance (ESR) ideology, which was advocated by the Tanzanian first President Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere. Within ESR, universal education was the goal, and therefore school fees at the primary and secondary school levels were abolished in the late 1960s/early 1970s. According to Mbilinyi (2003), the education system was, however, turned around by macro reform policies that began to be adopted in the mid-1980s, along with sectoral reforms. “The very first blow against the principle of ‘education for all’ and equity in education was the imposition of school fees i.e. cost-sharing, which was one of the conditions for World Bank loans in the early structural adjustment days. Tanzanians were told by WB representatives and consultants that ‘your country is too poor to afford universal primary education’, a cynical justification for the growing education inequalities at global level between ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ nations and peoples (Mbilinyi, 2003, p. 4).”
understandings of school level support. Then, suggesting strategies which could be: (a) taken by school heads to offer meaningful retention support to their collegial teachers, (b) adapted by the teachers themselves to meaningfully support their own retention. Fourth, to advance the understanding of how school heads perceive supportive collegial teachers and the reciprocal effects on teachers’ retention support. Then, coming up with suggestion(s) of how classroom teachers could offer increased meaningful support to school heads. Fifth, to uncover and document the “conditions” under which teachers could voice instead of exiting a remote school and to advance suggestions on how those conditions could be successfully adopted in remote schools.

At the broader knowledge object level: In studies with both multivariate and bivariate approaches, two major approaches used by scholars in the area of teacher attrition and retention (Shen, 1997) have contributed significant knowledge in the area, whereas the drawbacks are that no single study from either approach can be claimed as being comprehensive enough, because only a specific issue is dealt with and only from a specific outlook (Shen, ibid.). Evidence shows that the African perspective is little taken on board in major reviews in this area (Baran et al., 2012; Borman & Maritza, 2008). This is one significant indicator of the limited knowledge of this field in that part of the globe. The current study will add general aspects to the already available theoretical and empirical knowledge in the area of teachers’ attrition and retention, reflecting Africa South of the Sahara, especially the remote parts of Tanzania. Equally, most studies done within the theoretical framework of Organizational Support (OST)/Perceived Organizational Support (POS) are from the US and contain little educational context (Baran et al., 2012). Therefore, bringing in the remote Tanzanian context of education is another significant contribution. As, in addition, many studies performed in this area seem to be quantitative ones (Borman & Maritza, 2008), the current study is inspired by a mixed methods approach, offering another partial contribution in the field.

1.5 Thesis structure

This thesis is a monograph organized in eight major chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction where the researcher’s interest in the study, its problems, knowledge gaps, aim, questions and rationales are discussed. The second chapter discusses related contextual issues. The third chapter reviews previous research relevant to the study, while the fourth highlights the theoretical perspectives from which the inspiration has been taken. Chapter five is about the methodology and methods employed. Chapter six presents the main findings. While chapter seven is about the discussion of the findings, the last chapter advances the study’s conclusive remarks.
1.6 Chapter summary

This chapter introduces the study. The researcher’s inspirational trajectory serves to present the reasons why ‘teachers’ retention’ has been specifically chosen. The study is guided by two major questions towards fulfilling the aim of ‘exploring teachers’ perceived school level challenges and the support for retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania’. The study focuses on supportive strategies specifically, as they can be implemented within school level capacities. This is well in line with the situation that, although previous teachers’ retention practices in Tanzania and most other SSA countries have been monetary-based, they have been strongly criticized for their ineffectiveness. The strong need for researching alternative ways of retaining teachers is clearly and loudly reflected in a number of teachers’ attrition proxies such as mismatches among other teachers’ training trends, available teachers and shortages, global educational reforms which seem to adversely affect the teaching profession, teachers’ retention in particular. Doubtless, retaining teachers is a strongly challenging issue, influenced by many factors contextually. The chapter that follows captures contextual issues pertinent to the current study.
Chapter Two: The study context

This chapter presents the study context. It opens by highlighting the system and structure of education and training in Tanzania. The strategic importance of secondary education and school heads follows. The chapter proceeds by presenting a brief review of teachers’ attrition in Tanzanian secondary schools. In connection with this, the main forces pulling majority students into the teaching career are underscored. Next, a few traceable teachers’ attraction and retention strategies and targets in Tanzania are critically reviewed in light of their viability. With specific reference to that line, the education sector share of government budgetary allocation and its logical implications for teachers’ working and living environment are presented. The chapter ends by hinting at teacher retention in the light of quality education in Tanzania. The contextual information serves to broadly position the reader with regard to why the continuous search for diverse teachers’ retention strategies in the secondary education sub-sector in remote contexts is important and challenging.

2.1 The system and structure of formal education and training in Tanzania

In general terms, the system and its structure comprise the basic, secondary, tertiary, teacher and higher education sector levels. Drawing instances from the 2013 statistics of learners’ enrolment in the education sector (URT, 2013), most students were enrolled at the basic level (80.46%), followed by the secondary level (15.68%). Education becomes more elitist when climbing the ladder, and extremely few are enrolled at the tertiary level (for instance, 0.38% in teacher education in TTCs; 0.98% in technical education; 1.45% at university). With the exception of the pre-primary level, all other levels include examinations which mark their completion and are used for promotion to other levels. Tertiary and higher education and training are defined as including all post-ordinary level secondary education leading to the awards of certificates, diplomas and degrees (URT, 1995). In rare cases, primary education leavers join tertiary education, as the policy defines primary
education as a minimum admission requirement for vocational education (URT, ibid). Many opportunities become open after the completion of secondary education. Secondary education leavers can directly or indirectly join tertiary education, teacher education in teachers’ training colleges (TTCs) or university education, subject to their performance at the completion of each level and of promotion examinations. For instance, with a higher performance in the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (ACSEE) at the end of A-level secondary education, it is possible to directly join teacher education in TTCs, tertiary colleges or universities. A low performance can take students directly to teacher education in TTCs or tertiary colleges, but not to the university. However, a student with a low performance at ACSEE can, for example, qualify for university studies after a higher performance in teacher education from TTCs or tertiary colleges (an indirect route to university). Figure 1 offers more information on this issue. The current study concentrates on the secondary education sub-sector. Next, this sector will be specifically highlighted.

2.1.1 The strategic importance of secondary education and school heads

One of the major purposes of secondary education is to prepare students for tertiary, higher, vocational, technical and professional education and training (URT, 1995). In this context, secondary education acts as a bridge connecting other education sub-sectors. Strategically, secondary education is referred to as ‘pivotal, or the lynch pin’ in the functioning of the economy and the education system itself (URT, 2010b). Experience shows that, first, the majority of the people in both the private and public sectors are at least expected to be secondary education leavers. In this perspective, this creates broad employment opportunities, which will improve the quality of life of most Tanzanians; second, the whole primary education system relies on teachers who are products of the secondary education system; third, candidates of higher and tertiary education and training are products of the secondary education system; four, important externalities of secondary education are increasingly being recognized in family planning, education of the off-spring, political participation and health (URT, 2010b). Secondary education is thus regarded as a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for poverty reduction in the entire population. Arguably, a robust secondary education is expected to create the necessary foundation for a vibrant and viable middle class, which is essential for the contemplated economic boost to place the country among middle-income countries.

Unfortunately, this sub-sector has been ignored for a long time due to weak assumptions of ‘being elitist with low social compared to private returns’.
Recent efforts to improve it partially as a concomitant effect of global educational reforms have fuelled an enrolment expansion creating huge
teacher deficits. The deficits are exacerbated by the sector requirements of teachers with specialized knowledge in different subject content areas, compared to primary education, for instance, where a teacher can teach all subjects. The teacher deficit in secondary education is further discussed in section 2.2 of this chapter.

On the other hand, school heads and school boards are very important, especially at the school organization level in terms of motivating and retaining teachers. They have been significantly empowered under the decentralization school management policy. According to the 1995 Education and Training Policy in Tanzania, “Ministries responsible for education and training shall devolve their responsibilities of management and administration of education and training to lower organs and communities (URT, 1995, p. 26)”. Therefore, they are in a good position to support teachers’ retention by creating a conducive working and living environment within their schools. There is plenty of evidence that school heads’ support tends to improve teachers’ commitment, morale and satisfaction (Singh & Billingsley, 1998; Weiss, 1999; Mancuso, Laura & George, 2010).

2.2 Teacher attrition in Tanzanian secondary schools: A snapshot

Education reforms\(^\text{15}\) in the secondary education sub-sector in Tanzania, as in other education sub-sectors, have affected students’ enrolment expansion\(^\text{16}\), an increase in the number of secondary schools, and among forces critical of the high demand for and deficit of teachers.

Teacher attrition in Tanzania and other Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries is well documented (URT, 2011; 2012c; 2013; Mulkeen et al., 2007; Pitsoe & Petrunia, 2012). This study is motivated by the question of how to viably retain them - a knowledge that is largely missing. In the Tanzanian

\(^{15}\) These reforms are traceable to the late 1990s and early 2000s. To be exact, in 1997 the government formulated the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP). ESDP was partially intended to implement the 1995 Education and Training Policy for achieving the Tanzanian Vision 2025 and other national and international agendas (URT, 2008c). ESDP resulted in Primary Education Development Programmes (PEDPs I-2001/06 & II-2007/11), and Secondary Education Development Programmes (SEDPs I-2004/09 & II-2010/15) (URT, 2010b). The implementation of PEDPs and SEDPs consequently created acute shortages of teachers in almost all education sub-sectors.

\(^{16}\) At the secondary education level, for instance, students’ enrolment increased from 1,466,402 in 2009 to 1,804,056 students in 2013 (URT, 2013). During the same period, the number of schools increased from 4,102 to 4,576 (URT, ibid). Worth noting with regard to the future substantial enrolment expansion in Tanzania is the evidence of a significant increase of the school (pre-primary to secondary levels) and non-working age population. This population, comprising ages five to nineteen will increase from 18.2 million in 2015 to 24 million in 2025. The population aged fifteen to nineteen, which corresponds to secondary education level children’s ages, will increase from 4.9 million in 2015 to 7.1 million in 2025. Within the current annual population growth rate of 2.7%, the population of Tanzania is expected to double in the next 26 years (URT, 2012b). Recent data (2012 population census) shows that Tanzania now has 44.9 million people (21.9 males and 23 females) (URT, 2012b).
context, for instance, taking 2010, 2011 and 2013 as exemplary years, the number of teachers ‘just leaving the profession - terminating teaching contracts’- had kept increasing. Even prolonged sickness and truancy, labelled as termination, are reasons showing that most teachers leave the profession by hidden attrition (or in a ‘silence mode’) in terms of absenteeism (ITFTEFA, 2010). Qualification-wise, the best trained and most required teacher resource (bachelors and diplomas) in secondary education unfortunately includes most of those who leave the profession. Teacher attrition is generally associated with a number of de-motivators including poor working\textsuperscript{17} and living environments\textsuperscript{18}, as well as poor community and government attitudes to and treatment of the teaching profession and teachers (Sumra, 2004; Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005, Mkumbo, 2012, Ishumi, 2013). Apart from those de-motivators, teacher attrition could be broadly associated with forces attracting them into the teaching career.

2.2.1 Forces shaping a teaching career in Tanzania

In secondary education in Tanzania, a number of factors are identified as shapers of the teaching career including the financial aspect, employability, entry qualifications to the profession, and admission capacities in educationally related degree programmes (Sumra, 2004; Mkumbo, 2012; TCU, 2014).

Financing higher education is a critical issue for the majority of Tanzanian students aspiring to join that level. Most of them come from a lower socio-economic background (Boniface, 2008). As a supportive measure, mainly for those who cannot fully meet the costs, the government has set up a ‘cost-sharing’ plan. Such arrangements are clear in policy documents. For instance, the Education and Training Policy (URT, 1995) states:

“... special financial arrangements shall be established to enable students in tertiary and higher education and training institutions to contribute towards their own education and training (p. 79)....Financing of education and training shall be shared between Government, communities, parents and end users (p. 91)”.

Moreover, the Higher Education Policy (URT, 1999) states:

“...new policies on sources of financing higher education...emphasis will be directed at cost-sharing and power

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\textsuperscript{17} A high teaching load (more than 30 periods per week in remote areas), large classes (70-150 students or more); poor students’ discipline, deteriorating condition in permanent buildings (Pit latrines, classrooms, etc.), furniture (students’ and teachers’ chairs, tables), books, electricity, computers.

\textsuperscript{18} Teachers’ houses, salary (could determine the quality of life a teacher can live), Healthcare (is to a majority of teachers also identified as another problem regardless of the presence of health facilities like the National Health Insurance Fund [NHIF] recently established).
sharing….Students will have to contribute for their education (Section 6.2 of the HEP, p. 16)."

Worth noting, however, apart from the eligibility criterion for general loans for all needy applicants across all degree programmes in the higher education institutions (HEIs) in the country [stated in Higher Education Students’ Loans Board (HESLB) guidelines for loans disbursement] is that *degree programmes leading to educational qualifications are given special priorities in terms of getting loans* (HESLB, 2012). For instance, sections 3.7 and 3.8 of HESLBs’ guidelines and criteria for the issuance of student loans and grants for 2012/2013 academic year state:

“section 3.7- Given the high demand for student loans vis-à-vis a limited budget, priority shall be given to applicants who will be admitted to pursue National Priority Programmes which for the time being shall be: Education (Science) and Education (Mathematics)...Education Non-Science and Non-Mathematics (through Means Testing).... Section 3.8 states: All other candidates admitted into programmes other than ... Education (Mathematics) and Education (Sciences) on the basis of indirect or equivalent entrance to HEI may not be eligible for loans (p. 4)”.

On the other hand, the high possibility of getting employed without much delay after graduation in the teaching profession in Tanzania (Mkumbo, 2012), as the sector has, at any time, many unfilled vacancies due to high turnovers (URT, 2012b), attracts many students. Moreover, looking comparatively across different diploma/degree programmes, the minimum admission requirements for those entering the teaching career, especially in teachers’ training colleges (TTCs) have been relatively low despite the minimum entry qualifications stated and required by the Education and Training Policy (URT, 1995)19. This has been an issue not only in Tanzania but in many other African countries as well (Ishumi, 2013). This is also parallel to the observation that in some universities and university colleges (UUCs), tuition fees in educationally related degree programmes are slightly lower compared to other degree programmes (TCU, 2014). Furthermore, as a flipside effect of prioritizing educational qualifications leading to degree programmes with regard to the provision of loans, a significant number of

19 The minimum qualification for a primary school teacher shall be possession of a valid Grade A Teacher Education Certificate (URT, 1995, p. 38). The minimum qualification for a secondary school teacher in both government and non-government schools shall be possession of a valid diploma in education obtained from a recognized institution (URT, 1995, p. 41). It is equally noted from the policy that government schools are to be taught by diploma and graduate teachers. Diploma teachers are expected to teach in Forms 1-2, while graduate teachers normally teach in Forms 3-6 (URT, 1995, p. 41).
students are attracted to the teaching profession. This is further reinforced by the tremendous increase of higher education institutions (HEIs), which have improved educational degree opportunities through expanded enrolment capacities. Universities and university colleges (UUCs) increased from 30 in 2009 to 69 (of which 55% offer educational qualifications leading to a degree) in 2014 (TCU, 2014).

2.3 Attracting and retaining teachers in Tanzania

This section discusses documented teachers’ retention practices, particularly in remote areas in Tanzania and SSA. Section 2.3.1 presents retrieved teachers retention strategies and targets as well as criticism of their viability in Tanzania. Section 2.3.2 highlights the share given to the education sector from the government. This acts as an indicator of the fiscal ability of the sector and hence its capacity to increase teachers’ salaries and other monetary incentives. The last section (2.3.3) draws evidence from the SSA context that financial incentives to attract and retain teachers especially in remote areas have seldom been successful. Cumulatively, the three sections (2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3) are crucial for marking this study’s point of departure that monetary-related models for teachers’ retention are hard to implement successfully within the Tanzanian context and in SSA at large.

2.3.1 Are the strategies to attract and retain teachers in Tanzania achievable?

There is no shortage of evidence that teachers’ retention policies in most Sub-Saharan African countries are not only in state of crisis but are more critically unachievable as they depend much on fiscal resources, which in practice are not available (Mulkeen et al., 2007; URT, 2012a). Tanzania is no better than this noteworthy criticism states. In the next few paragraphs, I present some written strategies and targets retrieved from the Teacher Development and Management Strategy (TDMS20). This is followed by a discussion of the achievability extent of the documented strategies and targets.

Two notable expected outcomes from TDMS as far as teacher training and retention are concerned include: first, increasing the number of qualified candidates joining and remaining in the teaching profession, especially in rural and difficult areas; and secondly, getting adequate numbers of quality teachers to meet current and projected demands for pre-primary, primary, adult and non-formal education, secondary and teacher education (p. 11).

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20 The TDMS, a five years (2008-13) strategic plan, was an attempt by the Tanzanian government, to strategically produce and supply adequate and competent teachers; and to efficiently and effectively develop and manage the entire teacher education system, including teachers. Some few teachers’ attraction and retention strategies are documented in this document.
Towards attaining these outcomes, a number of strategies and targets were set. First, in order to attract and retain an adequate number of quality teachers, the strategy was to create an environment for the development of a well-grounded, motivated and committed teaching force. To achieve this strategy, a number of targets were set, including: first, creating and supporting a conducive environment for teachers through community sensitization and mobilization by 2009; second, establishing and operationalizing a reward system for good practice for teachers and student teachers in science, mathematics and language subjects by 2009; third, reviving and strengthening the teacher-parent relationship, school committees/boards to support teachers especially in remote, rural and difficult areas by July 2009; four, introducing fee exemption for candidates studying science and mathematics by July 2009; five, strengthening continuous career guidance and counselling for schools and colleges by 2009; and six, introducing an attractive incentive package for teachers at all levels with special consideration of those in difficult environments by 2009 (p. 13).

Moreover, in order to increase the number of teachers for secondary education, the strategy was to expand the enrolment of diploma student teachers and university teacher graduates. The targets were: to train about forty five thousand (45,000) diploma student teachers and upgrade five thousand (5000) licensed teachers to the degree level by 2013. Another intended strategy to alleviate this problem was to bring other ‘existing professionals’ into the teaching force. The targets here were: recruiting annually a total of 500 willing and able retired teachers, and 400 willing non-education degree holders, starting from 2009; binding all graduates who have benefited from government scholarships into teaching for two years starting from 2010 (p. 16).

Further noted is the need to develop adequate quality A-Level secondary school teachers and school managers. The strategy put forward here was to ensure an adequate supply of university level teachers to meet the demands for secondary schools and teacher colleges. Some of the set targets to achieve this include: increasing university level teachers’ supply to secondary schools and teachers’ colleges to 24,130 by 2010; expanding and consolidating the supply of science and mathematics teachers in diploma teachers’ colleges and university enrolments by 2010 (p. 17).

Criticism: While the strategies and targets set seem to be well written and are to be met or at least initiated by 2009, the situation on the ground does not suggest that anything significant has taken place. For instance, it is true that educational leading degree programmes have been loan prioritized by the government. Degree programmes leading to a bachelor of science and/or bachelor of education science are given 100% loans. However, this is not ‘fee exemption’ as noted in the document. Rather, it is a loan, which students have to pay back after completion, according to the procedures agreed for loan reimbursement. Moreover, the strategy and targets appear to insist on
increasing the enrolment and bringing unqualified teachers into the system. Neither of these efforts is likely to guarantee that teachers will stay in the profession nor do they improve the quality of the provision of education. The efficacy of binding graduate beneficiaries of government scholarships into the teaching without motivating them is critically dubious. The promised rewarding system for science teachers and students is not evident. No recent evidence (URT, 2013) indicates any attractive packages for teachers, especially not in difficult rural environments. Consequently, many teachers continue to flee and shun away from the profession (Sumra, 2004; Mkumbo, 2012). For instance, according to these strategies and targets, the shortage of teachers was supposed to be completed by 2013, at the latest. Yet, by that date, the situation was far from being solved, but a shortage of about 24,698 teachers was documented (URT, 2013). Indisputably, well planned and sustainable financing systems and strategies are needed to carry out the attraction and retention strategies and plans for teachers that have been laid down (URT, 2008a). However, to what extent this is possible, at least in the short run, is doubtful. This doubt is further deepened by observations of, first, the Tanzanian government budget to the education sector and its logical implications for teachers’ working and living environments, and second, the lack of significant evidence that the extent of financial incentives have succeeded to attract teachers in remote rural areas in most SSA countries. These aspects are discussed in the next few paragraphs.

2.3.2 The education sector budget and teachers’ working and living environment

Although the government’s budgetary allocation21 to education and training is being enhanced over time in order to ensure a better delivery of education and training services in the country (URT, 2013), yet, with the exception of the 2008/09 fiscal year when the government allocated 20% of its total budget to the education sector, the sector budget has been generally stagnant and deteriorating. For instance, in both 2009/10 and 2010/11 it was 18%, while from 2011/12 to the present (2014/15) it has remained at 17% (Hakielimu, 2014). So, what do these budgetary trends mean for teachers’ living and working environments?

One of the notable sources of teachers’ dissatisfaction has been the issue of ‘low salaries’ (Sumra, 2004; Mkumbo, 2012; Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005).

21 The provision of education in Tanzania is not the responsibility of a specific ministry, but shared among several government ministries and departments. In the same vein, financing Education and Training is shared among government, communities, parents and end-users. The key government ministries and department responsible for education include the Ministry of Education and Vocation Training (MoEVT); the Ministry of Community Development, Women & Children (MCDWC); the Prime Minister’s Office – Regional Authorities and Local Government (PMO – RALG) and the Public Services Commission (PSC). Therefore, the education sector budget is allocated and implemented by these ministries and departments (URT, 2013).
Still, to what extent are teachers’ demands for increased monetary incentives such as increased salaries, teaching allowance, allowance for teaching/working in difficult environments, payments of their different arrears and so forth achievable? As highlighted elsewhere in this text, financial deficits in public sectors including education seem to be grounded in global educational reforms (cf. Carnoy, 1998, 1999). The problem is further exacerbated by its budgetary implications. In Tanzania, for instance, the education sector is identified among the three biggest employing sectors in the country. In 2012, it was the third largest employment sector, employing about 16.4% of the total of 1,550,018 employed persons in the country, alongside Public Administration and Defense [18.5%] and Manufacturing [16.8%](URT, 2012b). Within this context, teaching is seen as a ‘common as opposed to a rare and elite profession’ (Ishumi, 2013). Not only that but also an even larger share (for example 76% in 2014/15 education sector budget share) in Tanzania goes to the Prime Minister’s Office – to Regional Authorities and Local Government (PMO – RALG) and Local Government Authorities (LGA) for teachers’ salaries. However, to what extent are teachers’ complaints about low salaries comparable to those of other sectors? Recent available evidence shows average monthly salary earnings being 508,450Tshs\(^{22}\) in the Education sector (NBS, 2013b). With such earnings, the sector ranks the seventh, better than 12 others, arranged in a descending order. Generally, 19 sectors are identifiable in Tanzania, with the monthly salary in the public sector documented as 671,639Tshs, and 307,026Tshs in private sectors, on average (NBS, 2013b).

A further interesting scenario for this issue is the observation that, despite the high shortage of teachers, their salaries are not likely to increase, contrary to the laws of demand and supply mostly operating to regulate prices in normal labour markets. This is because the teacher labour market differs from traditional labour markets or most conventional markets, as governments in most cases politically control and manipulate the supply and demand of teachers (Santiago, 2002). Within that context, Santiago (ibid.) observed that even with an increased demand for teachers, their salaries cannot be raised quickly to the ‘market-clearing level’.

Equally, looking at development expenditure, education receives a meagre amount. This suggests that little investment and developments have taken place in schools. Logically, teachers’ working environment and living conditions are not budgetarily prioritized, which is an indicator that they are likely to remain poor.

\(^{22}\) Using the exchange rate of 1USD equals 2104 Tanzanian shillings (Tshs) as retrieved from the Bank of Tanzania (BOT) on 21\(^{st}\) August 2015, 508,450 Tshs is equivalent to 252 USD. While exchange rates keep on fluctuating, normally increasing, they reflect a timely decrease in the purchasing power of the Tanzanian shilling. Teachers’ salaries, on the other hand, have remained unchanged for quite long, implying increased financial difficulties for teachers’ over time. Still, this not an exception, as other sectors receive even lower salaries, as highlighted in the text.
In sum, in spite of teachers’ complaints about salaries and other benefits, within the available evidence, the extent and ability of the government to fulfill them is questionable, at least in the short run. The sector is big, with many employees, and therefore even a small salary adjustment has significant implications on fiscal resources, something that is difficult to achieve within the context of the government’s constrained budget. Moreover, the ways the government controls teachers’ labour market it is not likely to be easily shaken by teachers’ practices such as strikes and boycotts. The government may also not take teachers’ demands, particularly a salary increase, seriously, because, according to the evidence available, teachers’ salaries are low but relatively and significantly higher than those in many other sectors. It could be equally theorized that the government does not take teachers’ attrition seriously because ‘the adverse impacts’ of it will not be immediately felt or noticeable (Sumra, 2004). To that comes the poor literature support of financial incentives and qualified teachers’ attraction/retention in remote areas among SSA countries.

2.3.3 Financial incentives and remote teachers’ attraction and retention in SSA contexts

While increasing teacher salaries may appear to be the obvious response to attrition problems, little evidence persists that an increased salary alone will have a high long-term impact on retention (Macdonald, 1999). Despite being low with variations across countries, teacher remuneration is generally documented as being much higher than national averages and a multiple of per capita GDPs and yet lower than the alternative opportunities open to graduates or similarly educated people (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mulkeen, 2010). Consequently: first, salaries do not seem adequate to attract and retain well-qualified teachers, in particular teachers with degrees in mathematics and science; secondly, teaching is perceived as less attractive than other government jobs with the same entry qualifications. In fact, evidence shows that the salary level has often resulted in teaching being seen as the “profession of last resort” (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mulkeen, 2010).

The salary issue is even made worse by late payment, mostly determined politically, which is notable in most SSA countries due to acute fiscal crises (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Mulkeen et al., 2007; Pitsoe, 2013). There is evidence of a significant number of teachers reporting never being paid in time, with frequent delays ranging between two and nine months (Hedges, 2002). Such delays cause particular hardship for teachers posted to remote

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23 Some observations from the Tanzanian context: the majority of teachers (51% compared to 37%) stated that they would leave the teaching profession and not advise their children to take up the profession (Sumra, 2004). Mlavi (2011) observed that about 66.7% of teachers who participated in his study had the intention to quit their work station and 51.7% to quit the teaching profession. Teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession in Tanzania is devastatingly low (Mkumbo, 2012).
areas, where they are farthest from their families and support networks (Hedges, 2002; Mulkeen et al., 2007).

Further evidence shows that, whereas agreeing on allowances to motivate teachers in remote areas has not been a big issue, their operationalization, however, has normally failed due to financial difficulties (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Pitsoe, 2013). Consequently, many countries have continued to experience difficulties in getting teachers to rural schools because those inducements are too insignificant to outweigh the ‘costs’ of living in remote areas, and are neither targeting nor financially sustainable. That aligns well with mounting evidence that in most cases financial incentives have had a limited success only in attracting and rectifying urban-rural teachers’ imbalances in many African countries (Mulkeen, 2010; Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Pitsoe, 2013). In the few cases of success, financial incentives seem to have attracted teachers already in rural regions to transfer to hardship schools within the same region (Mulkeen, 2010). Mulkeen (ibid.) fails to mark any indication where such allowances have been able to draw urban teachers to remote schools.

However, other schemes such as ‘paid study leave’, which could be part of the incentives, tend to unintentionally promote a steady flow of teachers out of the profession, as many teachers seldom return to it, especially not in remote contexts (Hedges, 2002). Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) even make the pressing observation that while allowances to attract teachers, especially in hard-to-staff environments, is an increasing trend in many parts of the world, Africa goes against the trend, with its countries being urged to phase out such allowances24.

Generally, while salaries and other financially related incentives are important in teachers’ retention efforts, especially in remote areas, there is no significant evidence that such incentives have been successful in SSA countries.

2.4 Teacher retention and quality education in Tanzania: A recapitulation

Quality education in Tanzania is treated as a strategic agent for mindset transformation and for the creation of a well-educated nation sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges which face the nation (URT, 2000). The quality

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24 This is in response to the economic reform agendas of the IMF and World Bank regarding public sector salaries. Within that line, African countries are advised to phase out allowances, in some cases almost altogether. However, in some countries such as India and Bangladesh, those allowances are noted to form a significant percentage of the overall remuneration package for teachers. Teachers are often not entitled to the same allowances as other civil servants (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007)
and roles of teacher in these efforts are policy requirements. For instance, the 1995 Educational and Training Policy (URT, 1995) states:

"[the]...teacher is the most important actor in education and training. He/she organizes and guides students in their learning experiences and interaction with the content of the curriculum, at all times...qualification of teachers and their ability to perform well in the classroom is a key factor in improving the quality of education (pp. 7, 41)".

Quality education debates cannot overemphasize the importance of quality teachers globally, African specifically (cf. Sifuna, 2007; Sumra, 2004; Sumra & Rajan, 2006). Studies (cf. Coleman et al., 1966; Husen et al., 1978; Solomon, 1987) clearly indicate that teacher quality does have a positive impact on the level of academic achievement of students attending schools in developing countries, including Tanzania. Bacchus (1996) argues that the poorer the country, the greater the impact which teacher quality is likely to have on students’ achievement.

Still, this area has suffered significantly in Tanzania. There have been consistent problems with the quality of teachers trained in the country, not only through poor training programmes like ‘crash training programmes’ (O-saki, 2003) but also by enrolling trainees with grades significantly below and contrary to the policy requirements (Wedgwood, 2007; URT, 1995). More intriguingly, this area is likely to continue suffering, especially due to evidence that, even with lowering entry qualifications, getting enough teacher trainees in teachers’ education colleges remains an unresolved problem (O-saki & Njabili, 2003). Consequently, coupled with other input problems, this has significantly affected teaching process and output alike. For instance, evidence shows that proxies of achievement (class repetition, dropout rates, completion rates, pass and transition rates, and so forth) in secondary education have been unsatisfactory (URT, 2011; 2013). This reflects Sumra’s (2004) observation that in contexts where teaching and learning materials are lacking, teacher quality assumes a far greater importance in improving the quality of education than would be the case otherwise. It equally echoes O-saki’s (2003) observation that an educational system cannot rise above the quality of its teaching force. This sends a clear message that the quality of education in the country remains very low. A still more critical concern raised is that even the few available teachers must be successfully retained. More generally, that calls for making deliberate efforts and informed choices towards getting and retaining quality teachers (Sumra, 2004; Sumra & Rajan, 2006). Sumra and Rajan (2006) emphasized that

"...when you cannot have everything and trade-offs need to be made priority should be given to teachers..... If teachers are at the
heart of education, they ought to be at the heart of our policy and practice, budgets and political rhetoric as well (pp. 4, 5)”.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed contextual issues associated with the current study. The study concentrates on the secondary sub-sector within the formal education and training system and structure. This level is regarded as a bridge linking all other levels and is important for economic growth and poverty alleviation. However, it faces strong teacher deficits, partly because it requires specialized teachers, and it has long been neglected as well as suffered from other de-motivators encompassed within poor retention practices. This is well reflected in the high attrition of well-trained teachers with educational diplomas and degree qualifications who simply terminate their teaching contracts. Indisputably, retaining teachers in contexts like Tanzania’s remote schools is extremely challenging. One of the reasons is the observation that almost all forces pulling students into the teaching profession are extrinsic. Equally, there is evidence that few documented teachers’ attraction and retention strategies are monetary-based and hard to achieve. This is well echoed within, first, the low government budgetary share to the education sector, which has been stagnant and declining (partly grounded in global educational reforms); second, budgetary implications of even slight adjustments in teachers’ salaries following the bigger size of the education sector and teaching force; and third, the government ability to manipulate teachers’ labour market and the lack of solid evidence of the extent to which financial incentives can successfully attract and retain quality teachers in remote areas in SSA countries. Consequently, the attrition of teachers, especially quality teachers, is increasing. This has a momentous impact on the quality of education received by Tanzanian children. While a number of policy documents strongly concede that quality education is a fundamental tool towards realizing national and international agendas, its contemporary state is not satisfactory. Doubtlessly, the importance of searching for alternative routes of retaining teachers, especially in remote schools, the areas mostly affected by teachers’ shortages, is crystal clear. In the next chapter, previous research connected to challenges and support for retaining teachers especially those in remote areas are presented.
Chapter Three: Previous research

The chapter advances a review of challenges and support connected to teachers’ retention in general and remote areas in particular. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section, 3.1, highlights a recapitulation of ‘teaching profession turbulences’ as exacerbated by global changes, strongly jeopardizing teachers’ retention in return. The second section, 3.2, advances a review of the challenges of retaining teachers, with specific focus on remote areas and the secondary education sub-sector in Africa South of the Sahara. The third section, 3.3, discusses organizational support and employees’ (teachers’) retention. Towards the end, challenges and support are summarized and caveats spotted, followed by the chapter summary. The review serves to position readers in a broad picture related to the challenging situation of retaining teachers in remote contexts of Africa and Tanzania, in particular. It also serves to show that support could be a useful teacher retention alternative to seriously consider within impracticable fiscal strategies.

3.1 Teaching professional and the changing times: Implications for teachers’ work life and retention

Economic, political, social and technological changes which take place now and then affect differently the teaching profession and education systems in many countries. The meaning and status of teaching as a profession, as well as teachers’ professional work and lives at large still remain issues strongly in need of improvement. This section serves to highlight teachers’ professional work life situation within changing global contexts which seem to make teacher retention even more challenging. I start by highlighting different discourses within which teaching has been conceptualized (or rather built) as a profession. After this, more insights are presented indicating different changes in teachers’ working life during global reforms which, apart from other consequences, may be reflected in teachers’ deprofessionalization and reprofessionalization. Critiques of predominant rhetorics which have been
steering teachers’ professionalism and professionalization and a suggestion for how this issue should be best examined are revisited. The section closes with a summative note.

3.1.1 Teaching professionalism definitive discourses

Despite some criticisms (cf. Ozga, 1995), one area which has affected the teaching profession and teachers’ work life has been the unclear position of whether teaching is really a profession or is still looking forward to be called one. Conceptually, ‘professionalism’ in education is constantly changing (Day, 2002). Lindblad and Goodson (2011), for instance, acknowledge that this is due to movements in educational practices and theoretical terms, and that professionalism in teaching remains strongly on the agenda among policymakers and intellectuals. I agree with Lindblad and Goodson’s (ibid) use of the concept as being closer to demands on professional legitimacy and authority as well as disciplinism. Observably, debates on the development of teaching professionalism over time identify at least six discourses: classical, flexible, practical, extended, complex, and postmodern professionalism (cf. Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; Hargreaves, 2000).

Classical Professionalism: In this discourse, teaching is compared with other professions like law and medicines in areas such as the extent of sharing a technical culture, being self-regulated, involving collegial control rather than external bureaucratic control over recruitment and training, or applying a code of ethics and standards of practice (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Teaching is, however, seen at least as ‘partially professionalized’ (Lortie, 1975).

Flexible Professionalism: In this discourse, teacher professionalism is mainly reflected in a shared professional community and in cultures of collaboration (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). However, such cultures are sometimes considered week, by, e.g., being easily controlled by bureaucracies – by ‘contrived collegiality’ plans that are the antithesis of self-regulating professionalism. The importance for teachers of local communities as a vehicle for enhancing professionalism in teaching is emphasized in this discourse.

Practical Professionalism: This tries to accord dignity and status to people’s practical knowledge and judgement of their work (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Research on teachers’ personal practical knowledge points to the existence of teacher knowledge that is practical, experiential and shaped by a teacher’s purposes and values (Clandinin, 1986). One example is reflective practice (cf. Schon, 1983), i.e., thinking directly linked to practice.

25 The conventional notion of teaching as having special status as a vocation or profession has been sometimes criticized for the risk that it acts an obstacle to making use of insights available from studies of work and occupations (cf. Ozga, 1995). The term ‘profession’ may also be used seductively as a control and exploitation mechanism for teachers and the teaching as a whole (Ozga, ibid.).
This is also connected with teachers’ capacity to exercise discretionary judgment in situations of unavoidable uncertainty (Schon, 1983).

**Extended Professionalism:** This mainly distinguishes between restricted and extended forms of teachers’ professionality (cf. Hoyle, 1974; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). In restricted professionalism, skills are derived from experience and perspectives are limited to the here and now with classroom events perceived in isolation or and the involvement in non-teaching professional activities being limited. In extended professionalism, on the other hand, teachers derive their skills from mediation between experience and theory, and their perspective extends beyond the classroom to embrace the broader social context of education. Collaboration, peer coaching, teamwork, partnership, mentoring, professional development, contractual relationships, and a focus on outcomes are essential in such professionalism (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

**Complex Professionalism:** It is argued here that professions should be judged by the complexity of the work tasks which they comprise (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Evidence shows that teaching is characterized by a high degree of complexity (cf. Devaney & Sykes, 1988; Sykes, 1990; Rowan, 1994). Rowan (1994), for instance, using qualitative indicators to compare the knowledge, skills and tasks of teaching to those employed in other professions, concludes that teaching is a highly complex work.

**Postmodern Professionalism:** In this discourse, the character of teacher professionalism and professionalization involves an increasing organizational complexity, economic flexibility, and scientific and moral uncertainty on a global scale. Since professionalism and professionalization discourses and practices can empower or exploit teachers, it is suggested that future struggles concerning this issue should be guided by moral and socio-political visions of the purposes which teacher professionalism should serve within actively caring communities and vigorous social democracies (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Teacher professionalism in a complex, postmodern age, should entail, for instance, an increased opportunity and responsibility to exercise discretionary judgment over teaching, curriculum and care issues that affect students; opportunities for and expectations of engaging in the moral and social purposes and values of what teachers teach, along with major curriculum and assessment matters in which these purposes are embedded; a commitment to working with colleagues in collaborative cultures of help and support as a way of using the shared expertise to solve the ongoing problems of professional practice rather than engaging in joint work as a motivational device to implement the external mandates of others; and embodying heteronomy, complexity and commitment and care (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

A closer analysis across these discourses suggests that the extent to which teaching is or could be recognized as a profession at the same level as, e.g., law or medicine, is a contested issue, especially because of its different
framing from different angles by different people with different interests. For instance, compared to other professions, teaching is labelled as having a partially professional status with an unclear and weak professional community and collaboration culture (cf. Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Moreover, while teachers seem to have practical knowledge and mostly involving in reflective practices, yet, their skills are labelled as being more ‘restricted’ than ‘extending’ beyond classrooms and school contexts. This instability, different framing and unclear position and positioning of teaching as a profession not only limits benefits and rewards (more pay, higher status, greater autonomy, increased self-regulation, improved standards of training, etc.) which are accrued, for instance, from other occupations with full professional status, but also easily falls victim to cost-conscious, control-centred governments and bureaucracies. This reduces the attractiveness of the teaching career and arguably forms one source of teachers’ retention challenge. By focusing on these challenges and support, the current study seeks to enhance the attractiveness of the teaching profession, which is an important factor for making it stable and strong. Within current global educational reforms, teachers’ work and life as professionals could be regarded as being at a crossroads.

3.1.2 Teachers’ professional life and work at a crossroads during changing times?

In their book *The Life and Work of Teachers: International Perspectives in Changing Times*, Day et al., (2000) bring together researchers from many different countries committed to enhancing the lives and work of teachers and the changing contexts in which they work. I find their insights worthwhile, especially in supporting teachers’ empowerment and self-retention. For instance, under the headings of Teacher Professionalism and Conditions of Change, they examine how reforms continue to affect teachers’ knowledge, identity and professional self-understanding and the development of their professional knowledge.

Goodson (2000), for instance, shows in ‘Professional knowledge and the teachers’ life and work’ that teachers’ voice has been neglected in many reforms, a signal that these important agents of implementing change have not been valued. McCulloch (2000), citing examples from England and Wales in ‘The Politics of the Secret garden: Teachers and the school curriculum in England and Wales’, shows that most curriculum changes have affected teachers’ freedom and autonomy, partly because of the many external examinations and other influences on the curriculum. Drawing examples from Hong Kong, Morris, Chan and Lo (2000) in ‘Curriculum reform and education change in primary and secondary schools’ show that most of these reforms seem to lack clear justifications at the implementation levels, as most of them are initiated top down, in the sense that the implementers (teachers) are neglected, which has led to a variety of interpretations (mostly based on
teachers’ prior experiences) and implementations, possibly far away from the original intentions of the reforms.

Moreover, considering the lives and work of teachers, Day and colleagues (2000) show that numerous changes have affected their work and their lives in many different ways across the globe. Impacts of these changes could be reflected, for instance, in time and structure, agency and personality, leadership and culture, history and context or innovation. These authors indicate that a typical pattern of change has been for policy makers and administrators to mandate those who work in schools to effectuate a new policy, often without adequate or appropriate support and assistance. For instance, Labaree (2000), drawing examples from America in ‘Educational researchers: Living with a lesser form of knowledge’ shows that because of its nature (more applied and soft, with low exchange but high use value), the authority base of education knowledge is weak and easily shaken by political winds. He shows that schools and teachers are seen as easy targets for change from the political and administrative level. With few exceptions (cf. Helsby, 2000; Day, 2000), most researchers show that teachers’ work has intensified, with deskilling and even proletarianization as a result (cf. Ozga, 1995).

It is evident that teachers’ life and work situations within the current educational reforms have been made difficult. One typical example is when teachers are asked to implement changes (new policies) which they have no clear idea of where they come from, or of how to effectively implement them, which is made more problematic without the necessary support. This does not only suggest the consequences that may arise from an unstable profession, but also clearly signals that many teachers are likely to continue running away from the teaching career. To explore the challenges that teachers perceive as threatening their stay and to seek more ways of how to support their stay the need for studies such as this one cannot be overemphasized.

Self-managing school reforms: Principals’ roles and dilemmas

It is further notable in Day and colleagues (2000) that a ‘self-managing school’ is among recent major reforms in many countries. This has had a significant implication on school leadership and governance and the changing roles of school principals. Drawing examples from the Swedish context, for instance, Berg (2000) in ‘Steering in and steering of the school’ shows that school governance and development have been changing in different ways due to societal change at large. For instance, there is a change from traditional centralization and steering by rules to decentralization and steering by goals, suggesting a power shift from the state to the community. Power shift, yes, but how has it affected the implementers of these changes, i.e., the principals? Drawing examples from Norway, Møller (2000) in ‘School principals in transition: Conflicting expectations, demands and desires’, shows the major dilemmas principals are facing due to devolution reforms. Møller shows
principals facing great confusion because of their many tasks, mostly paper
work and budgetary resource management, with high accountability as well as
evaluations accompanying the increased state control over teachers’ work and
time. Møller for instance writes:

...there is certainly a tension between principals’ desire to be
instructional leaders and demand from the municipal level for them
to be managers....very often principals find themselves engaged in
coping strategies to comply with legal mandates that sometimes
seem impossible to implement (Møller, 2000, p. 216).

It is evident that these reforms have put principals (school leadership) in
difficult situations. Yet, Fernandez (2000), for instance, drawing examples
from Canada in ‘Leadership in an era of change: Breaking down barriers of
the culture of teaching’ argues that principals have the potential to influence
the quality of student learning in school by supporting the growth of teacher
professionalism and that they achieve this largely through their visibility,
modelling, support, high expectations and decisiveness and courage. Within
this context, the current study seeks to enhance how school leadership could
be supported by its colleagues to face challenges brought by educational
reforms. This is especially important as the role of school leaders in
influencing the implementation of changes especially at school levels remains
essential. Broadly, what seems clear is that these reforms are
deprofessionalizing teachers significantly.

**Teachers’ deprofessionalization and reprofessionalization, and the implied
consequences**

Although there is evidence that educational reforms and restructuring could
lead to teachers becoming ‘professionalized’, that is having more professional
autonomy, legitimacy, etc., one significant condition for that to happen is the
removal of centralized and bureaucratic governing systems and creating
stronger professional organizations (instead of teacher unions) (Lindblad &
Goodson, 2011). The question is, to what extent is that possible, at least in the
short term? What is more clear, however, is that most educational reforms and
restructurings (standardized testing, detailed learning outcomes, site-based
management, school development planning, etc.) have deprofessionalized
teachers by reducing their curriculum scope and moral discretion, burdening
them with form-filling and other busy work, including an increased
dependence on detailed learning outcomes prescribed by others (cf. Ozga,
1995; Lindblad & Goodson, 2011; Lai & Lo, 2007; Gu, 2013). Lindblad and
Goodson (2011), for instance, document that teachers are being increasingly
controlled by managers and stakeholders, which is chiefly reflected within
marketization, commercialization, school choice, and other reforms. These
reforms have also ‘reprofessionalized’ teachers by, e.g., broadening their tasks, subjecting them to more sophisticated judgement, and increasing the needs for collective decision-making among colleagues (cf. Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Notably, teachers’ work has become much more complex, not only in terms of collective planning and decision-making, but also in terms of a whole set of new skills to apply in classroom assessment, such as portfolio assessment, peer assessment, self-assessment and performance assessment (Pollard, et al., 1994). Doubtlessly, the constant current of change, especially in curricula, pedagogy and evaluation, has exacerbated rather than alleviated the already relentless pace of teachers’ daily work. Unfortunately, these new policies have put a heavy demand on teachers’ personal and professional lives. Teachers have rarely been given the opportunity to negotiate the changing shape of their work. Therefore, these reforms have weakened teachers’ professional confidence, lowered their morale and left them uncertain both of their ability to cope and their right to make major decisions. There is no shortage of evidence, for instance, that market rationality had weakened teachers’ ability to innovate and renew their work and to respond to students (Webb, et al., 2004). Ball (2003) wrote that reforms have led to a high degree of uncertainty, instability and vulnerability for teachers. Moreover, apart from increased accountability, the perceived failure of schools to produce responsible, literate and skilled citizens has also diminished the traditional support, respect and trust accorded to teachers by parents and the public at large. In recent times, therefore, not only do teachers have to cope with the changing internal contexts of their work, but they also have to battle against negative criticism and publicity from the outside (Day et al., 2000). Since education and hence teachers remain crucial to date, especially as core educational reform implementers, it seems logical to give them voice in future educational reform projects. The focus of this study is aligned to that observation, which partially emanates from criticisms of the existing practices in reform formation.

Critique of predominant steering teachers’ professionalism and professionalization rhetorics and the need for professional reconfiguration

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) observe that the movement for teacher professionalism, professional standards and professional self-regulation has become a bandwagon for academic and bureaucratic cheerleaders who presume to know what is best for teachers. Day and colleagues (2000) clearly show that the choice of redefining professionalism cannot and should not belong only to those who do not teach. Contrarily, the teachers themselves have to be active in creating the work conditions, the opportunities and the spaces in which competence, creativity, risk-taking and learning may thrive. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) further write:
‘...the rhetorics and realities of teachers’ professionalism and professionalization within educational restructuring and reforms can hardly be meaningfully understood without being connected to teachers’ everyday working lives as professionals. ...when we look at teaching as lived experience and work, we often find the seductive rhetorics of change pronounced in policy break down into cynical, contradictory or resistant voices within the lives of teachers themselves...if we wish to enhance teachers’ professional lives, we have to direct our inquisitive gaze at teachers’ own experienced worlds, and from there, pose demanding questions to those who seek to change and restructure the teachers’ work from above. For at the end of the day, teacher professionalism is what teachers and others experience it as being, not what policy makers and others assert it should become (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; p. 22)’.

Moreover, Day and colleagues (2000) write that it is important to study teachers’ life and work as placing teachers at the centre of the action and sponsoring their voice could provide a valuable range of insights into the new moves to restructure and reform schooling and into new policy concerns and directives; it makes it possible to produce teacher-centred professional knowledge.

In summing up section 3.1, it could be noted that diverse global changes continue to significantly affect arenas in which teachers could negotiate their professional status, work and lives. These changes have deprofessionalized and reprofessionalized teachers and continue to do so. Apart from other consequences is the observation that most predominant steering rhetorics in teacher professionalism, professionalization, and teachers’ work and life reforms have significantly neglected teachers’ voice (cf. Goodson, 2000; Gu, 2013). Therefore, a discourse more strongly involving teachers might be an ideal in the future for negotiating the full status and implied benefits of teaching as a profession. In that case, it may be possible to reduce paradoxes, contradictions, confusions and mismatches between rhetorics and realities that are strongly at hand in educational reforms and the restructuring currently in operation. Consequently, it could help to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession and hence improve teachers’ retention. The current study seeks to improve teachers’ retention through ‘supportive practices’ empowering teachers to support their own stay. Arguably, this could be one of the initiatives for giving teachers voice in negotiating their own professionalism within their everyday working lives. Such initiatives are more in line with the recent strong need of identifying new ways of negotiating the status of education and teaching profession in relation to changing ways of governing education, that is ‘professional reconfiguration’ (Lindblad & Goodson, 2011). In support of that, Lai and Lo (2007) clearly show that teachers need more empowerment if they are to live effectively and work
professionally within educational reforms. That seems to suggest more studies of teachers’ professional lives and work, which could broadly improve retention. Besides, research evidence shows that teacher retention can be well informed by teachers’ own perspectives on their professional lives (Rinke, 2008). The current study places teachers at the core by investigating the challenges they perceive as being obstacles for their staying in schools, as well as for the teaching profession at large, and the support they perceive as a possibility for promoting their staying.

Section 3.1 revisits broader global changes and problems in the teaching profession, especially teachers’ deprofessionalization and reprofessionalization as they relate to retention difficulties. The next section (3.2) reviews challenges related to teachers’ retention, specifically in remote areas.

3.2 Challenges of retaining teachers in remote areas

There is mounting evidence that teachers’ attrition and retention are significantly challenging (Shen, 1997; Borman & Maritza, 2008). Still, remote areas are even more challenging, given their unsatisfactory conditions. In the next few paragraphs, a number of challenges related to retaining teachers in remote contexts in Tanzania and SSA at large are discussed.

3.2.1 Demographic factors, job satisfaction, turnover and retention

A great deal of research evidence has indicated different demographic factors (gender, age, marital status, qualification, income, and years of service) which strongly influence job satisfaction, and significantly predict turnover and retention in general and remote areas in particular (Furnham et al., 2009; Kavangah et al., 2006; Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Schroder, 2008; Agyeman & Ponniah, 2014; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Tourangeau & Cranley, 2006). Consequently, demographic characteristics have an influence on employee retention strategies (Agyeman & Ponniah, ibid.). A few of them that are relevant for the current study are discussed below.

Gender

Some results suggest that women tend to be somewhat more satisfied with their teaching career, whereas men tend to be more likely than women to stay in teaching (Stockard & Michael, 2004). Moreover, in their comprehensive meta-analysis study, Borman and Maritza (2008) observed that, out of 34 studies, 19 studies of gender as a moderator of attrition suggested statistically significant differences between men and women, indicating that the odds of men leaving teaching are approximately three fourths of those for women.
Alternatively, by taking the inverse of the odds ratio of 0.77, the result suggests that the odds for women leaving the profession are 1.30 times those for men (Borman & Maritza, ibid.). Other estimates of gender-turnover correlation indicate a similar turnover rate between women and men (Griffeth et al., 2000).

It could be suggested that more male than female teachers are likely to remain in the teaching albeit less satisfied with their careers, while more females than males are likely to leave the teaching career albeit being more satisfied with their careers.

**Age and years in the profession**

Among the well-documented demographic factors strongly predicting turnover and retention is age (Armstrong, 2014; Ahuja et al., 2007; Kavanaugh et al., 2006; Wilson et al., 2008; Borman & Maritza, 2008; Stockard & Michael, 2004; Griffeth et al., 2000). Armstrong (2014) writes that, for early career employees (30 years and below), career advancement is significant, for mid-career employees (age 31–50) the ability to manage their careers and receive satisfaction from their work are important, while late career employees (over 50) will be interested in security. Ahuja and colleagues (2007) observed that older workers were less exhausted, more committed, and less inclined towards turnover. Kavanaugh, Jo and Juliana (2006) reported that young nurses had the lowest levels of job satisfaction while the older age group (40 and up) had the highest level. Kavanaugh, Jo and Juliana (ibid.) generally observed that employees aged 40 and older were the most satisfied ones, those between 30 and 39 the least satisfied, with those 29 years and younger landing in between (although this was not statistically significant). Wilson et al. (2008) equally observed an overall decrease in job satisfaction for younger generations as compared to older ones (baby boomers) among nurses in Canada.

Moreover, in their meta-analysis study, Borman and Maritza (2008) observed that older teachers were less likely to leave teaching than were younger teachers. Borman and Maritza (ibid.) argued that, even though the effect of a 1-year difference is slight, if one assumes a linear relationship to exist between age and attrition, the odds of attrition for a teacher 5 years younger would be 5.32 times greater than those for the older teacher. Moreover, even when they considered four studies that investigated the relationship between age at the entry into teaching and attrition, the evidence suggested that teachers who began their careers at 31 or older were less likely to leave the profession than those who began teaching at 30 or younger. The odds of teachers 51 years or older leaving teaching were nearly 2.5 times those for teachers 50 years old or younger (Borman & Maritza, ibid.). Moreover, Stockard and Michael (2004) report that even when levels of satisfaction with teaching were controlled, younger people were more likely than older people to indicate that they planned to leave teaching. Older teachers and those who
had prior experience within education or who rated their teacher training as more helpful were less likely to leave (Stockard & Michael, 2004). Griffeth and colleagues (2000) document that both younger (less than 30 years) and older (more than 50 years) teachers are more likely to depart than are middle-aged teachers. For instance, the relative odds of young teachers departing are 171% higher than for middle-aged teachers (Griffeth et al., ibid).

To some extent, teachers’ age could be associated with the number of years they had been in the profession (or in schools). This is the experience of teachers. Still, how does this relate to or influence attrition? What is the research evidence with regard to this question? In their meta-analysis study, Borman and Maritza (2008) report that the odds of attrition among teachers with five or six years of teaching experience were 1.57 greater than those for teachers during the first five years of their careers. In addition, these authors document that, with each additional year of experience, the odds of attrition increased slightly. For instance, a difference of five years of experience was associated with odds of attrition for the more experienced teacher that were 5.10 times greater than those for the less experienced teacher (Borman & Maritza, ibid.). Equally, Crawley (2005) reported that women in military service organizations with five to eight years of service are most likely to leave. Ng and Sorensen (2008) reported that employees with higher tenure may be more familiar with their work role and have reached a higher level of career attainment than those with lower tenure. Kavanaugh et al. (2006) revealed that nurses with different levels of tenure are not motivated to remain with an organization by the same incentives.

In sum, the literature on age, experience and attrition is mixed. Still, two overall messages can be noted: first, more attrition could be expected among young employees (teachers) compared to middle and older ones, and also among experienced workers (teachers). This is a complex situation, especially if we assume that experienced workers are likely to be middle-aged or older in remote areas where attrition is most evident, which motivates the need for more studies of how to support employees’ retention. This is because there are different motivations behind teachers’ intentions to remain in an organization.

**Education level**

The level of education or qualification is found to be positively associated with turnover, suggesting that the more educated employees are, the more likely they are to quit (Agyeman & Ponniah, 2014). In their meta-analysis study, Borman and Maritza (2008) evidenced that the odds that teachers with a graduate degree would leave teaching were somewhat higher than for teachers without a graduate degree. A science or math undergraduate degree was associated with odds of attrition approximately twice those for teachers with other undergraduate degrees. On the other hand, teachers holding a traditional or regular teaching certification had lower odds for leaving teaching relative to
those with no certification. By taking the inverse of the odds ratio of 0.38, the result suggested that teachers without a certificate had odds of leaving the profession that were 2.63 greater than those for teachers with a certificate (Borman & Maritza, ibid.).

Although the literature on education qualification and attrition is equally mixed, it seems obvious that qualified teachers are more likely to leave the profession than unqualified ones. However, in general terms, attrition problems cut across all teachers regardless of qualifications.

In sum, research on demographic characteristics and retention is mixed and indeed challenging. However, in general terms, male teachers are likely to stay more in remote areas. Still, when it comes to satisfaction with their teaching career, female teachers seem more satisfied. Moreover, it could be generally noted from the literature that young, well-educated and experienced teachers are more difficult to retain in remote areas. Furthermore, evidence shows that when age and gender are combined, women are more likely to remain when aging than are men (Griffeth et al., 2000).

3.2.2 Teachers’ deployment and urban-remote rural imbalances

One of the notable challenges facing most Sub-Saharan (SSA) African countries is achieving equitable teachers’ deployment across different locations by qualification, subject specialization, and gender. Evidence shows that while teachers’ deployment is a challenge to all locations, shortages are more striking in certain locations, usually remote rural areas (UIS, 2006). As a strong signal of rural-urban teachers’ uneven distribution, studies by Lewin (2008) and Mulkeen (2010) document the possibility of finding unemployed qualified teachers in urban areas, while there are unfilled posts in rural areas in most African countries. Even more inequitable is the distribution of better-qualified teachers, and teachers of mathematics and sciences. Previous research has shown that the majority of these teachers tend to be concentrated in urban areas (Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002; UIS, 2006; Mulkeen, 2010). Teachers are reported to resist moving to the least-desired and poorly developed areas to such an extent that, when assigned, often do not take up the posts or quickly arrange to transfer (Mulkeen, 2010). Qualified teachers in particular tend to have higher expectations\(^{26}\), which are frequently absent in remote compared to urban areas. Consequently, most remote schools have

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\(^{26}\) In most cases teachers, more qualified ones in particular, expect good houses, with electricity and running water, greater social opportunities, better education for kids and health services, and some additional economic opportunities. While those expectations can hardly be met in remote areas, these areas (compared to urban ones) are equally more susceptible to diseases, problems with local languages, poor classrooms, school resources, leisure opportunities, less accessibility to health services, feelings of isolation and exclusion from opportunities for participation in consultation or professional development, and possibility of greater workloads due to teacher shortage (Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002; Towse et al., 2002; VSO, 2002).
more unfilled posts, a higher turnover, and a less experienced staff. What is more disturbing is the observation that those imbalances seem not to be taken care of in national teachers’ supply management, including teachers’ training institutions. This is fairly well reflected in the difficulties of attracting enough students in teacher training institutions (Mulkeen, 2010; O-saki & Njabili, 2003). Arguably, these deployment imbalances are essential to address as they are likely to further amplify inequities in educational opportunities and attainment across gender, rural/urban areas and subjects.

3.2.3 Wastage and alternative employment

Previous studies have documented a significant problem involving that many trained teachers do not enter the teaching profession after graduation even when measures such as ‘teachers’ bonding’ are used (Mulkeen, 2010). This is wastage. This problem of teachers’ shortage is mainly due to ‘labour market conditions’, particularly the availability of alternative employment, which particularly affects remote areas. The reason is the existence of more employment opportunities in urban areas. The problem is particularly exacerbated by the existence of a private education sector, especially in urban areas, where there are more private schools. Mulkeen and colleagues (2007) have documented that private schools positioned in urban areas are perceived more attractive even at lower pay than what is offered in a rural posting. Such a substantial challenge to attracting and retaining teachers in remote areas is even worsened by the evidence that in many African countries the highest salaries are offered in the private sectors (Mulkeen, 2010). Moreover, where distances between schools allow, secondary school teachers in urban areas are reported to teach part-time in private schools while holding full-time teaching positions in government schools (Mulkeen et al., 2007). Within that context, deploying and retaining teachers, especially qualified ones, in remote rural schools becomes a challenge of gigantic proportions.

3.2.4 School heads’ roles and capacities for school management

The importance of school heads in managing, supervising, mentoring teachers, and the general functioning of school, as being the most senior managers normally present in a school on a daily basis, is widely acknowledged (Mulkeen, 2010). This is even more reinforced by the increased demands on and the changing roles of school heads especially due to the decentralization of educational administration policies (Riley, 1999; Ross & Hutchings, 2003; Kucera & Stauffer, 2003). However, previous research shows that school heads in many African countries are too often ill prepared for their roles (UNESCO, 1996). Gottelmann-Duret and Hogan (1998) document that principals have rarely received any specific training for the new responsibilities before taking up their posts. Studies such as those of De Grauwe (2001) and Dadey and Harber (1991) report on the absence of automatic training for head teachers in most African countries, while the little
training offered, frequently with external funding, has been criticized for being ‘short of needs’. Consequently, school management in many of these countries is weak, and most school heads have been criticized for their tendencies to ‘look up rather than down’, that is, focusing a great many of their efforts on dealing with the district and central administration, rather than on managing the schools for which they are responsible. Such practices fuel the absence of school heads from schools, sometimes for days (Mulkeen, 2010). Arguably, the consequences of such weak management capacities and skills are likely to more adversely affect remote teachers who doubtless require frequent support from school heads. To promote effective school management, school heads need to be given routine and practical training, including the opportunity to acquire some support, for instance from peer-group of local head teachers (Mulkeen, 2010).

3.2.5 Female teachers’ retention in remote contexts

Previous research demonstrates the few achievements made in attracting and retaining female teachers at the secondary level (Mulkeen, 2010). Mulkeen (ibid.) writes that, although exceptions exist, general evidence suggests that the increase of female teachers at the secondary level has been insufficient over the last three decades. While attracting and retaining female teachers affects all locations, it is more apparent in remote contexts. Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) specifically highlight the scarcity of female teachers in more remote areas. A number of reasons contribute to these problems: first, the lack of standard housing and of acceptance among rural community members. There is significant evidence of an acute shortage of houses in remote areas, and the quality of the few that are available is too low to be accepted by educated teachers with an urban background (Lowe, 2006; Mulkeen & Chen, 2008). Moreover, Mulkeen (2010) has shown that in some contexts where housing is lacking, the community tends to provide it to attract teachers. Unfortunately, however, evidence shows that in many African countries those houses are hardly given to educated salaried unmarried female teachers from urban areas or from outside the local community (Mulkeen, 2010). In fact, Mulkeen (ibid.) shows that in some countries there have even been attempts to drive such female teachers out of communities. In most cases, such practices are linked to beliefs that female teachers of such calibres may destabilize families by attracting eligible single men in villages or even establish relationships with married men. They are supposed to bring ‘urban cultures’ like wearing shorts or such practices, which might be considered indecent according to rural cultural and religious beliefs. Second, working in rural areas may also be an obstacle for the opportunities of private life. Evidence shows that educated young single female teachers, particularly those with an urban background may perceive rural areas as being problematic in terms of offering opportunities to find a husband of their calibre (with a high education and income) (Kadzamira, 2006). This equally affects married
female teachers, especially if they relocate them away from families and husbands, most of whom are located and work in urban areas and are not traditionally used to moving to follow their wives’ employment (Mulkeen, 2010). Indeed, attracting and retaining female teachers in remote areas is deeply challenging, which spills over to the retention of female students as well (Bernard, 2002).

3.2.6 The language issue
Many countries, particularly in Africa, have several local (mother tongue) languages. Previous research has shown that the mother tongue and/or a main local language being used in assisting classroom instruction in many African countries, including Tanzania (Brock-Utne, 2007). This clearly shows that understanding the language spoken by the community is important for teachers to be well equipped in their jobs and become integrated into the community. Within that context, Mulkeen (2010) clearly shows that it has been highly challenging to retain teachers in areas where they are not conversant with the local or main language spoken by the community. Teachers who fail to understand the local language are likely to experience an even greater isolation from the wider community that will severely hinder their attempts at effectively supporting students’ learning. While the language issue is likely to affect all areas, it is stronger in remote rural areas where local languages are likely to be spoken by a majority of the population.

3.2.7 The HIV/AIDS pandemic
HIV/AIDS has been reported to be one of the most dangerous diseases killing a large number of teachers in many SSA countries, which sincerely affects retention (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mulkeen, 2010; Pitsoe, 2013; Kelly, 2000; Bennell, Hyde & Swainson, 2002). The consequences of HIV/AIDS strike harder in remote areas. This is because most schools are more likely to be staffed by male teachers. Unfortunately, evidence shows that more male than female teachers are affected by this disease (Bennell, Hyde & Swainson, 2002). Still, even the few female teachers found in remote areas are strongly at risk of HIV/AIDS given their low socio-economic status and remote life (Gordon, 2009; Pitsoe, 2013). Moreover, health and other social services are limited in remote areas. In this context, teachers suffering from HIV/AIDS tend to prefer urban areas in their search for medical facilities, whereas returning them to remote areas is extremely difficult.

3.2.8 Promotion and advancement opportunity practices
There is evidence that the availability of proper and transparent career-path projections and opportunities for progression strongly motivates employees’ satisfaction and influences retention (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mulkeen, 2010; VSO, 2002). This is, however, severely limited in the education profession
within most African countries, a situation which is strongly demoralizing for teachers (Gaynor, 1998; Mulkeen, 2010). Apart from perceived unfair practices surrounding teachers’ promotion (cf. Mkumbo, 2012), evidence shows that promotion criteria mainly based on academic qualifications have led to removing teachers from classrooms for upgrading (Mulkeen, 2010). After graduating with higher qualifications, however, the majority do not return to the profession, and those formally located in remote areas refuse to go back, possibly finding alternative employments in urban areas. The cost of poor promotion and advancement practices falls more heavily on remote schools, and not only from wastage. In addition, teachers in remote areas face substantial difficulties in following up their promotion and advancement opportunities. This is because most education offices are located in urban areas, which is costly for remote teachers because of transportation problems. Besides, bureaucratic and corrupt practices prevail within those offices, which slows down the pace of services, so that a minor issue could take several days/months and imply substantial costs for poor remote teachers.

3.2.9 Career choice forces, motivation and sense of investment

Previous research shows that teachers’ retention is influenced by forces pulling teachers into the teaching profession, mitigating their motivation behaviour and career satisfaction (Borman & Maritza, 2008). Scholars like Leung (2008), Ntim (2013) and Ramlall (2004) have discussed, in line with several career choice and motivation theories, the importance for employee retention of career choice decisions and motivation. Congruence between the work environment and employees’ motivating factors is one core factor in these theories. Moreover, there is mounting evidence that teachers’ retention in the career is mitigated by the extent a teacher has invested in the profession (Borman & Maritza, 2008; Kirby & Grissmer, 1993; Shen, 1997; Tye & O’Brien, 2002). In contexts where the majority of teachers in many SSA countries enter the teaching career as a ‘stepping stone’ (Towse et al., 2002; Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mkumbo, 2012) with low grades and minimal struggle, their sense of perceived investment is likely to be low, especially during their early years in the career (Borman & Maritza, 2008). Arguably, remote areas with poor conditions are likely to be much more affected when it comes to retaining teachers of such calibres.

In summing up section 3.2, the literature shows that retaining teachers especially in remote areas is significantly challenging. Those challenges emanate from many areas including teachers’ demographics, forces pulling teachers into the teaching career, the extent to which teachers think they have invested in the career, rural/remote-urban unequal opportunities and working environments which trigger teachers’ wastages, mostly in remote areas. Also, problems related to diseases like HIV, school management and female
teachers’ retention. Section 3.3 presents previous research on organizational support and employees’ (teachers’) retention.

### 3.3 Organizational support and employee retention

As indicated in the introductory chapter, this study focuses on school level support and teachers’ retention in remote areas. This section briefly highlights research on support and employees retention. More discussion on organizational support and employee retention is also notable in section 1.3.2 on knowledge gaps and study focus as well as in Chapter Four on the study’s theoretical framework.

#### 3.3.1 Quality exchanges in organizations and employee retention

There is mounting evidence that organizational support influences retention (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Greenberg, 1997; Ehrhart & Naumann, 2004; Ballinger & Schoorman, 2007; Ducharme, Hannah & Paul, 2008; Eder & Robert, 2008; Ballinger et al., 2010; Waddell, 2010; Webb & John, 2012; Leah & Colin, 2013; Herman & Troth, 2013). This is especially notable through quality and justice exchange relationships among organizational members. Leah and Colin (2013), for instance, show that justice moderates the causal relationship between leader-member exchanges (LMXs) as well as coworkers’ exchanges (CWXs).

*Well-supported employees are less likely to leave*

It is argued that well supported employees are less likely to leave because the support given acts as a factor mitigating the causes of attrition. For instance, using a sample of about 1,800 substance abuse treatment counsellors (in the human service industry\(^\text{27}\)) in a survey in the US, Ducharme, Hannah and Paul (2008) investigated how emotional exhaustion resulting from job characteristics, coworkers’ support, and workplace justice relates to turnover intention. Their findings showed that, while emotional exhaustion significantly predicted the intention to quit, coworker support prohibited quitting intents among counsellors.

*Counsellors working in settings in which the established pattern of interaction provides a sense of autonomy, fairness, and interpersonal support are less likely to express symptoms of emotional exhaustion, and are less likely to desire to quit their jobs.*

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\(^{27}\) Occupations within the human service industry (such as nursing and counselling), share similar professional characteristics (such as attrition trends and staffing problems, working arenas and being mostly female dominated) like the education (cf. Ingersoll, 2001; Ducharme, Hannah & Paul, 2008; Webb & John, 2012). They are ‘caring’ or ‘helping’ professions (Ducharme, Hannah & Paul, ibid.).
The interpersonal relationships characterizing the work environment—the milieu within which therapeutic alliances are built—are highly predictive of the well-being and stability of those who engage in counselling occupations (Ducharme, Hannah & Paul, 2008, p. 99)

The study by Ducharme, Hannah and Paul (2008) shows the importance of a ‘supportive working environment’ in reducing employees’ tiredness, exhaustion, emotional stress and thoughts of leaving. This is even more important in remote areas due to their difficult and stressful working situations. As noted in the definition of terms, coworkers define an employee’s working group (i.e. an individual employee’s colleagues). Evidence shows that work groups tend to influence the individual employee’s withdrawal behaviour (Ehrhart & Naumann, 2004; Greenberg, 1997; Eder & Robert, 2008). For instance, Eder and Robert (2008), using a sample from manufacturing companies and electronic and appliance stores in the US, report that when employees’ coworkers exhibit higher levels of withdrawal, individual employees are more likely to withdraw from their own work as well. Doubtlessly, this is likely to have significantly devastating effects in remote areas with more employee attrition scenarios. However, such practices could be mitigated by high perceived organizational support (POS), which tends to eliminate the relation between work group and individual tiredness and withdrawal (Eder & Robert, ibid.).

Employees are likely to leave due to the departure of a supportive leader

Ballinger and colleagues (2010), using a sample of 330 employees from 45 veterinary hospitals in the US, investigated the effects of leader–member exchange and turnover before and after succession events. Their findings showed that employees who were well supported by their supervisors/leaders (that is high-LMX employees) were less likely to leave the organization before than after the departure of the supervisor/leader, compared to those employees who were less supported (that is low-LMX employees). Moreover, Webb and John (2012), reporting a systematic review of about 699 (all but one from the US) researches in social work, teaching and nursing, acknowledge the importance of administrative variables particularly supervision and support, as being important in influencing turnover and retention. Furthermore, evidence shows lack of support as being an important factor for teachers’ attrition (Waddell, 2010). Waddell (ibid) acknowledges the importance of human relationships in the retention and growth of urban teachers in the US. In a more general way, Gerstner and Day’s (1997) meta-analytic review shows the presence of significant relationships between the quality of leader-member exchange and job performance, satisfaction, commitment and turnover.
intentions. Still, even more interesting is that exchange practices (or support) in organizations are noted as being affected by relational demography.  

3.3.2 Employees’ relational demography, exchange quality and retention  
The quality of exchanges (support) and well-being among organization members is also affected by different demographic characteristics such as age, gender, tenure, education and other physical qualities (Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989; Vecchio, 1993; Smith & Harrington, 1994; Epitropaki & Martin, 1999; Collins, Joseph & Jr. Tonette; 2009; Gellert & Rene, 2012). Most studies about this area are based on the assumption that individuals with certain similarities, for instance in their demographics, are likely to be attracted to each other (cf. Byrne, 1971; Liden, et al., 1993). Equally, Tsui and O’Reilly (1989) reported that dissimilarities in superior-subordinate demographic characteristics (relational demography) are strongly associated with lower effectiveness as perceived by superiors, less personal attraction to subordinates from superiors, and an increased role ambiguity experienced by subordinates. Epitropaki and Martin (1999) show that differences in age, organization tenure and gender between manager and employee are potential moderators between employees’ leader–member exchanges (LMX) and some related work outcomes. More specific empirical studies on age, tenure, gender and educational differences and their implications on the perception of exchange quality, wellbeing and retention in organizations are highlighted below.

**Age:** Using a sample of 292 high school teachers in the US in studying ‘the impact of differences in subordinates’ and supervisors’ age on attitudes and performance’, Vecchio (1993) showed that employees who were older than their supervisors, first, reported better working relations with their supervisors, second, evaluated their supervisors more favourably, and third, received ratings from their supervisors that were not less favourable than those of other employees. On the other hand, Smith and Harrington (1994), in their study titled ‘Younger supervisor-older subordinates dyads: A relationship of cooperation or resistances?’ suggested that the relationship between younger managers and older subordinates may be problematic because of age-based beliefs and stereotypes. This is supported by Collins, Joseph and Jr. Tonette (2009) in their study titled ‘The older-worker-younger-supervisor dyad: A test of the reverse Pygmalion effect’. In this study, Collins, Joseph and Jr. Tonette (ibid.) found that older workers expected less from their younger supervisors than do younger workers and that, in turn, older workers rated their younger supervisors’ leadership behaviour lower than younger workers rated their younger supervisors. Moreover, using a sample of about 152 employees from

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28 The concept of ‘relational demography’ is used to mean the differences in demographic characteristics (age, gender, educational, tenure, etc.) between managers/leaders/supervisors and subordinates (cf. Epitropaki & Martin, 1999).
six residential homes for elderly people in Germany, Gellert and Rene (2012) examined the influence of age-related attitudes on relationship and performance at work. The results showed that age-related attitudes (intergenerational cooperation and the perception of older employees’ capabilities) are important factors influencing the perceived quality level of in-group cooperation. These authors argue that both age-related attitudes and relationship factors influence perceived employee performance, and job satisfaction.

**Tenure:** In a study of 'Relational and organizational attachment', Tsui, Egan and O’Reilly, (1992) analyzed a sample of 151 groups comprising 1,705 respondents. Their findings showed that a high tenure difference in the manager-employee dyad is associated with lower levels of psychological attachment among work group members.

**Educational differences:** Although the effect of supervisor-subordinate educational differences and exchange qualities is inconclusive, Tsui and O’Reilly (1989) reported partial support for the perception that supervisors tend to prefer subordinates with less education than their own. One reason could be that such subordinates easily comply with supervisors’ interests and politics. That, however, does not eliminate problems, especially of ‘language incompatibility’ (March & Simon, 1958) that are associated with differences in educational attainment levels.

**Gender:** The effects of gender similarity on leader-member exchange (LMX) quality seem to be contradictory. For instance, while some studies (cf. Green, Anderson & Shivers, 1996) found gender differences to have a significant effect on LMX, showing that the quality of LMX was lower when the leader and the subordinate were of different genders, other researchers (cf. McClane, 1991; Liden et al., 1993) reported no significant effect of gender similarity on LMX.

In a broader way, a study by Epitropaki and Martin (1999) on ‘The impact of relational demography on the quality of leader–member exchanges and employees’ work attitudes and well-being’, found out that, first, those employees with a high difference in age to their manager and poor LMX reported the worst well-being; second, those employees with a large difference in organizational tenure from their manager and low LMX reported the worst organizational commitment, job satisfaction and well-being; and that, third, no support was found for the moderating role of gender similarity. The study was done in the UK with a sample of 245 administrative employees in academic institutions who filled in questionnaires with a 30% response rate.

In general terms, relational demography has significant implications on the quality of exchanges, employees’ satisfaction perception and well-being realization. Yet, research on relational demography and exchange qualities seems contradictory and inconclusive. Still, one message is clear: that the definition of ‘meaningful support or quality exchange’ for retention in different contexts is indeed complex. As part of the initiatives towards
addressing that complexity, the current study seeks to understand how teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania conceptualize school level support with retention force.

In sum, the literature on organizational support and retention shows that quality organization support could mitigate employees’ turnover and influence retention in general and in education specifically (Eder & Robert, 2008; Waddell, 2010; Vidyarthi et al., 2010; Webb & John, 2012; Leah & Colin, 2013). The research also suggests the importance of supporting perceived supportive supervisors/leaders as their departure may have a significant flipside turnover effect on other employees. Organization support may influence employees’ commitment to it, acting as ‘a contractual’ force to support retention. Equally, good coworkers’ support may serve as a ‘constituent’ force influencing retention (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004).

Moreover, organizational members’ relational demography is an important influence on the quality of exchanges (Epitropaki & Martin, 1999). Arguably, and in line with the discussion of section 3.2.1, employees’ demographics are important in influencing retention strategies. However, as indicated elsewhere in this text, most research on organizational support is conducted in the US, and little has been done in educational African, Tanzanian and remote contexts.

### 3.4 Previous research: synthesis and caveats

Broadly speaking, teachers’ retention challenges seem to be grounded in the frequent changes taking place globally over time. Among other consequences, these changes tend to deprofessionalize and reprofessionalize teachers, significantly affecting their working and living arenas. When it comes to retaining teachers in remote areas, a number of challenges are notable, one of them being their demographic characteristics. While teachers’ demographics could be a challenge to retaining teachers across many contexts, it is likely to be even more challenging for remote areas with an unsatisfactory environment. Additionally, male teachers who are mostly likely to stay and are normally found in remote schools, are noted in previous research to be rarely satisfied with their teaching career. Moreover, previous research pinpoints the uneven distribution of teachers across areas. Remote areas are strongly affected, with few, mostly unqualified, teachers. The imbalance is so strong that it is possible to find unemployed qualified teachers in urban areas while there are unfilled vacancies in remote ones. This is exacerbated by wastage phenomena and by the availability of possibly well-paying alternative employments in urban areas. More generally, other challenges to retaining teachers include the increasing roles assigned to poorly prepared school heads, which makes school management weak; the increasing difficulty of retaining
female teachers due to local community practices and personal factors; the diversity in local languages in remote areas affecting teachers’ effectiveness in supporting teaching, learning and integration into the community; the effect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and poor practices in teachers’ promotion and advancement opportunities. In addition, it seems more challenging to retain teachers with a low intrinsic motivation for the career coupled with a low sense of career investment in remote areas.

With regard to support and retention, the literature shows that, first, well supported employees (teachers) are less likely to leave; second, it is crucial to retain supportive leaders since their departure is likely to fuel departure of other employees; third, leader-member relational demographics also contributes to exchange qualities between leaders and subordinates in organizations. By focusing on ‘how teachers perceive school level support with retention force’, the current study seeks to enhance leaders’ (school heads’) and coworkers’ (classroom teachers’) retention. This is even more important as evidence shows that attrition behaviours either among leaders or coworkers are likely to influence the attrition of other employees in return (cf. Eder & Robert, 2008). The consequence of such attrition could be more painful to remote contexts given their disgruntling environments.

Despite the mounting literature on remote rural teachers’ retention challenges, there is a noticeable paucity of stronger policy-practice-focused research (Mulkeen et al., 2007). The available research in SSA has, for example, been criticized for focusing too much on, first, clarifying the dimensions of the problem rather than on formulating and testing alternative solutions; second, describing in detail particular countries’ efforts to attract, deploy, and retain teachers, but often lacking solid evidence of the effectiveness of the approaches being described (Borman & Maritza, 2008; Mulkeen et al., 2007). This clearly shows, not only that the weak basis for guiding policy and programme development for effective teachers’ retention, particularly in remote areas, but also the need for further studies on this area in African contexts, that of Tanzania context to be exact. The challenges are enormous, with ‘no magic bullets’ for solutions. While the efficacy of monetary-related teacher retention policies in African contexts is strongly questioned (Mulkeen et al., 2007), there is ample evidence that examining the organizational characteristics of schools and the characteristics of teachers’ working conditions, including supportive policies, is an important and powerful future research area in the issue of retention (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Mulkeen, 2010; Borman & Maritza, 2008; Ingersoll, 2001). This area has not been accorded scholarly attention, particularly in the Tanzanian remote school context.
3.5 Chapter summary

Previous research has shown that attracting and retaining teachers in remote areas is a highly challenging issue. For instance, it is obvious from earlier studies that the demographic picture of teachers is challenging definite challenge, particularly with regard to remote areas. It has been further documented that deployment practices have failed to address the urban-rural imbalance of teachers, with remote areas suffering the most. Parallel to that, it has been observed that most trained teachers never return to the teaching profession and posts, while the few who do return refuse going to remote areas but instead remain and search for teaching or other employment opportunities in urban areas. Given that context, teachers who are located in remote areas need to be strongly supported to be made to remain. While school heads are strategically positioned to provide support of this kind, at least at the school level, it is a challenge to observe that they lack the necessary competences. Furthermore, female teachers are particularly crucial as they influence the retention of female students. However, prior research has revealed the striking challenge of retaining them, which substantially affects female students’ attendance in remote areas. Other challenges to teachers’ retention in remote areas that have been documented include the problem of local languages, HIV/AIDS infections, poor promotion and advancement opportunities, as well as the poor motivation of forces attracting teachers into the career and the little interest in investing in teaching. More critical is the deprofessionalization and reprofessionalization of teachers brought about by global changes.

Despite many documented challenges, caveats must be expressed about the lack of ‘viable retention strategies’, especially for remote teachers. The need for supportive retention strategies is clear, particularly within the African and Tanzanian contexts, where the effectiveness of monetary-based teachers’ retention strategies is strongly questionable. More important still is that the literature on organizational support provides convincing evidence that supportive strategies can meaningfully enhance teachers’ retention. The current study could be regarded as part of ‘teaching professional reconfiguration’ initiatives which are arguably important within global educational reforms and restructuring. While the current chapter has reviewed relevant previous research, the next chapter will discuss the theory adopted for this study.
Chapter Four: Theory

The chapter presents and discusses the theoretical perspectives that the current study is inspired by. These mainly include those explaining organizational support and employees’ retention. The chapter begins with a broad introductory line on choices and uses of theories and key concepts. It is then followed by a discussion of specific theoretical perspectives used and how they fit into the study. The conceptual framework is presented next, before the summary which closes the chapter.

4.1 The relations, choices and uses of theories and key concepts

This section is divided into three main sections. The first section, 4.1.1 discusses two main issues, first, the linkage between teacher retention and pedagogical practices in general; and second, the motivation for the choice of management-inclined theories rather than pedagogical or teachers’ professional theories. The second section, 4.1.2 discusses complexities in researching teachers’ retention (and attrition), and partially, their logical influence on how the theoretical perspectives were used in this study. The third section, 4.1.3 explains key theoretical concepts and their positioning in the current study.

4.1.1 Teacher retention, pedagogical practices and choice of theories

A number of pedagogical theories and ideologies29 (cf. Dewey, 1897; Lundgren, 1999; Bernstein, 1996/2000; Kozulin, Boris, Vladimir & Suzanne, 2003; Hayes, 2006; Tollefson & Monica, 2008; Diana, 2010; Radu, 2011)

29 These pedagogical theories and ideologies are many and diverse. Some can be noted, for instance, in progressivists like John Dewey, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Francis Parker, William Heard Kilpatrick; essentialists’ pedagogues and educational philosophers such as William Chandler, Michael John Demiashkevich; or other theories such as Bernstein’s Pedagogical Devices, Frame Factor Theory, and Vygotsky’s Sociocultural theory. They all commonly insist on the critical role of teachers in children learning.
strongly put teachers at the fore towards successful and meaningful child learning. A teacher is labelled as ‘the everyday pedagogue’ (cf. Mortimore, 1999). Moreover, pedagogy conceptualization models identify teachers as being among the significant elements of pedagogy alongside the classroom (or other contexts), content, the view of learning, and learning about learning (Mortimore, 1999). This seems to suggest that teachers and pedagogy cannot be meaningfully separated and, logically, that any study dealing with teachers (teacher retention in this context) equally deals with pedagogy, at least implicitly. Even more specifically, some findings and recommendations of this thesis are connected to teachers’ ‘recruitment and training practices’ that are capable of enhancing their retention. Teachers’ recruitment and training as part of teacher education and professionalism doubtlessly involve a pedagogical element. Equally, a few research questions, like the first of the current study, identify the sources of teachers’ low retention. Some findings are related to teaching and learning situations (such as the lack of enough textbooks, or students’ low motivation to schooling and lack of discipline). Recommendations advanced for these findings centrally intend to enhance pedagogical practices and teachers’ retention in these respects. Indisputably, the study is well linked to pedagogical practices in broad terms.

Nevertheless, this study focuses more on managing teachers (keeping teachers in the teaching profession) and schools than on teachers managing teaching (such as classroom management, understanding and using different teaching and learning techniques). Within that context, the study is not basically inclined towards pedagogical theories (theories of teaching and learning). Equally, or professional theories seem to be more directed towards the conceptualization of professionalism and professionalization. Claims like the extent to which teaching is or can be called a profession, different change forces and their impact on teaching, teachers, schools and the education systems over time (cf. Bourdieu, 1988; Etzioni, 1969; Freidson, 2001; Fournier, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994; Goodson, et al., 2006; Wittrock, 1986) are dealt with. While professional theories are important when dealing with teachers and professional teaching, they are peripheral to the focus of this study. For this reason, this study is inspired by management-inclined theories.

4.1.2 Researching teachers’ retention and (attrition): Challenges and theory usage in this study

As indicated elsewhere in this text, while teachers’ retention is a critical problem, most countries, including Tanzania, have consistently been unable to come up with visible strategies for their retention. One possible explanation could be the complexities involved in researching teachers’ retention and attrition. Scholars in this area have adopted two major approaches, the first being a multivariate or theoretical approach, and the second a bivariate approach. In the next few paragraphs, I will briefly revisit each approach.
intention is to show that many variables are to be taken into consideration, which makes the use of theories in these studies quite challenging.

The first, the multivariate or theoretical, approach inquires into a set of variables simultaneously to test theories of explaining why teachers choose to stay in or leave the teaching profession (Shen, 1997). Some of these theories include: career choice theories such as the Work Adjustment theory; Holland’s Vocational Personalities in Work Environment; Super’s Self-concept Theory of Career Development; the Social Cognitive Career Theory; and Gottfredson’s theory of Circumscription and Compromise (cf. Leung, 2008). They further include motivational theories such as Need theories - Maslow’s Need Hierarchy and McClelland’s Need theories; Equity theory; Expectancy theories - Vroom’s Original Theory and Porter and Lawler’s Extension Theory; as well as a job design model - Herzberg’s Motivator-Hygiene Theory and Job Characteristics Model (cf. Ramlall, 2004). Other theories include Human Capital theory (cf. Kirby & Grissmer, 1993; Shen, 1997) and the theory of teachers as economically rational decision makers (Shen, 1997).

The second approach, the bivariate approach, inquires into the relationship between retention/attrition and another variable (Shen, 1997). For example, Borman and Maritza (2008) in their comprehensive meta-analysis study document that teacher attrition and retention can be related to: teachers’ demographic characteristics (gender, teacher race, age, marital status, having/not having a child, number of children); teachers’ qualifications (teacher training, experience, teacher ability or achievement, teaching specialty area); school resources (average class size, teacher-student ratio, school expenditure for support per teacher, school expenditure for teaching materials, teacher classroom assistance, instructional spending, per pupil spending, salary); school organizational characteristics (school location, sector, size, administrative support, beginners’ mentoring programmes, collaboration & teachers’ network, regular supportive communication with administrators, opportunities for advancement, bureaucracy; and school student body characteristics (students’ achievement levels, the school socioeconomic composition, racial/ethnic school composition).

In sum, the above discussion serves to illustrate that studying teachers’ retention (and attrition) can be examined (as has been done) from many angles, with different approaches, depending on specific study interests. Given that diversity, the theoretical base in this study was not used as a “steering tool”, to strictly impinge on what to be investigated or seen from the data. Rather, it was used, within this study focus, to provide ‘overall theoretical guidance’. That includes helping in spotting out specific areas with interesting gaps, offering a study-theoretical base, guiding data analysis (especially a theoretical thematic approach) and presenting a discussion/understanding of the results. For instance, the theories used are helpful in indication the general frame that is useful for explaining the perceived influence of “organizational support embedded in exchange relations” on addressing the “teachers’
retention” issue. However, it is important to note that, in line with the philosophical stance—“pragmatism” inspiring this study, that theories were fitted into data as opposed to the other way around. Therefore and in line with the complexities of dealing with teachers’ retention, other theoretical insights were occasionally used to enhance the understanding of the results.

4.1.3 An overview of theoretical positioning

This study draws from the Organizational Support Theory (henceforth, OST) and its central construct, Perceived Organizational Support (henceforth, POS): “the degree to which employees believe their work organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).” Within organizations, some employees are vested with authorities or rights over other employees on the basis of their knowledge, experience, skills or any other base. These appointed authorities are considered agents of the organization, and their actions are considered organization actions. This is because employees perceive an organization as a human being, while its acts are considered to be the acts of human beings (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Levinson, 1965). Organizations therefore have a relational agency with all its employees. Implicitly, support of any kind from employees is translated as support from the organization. Such a broader perception of organization has necessitated examining its support from several angles. Key categorizations of looking at POS are notable in Woo (2009) and in Chou and Robert (2008). In their studies it is argued that POS could be studied from three main perspectives: support from management, from supervisors, and from coworkers. Hence, organizational support broadly means support from these three categories or perspectives. To make an easy connection with how these concepts are used in this study, it is important to revisit them briefly.

Management (or managerial) support is frequently used to mean organizational support: “employees’ perception about the degree to which the

30 The idea of people relating acts of organisations and their members to the human being perspectives are notable in Levinson’s (1965) writings on ‘the relationship between man and organisation and the concept of reciprocation’. Levinson (ibid.) writes that an organisation is created as a legal fiction which meets certain requirements and has certain capacities, but, it has no life of its own apart from people. Therefore, employees (people) make up a certain organisation (hence organisational agents), for instance, teachers and schools in this context. That means, in their relationships with other people, employees act as organisational agents. On the other hand, these employees (people) have their own attitudes, impulses, wishes and expectations, which they bring with them in or out of the organisations. Levinson (ibid.) further writes: ‘… people project upon organisations human qualities and then relate to them as if the organisations did in fact have human qualities. They generalise from their feelings about people in the organisation who are important to them, to the organisation as a whole, as well as extrapolating from those attitudes they bring to the organisation’ (p. 377).

31 This study adopts a broad definition of organization support that is support from management, supervisors/leaders and coworkers (cf. Woo, 2009; Chou & Robert, 2008). The theoretical perspectives used partly reflect that alignment. More importantly, all three perspectives are grounded in ‘exchange relationships’ but at different levels.
organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being” (Eisenberger et al., 1986). From the definition of managerial support by Eisenberger et al. (ibid.), it could be argued that perceived managerial support (PMS) also implies POS. In this line of argument, antecedents of POS are antecedents of PMS.

Several POS antecedents are identified in the literature, including organizational justice, rewards and recognition, participation in decision-making, growth opportunities, autonomy, task variety, work overload, role ambiguity, role conflicts, and job security (Ahmed, 2012). Managerial or organizational support is concerned with making policies and procedures like pay determination, promotion decisions, participating employees in decision making, managing justice at work and offering better working conditions. When employees receive support, they offer their commitment, loyalty, motivation and other outcomes in return for POS or PMS.

Supervisor support, on the other hand, simply means support from supervisors as organizational agents. Supervisory support is also noted as one of the POS antecedents (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). It is notable in Rhoades and Eisenberger (ibid.) that employees develop general views concerning the degree to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being (i.e. perceived supervisor support, PSS), almost in the same ways as they do for the organization (POS). This implies that employees could perceive the supervisor as being either supportive or not, which could affect employees’ POS in return.

Supervisors are seen as seniors/ leaders working towards policy implementation and bridging the gap between employees and management (organization). It has been argued that supervisors are an important element in the organization’s socialization process by making employees identify and achieve their goals, and suggesting rewards for their achievements (Jokisaari & Numri, 2009). Another important issue is that supervisors work on the targets provided by the top level management and have to report to that level about the performance of each and every employee against each and every target, thus creating a link between feelings about the supervisor and feelings about the organization (POS) (Pack, 2005). Supervisor support includes but is not limited to providing instrumental, informational and emotional support to followers and helping in job-related matters.

Supervisors are also regarded as leaders, as they have to be readily available to followers, setting examples and motivating them to perform their duties and achieve the targets set (Ahmed, 2012). This is normally done by the use of their internal capabilities, skills, personality, experience, and honesty under the banner of the authority vested in them and widely accepted by their coworkers (Ahmed, 2012). With PSS, employees reciprocate with commitment, performance and loyalty (Ahmed, ibid.), which implies an exchange relation between leader/supervisor and subordinates. Wayne, Shore and Liden (1977) argue that the concept of leader-member exchange can be
attributed to supervisor support, and thus both constructs can be used interchangeably.

Several issues are notable from the POS, perceived management support (PMS), and perceived supervisor support (PSS) in the discussions presented. As for the first concept, Woo (2009) and Chou and Robert (2008) suggest that POS can be examined from three main perspectives, which are managerial/management, supervisors, and coworkers. However, a closer look at the definitions, management/managerial support and its central construct PMS, seem to be equated with organizational support and its central construct POS (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In this sense, the antecedents of POS and PMS are the same. However, this produces some controversy as to whether organization and management mean the same, because these concepts are in some instances separated. For instance, organization defines the entire ‘group’ in a certain context linked with the intention of achieving a certain common goal. Management, on the other hand, could mean the few specific people vested with authority and rights to act as ‘binding glue’ towards the successful fulfilment of bigger ‘group-organizational’ goals. Unless the two are examined across organizational type and size and thus form a contextually embedded definition, their general equalization might cause some confusion and misunderstanding.

Again, there seems to be a clear demarcation between a supervisor (or a leader) and management (or organization), depending on the nature and size of the organization in question. For instance, in a big multi-company organization, such a difference is more visible than in small companies. In the latter, perhaps founded by two people and employing a few others, there is a high possibility that both founders act as managers and leaders/supervisors. They set policies and procedures, supervise their implementations and evaluate their successes and failures. Arguably, the demarcation between management and supervisor is organizationally and contextually contestable. The two, I think, influence each other in most cases. With those few observations, I will briefly revisit how the above discussed concepts of POS, PMS and PSS are abbreviated in this study.

As noted in the definition of terms (1.1.2), since school is used interchangeably with organization, School Level Support (SLS) and Perceived School Level Support (PSLS) are used in a way more or less similar to Organizational Support (OS) and POS, respectively. The school is perceived by teachers (both school heads –SHs –and classroom teachers –CTs –) as a human being and its acts as human acts. Therefore, both perceived school head support (PSHS) and coworker Support (CWS) are part of the perceived school level support (PSLS).

A school head functions as a manager and supervisor (leader). This is because, at the school level and in the context of this study, school heads engage both in managing and supervising, assuming almost all managerial and supervisory (leadership) roles, representing their school. Despite most policies
and guidelines being set by the central government at the ministry level in Tanzania, yet, at the school level school heads are responsible for defining them to classroom teachers, looking after their implementation, and reporting their successes and failures. However, in some instances the effects of PSS and POS to employees are discussed differently, especially in contexts when a supervisor is acting as an independent person as contrasted to the organization agent. Yet, it is highly notable that PSS leads to POS, as supervisors are mostly seen as agents of the organization. Equally, in most practical cases, it might be difficult to clearly know when the school head is acting as an individual and not as school agent. With this note, in this study, it is assumed that support given by school heads is part of school support, not of the individual person. Therefore, perceived school level support (PSHS) is hereby used interchangeably with both POS and PSS. Although in the Tanzanian context, the school head reports to higher levels (like district educational officers-DEOs and other educational officials in the ministry), these parts of school management beyond the “school level” are not discussed because of the focus and delimitations of the study. While the above discussion serves to broadly show how key theoretical concepts are operationally used, the next section discusses the specific theories [that is, Organizational Support Theory (OST), Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMXs), and Coworker Exchange Theory (CWXs)] adapted for this study and the reasons behind.

4.2 Study theoretical frame and rationale

The specific motivations behind the study are the Organizational Support Theory (OST), the Leader-Member Exchange Theory (henceforth, LMXs), and the Coworker Exchange Theory (henceforth, CWXs). As defined earlier (in 1.1.2), at the school (or organizational) level, exchange involves management, leaders/supervisors and subordinates. Combinations of these three theoretical perspectives help to broadly view exchange relations and their reciprocal effects on organizational members’ satisfaction and retention. Whereas LMX captures the exchanges of leaders, POS is an indicator of exchanges within the organization (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007). For instance, OST does not specifically show what possible exchange behaviours/relationships exist between leaders and subordinates, or between peers reporting to the same leader, as dealt with within the LMX and CWX theories. Specifically, while OST looks at exchange related to the school organizational level in general, LMX more precisely looks at exchange related to leaders and subordinate level (school heads and classroom teachers) and CWX at subordinates’ levels (actual classroom teachers). Figure 2 depicts the theoretical connections between relationship and rationale.
POS expounds exchange behaviours at school (organizational) level. LMXs explicate exchange behaviours between leaders (school heads) and subordinates (classroom teachers). CWXs deal with exchange behaviours among coworkers dealing with one or a similar leader. For instance, within the school context, classroom teachers (hereby defined as subordinates) report to the same school head. LMX practices strongly affect CWXs. Equally, LMX practices influence the POS/perceived school level support (PSLS), and so do CWXs. For support to meaningful influence retention, exchanges across leaders and subordinates ought to be ‘relevant’, strongly fuelling positive POS beliefs.

In the next two sections, specific theoretical perspectives and their connectivity rationale to teachers’ retention as per the current study’s focus are discussed.

**4.2.1 Specific theories used in the study**

**4.2.1.1 Organizational Support Theory**

The OST is built on the exchange relationship between an employee and an organization. Basically, the theory explains how employees’ and employers’ relationships are based on social exchange (Baran et al., 2012). This was propounded by Eisenbeiserger et al., (1986), who examined employees’ beliefs of how organizations support them and their reciprocal behaviour. These beliefs are termed “POS”, a central construct in OST.

OST emanates from the Social Support Theory (SST) and Blau’s (1964) Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Ahmed et al., 2011; Ahmed, 2012; Baran et al., 2012). Notably, it was in SST that the concept of support dependency among human societies was explicitly propounded. This theory argues that human beings as social animals are interdependent and always involved in an exchange relation. This was shown to partly determine human actions, emotions, moods, cognitive outcomes and perceptions (Ahmed et al., ibid.; Ahmed, ibid.). The perception of support and its influence on exchange relation were then advanced in the Social Exchange Theory built on the concept of “reciprocity norms”.
According to this theory, “an individual who supplies rewarding services to another obligates him to discharge this obligation; the second must furnish benefits to the first in turn” (Blau, 1964, p. 89). Such obligation exchange relations had its genesis in the concept of “reciprocity” in the writings of Gouldner (1960), which implied “the ability of one party offering something valuable for the benefit offered by another party”. High quality exchanges are determined by a “cost-benefit” balance in offerings between the parties involved in exchange (Ekeh, 1974).

According to OST, employees develop POS in response to tangible incentives (such as wages and fringe benefits like medical insurance), the fulfilment of socio-emotional needs (like self-esteem, respect, approval, caring, and affiliation) and the organization’s readiness to reward increased efforts made on its behalf (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995). According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (ibid.), POS has three main antecedents: fairness, favourableness of organizational rewards and job conditions (such as training, autonomy, role stressors), and supervisor support. The antecedents of POS also reflect the concept of “discretionary treatment”, meaning that employees value resources more if they are voluntarily given rather than forced. Consequently, POS elicits employees’ commitment, performance, citizenship behaviour, withdrawal behaviours, job-related affect (like positive mood, job satisfaction, safety), and strain (Rhoades & Eisenberger, ibid.). Baran et al. (2012) summarize three processes in which POS operates to achieve its consequences: first, based on norms of reciprocity, employees who perceive organizational support feel obligated to reciprocate towards the organization; second, POS helps to fulfill socio-emotional needs, leading to organizational membership and role status becoming part of one’s social identity and helping to reduce occupational strain and to enhance employee well-being; and third, POS helps to determine the organization’s readiness to reward efforts made on its behalf. On the other hand, supervisor support is related to POS to the extent the supervisor is viewed as an agent or representative acting on behalf of the organization (Ahmed, 2012). According to Levinson (1965), deeds of agents are deeds of organizations, and therefore, care from agents will be considered as care from the organization.

Drawing from POS antecedents and consequences, it is logical to reason that behavioural outcomes of POS would include increases in in-role and extra-role performance and decreases in withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism and turnover. This is because, by increasing commitment, citizenship behaviour and reducing withdrawal behaviour, POS reduces employees’ turnover and fosters retention. Equally, it could be inferred that employees with a high POS are likely to be loyal to the organization, forming glue that would bind them to “voice” instead of “exit” in times of dissatisfaction. The concepts of Exit, Voice and Loyalty are explicit in the writings of Hirschman (1970), who noted that people choose either to leave
the organization (exit), or stay and express their displeasure (voice) on confronting problems in the workplace, depending on their loyalties. Hirschman further indicated that “employees’ loyalty” acts as a contingency that shapes the employee’s decision whether to stay and ‘fight’, and or cut bait and leave. While it is not evident under what contextual conditions loyalty influences voice above exit, it is logically reasonable that POS influences loyalty. OST/POS shows the need for the organization to appreciate and reward employees’ efforts for reciprocal return. Such an exchange ought to be cost-benefit balanced to elicit quality-felt obligation reciprocals, which could enhance retention in remote rural contexts. However, at the organizational level, exchange involves the management, leaders/supervisors and subordinates. That makes exchange behaviours even more challenging and difficult to be well captured within OST/POS alone. That brings in LMXs and CWXs perspectives.

4.2.1.2 Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is sometimes referred to as “the relationship-based approach to leadership” (Schriesheim, Stephanie & Claudia, 1999). LMX has its roots in the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and assumes that relationships of varying quality develop between leaders (or supervisors) and different subordinates in working places (DeConinck, 2009; Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Schriesheim, Stephanie & Claudia, ibid.). LMX basically focuses on this dyadic relationship (DeConinck, ibid.; Erdogan & Jeanne, ibid.). It is presumed that the quality of the relationship that develops between a leader and a follower is predictive of outcomes (attitudes and behaviour) at the individual, group, and organizational levels of analysis (Gerstner & Day, ibid.; Liden et al., 1997). Two groups of exchange relationships are identified: “in-group” or high-quality LMX or “trusted assistants”, and “out-group” or low-quality LMX or “hired hands” (DeConinck, ibid.; Erdogan & Jeanne, ibid.; Gerstner & Day, ibid.; Scandura, 1999; Schriesheim, Stephanie & Claudia, ibid.). It is shown that varying styles of leadership or exchanges apply across these groups (DeConinck, ibid.; Erdogan & Jeanne, ibid.; Schriesheim, Stephanie & Claudia, ibid.). On the one hand, leaders develop high-quality exchanges with members of in-group or high-quality LMX. The exchange relationship is characterized by trust, liking, respect, mutual support, attention, loyalty, obligation, and a more negotiating latitude, extending far beyond the employment contract (DeConinck, ibid.; Erdogan & Jeanne, ibid.; Schriesheim, Stephanie & Claudia, ibid.). Members of this group are likely to experience less role-related stress (role overload, role insufficiency, role ambiguity and conflict) (Scandura, ibid.). On the other hand, leaders form lower quality exchanges with members of out-group or low-quality LMX. The exchange relationship is limited to the provisions of an employment contract. Relationships also display less loyalty, respect, and liking between the
subordinate and supervisor and involves autocratic decision-making (DeConinck, ibid.; Erdogan & Jeanne, ibid.). Evidence indicates that members of this group are in most cases likely to file grievances (Scandura, ibid.).

### 4.2.1.3 Coworkers’ Exchange (CWX)

Coworkers have been noted as central to workgroup culture and form a distinguished basis for organizational commitment and social support (Leah & Colin, 2013). CWXs describe the dyadic relationship shared by two peers who report to the same manager (Sherony & Green, 2002). As noted in LMXs, CWXs form varying exchange relationships among themselves, characterized by different levels of trust, respect and loyalty (Leah & Colin, ibid.; Sherony & Green, ibid.). Coworkers are important as they define the social environment, serve as organizational guides (clarifying role ambiguity, mitigating conflicts and ameliorating overload), help to reduce peer turnover intentions and may be able to satisfy interpersonal and professional needs far beyond what LMX can do (Clay & Olitt, 2012; Siegal, 2000; Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Basford & Offermann, 2012). Several reasons for coworkers’ friendship formation are identifiable in the literature, including job security, career advancement, information access, shared similarities, finding a workplace surrogate that resembles important others (like friends, family members); or physical proximity (Dindia, 2002a, b). A positive coworker climate is associated with increased attendance, task performance, instrumental collegial support, newcomers’ socialization, while antagonistic peer relationships are likely to prompt competition and aggression fuelled by envy of differences in benefits and colleagues’ undermining behaviours (Leah & Colin, ibid.).

**LMXs, CWXs and group dynamics**

Evidence suggests that high quality leader–member relations act as forces (affective\(^{32}\) and calculative\(^{33}\) that embed staff in the organization, influencing their retention (Ballinger, David & Schoorman, 2010). However, unequal relationships and treatments among different members of a workgroup are notable in LMX, which goes against the norms of equality, bringing up serious fairness and justices issues, which subsequently affect the workgroup cohesion, exchange relations and retention (DeConinck, 2009; Leah & Colin, 2013; Scandura, 1999; Sherony & Green, 2002). Evidence indicates that LMX affects CWXs centrally because of unjust treatments between in-group and

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\(^{32}\) Affective forces are associated with benefits accrued by in-group members from positive LMX like trust or better communication with a leader.

\(^{33}\) Calculative forces emanate from the high utility related to perceived alternatives receivable from tangible benefits like protection, job latitudes, and extra resources to perform critical tasks by in-group members (Ballinger, David & Schoorman, 2010).
out-group members. Members of a specific group (based on LMXs) are likely to experience a strong positive friendship, which leads to high-quality CWXs, and conversely (Sherony & Green, ibid.). Leah and Colin (ibid.) observe that LMXs, CWXs, and perceptions of justice or injustice function interactively to determine certain workgroup dynamics. Scandura (ibid.) has argued that employees’ perception of justice in LMX positively influence job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and extra-role behaviour (such as organization citizenship), and conversely (Leah & Colin, ibid.). It is further argued that absenteeism and turnover might be negatively related to LMX and organizational justice variables, since those who perceive their leader as being fair may be less likely to psychologically and/or physically withdraw from work (Scandura, ibid.). It is noted in Leah and Colin (ibid.) that LMX differences within workgroups have been linked to decreased employee well-being and conversely.

In sum, both the OST/POS and LMX theories originate from the writings of Blau’s (1964) Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the concept of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). People in the organization trade off the cost and benefits accrued from the exchange relation. The higher perceived fairness across the “cost-benefit” of exchanges, the higher the positive reciprocal returns. Unfortunately, however, when members of the workgroups are treated differently, this leads to unjust perceptions. Such unjust treatment perceptions trigger, define and influence the formation and outcomes of varied coworkers’ exchange relations. Moreover, leaders with a high-quality exchange with those at the upper levels, or ‘high POS’ leaders, are expected to receive more resources compared to ‘low POS leaders’. The leader’s POS further affects CWXs and related outcomes. Since the high POS leader is expected to have more to offer and/or withhold as compared to a low POS leader, this similarly affects members of the workgroup formed within LMXs. For instance, with regard to the high POS leader, in-group members will have more to benefit and out-group ones more to lose as compared to a low POS leader (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007). Theories show the role of a fair exchange relationship, in other words, “support” within an organization as necessary to bind employees together and to the organization, for fostering retention subsequently.

4.2.2 The theoretical fit of the study

Within the current study focus, organizational support theories are useful. One of the key strengths of these theories specifically for this study is the fact that their suggested strategies do not rely on monetary resources, especially from

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34 High POS is the belief that the organization is willing to help, support, and reward leaders/supervisors (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). It is assumed that such a leader has greater access to resources (tangible and intangible) from the upper levels, is listened to, is trusted, and possessing greater influence in decisions, and so forth.
central government, but could be implemented within school level resources. Also, organizational support is broadly defined within these theories making it possible to capture all organizational members. Equally importantly, these theories indicate diverse exchange relations that prevail within the organizational context and their influences on members’ behavioural outcomes, teachers’ retention in this context. The next section about the ‘study conceptual framework’ gives wider perspectives on the issue.

4.3 The Study Conceptual Framework

Figure 3: Study conceptual framework

![Diagram showing the study conceptual framework]

Figure 3 presents the conceptual framework that guides the present study. The framework was informed by the literature reviewed and inspirations from organizational support, leader-member exchange and coworker exchange theories. The model explains the exchange relationship between school management and classroom teachers, viewed from organizational support perspectives. It also shows challenges which could be mitigated by supportive exchange practices, leading to retention. The two top boxes depict two major strands forming the question base of the current study.
As Figure 3 indicates, the study explores teachers’ retention in remote areas. It particularly focuses on challenges and support relevant to improving teachers’ stay in remote schools within remote contexts. One research question explores teachers’ perceived challenges of teacher retention in remote areas. Such challenges are conceptualized through teachers’ demographic characteristics as one proxy of teachers’ retention challenge. It also questions (from the teachers themselves) important aspects which they perceive as being sources of low retention within remote schools. The other research question explores relevant support at the school level that is significant to influence teachers’ retention. Questions such as how classroom teachers perceive supportive school heads and their peer teachers, how school heads perceive supportive classroom teachers, and, broadly, how these perceptions influence teachers’ intention to voice and/or exit remote schools are explored. It is assumed that challenges and support influence each other, since relevant support could mitigate some challenges and conversely. The model assumes that school management practices strongly influence how the classroom teachers themselves behave, as well as the management. It equally assumes that both challenges and support could influence satisfaction, voicing and retention on the one hand and dissatisfaction, exiting and attrition on the other. OST/POS, LMXs and CWXs are used to guide the study.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the theoretical perspectives in which this study is framed. The study is inspired by supportive theoretical viewpoints as reflected in the Organizational Support Theory (OST) and its central construct Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMXs) and Coworker Exchange Theory (CWXs). These theories serve to shed light on the various behavioural and exchange relational dynamics that exist among organizational (school) members. They therefore uncover how core groups (levels) within schools (school management and other school members) are likely to relate to each other, and the possible outcomes of these relationships as aligned to teachers’ turnover and retention. More importantly, a clear understanding of these exchange relationships in the school context could be helpful in designing and formulating teachers’ retention policies which are less ‘fiscal dependent’. However, given the complexity in exchanges within school contexts, the perceived balanced exchange relations are important but challenging, especially in remote schools, where life is more difficult and living is communally based. Having discussed the theoretical inspiration for this study, the chapter that follows discusses the methods and methodology adapted towards fulfilling the study aim and answering specific research questions.
Chapter Five: The Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology and methods used to collect and analyze data towards fulfilling this study aim. In the chapter, a number of issues are discussed: philosophical and paradigmatic inspirations; research design - including data collection phases, methods, participants and collection protocols; data analysis - particularly the analysis of interviews (focused group interviews and one-to-one interviews), the analysis of open-ended questions (in a questionnaire), and the analysis of surveys; legitimation; generalizability claims, limitations and ethical considerations.

5.1 Philosophical and paradigmatic inspirations

The study is inspired by pragmatic knowledge claims. Pragmatism allows the mixture of methods and methodologies in collecting and analyzing data (Creswell, 2003, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008), advocates immediate solution to the prevailing problem, and considers “valid” knowledge as what works in practice (Delanty, 2005). It was presumed that research questions could be best answered within this paradigm, resulting in pragmatic knowledge.

Contrary to purist proponents who concentrate on differences rather than similarities, pragmatists seek to find the best answers to research questions regardless of ontological, epistemological and axiological barriers. According to Onwuegbuzie and Nancy (2005), pragmatists contend that a false dichotomy exists between quantitative and qualitative approaches. They believe that quantitative methods are not necessarily positivist, nor are qualitative techniques necessarily hermeneutic. While a number of criticisms exist, one of them has been that, although positivists claim that the essence of science is objective verification and that their methods are objective, they significantly disregard the fact that many research decisions (from problem decision, instrument development, experimenting, analysis and so forth) are made throughout the research process, preceding objective verification decisions (Onwuegbuzie & Nancy, 2005). It has been argued, for instance, that
there is no such thing as a quantitative analysis without a qualitative frame underlying it, and that having a strict dichotomy would mean that the quantitative analysis does not really mean anything (Ercikan & Wolff-Michael, 2009). Interpretivists have equally been criticized, particularly for their claim, which seems to be extremely misleading, that multiple, contradictory, but valid accounts of the same phenomenon always exist as they lead many qualitative researchers to adopt an ‘anything goes’ relativist attitude without paying due attention to providing an adequate rationale for interpretations of their data (Onwuegbuzie & Nancy, ibid.). Consequently, pragmatists advocate integrating methods within a single study (Creswell, 1995). This is further supported by Sieber (1973), who argued that, since both qualitative and quantitative approaches contain inherent strengths and weaknesses, researchers should utilize the strengths of both techniques in order to better understand social phenomena.

This study therefore adheres to ontological and epistemological stances aligned with the production of pragmatic knowledge (Johnson & Larry, 2012). Ontologically, pragmatism advocates pluralism. It appreciates objective, subjective, and intersubjective realities and their interrelations. Epistemologically, it advocates practical, normally contextually specific knowledge. Moreover, pragmatism is interested in connecting theory and practice, understanding multiple causation (individual/particular to general) and connecting national and local interests and policies (Johnson & Larry, ibid.). The study regards knowledge as being subjectively constructed by teachers (individually and in groups) and influenced by contexts within their everyday life (Bryman, 2012; Buckingham & Peter, 2004; Delanty, 2005; Crabtree & William, 1999; Searle, 1995). Within this study’s focus and interests, teachers are assumed to be better positioned than any other person not directly involved in teachers’ problems to realize what challenges and support from the school are relevant to making them stay or leave. However, their suggestions regarding this issue have not so far been mapped out systematically. To this end, the relevant knowledge was acquired through teachers responding to various questions and discussions. However, such knowledge was further interpreted from a teacher perspective (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993) and in the light of an area-theoretical base for actions of change to be suggested.

In line with pragmatic philosophies, the study has adopted a mixed methods approach. This is an empirical research design that brings together quantitative data (and methods) and qualitative data (and methods) (Punch, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). According to Onwuegbuzie and Nancy (2005), pragmatists ascribe to the philosophy that the research question should drive the method(s) used, believing that ‘epistemological purity does not get research done’. Important to note is that researchers who ascribe to epistemological purity ignore the fact that research methodologies are simply
tools that are designed to aid our understanding of the world (Onwuegbuzie & Nancy, ibid.)

Specifically, the choice of mixed methods approach was motivated for the following reasons (Johnson & Larry, 2012):

First, Completeness. A mixed methods design allowed the combination of approaches to provide a comprehensive account of the study issue.

Second, Instrument development. Results from different methods informed each other towards instrument development.

Third, Complementarity. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were used to elaborate, enhance, illustrate, and clarify each other.

5.2 Research design

To achieve meaningful positioning and connect to the empirical world (Bryman, 2012; Hartas, 2010; Punch, 2006, 2011) the study was organized into three data collection phases, which were sequentially conducted. The aim of this division was to ensure that the research questions are thoroughly answered. The study design is summarized in Figure 4. This figure shows the exploratory qualitative data that were first collected (in the pilot phase), followed by explanatory and confirmatory quantitative data in the surveys, and then in turn by additional qualitative interviews to explore and help to interpret the earlier (survey) findings (Johnson & Larry, 2012). The time when and the area where each phase was conducted are also indicated. The area where data were collected is further discussed in the next section.

5.2.1 Study area

The study was carried out in the Dodoma region in Tanzania. Dodoma is one of twenty-five regions in Mainland Tanzania. It is situated in the central part of Tanzania. It is boarded by the Iringa region to the South, the Singida region to the West, the Manyara region to the North, the Tanga region to the North East and the Morogoro region to the East. The region has an area of 41,311 square kilometres, of which 2,593,000 hectares is arable land. According to the 2012 Tanzanian population and housing census, the region has a total population of 2,041,085 (1,014,963 males and 1,026,122 females). Its annual population growth rate and density was 2.3% and 41 people per square kilometre, respectively, according to that census. This region was chosen for several reasons.
Figure 4: Sequential mixed design

Key: “qual” means qualitative, “quan” means quantitative, line shows sequential direction, capital letters denote high priority or weight, and lower case letters denote lower priority or weight (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2004)

Compared to other regions in Mainland Tanzania (cf. Kessy et al., 2011a, b), Dodoma belongs to regions containing many adults (about 31%) without education35; a region where very few households (about 49%) are located within 2 km of a primary school and 6 km from a dispensary and/or health centre; a region where a significant percentage of individuals (about 13%) live

35 It is documented that about 20% of adults had no education in Mainland Tanzania by 2012 (NBS, 2013a). While most households consist of five people on average, statistics show, overall, that about 73% of those household members (5 years and above) are literate, implying about 27% illiterate (NBS, 2013a).
below the food poverty line, about 34% below the basic needs poverty line, and one of the ten regions with the most households (32%) living below the poverty line (Kessy et al., 2011a). Moreover, Dodoma, as part of central Tanzania, has other problems including poor climatic/weather conditions (most parts are semi-desert with heavy droughts and, when the rain falls, it is normally heavy, leading to floods and destruction); a poor transportation and communication infrastructure in most parts of the region; the presence of diseases like eye infections, chest-related diseases, trachoma, malaria and dysentery; land and tribal conflicts, violence and theft-related crimes, wild animals and vermin (Kessy et al., 2011b).

Equally importantly, the region has quite a long standing record of not achieving satisfactorily in national examinations (cf. Mkumbo, 2012). Apart from other factors affecting the region at large, as documented, for instance, in Kessy and colleagues (2011a, b), its poor academic records could be linked to deficits in important teaching and learning components. A review of the 2013 government education reports for the Dodoma region indicates shortages in important infrastructure and furniture. Administratively, the region is divided into seven districts, namely Dodoma Urban, Chamwino, Bahi, Kondoa, Chemba, Mpwapwa and Kongwa. The three districts of Chemba, Kondoa and Mpwapwa were used in this study.

In sum, the Dodoma region and the three chosen districts display serious hardships in terms of the working and living environment for teachers. Even more importantly, there is a significant shortage of teachers and of other important teaching and learning facilities. It is therefore noted as being among the most representative regions as far as teacher retention problems are concerned. Within a similar line of reasoning, schools and their teachers were qualified for inclusion in the study. However, additionally, schools with an even larger shortage of teachers, teaching and learning facilities, as well as relatively poor academic records and locations far (at least 30 km) from district municipalities were specifically chosen. Next, data collection practices are discussed.

36 It is documented that about 28.2% of population in Mainland Tanzania falls below the basic needs poverty line, and 9.7% below the food poverty line (extremely poor) [NBS, 2013b]. The poverty difference is significant between urban and rural population. Rural households are much poorer than those in urban areas. More than 84.1% of the poor population lives in rural areas.

37 Infrastructure and Furniture include Classroom, teachers’ housing, latrines, administration blocks, laboratory, stores, hostels, students’ tables and desks, cupboards, teachers’ chairs and tables, shelves and beds (SEDP Report, URT, Dodoma, 2013)
5.3 Data collection phases, methods, participants and collection protocols

In this study, a sequential model of data collection was used (Creswell, 2003; 2009). The model and methods supported a vigorous gathering of data as per research aim, questions, and a mixed research adaption rationale (Johnson & Larry, 2012). In mixed research, data can be collected from the same or different samples (Johnson & Larry, ibid.). In this study, the pilot sample was not used in the surveys; however, a similar sample was involved in both the surveys and the follow-up interviews. The study population was defined as secondary school teachers in remote contexts in Tanzania (Cohen et al., 2011; Hartas, 2010). The study sample, sampling techniques, data collection methods and analysis techniques are summarized in Table 1

Table 1. Sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques across study phases

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Table 1 summarizes three keys issues across the three phases of the study’s data collection. First, the *study sample* (sample item and specific number), the sampling techniques used and their choice rationale. It is notable from Table 1 that a
total of 28 schools were used in the study, five in the pilot and 23\textsuperscript{38} in surveys (and follow-up interviews). The study sample also included 27 school heads (SHs), and 231 classroom teachers (CTs). Demographically, teachers included in the sample could be reflected in Table 8. They are generally males, young (mostly above twenty-five but less than thirty-six years), with adequate educational qualifications (most of them having a Bachelor’s Degree in Education), and are relatively experienced (most of them having been in the current schools and in the teaching profession for at least four years). It is equally notable from Table 1 that two major techniques were used to sample respondents. These are purposive and simple random\textsuperscript{39} sampling.

Second, data collection methods used and their operationalization. Table 1 shows that, in total, two major methods were used to collect data. These are interviews [focused group interviews (FGIs), and one-to-one interviews (OOIs)], and questionnaires. For the entire study, a total of three FGIs and fourteen OOIs were conducted; and 214 questionnaires were collected. As to the response rates, five FGIs were planned and three were conducted (a 60% response rate); nineteen OOIs were planned and fourteen conducted (a 74% response rate); and 237 questionnaires were administered and 214 collected (90.3% response rate). Therefore, despite some attrition, the response rate was satisfactory for producing authentic findings in that respect. Those who did not participate (dropouts) were either occupied with other activities during the data collection period, or simply did not want to participate for their own reasons. Since nobody was forced to participate (as is further explained in the third aspect of the section voluntary participation’ of the ethical consideration), dropout decisions were respected by the researcher.

Third, data analysis techniques used. Generally, mixed methods data analysis (thematic, descriptive statistics, qualitization and quantitization) techniques were used, as discussed further in the data analysis sections. In the next few sections, each specific data collection phase is discussed.

\textsuperscript{38} As noted earlier, a similar sample was used in surveys and follow-up interviews. Therefore, four schools used in the follow-up phase were chosen among the twenty-three schools previously used in the surveys.

\textsuperscript{39} As highlighted elsewhere in this text, the study population was defined by secondary schools teachers in remote contexts in Tanzania. While the exact number of these teachers (in Tanzania at large) is difficult to obtain, what is clear is that most remote schools have teacher shortages. Moreover, even those who are on the school roster cannot all be found at school at once, at any time, or every day. Implicitly, in the contexts of this study it is not a question of there being many teachers in remote schools such that few were to be included as sample. Rather, in this study, simple random sampling is applied to mean that any teacher who was found at a school which was already purposefully sampled had equal chance of being included in the sample. In that sense, any teacher who was found at school during the data collection visit and was willing to participate was included. Notably, simple random sampling was even used to get respondents to be interviewed and filling questionnaires. This is mainly because the topic under investigation is common to all teachers in remote schools, so specialized/special knowledge was not needed to obtain the correct answers. This explains why all teachers, as long as they were teaching in remote schools qualified for both interviews and for filling in questionnaires.
5.3.1 Pilot study

This pre-study (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001; Thabane et al., 2010) served two major purposes: first, testing the research instruments consisting of interviews and questionnaires, checking data collection bureaucracies and logistics, and testing research key concepts and ideas (van Teijlingen & Hundley, ibid.); second, clearly refining the study focus, specific aim and questions and constructing the questionnaire (Frankland & Bloor, 1999; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Thabane et al., 2010). From the pilot study the researcher was able to ascertain major themes and sub-themes emphasized by a majority of the respondents, indicating their core concerns regarding the issue of teachers’ retention in remote contexts. These “themes” were used to construct the questionnaire used to collect data in the surveys. Additionally, the pilot study helped to increase the content validity of the questionnaire (Creswell, 2003). The time when an area where the pilot study was conducted is summarized in Figure 4 and the data operationalization in Table 1. The methods used to collect pilot data are further clarified below. A sample of guiding questions for the pilot study can be seen in Appendix A on page 218.

- **Focused Group Interviews (henceforth, FGIs).** FGIs were preferred for several reasons. First, through group interaction, diverse realistic and more thoroughly considered ideas were uncovered during the study (Bryman, 2012; Punch, 2011). In addition, more teachers were gathered together in a short while, which quickly generated a wealth of data. Equally, since these teachers work together (in the same schools), this was thought to increase the group’s ability to discuss and interact (King & Christine, 2010).
  - Focused group interviews (FGIs) were conducted in schools. The FGI venue was arranged in consultation with the teachers. In most cases, they took place in available classrooms. Before starting the FGIs, efforts were made to ensure that the environment was cool (quiet) enough to allow proper discussion (with a minimum of interruptions) and quality recording. Moreover, venues for conducting FGIs ensured that the participants were seated comfortably so that they could see the researcher and each other properly. Since most FGIs were conducted in classrooms, the desks were arranged such that participants could sit facing each other in a circle.
  - The discussion started with an introductory note whereby the researcher provided reasons why the topic is important, why they were chosen to participate and what is expected from them. Discussants were asked for their consent to be recorded and given space to ask any questions before starting.
  - The size of the focus group varied between six and eight participants (Kvæle & Brinkmann, 2009). The number was adequate, as participants were acquainted with the topic and larger groups would be challenging.
to moderate and record (Bryman, 2012). The researcher acted as moderator, introducing discussion topics and facilitating the interchange (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The moderator therefore ensured balanced participation and the sharing of understanding, reflecting, rephrasing, summarizing and asking for further clarification on emerging issues as the need arose, involving all discussants. A listening ear, an interest in and attention to what was discussed was ensured by the moderator. This mitigated the effect of discussants’ ‘restricted choice and positions’ of issues being discussed associated with group homogeneity (King & Christine, 2010). Moreover, discussants were given freedom to speak out their ideas without interference. However, the moderator made sure that the discussion was concentrated to the topical issue. That mitigated effects related to discussants with a domineering behaviour, ensuring that the moderator’s control was not reduced due to group interaction, and minimizing the possibility of resulting in chaotic interview transcripts because of directionless FGIs (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Before closing, the researcher noted the key issues emerging from the discussion and asked the discussants if they had anything else to add.

More male teachers were found in remote schools compared to female, which explains the gender differences among participants (see Table 1).

Three FGIs were conducted, in sessions ranging from sixty to ninety minutes. The discussion was semi-structured and flexible to accommodate new issues raised by participants. Recording (both audio recording and note taking) took place in order to make transcriptions afterwards.

- **Questionnaire.** “Supervised self-completion questionnaires” were used (Bryman, 2012). Since the schools were geographically dispersed, the method was easier to administer, gathering large-scale data within a short while, saving both costs and time. Moreover, it allowed freedom for respondents to give their answers without being interfered with or influenced by the researcher, and thus enhancing more thoughtful answers (Bryman, ibid.). Only open-ended questions were used because, first, the scale of the study was small, and secondly, the aim was to explore and generate as many items as possible to be subsequently used to inform the questionnaire’s fixed-choice answers (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2011).

The questions in the classroom teachers’ questionnaire were translated into Swahili to elicit a better and easier response from them. However,

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40 Uncertainty about how interacting in a group influences what each individual participant contributes is an enduring conundrum. A tendency to conform and develop group norms might imply that opinions expressed lack validity in a more subjective sense. Interacting in a group will inevitably affect what some people say - some participants may feel more reticent as part of a group and be more vocal in a one-to-one interview (King & Christine, 2010, p. 69).
respondents were given the choice to respond either in English or Swahili, or a mix of both languages. While quite a few classroom teachers responded in mixed languages, the majority used Swahili. On the other hand, school heads’ questionnaires were written in English. Like the classroom teachers, school heads were also given the choice to respond in either English or Swahili, or to mix. However, all of them responded in English. Moreover, enough space was provided to enhance more and diverse responses. Questionnaires were administered and collected by the researcher in person. Some of the questionnaires were filled in and collected on the same day. Others were collected one or two days from the day of their administration.

- **One-to-one semi-structured interviews.** Only one face-to-face interview was made with a school head. This was for convenience’ sake, as this school head preferred an interview discussion to responding to a questionnaire. The pilot study was followed by ‘surveys’.

### 5.3.2 Surveys

Surveys were used because, first, they allowed gathering data on a wide target population at once, which made them economical and efficient. Secondly and more importantly, they enabled drawing a larger picture from the findings regarding the target focus (Cohen et al., 2011). The survey information was gathered using questionnaires (Cohen et al., ibid.), whereby both open- and closed-ended questions were used, including more of the latter type. Open questions were used to tap personal comments from respondents which could not have been included in the closed-ended questions. Cohen et al., (ibid.) insist that open-ended responses might contain the “gems” of information that might not be captured in closed-ended questions. During the surveys, the questionnaires were administered and collected by the researcher and the trained research assistant. The time and place of the surveys are specified in Figure 4 and data operationalization in Table 1. The sample survey questions are presented in Appendix B on page 220. Surveys were followed by a few follow-up interviews.

### 5.3.3 Follow-up interviews

The follow-up interviews phase was specially arranged to find more explanations of ‘specific issues’ which emerged with great emphasis in the survey phase without being properly clarified (Bryman, 2012). Figure 4 summarizes the time and place of the interviews and Table 1 its operationalization.

Thirteen follow-up semi-structured interviews (three with school heads and ten with classroom teachers) were conducted by the researcher. Since the sample was chosen from those used in surveys, it was easy to handle, as the researcher was already familiar with the rapport and the participants were very
cooperative. Besides, the latter were already aware of the purpose of the study.
The interview sessions were guided by some questions which the researcher
thought important for further clarification. Some of them included: (i) How
did the perceived organizational support help teachers to cope with
demotivating remote conditions?, (ii) What kind of support does the school
head give classroom teachers? Who are mostly considered? How does this
affect the perceived organization support?, (iii) Why do school community
conflicts take place in remote schools? How can the school management
support its solution?, (iv) What activities could be organized at the school
level to unite teachers?, (v) What frameworks exist at the school level for
listening to and resolving teachers’ grievances and conflicts?, (vi) How can
school management support teachers in solving accommodation problems in
remote schools?, (vii) What alternative economic activities can teachers
choose in remote schools, and how can the school management support that?
Follow-up questions were posed during the interview process. They were
addressed to both school heads and classroom teachers to obtain an overall
picture across both teacher categories.

The interviews were conducted in Swahili, the language best known by the
majority of the teachers. However, they were able to mix English and Swahili
depending on what they felt comfortable with. Interviews with school heads
were conducted in their offices, while those with classroom teachers were
conducted in classrooms after they had finished classes or in empty
classrooms. The interview secession varied across participants, but each
session took thirty minutes on average. With the participants’ consent, the
interview sessions were recorded by a digital voice recorder for later retrieval
during the transcription. The transcription was done verbatim by the
researcher himself, as discussed earlier in connection with the focused group
discussion. Transcripts were stored in a password secured computer and hard
copies were produced. After presenting how data were collected in phases, the
next section discusses how the data were analyzed.

5.4 Data analysis

In this study, data were generated from: (i) focused group interviews (FGIs),
(ii) One-to-one interviews (OOIs), (iii) Open-ended questionnaires responses,
and (iv) Closed-ended questionnaire response surveys. Notably, both open and
closed-ended questions were used, depending on the phase (see the design in
Figure 4 and appendices). For instance, in the first phase (the pilot study), only
open questions were used. In phase two (surveys), both open and closed
questions were used, with many closed questions compared to open ones. In
phase three (follow-up interviews) only open-ended questions were used.
Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered.
The data analysis starts by presenting a general picture of the techniques used and the procedures followed (sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2, and 5.4.3). Next, under sections 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 the analysis of each specific data type is discussed.

5.4.1 Data analysis techniques
In this study “mixed methods data analysis techniques” (Johnson & Larry, 2012) were concurrently and sequentially applied, depending on the specific need at specific phase of the analysis. The intention was to ensure a generation of meaningful and relevant data findings as per research aim, question, and data collected at hand. The analysis was made at the end of each data collection phase.

- **Concurrent - Monodata**[^41] - **Multianalysis**[^42] - a technique used to analyze data from the pilot study and follow-up interviews. This included the analysis of only qualitative data (monodata), using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques concurrently.

- **Concurrent Multitype mixed analysis** (Multidata[^43]-multianalysis) - a technique used in the analysis of survey data in the questionnaire. Quantitative techniques were used to analyze closed-ended questions and qualitative techniques for open-ended questions.

5.4.2 Analytical procedures
- **Data were first “reduced” (Data Reduction).** According to Johnson and Larry (2012), data reduction means reducing the number of dimensions in the quantitative data (e.g., via descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis) and/or in the qualitative data (e.g., via thematic analysis, memoing). In this study, data reduction was done as follows:
  - **Qualitative Data.** Thematic analysis was used to identify emerging ‘themes’.
  - **Quantitative Data.** The coded five/six-scale measures (1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree” or 1 = “more critical” to 6 = “less critical”) were reduced through descriptive statistics, with the help of the SPSS programme.

- Secondly, **Displayed Data.** This means a visual description of data, for instance using tables and graphs for quantitative data; and/or graphs, charts, matrices, checklists, rubrics, networks, and Venn diagrams for qualitative data (Johnson & Larry, 2012). In this study, data were displayed as follows: -

[^41]: Monodata means one data type only (either qualitative or quantitative)
[^42]: Multianalysis means analyzing data using both qualitative and quantitative techniques.
[^43]: Multidata means using two types of data (both qualitative and quantitative)
Qualitative Data: Themes and sub-themes were summarized and presented in tables. Each specific question was presented in its specific table.

Quantitative Data: Frequency tables were used to summarize and present quantitative data. Again, each specific question was summarized in its specific table.

Third, Data “transformation”: This involves quantitizing (converting qualitative data into quantitative data) and/or qualitizing (converting quantitative data into qualitative data) (cf. Caracelli & Jennifer, 1993; Driscoll et al., 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Teddlie & Stringfield, 1993; Johnson & Larry, 2012). In this study, data were transformed as follows:-

Quantitizing: The qualitative ‘themes’ generated were converted into numerical form using ‘tallying techniques’ in order to enable a more complete description and/or interpretation of a target population. By tallying is meant that each theme was given a number or sign (such as /) whenever appearing in the data set. Each single sign counts as ‘one’. Signs like /// would mean that the theme appeared three times in the entire data set. Tallies were counted and the total was found at the end of the process. This allowed the researcher to understand how often various categories or statements or themes occurred in the qualitative data, rather than knowing what categories or statements had just occurred (Johnson & Larry, 2012). Moreover, counting (quantitizing) not only adds empirical precision to native descriptions (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011) but equally helps the researcher to be analytically honest, as a protection against bias (Miles et al., 2014).

Qualitizing: Statistical responses summarized from SPSS were merged, leading to participants being categorized into mainly two groups of either “Agreeing”/ “Disagreeing” or “More Critical”/ “Less Critical”. The merging depended on the rating scale used, as some questions had 5 and others 6 rating scales. On the other hand, regardless of the number of scale measures used, all rating responses either ranged from “more pressing/critical” or “strongly agree” to “least pressing/critical” or “strongly disagree”. Therefore, the first two or three rating measures (depending on the specific question-rating measure used) were merged together. Those in the “most pressing/ strongly agree” category were merged to form “agreeing group” and conversely. Such analyses provided meaningful simplified narrative descriptions of data from a numerical perspective. What was equally important was that this helped to ‘holistically triangulate emerging key issues’. This is because quantitizing makes it possible to see what emerges strongly from qualitative data, especially from the pilot study which was used to construct survey questionnaires. Since many issues were presented in the survey, it became possible through qualitizing to holistically view a
few critical issues of great interest. It was also apparent that open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire generated few responses, which suggested the comprehensiveness of the pilot study coupled with quantizing techniques in generating the few key study issues of critical focus.

- Fourth, data were then “compared and integrated”. On the basis of the aim and design, both qualitized and quantitized data and quotes were compared and integrated to create a robust holistic account of a complete study phenomenon as contrasted to searching for similarities and differences.

5.4.3 Units of analysis
The study focus and henceforth unit of analysis was “Teachers’ in remote secondary schools” (Miles et al., 2014; Cohen et al., 2011). “Remote secondary schools” defined a “single group” of schools with certain common specific contextual characteristics constituting “remoteness” (Baxter & Susan, 2008). Teachers are specifically defined as school heads and classroom teachers.

After highlighting the data analysis in general, an analysis of specific data types is presented in the sections that follow.

5.5 Analysis of interviews
In this study, the interviews consisted of focused group interviews (FGIs) and one-to-one interviews (OOIs). In this section, a discussion follows of how data generated from these interviews were analyzed.

5.5.1 Analytical technique
Thematic analysis techniques were used to generate themes and sub-themes from the interview data. Braun and Clarke (2006) noted that a thematic analysis was a detailed method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. These authors further indicate that thematic analysis is not wed to any pre-existing theoretical framework, and hence it can be used within different theoretical frameworks, from the essentialist or realist method44, via the constructionist method45 to the contextualist method46 (Braun & Clarke, 2006). One of the reasons for the choice of thematic analysis in this study is its flexibility of fitting into several theoretical frameworks. This implies that it also fits better into mixed designs and pragmatic

44 Realist methods mainly report experiences, meanings and the reality of participants
45 Constructionist methods mainly examine the ways in which events, realities, meanings and experiences are the results of a range of discourses operating within society.
46 Contextualist methods entail those existing in-between essentialism and constructionism, like critical realism, which acknowledges how individuals make sense of their experience within the influence of a broader social context and yet remain aware of the various limits of reality.
epistemologies. Likewise, it aligns better with this study’s interest in generating themes emanating from research questions.

In the light of thematic analyses and pragmatic philosophies, qualitative data were more inductively approached, allowing themes to strongly develop from the actual data (Patton, 1990). The researcher’s theoretical and epistemological preconceptions did not strictly limit what was to be seen in the data. However, some theoretical thematic analysis cannot be strictly eliminated, especially not when trying to make sense of whether such themes are theoretically justifiable (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Four specific stages (data familiarization, coding, thematizing, theme revision/naming and reporting) were considered and followed (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

- **Data familiarization**: The data were collected mainly by the researcher himself and in a few instances with the support of a trained research assistant. This was when the researcher first started to acclimatize himself with data. Apart from that, the researcher read and listened to the data repeatedly to become familiar with the depth and breadth of the content before doing any coding. Since both the FGI and OOI data collected were recorded by the digital voice recorder (DVR), they were then transcribed verbatim by the researcher in person with the important statements noted. In general, seventeen transcripts were transcribed, generating about twenty single-spaced pages each.

- **Coding**: On the basis of the needs for research aim and questions, the most basic segments containing meaningful information were taken from the raw data. During the coding, the research and participants’ “context conservation” were considered. Therefore, code extracts of data were maintained. As Braun and Clarke (2006) note, any motif which was seen as important (addressing challenge and/or support related to teachers’ retention in remote areas) was considered important regardless of the number of its occurrence in the data set.

- **Thematizing and Quantitizing**: Different codes were checked to generate an overarching theme. Combining and separating codes was done on the basis of how they could best answer certain research questions and create meaning in a broader sense. Therefore, many statements, themes, and their definitive constructs were generated across research questions. As other statements and themes kept being repeated in the data set, a tallying technique (quantitizing) was used to see how different themes emerged with varying weight. Table 2 briefly exemplifies how statements, themes, defining concepts and tallies were generated and summarized, for instance on the issue of “school level sources of low teachers’ retention in remote areas”
Table 2. Thematizing and quantitizing of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements in FGIs/OOIs</th>
<th>Theme(s)</th>
<th>Definitive constructs</th>
<th>Tallies (Quantitizing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“...you see, the critical problem is houses…”</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Teachers’ houses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“school has no teachers’ houses, we have to find accommodation in the villages”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“…I think the first trouble here is where to live/stay...especially newcomers…”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Theme revision, naming and reporting**: Themes were checked and re-checked to see if there were other themes which could be further combined or separated. Themes were then defined and named by looking at their key interest for the study. In the text, themes are supported by data extracts demonstrating their presence and flavouring the context. The choice of extracts depended on how far they could enhance the comprehensiveness of the themes contextually and within research question interests.

**5.6 Analysis of open-ended questions (in questionnaires)**

Data were also generated using open-ended questions in questionnaires. Thematic analysis techniques and procedures were used again to generate themes and sub-themes from these data.

Since the questionnaires were administered to many respondents (see Table 1), many responses were elicited. For a meaningful and easy analysis each specific question was summarized in a separate table. For instance, one question was to tape what classroom teachers perceive to be critical school level sources of low retention in remote schools. Table 3 briefly exemplifies how recurring statements, themes, definitive constructs and tallies were summarized in analyzing this question. Each question was read at least twice across the entire set of questionnaires to identify statements, themes and their defining constructs. Then, since statements and themes kept being repeated in different questionnaires, tallying techniques were used to identify how themes of different weight emerged across the data set (quantitizing).
Table 3. Thematizing and quantitizing of open-ended questionnaire questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements (answers) in questionnaires</th>
<th>Theme(s)</th>
<th>Definitive Constructs</th>
<th>Tallies (Quantitizing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Lack of important social services…”</td>
<td>Lack of “social services”</td>
<td>Hospital, electricity, safe and clean water, etc.</td>
<td>/////////=10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Poor cooperation among collegial teachers”</td>
<td>Lack or poor “collegial support”</td>
<td>Other teachers not offering necessary assistance whenever required</td>
<td>//////=6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor cooperation from the community</td>
<td>Lack or poor “community support”</td>
<td>Community, especially parents not attending school meetings and paying agreed contributions</td>
<td>//////=4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combining and integrating interviews (FGIs and OOIs) with open-ended questionnaire responses (from the pilot study) and construction of the survey questionnaire

With the exception of follow-up interviews (third phase - see Figure 4), both interviews and open-ended questionnaires conducted in the pilot phase (first phase - see Figure 4) conveyed more or less similar information. Therefore, after thematically analyzing them separately, they were combined to generate a comprehensive picture of a specific question. For instance, both Tables 2 and 3 generated data on “school level sources of low retention in remote schools”, though by different methods. Therefore, similar statements and/or themes were combined and their tallies added together to generate an overall/comprehensive picture of responses from the entire data set on a specific question. For instance, if “lack of collegial support” as a theme had 12 tallies in Table 2 and 10 in Table 3, a combined table would show it having 22 tallies, and its statements and definitive constructs from both tables were put together in a meaningful way.

Construction of survey questionnaire

The final combined tables from the analysis of pilot data were used to construct a questionnaire for collecting survey data. While all statements and themes were considered, issues with more weight were given more emphasis. Therefore, statements and themes were used to construct ranking questions...
and questions which required respondents to show their extent of agreement or disagreement. Some statements/themes were combined/separated in constructing a questionnaire based on the extent to which they enhanced an easy and meaningful responding sequence as well as answering the research question. For instance, school level challenges to teachers’ retention in remote schools in the classroom teachers’ questionnaire were broken down into six sub-sections with the questions ranked (Appendix B: BI, section B, p. 220).

5.7 Analysis of surveys
Survey data were collected using questionnaires. This section discusses the analysis of “closed-ended questions” in the survey questionnaire. The analysis was done by the researcher in person.

5.7.1 Analysis-assisted software
In the analysis of closed-ended questions (surveys), the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) - a statistical analysis and data management software package was used. SPSS can take data from almost any type of file and use them to generate tabulated reports, charts, and plots of distributions and trends, descriptive statistics, and conduct complex statistical analyses (http://glimo.vub.ac.be/downloads/eng_spss_basic.pdf). Specifically for this study, the “IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21” was used.

5.7.2 Analytical Procedures
- Coding
The questionnaires and their responses were first given numerical codes and definitive value labels.
  - School heads’ questionnaires were coded from 1 to 17, and those for classroom teachers from 1 to 162. The numbers 1-17, 1-162 indicate the number of questionnaires. This helped to check specific information from a specific questionnaire in the data or variable views in the SPSS whenever required.
  - Responses were coded (given values and labels) depending on the number of response measures used. Value 1 was labelled as “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. On ranking questions, value 1 was

47 With respect to ranking questions (see Appendix B), there could possibly exist relationships between and across rankings. However, this study did not focus on those relational aspects. On the contrary, on the basis of the ranking responses this study was strongly interested in which challenges were ranked the highest. That was important to know to be able to solicit relatively few among the many listed ones that were perceived by the majority of teachers (in the survey as contrasted to the small pilot sample) as being more critical at the school level in remote areas. Ranked responses were subjected to SPSS, which made it possible to identify from a dataset which challenge was ranked the highest (most pressing challenge) and which received the lowest ranking from the number of respondents and their
labelled as most pressing challenge source (or group) and 3/4/5/6 as the least pressing challenge source (or group) depending on the number of challenge sources/groups presented.

- **Entering coded questionnaires and responses in the SPSS programme**
  The coded data were then entered into the SPSS programme. This was done according to the sections in the questionnaires. For instance, section B in the classroom teachers’ questionnaire (see Appendix B) was entered separately, given its specific file name, like all the other sections. The coded questionnaire was entered first and was then followed by entering answers.

- **Data inspection**
  After the entering process was done, the data were inspected to check for any possible errors or spurious values. This was done, for instance, by checking if the entered coded values/labels reflect the original coding and aligning them with specific responses in the respective questionnaires.

- **Frequency distribution, descriptive statistics conducted**
  After completing the data inspection, descriptive statistics was conducted. Such statistics focus on describing, summarizing, or explaining data, for example, by forming frequency distributions and generating graphical displays (Johnson & Larry, 2012). In this study, specifically, frequency distributions were made. These are tabular or graphical presentations of data that show each category of a variable and the frequency of its occurrence in the data set (Introduction to SPSS 21, College of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow, p. 17).

  Frequency tables were produced and then copied into Microsoft Word. Their output was given file names according to the specific question addressed and the coding. For instance, frequency tables produced from section C in the classroom teachers’ questionnaire (see Appendix B: B1, C) were put under one file named “Conditions for voice over exit amongst teachers in remote schools”. This facilitated the easy retrieval of information. Subsequently, all SPSS output files were stored in a folder in a password protected computer.

- **Frequency tables combined**
  Since SPSS produced a frequency table for each question/statement, many tables were produced, depending on the number of statements/questions presented in the questionnaire. For instance, Table 4 below includes five frequency tables, indicating how many school heads responded (by number and percentages) to each specific statement. With such huge information, it was difficult to make a meaningful presentation of all tables in a single study.

  The SPSS output was subjected to further mixed methods analysis techniques, ‘transformation, comparison and integration’, as discussed in this text.
Therefore, these tables were combined (depending on their suitability of addressing specific research question) and summarized in one major table. (See, for instance, Table 5 presenting a combination of all five frequency tables produced by SPSS from Table 4.)

### Table 4. School heads’ perceived collegial support and retention effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>1(SD)</th>
<th>2(D)</th>
<th>3(NS)</th>
<th>4(A)</th>
<th>5(SA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ retention support to CTs?</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs feel that CTs appreciate SHs’ extra retention efforts?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ CTs’ retention performance and commitment?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs think that increased CWs’ support could increase teachers’ commitment and stay in remote schools?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs think that CTs’ PSLS contribute to CTs’ felt obligations to stay in a school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key: SD = Strongly Agree, D = Disagree, NS = Not Sure, A = Agree, and SA = Strongly Agree. SHs’ = School Heads’, CTs’ = classroom teachers’. School heads were asked to put a tick (√) in the appropriate box according to the extent to which they felt the statement to be correct.*

### Table 5. Five SPSS output tables from Table Four combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>1(SD)</th>
<th>2(D)</th>
<th>3(NS)</th>
<th>4(A)</th>
<th>5(SA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ retention support to CTs?</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs feel that CTs appreciate SHs’ extra retention efforts?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ CTs’ retention performance and commitment?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs think that increased CWs’ support could increase teachers’ commitment and stay in remote schools?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs think that CTs’ PSLS contribute to CTs’ felt obligations to stay in a school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Qualitizing**  
The combined and summarized frequency distribution output data from SPSS were then qualitized for easy presentation and description. See Table 6 as an example of qualitized data from Table 5.
Table 6. Example of Table Five results being qualitized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summarized Responses</th>
<th>Agreement Group (\sum(4 &amp; 5))</th>
<th>Disagreeing Group (\sum(1 &amp; 2))</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ retention support to CTs?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs feel that CTs appreciate SHs’ extra retention efforts?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influence SHs’ CTs’ retention performance and commitment?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs think that increased CWs’ support could increase teachers’ commitment and stay in remote school?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do SHs think that CTs’ PSLS contribute to CTs’ felt obligations to stay in a school?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.8 Legitimation

Legitimation (validity and reliability) issues in mixed research are discussed in connection with four methodological/research paradigm domains: philosophical assumptions and stance; inquiry logic(s); guideline(s) for research practice; and socio-political commitments (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Greene, 2006). Across these domains, a number of legitimation issues, to include inside-outside, paradigmatic mixing, commensurability, weakness minimization, sequential, conversion, sample integration, and political issues are notable. There is no shortage of examples on the uses of these mixed methods legitimation concepts/aspects (cf. Etheredge, 2006; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2004, 2006; Johnson et al., 2007; Morgan, 2007; Teddlie & Stringfield, 1993). In this study context, the significant legitimation practices adhered to are clarified below:

- **Inside-outside validity**: “The extent to which the researcher adequately and accurately understands, uses, and presents the participants’ emic and researcher’s etic viewpoints” (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Larry, 2012). To enhance this validity, the researcher spent about seven months in the field to build the necessary rapport for making participants open up. The researcher’s familiarity with the study context enhanced his understanding of participants’ views from
their own perspectives. Further, the data gathered were read and reread several times to create a greater awareness of issues beyond the written words. Moreover, participants’ voices are presented in the text.

- **Paradigmatic validity:** This is about the extent to which research philosophical beliefs are clearly explained (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Larry, 2012). Epistemologically, it was made evident that the knowledge from this research is “pragmatic”, as best constructed by the teachers themselves contextually and shaped within the field theoretical frame. In that sense, what works ontologically in practice is assumed to be real knowledge. The study assumed the existence of subjective multiple realities, with majority realities informing “group reality”. Equally, ethical issues were clearly observed during the research process and clearly explained in the report. Moreover, the methodological routes taken are elaborated on in detail, and the report mixes tables, words and numbers of comprehensive account.

- **Commensurability mixing validity.** This reflects the extent to which the meta-inferences made in mixed research reflect a mixed worldview (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Morgan, 2007; Johnson & Larry, 2012). Both qualitative and quantitative aspects are well mixed and integrated in the presentation and writing. Such a mix was produced to enhance the meaningful answering of the research questions.

- **Weakness minimization validity:** Both qualitative and quantitative data were used to enhance and strengthen the final account of the issue studied (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Larry, 2012). For instance, follow-up interviews were used to clarify unclear issues presented in the quantitative survey data, resolving possible misapprehensions of participants’ thoughts.

- **Sequential validity.** This deals with the effects the order of phases within a study might have on the quality of the research conducted and its findings (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The sequence used in this study allowed for an earlier focus and systematic oscillation in searching answers to the research questions. Starting with a survey questionnaire in a larger sample in a relatively less explored topic like this in the Tanzanian context could have subjected the study to the risk of including irrelevant issues in the questionnaire, hence reducing its content validity. It is inferred that reversing the order could have either produced less robust findings or prolonged the research data collection period.

- **Conversion validity.** This refers to the degree to which quantitizing or qualitizing yields high-quality meta-inferences (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Larry, 2012). In this study, qualitative data were quantitized through counting and tallying techniques, while quantitative data from SPSS were qualitized by being put into
categories. The conversions were made after carefully reading and re-reading qualitative and quantitative data generated from thematic and SPSS analyses. Such familiarity helped seeing clearly which data to be put together and conversely. This is further explained in connection with the third mitigation strategy of limitation (section 5.10 on page 93)

- **Sample integration validity.** To enhance this validity, samples across the three phases were defined by the similar contextual characteristic of “remoteness” and were drawn from the same region, albeit from different districts and schools. This ensures that all teachers in the study sample have experienced more or less similar situations. Moreover, the same sample as the one used in the survey questionnaire was followed in the interviews to mitigate belief differentials likely to occur due to changing samples.

- **Political validity.** The study insists on the relevance of retaining teachers because of their “values” in meeting Tanzania’s vision 2025 and other national/international agendas. Most issues discussed entail giving “voice” to teachers and the teaching profession. The study does not attempt to offend or throw blame on anyone. Moreover, bearing in mind the critical need for teachers in Tanzania, the acute and growing shortage of teachers and the governments’ financial difficulties which make financial retention strategies difficult to achieve, it is inferred that findings and recommendations will be of wide usability (action validity) (cf. Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011) in the Tanzanian context and beyond.

### 5.9 Generalizability/transferability claims

As regards generalizability or transferability, Ercikan and Wolff-Michael (2009), document that generalizability can be based on observed or reported similarities ‘fitting a certain site into a larger scheme of things’ (p. 53). These authors further write:

> [the] individual researcher may not be in a position to have detailed knowledge of more than one case or context, but at least he or she has the responsibility of suggesting the kinds of cases or contexts to which the results might be transferable and providing sufficient details about researched context for a person with intimate knowledge of a second context to judge the likelihood of transferability (p. 56)’.

Within such contexts, the findings of the current study could be generalized or rather transferred to: first, teachers in remote areas in the Kondoa, Chemba and Mpwapwa districts in the Dodoma region, where data were specifically collected; second, to other secondary schools in remote areas in Tanzania;
third, to other educational sub-sectors with remote characteristics similar to the current study context; fourth, other similar areas beyond the study population and contexts recognized by the different readers of the report as being able to be generalized or transferred to their own contexts. Notably, the current study adopted a mixed methods approach, whereby both qualitative and quantitative elements are present. That serves to mitigate weaknesses inherent in each single methodology as far as the generalizability/transferability issue is concerned. Moreover, the study context should enable other users to compare and decide the relevance of its transferability.

5.10 Limitations

When looking at the study critically, I note few weak points.

First, the three phases of data collection were conducted sequentially; however, the time spacing between the phases was rather small and the schedule very tight. I think of this limited time in terms of analysis and interpretation. Perhaps more plausible findings could have emerged if more analysis and interpretation time had been available. In taking care of this, the data were further read several times after all phases of data collection were completed to see if anything interesting was left out.

Second, the data analysis was limited to searching for relevant themes according to the research aim and questions on the qualitative side. Likewise, only frequency distributions were made in descriptive statistics from the survey data to see which qualitative themes may generalize to a wider sample and with what weight. Maybe more diverse and interesting results could have been possible through more analyses like cross-case analyses or multivariate analyses. On the other hand, such analyses were not within the interests of the study according to its aim and questions. For instance, teachers’ views were intended to give a collective picture (on challenges and perceived support) as contrasted to searching for patterns involving individual teachers. Any divergent responses were reconciled (combined) in a meaningful way to enhance the bigger picture of the issue under presentation. This also reflects the unit of analysis - “teachers in remote secondary schools” - as a group.

Third, during the data analysis, data were transformed (as discussed in section 5.4.2). However, the process seems tricky, especially the quantization process, as it could reduce rich qualitative data into dichotomous variables, making them single-dimensional and immutable (Driscoll et al., 2007). Arguably, while qualitative codes are multidimensional, they can be revisited whenever required during the analysis, allowing more emerging insights and themes to be recognized. Quantitized data tend to be fixed and one-dimensional and problematic to change to capture new insights (Driscoll et al., 2007). To mitigate that shortcoming, the original qualitative dataset was kept.
That enabled the original qualitative dataset, particularly linked with qualitative codes/themes with significant statistical results, to be revisited from time to time (during the data analysis) for further checking. Within that context, it was possible to acquire more insight and relevant qualitative participants’ voice to support the quantitized data for the complementarity and enhancement of the issue under presentation. Moreover, the responses to specific research question(s) per respondent to the entire dataset were counted to minimize the possibilities of verbal/over/misleading/contextual counting.

Fourth, combining different methodologies and methods is difficult as it requires time and expertise. Therefore, more time was spent on becoming acquainted with the proper undertaking of the study. As a flipside effect, however, the researcher’s research knowledge was extended beyond a single methodology and method usage.

Fifth, pragmatic philosophies require practical knowledge for particular people in the context. It seems imperative that such knowledge ought to emerge from the data. In this regard, the use of “theories” for guiding data collection and analysis was somewhat challenging. Therefore, I used the “theory of the field” to see what exits, possible gaps and positioning my study. Data were more openly approached during the analysis, to see whatever emerged of interest to the study aim and questions. Later, having looked at the results, several theoretical perspectives, for instance from motivational and career choice theories, were applied to understand and discuss the results. While this helps viewing results from different angles, it also exposes the study to the dangers of being too diverse, which might be a point of criticism. However, there is no shortage of examples of studies using this tradition (cf. Heineke, et al., 2014; Goodwin et al., 2014; Osterman, et al., 2014; Day, et al., 2008; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007).

Sixth, both qualitative and quantitative data were mixed together during reporting to elaborate on and enhance the understanding of the comprehensive picture and achieve a broader account of the issue studied. It could have been interesting also to present each data type separately and compare them at a later stage. However, this was not the rationale for choosing the mixed methods.

5.11 Ethical considerations

The research ethics as regulated by the United Republic of Tanzania were adhered to. Relevant legal and bureaucratic procedures required to be followed

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48 Some of the general research regulations and guidelines are found here: http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics/geo/user/index.php?action=Geo4Country&db=GE04&id=30&lng=en. However, there are specific regulations and guidelines in different organizations and institutions which have been empowered by law to handle research issues in those organizations and Institutions, like the Research and Consultancy Bureau of the University of Dar es Salaam which has a Research Ethics Policy to be followed by the UDSM research community.
in conducting research were obtained and followed. First, the research permit was secured as rules and regulations demand. This helped to build trust and rapport at the entry stages: (a) Research clearance was secured from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) Research and Consultancy Bureau, which is the legal body for research activities at the UDSM; (b) these clearances were presented to the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) in the Dodoma region; (c) RAS provided permit to see the Regional and Districts Educational Officers (REOs & DEOs) who then provided entry to the respective schools; (d) Subsequently, the respective schools sampled were visited.

Secondly, on arriving at a school, I was normally welcomed by the school head(s), with whom I could in most cases spend five to fifteen minutes chatting on general issues regarding the school, the education system, presenting research permits, explaining my research aim and significance, and seek their informed consent participation. After seeing the school heads they could introduce me to the classroom teachers. After the introduction, he/she could leave and let me proceed with classroom teachers. Then, I could spend some five to ten minutes explaining to them why the study is important and why their participation was desirable. After that, I could seek their informed consent to participating in the study. Due to the significance of the study topic to them, most agreed to participate. Again, the researcher ensured that no harm or exploitation would affect the teachers where the study was conducted. As a researcher I was keen to separate the description from my interpretation and judgments. Data was going to be published and made public through the thesis and via journal articles after the thesis had been defended in the country of study. The results were to be specifically communicated to those who directly participated in the study and to the general public. In any case, the researcher was open and allowed data to speak for themselves as regards what was obtained from the study.

Third, there was voluntary participation. Each participant was free to participate or not. Participants were informed beforehand of their capacity to withdraw their participation at any time without notice, if they felt like it. It was important that school heads introduced the researcher to classroom teachers but did not choose to influence or dictate who was to participate. The researcher allowed the classroom teachers to freely decide after listening to the study rationale and their participation motivations.

Fourth, all information was treated as confidential. No respondent was forced to reveal his or her name or identity except by free will. Background information like participants’ education level was treated with confidentiality and strictly used for research purposes only. The teachers’ consent to record and take pictures/photographs for study purposes was also sought.

Morally, the findings should be widely acceptable across diverse stakeholders because of the magnitude of the teachers’ retention problem. Notably, the study findings did not offend anyone.
5.12 Chapter Summary

The study is inspired by the claim for pragmatic knowledge. Pragmatism allows the mixing of methods and methodologies in collecting and analyzing data, hence mitigating the effects of applying one method and methodology. Within that context, a mixed methods approach for the study was adopted for three specific reasons: completeness, instrument development, and complementarity. Therefore, to ensure that the research questions were thoroughly answered, data were sequentially collected in three phases: by a pilot study, surveys and follow-up interviews. As shown in Table 1, the sample included twenty-eight schools, twenty-seven school heads, and 231 classroom teachers. In general, three focused group interviews (FGIs) and fourteen one-to-one interviews (OOIs) were conducted. Moreover, 237 questionnaires were administered and 214 were collected. That shows a satisfactory response level for strong findings.

The pilot study served, for instance, to construct questionnaires for collecting data in the surveys. Both interviews and questionnaires were used to gather data in the pilot study. Questions were mainly qualitative in nature. The aim was to find as many themes as possible related to the issue under study. Surveys helped to quickly collect data from a large sample as well as revealing the bigger picture from the findings regarding the target focus. Follow-up interviews served significantly to clarify issues of major importance emerging from the surveys but lacking adequate understanding.

Mixed methods data analysis techniques were used. This was important in order to ensure that each data was analyzed according to the need of the research aim and questions. A number of analytical procedures were followed, including data transformation through quantitizing and qualitizing. While quantitizing helped to see the apparent weight of each theme in the dataset, qualitizing simplified narrative descriptions of data from numerical perspectives. Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis techniques and procedures were followed to generate themes and sub-themes from the interview data. One of the significant strengths of the choice of thematic analysis is its flexibility in fitting into a number of theoretical frameworks, including pragmatic epistemologies and mixed designs. On the other hand, closed-ended questions from surveys were analyzed with the support of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) data analysis assisting software. IBM SPSS Version 21 was specifically used to run descriptive statistics and generate frequency distributions (tables).

Moreover, a number of legitimation issues were adhered to. As regards transferability, it is claimed that the findings can be generalized to specific areas where data were collected, and other areas which readers find relevant to the current study. Few limitations were noted and how their effects were mitigated discussed. Lastly, the ethical issues considered were discussed to show that the study was performed legally through the relevant research
permit and clearance. Other ethical issues considered include ensuring the informed consent of participants in order to avoid causing harm to anybody (especially to the participants). Therefore, the aim of study was made evident to participants beforehand and voluntary participation and confidentiality were adhered to. After the discussions in this chapter of the methodologies and methods followed to answer research questions, Chapter Six will present the main results found from this study.
Chapter Six: Results

The aim of this study is to explore teachers’ perceived school level challenges and the support of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The study was guided by two specific questions towards fulfilling the aim. The data presentation is organized into two sections, according to the two specific questions. The first section, 6.1, presents data on school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The section is divided into two parts: 6.1.1- Teachers’ demographic characteristics in remote secondary schools and their implications on retention efforts, and 6.1.2 - Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The second section, 6.2, presents data on teachers’ perceptions of school level support, and their influence on teachers’ voice and exit intentions in remote schools. This section is divided into four parts: 6.2.1 - Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head, and their implications on voice and exit intentions in remote schools; 6.2.2 - Classroom teachers’ perceptions of coworkers’ support, and their implications on voice and exit intentions in remote schools; 6.2.3-School heads’ perceptions of a supportive classroom teacher and their implications on better classroom teachers’ retention efforts, and 6.2.4- Teachers’ “Perceived School Level Conditions” favouring voice over exit from a remote school. The major results are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Summary of major results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1: ‘Teachers’ perceived school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote schools’</th>
<th>RQ1(b): Perceived low retention sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RQ1(a): Demographic characteristics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Accommodation and social services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The majority of the teachers (76.3%) found to be males</td>
<td>• School level conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mostly (65.1%) aged 26-30, &amp; huge %s (93.3) aged 21-40 years</td>
<td>• Poor teaching and learning conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Huge %s (63.8) being in their current schools between 1-5 years</td>
<td>• Teachers’ involvement in decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lack of alternative economic activities.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- The majority (94.1%) hold education diploma and bachelor degrees

RQ2: ‘Teachers’ perceived school level support and voicing/exiting intentions in remote schools’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived relevant school level support</th>
<th>How those perceptions influence-</th>
<th>Voicing</th>
<th>Exiting</th>
<th>Retention efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| RQ2 (a) - Classroom teachers to school heads | • Harmonious school environment & collaborative decision-making  
• Accountability to teaching and learning situation  
• Commitment to teachers’ affairs  
• Respect, tolerance & fairness in allocating school level opportunities & resources  
• Smell of development | • Reducing teachers’ anxiety & stress  
• Freedom & happiness  
• Acceptance & belongingness | • Loneliness  
• Conflicts & crises  
• Untrustworthiness  
• Despair |

RQ2(b) - Classroom teachers to coworkers

| | • Accommodative collegiality  
• Willing collegial presence  
• Knowledge Sharing & support culture | • Collegial acceptance  
• Environmental adaptive knowledge sharing  
• Group citizenship identity | • Conflicting contexts |

RQ2(c) - School heads to classroom teachers

| | • Cooperative & professionally committed  
• Reminder & advisor | | • Sense of appreciation  
• Recognition  
• Worthwhile efforts  
• No time |
### 6.1 School level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

The first objective of this study focuses on the school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The argument is that to be able to effectively retain teachers, especially at the school level, it is imperative to be aware of the core challenges leading to low retention. The objective is answered through two sub-questions: First: What are the demographic characteristics of teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania and their implications on retention efforts? Secondly: What aspects do teachers perceive as sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania? The findings are logically organized into two sections, as per the two sub-questions.

#### 6.1.1 Demographic factors and teachers’ retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

This section presents data on the demographic characteristics of teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania and their implications on retention efforts. Four demographic aspects of gender, age, years in the current school, and the highest education level were examined. Responses are summarized and presented in Table 8.
Table 8. Classroom teachers’ demographic characteristics in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Demographic characteristics</th>
<th>Labels</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>a. Male</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Female</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>a. 21-25 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. 26-30 years</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. 31-35 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. 36-40 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. 41-45 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>f. 46-50 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>g. above 50 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>h. Missing system</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Highest education qualification</td>
<td>a. Certificate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Diploma</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Master’s Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. Missing system</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Years in the current school</td>
<td>a. ≤ 1 year</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1-5 years</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. 6-10 years</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. ≥11 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. Missing system</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in Table 8 show that gender-wise, the majority of the respondents, 76.3%, were males, suggesting that most schools in remote areas are staffed with male teachers. Age-wise, the majority of the respondents, about 65.1% were aged between 26-30 years. A general observation indicates that about 93.3% of teachers in remote schools are of ages ranging between 21 and 40 years. On the other hand, about 63.8% of the teachers have worked in their current schools between 1 and 5 years. Generally, the majority seem to have been in their current schools in between 1 and 10 years. In terms of academic qualifications, for about 58.6% their Bachelor’s degree is their highest education level. A general observation in this respect suggests that for the majority, about 94.1%, a diploma or degree in education is their highest education level. The results broadly show that most teachers in remote schools are male, young, and relatively well educated. The implications of these results for remote teachers’ retention efforts are highlighted in the discussion (Chapter 7).

Apart from teachers’ demographic aspects as part of the broad teacher retention challenge, the next section explores what teachers themselves perceive as important school level sources of low retention in remote schools.
6.1.2 Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

This section presents results of the second sub-question of the first major research question: ‘What are teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania?’ The aim is to establish the challenges of retaining teachers, specifically those related to the school organizational level. It is theorized in the context of this study that such understanding is an important part of efforts to establish teachers’ retention strategies which could be implemented within school level capacities. The results of this question are summarized and presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Responses to teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary school contexts in Tanzania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Sources of low retention (Themes)</th>
<th>Qualitized (Survey) responses</th>
<th>Total respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More critical (N*)</td>
<td>Less critical (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Accommodation and social services</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>School level conflicts</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Poor teaching and learning conditions</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Teachers’ involvement in decision-making</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Lack of alternative economic activities</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N* represents the number of respondents within a group (combining classroom teachers’ and school heads’ rankings), which varies depending on respondents’ choice to answer or not to answer a specific question aspect. That depicts the teachers’ different prioritizations of the criticality level of the perceived problem source, which of course varies from one teacher to another. While many responses to a certain source depict its higher perceived criticality, low responses do not necessarily mean that these sources are unimportant. For instance, while only 67 teachers responded to the source of the lack of alternative economic activities, they all showed it as being more critical, meaning that the source is an equally important source of low retention.

As noted in Table 9, five major sources were identified causing low retention at the school level in remote school contexts in Tanzania. These include: Accommodation and social services; School level conflicts; Poor teaching and learning conditions; Teachers’ involvement in decision making; and Lack of alternative economic activities. In the paragraphs that follow, the five sources are briefly presented with a few verbatim quotations incorporated in their support.
Accommodation and social services

Accommodation was defined as a decent teacher’s house. No single teacher respondent indicated accommodation as not being a big problem leading to a good number of teachers running away from remote schools. Contextually, among the reasons which make the issue of accommodation critical in remote areas are the locations where schools are built. One of the teachers claimed:

...some schools are located in very remote isolated areas, far from peoples’ habitat and there is no teachers’ houses...teachers have to walk a long distance (in many cases more than 10 kilometres), passing through bushes and forests...sometimes are attacked by wild animals or getting robbed....I think this is discouraging especially for young educated teachers with “big dreams”....I think accommodation issue is amongst the top in discouraging majority teachers in this school ...may be the school could arrange for transportation support to teacher (school bus) to rescue them from this daily movement to and from the school (Halima, classroom teacher)

Social services were identified on the same level as accommodation. No single teacher respondent showed this aspect as being less critical. While social services could be of many kinds and of course important, clean and safe water, electricity, markets/shopping areas, and healthy centres were noted as being more essential. Other social services identified include roads, Internet and mobile connectivity, as well as banking services. Commenting on the issue of social services facing remote schools in general, one of the school heads noted:

...as you might have noticed, travelling from the district municipal council to this school can take you a whole day, though it is only about 85 kilometres. Roads are quite bad especially during rainy seasons. In here, there is no bank or its related services... as you can see no electricity, water is extremely difficult to get....even mobile phone connectivity is very difficult until you are in specific places (like somewhere around the mountain hills [pointing fingers at a certain mountain hill at distant place from the school])...yes, yes,... life is somehow difficult coping in remote areas like this...but, we are trying...as you can see (Kassim)

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49 I operationalize a decent house in remote Tanzanian context as a small sized (1-2 rooms) house, built of cement blocks/burnt bricks, with concrete floor, and with a corrugated iron/aluminum roof. In most cases toilet(s) and bathroom(s) could be built outside, close to the main house.
School level conflicts

The data shows the presence of substantive conflict situations within schools in the remote areas. It is notable that teachers are unequally treated by the school management, especially by school heads. Classroom teachers are divided into groups; while some are favoured others are neglected. Opportunities and tasks at the school level are unequally distributed and allocated. School heads are noted as not showing the appropriate respect to classroom teachers as professionals and colleagues. Practices such as those are described by teachers as being sources of conflicts among teachers because of their unfairness.

While these conflicts could be of many kinds, it was found that a major part of critical conflicts at the school level concerns the relation between classroom teachers and their managements, school heads to be exact. The other important conflict is the one which was termed ‘socio-cultural conflicts’ – i.e., conflicts between schools in general and their immediate surrounding communities, notably, parents. Except for a few teacher respondents (33) who did not single out conflicts as being a critical source of low teacher retention challenge at the school level, this emerged as the second aspect emphasized by the majority of the respondents (139) as being a critical source.

On the one hand, some teachers think conflicts are not so terrible, because they could result in some matters being resolved. On the other, the presence of teachers’ stratification in schools as an effect of school heads’ groupings and labelling meant that those who are favoured do not regard conflicts resulting from those acts as a big issue. Yet, a good number of teachers see the costs brought on by this unfairness as being far higher than the benefits. They claim that conflicts most likely lead to misunderstandings among teachers and are therefore an important source of disharmony, making the working environment very uncomfortable. Some teachers clearly exemplify the issue of conflicts in remote schools:

Major conflicts among teachers and school leadership emerge or are caused by the fact that teachers [classroom teachers in this context] are not valued and respected... the school leadership is the source of groups in schools. There is a saying used by school leadership in grouping teachers... “these are mine these are not”. As a result, if there are opportunities...those few who belong to the school leadership are given and others are not...favouritism brings groups and stratum amongst teachers in schools (Joyce, classroom teacher)

... School heads have been treating teachers not only unfairly but also unequally. For instance, they create groups in school known as “highly considered or favoured group” and “less considered or
favoured group”. The favoured group gets all opportunities which have economic benefits occurring at the school…it receives all the favours and support from the school head. The less favoured group ends up getting nothing as far as school opportunities are concerned... the less considered group normally “does everything for free”, no favour or immediate support as compared to the other group. This goes as far as unequal distribution of money for new teachers by the School Administration... I can tell you...this is discouraging and demotivating...because...whatever you say...the management won’t listen... (Muhongo Mchungu, classroom teacher)

Conflicts also seem to emerge from poor communication within the school. One teacher commented on the issue as follows:

...there is poor information flow or poor communication from the school management especially school head to the other staff members. Getting feedback on issues raised by classroom teachers to the school management is a big problem. They rarely provide relevant, meaningful and timely feedback. This means lack of administrative support and poor management, leading to a lot of misunderstandings and conflicts (Mussa, classroom teacher)

Conflicts also result from non-cooperative local communities surrounding schools from where the majority of students come. The data shows that people in remote areas attach a low value to education and teachers. They do not have time to check on their children’s progress nor pay the necessary school contributions. In some instances, they also threaten teachers. In this regard, several teachers had a great deal to say. One of them indicated:

...there is poor cooperation between the community and the school or teachers especially on academic matters...there is poor cooperation from parents with children in school especially in monitoring their education development. Teachers and their properties also feel insecure because of villagers’ intimidation and theft....(Mariam, classroom teacher)

Another claimed:

In our case, parents and the whole community do not take education as an important thing in their lives. So they do not pay the agreed contributions. This causes failure in operating some school activities like remedial classes, weekly/monthly tests, and others which could improve students’ learning and performance. This is also escalated by some politicians who tell people not to contribute
anything because the government is bringing money to schools. But the reality is different as the government brings a very small amount of money such that parents have to top up if other activities are to be run... (Ijumba, classroom teacher and academic master).

**Teaching and learning conditions**

Teaching and learning conditions in the remote schools visited were found to be in a bad condition. The permanent buildings such as classrooms, libraries and laboratories were not enough and in poor conditions. Schools do not have enough furniture (chairs and tables), including students’ desks. Teachers are equally complaining of heavy teaching loads in these schools. Moreover, they show concern about the deteriorating discipline among students. Poor teaching and learning conditions in these schools are associated with mass failure, especially in mathematics, sciences and languages, which has been a song of the day in many remote schools. However, in return, much blame is cast back on teachers as being non-innovative, ineffective and incapable of teaching properly. This discourages teachers, causing psychological torture and minimizing their motivation and satisfaction with the profession and is associated with their tendency to shift to other schools with relatively good facilities and better performances. While a good number of teachers (63) who responded to this question did not describe teaching and learning conditions as a big problem to teachers’ retention, this factor is found to be ranked third. It could be argued that not all teachers think that students’ failure is a big issue to them as long as the government fails to provide relevant teaching and learning resources or students are undisciplined. Therefore, it is reasonable that other teachers would regard this as less important to them, perhaps in comparison with the lack of housing and basic services and the presence of conflicts at school.

Teachers describe the issue of a heavy teaching load in remote school as being escalated by the low reporting number of teachers allocated to those schools, as indicated by one of the school heads:

...many teachers allocated in remote schools do not report. Few who report stay for few weeks and leave...school and the living environment in remote areas is not promising...most schools have few teachers...and they have to carry out the entire teaching load...indeed they stretch themselves hard, becoming extremely tired at the end of the day (Babu, school head)

Indicating the extent to which the teaching load could be heavy, one of the classroom teachers exemplified:
... this school has both ordinary and advanced levels. Those are six classes, and a class has about sixty students on average. I teach both physics and chemistry from Ordinary to Advanced level. I can tell you it is a disaster and indeed suffering. But I have no alternative because I am the only science teacher in the school (Magessa, classroom teacher)

The issue of students’ performance is well captured in teachers’ sentiments as related to teaching and learning contexts in remote schools. Students’ lack of discipline, low motivation for education, and poor support from their parents are among the teachers’ important concerns. Most students do not perform satisfactorily in a number of local and national examinations in the remote schools visited. One teacher noted:

...we have a big problem here...discipline and truancy. Most students do not come to school and enter the classroom. Even right now, if I take you down hills and in forests surrounding the school [pointing at the nearby school hills and forests], you will find many students there. We punish them, but the society especially their parents are not cooperative. Teachers are discouraged to work in these schools because of the massive failure of students ...teachers are seen as if they are not teaching well...most teachers are migrating from remote rural schools to urban areas where performance is relatively good...(Kishimba, school head)

Another teacher claimed:

Most parents are illiterate and poor. I think this is a challenge among most students’ families. I have also noted the presence of low motivation for students to learn even when being supported. I think students and parents alike are unaware of the importance of education...students are performing poorly, and we become highly discouraged as teachers (Paul, classroom teacher)

**Teachers’ involvement in decision-making**

The data shows that while many decisions such as planning teaching schedules or planning duty rosters for teachers, which are made at the school level directly affect teachers. Yet, such decisions are mainly made by school heads and a few ‘favoured’ teachers. Such practices are noted by teachers as representing a total inconsideration of their welfare. The majority of the teachers (103) noted it as being a more critical challenge; however, about 50 teachers did not see it as being more critical in comparison to other issues. On this issue, Jenifer, a classroom teacher claimed:
school heads in most cases do not involve classroom teachers in
decision making, even for things which affect teachers directly...you
know when a teacher is involved in decision making at the school,
he/she feels a sense of recognition and part of changes at the school

Lack of alternative economic activities

A possibility of generating extra incomes for teachers is noted as being
important as well. The respondent teachers indicated that social life in the
remote areas was more difficult as compared to urban ones. The major reason
given is the absence of opportunities for teachers to take on extra activities to
top up their low salaries. Incomes are widely noted as being among the critical
causes of teachers’ job dissatisfaction.

As one of the indicators that teachers’ salaries are not enough and that
opportunities towards addressing this issue among teachers are unequal,
Mathew, a classroom teacher, commented:

...one among the major problems facing teachers and the teaching
profession is low and unsatisfactory salaries. Many teachers are
facing a crisis in terms of maintaining their families as their
incomes are not enough. Contrary to urban areas, in remote rural
areas it is difficult to get activities which could increase your
income. Well, some teachers are trying to involve themselves in
agricultural activities and some petty businesses but it is not paying.
Sometimes the weather is not good and crops do get dry, and most
people in villages are poor, so even business is difficult to do...I
think that students’ teachers need to be given entrepreneurship
education in their colleges and universities....

Indicating further some of challenges that remote schools face, a female
teacher, who seems to have been trying to participate in agricultural activities
complained:

...some schools are really built in an extremely challenging
environment...some schools, especially the ward-based ones, are
built in degraded lands, poor soils, gullied and bare lands which
cannot support any economic activity...even small scale agriculture
(vegetable gardens)...getting food is sometimes difficult (Malima,
classroom teacher)

In sum, the school organizational level is an important area in efforts to search
for teachers’ retention strategies which can be implemented with less financial
dependence from the central government. Both the demographic aspects of the
majority of remote secondary school teachers, as well as the school level sources of low retention found in this study are worth considering. An in-depth discussion of this issue is advanced in Chapter 7. However, most of these low retention sources at the school level could be linked to poor support within schools. The section that follows presents data on teachers’ perceived school level support as connected to their voicing and exiting intention in remote schools.

6.2 Teachers’ perceptions of school level support and their influence on voicing and/or exiting intentions in remote schools

The second question of this study explores how classroom teachers perceive a supportive school head (as part of the school management); how classroom teachers perceive a supportive coworker (their fellow collegial teachers); and how school heads perceive supportive classroom teachers in remote school contexts. In line with exploring those perceptions, the question further seeks to understand how these perceptions influence teachers’ voice and exit intentions. The line of argument here is: Can the way classroom teachers perceive school heads and/or coworker support affects their intentions to stay at or leave a remote school? How and/or why? Do school heads’ perceptions of a supportive coworker influence their efforts to support coworkers’ retention in return? How and/or why? Since this study seeks to explore teachers’ retention strategies which bank more on ‘supportive school level contexts’, the need to be clear on how teachers perceive a relevant supportive school environment within remote contexts cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, the question equally establishes the conditions teachers perceive as favouring voicing over exiting a remote school. As noted elsewhere in this text, school level support means support from school heads and other teachers, labelled as classroom teachers. The findings are organized into four parts, as highlighted earlier at the beginning of the chapter.

6.2.1 Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head in a remote school

In this section, the results of how classroom teachers perceive a ‘supportive school head’ in a remote school context are presented. The perceptions with their respective qualitized responses are summarized and presented in Table 10.
Table 10. Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head in remote schools contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Major perceptions (Themes)</th>
<th>Qualitized (Survey) classroom teachers’ responses</th>
<th>Agreeing (N)</th>
<th>Disagreeing (N)</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Harmonious school environment &amp; collaborative decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Accountability to the teaching and learning situation</td>
<td></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Commitment to teachers’ affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Respect, tolerance and fairness in allocating school level opportunities and resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>“Smell of Development”</td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted in Table 10, the study finds five major perceptions being held by classroom teachers of whom they consider a supportive school head in remote schools. The perceptions include: harmonious school environment and collaborative decision making; accountability to teaching and learning situation; commitment to teachers’ affairs; respectful, tolerance and fairness in allocating school level opportunities and resources; and smell of development. Table 10 clearly shows, using the number of respondents in the “Agreements” and “Disagreements” groups, the different weight held by different themes on teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head. The more agreeing responses, the strongest perceptions concern that theme, and conversely. Notably, remote contexts are susceptible to harsher and more dissatisfactory situations, a factor which is even reflected in the high teacher turnover in those areas. It is therefore logical to observe that, although the perceptions identified could be used in other contexts, they are specifically important to remote contexts. In the paragraphs that follow, I will present each specific theme, with a few verbatim quotations.

*A harmonious school environment and collaborative decision-making*

The majority of the teachers are concerned with the remote environment they are working in. Classroom teachers describe a supportive school head as one
committed to building a peacefully working environment. They prefer a “conflict-free zone”. A supportive school head is described as a person who can address school level conflicts, is committed and capable to bring harmony, unity and solidarity among staff members and is also committed to building and maintaining a harmonious relationship between school and community.

Classroom teachers suggest that school heads should initiate social events whereby the school community can socialize and build good relations. “We almost every year see welcoming events for new students joining secondary level education after completing primary level education (called form one) but never seen welcoming events for new teachers joining the school,” one classroom teacher wondered. They believe such events will further unite teachers and school community, thereby cementing peace and harmony.

The question of accountability and transparency in dealing with school issues and especially those directly affecting classroom teachers is well noted. In that regard, classroom teachers highly emphasize a supportive school head as one involving them in planning and deciding on school activities. Classroom teachers are in quest of ‘participatory decision-making’. This seems to be a problem in many schools. Most classroom teachers complained of being neglected when it comes to the issue of making important school decisions. Only 20 of them did not perceive this theme as an important perception of a supportive school head as compared to 114 others.

It was noted that some of the problems which lead to disharmony in remote schools are associated with the “political interests” of some school leaders. One of the teachers contended:

...some school heads engage in political activities...tend to force other teachers and workers to be allied to their parties of interests. In case you have different interests... it could bring you into trouble including being put into scandalous issues and be neglected necessary support (Moshiro, classroom teacher)

The data also indicate that, in some schools, getting access to normal information as a teacher is an issue. This teacher clarifies further:

In many schools, transparency is hidden and confidential. You find that many things which are supposed to be open to classroom teachers are made secrets and not easily accessible. Can you be efficient and effective in that situation?....(Chacha, classroom teacher)

On the issue of decision-making, the data indicate that teachers’ influence over decisions at the school level is still a big problem even when they are involved, as this teacher indicated:
...most teachers are not involved in decision making on issues affecting them and their schools...and whenever they are involved, their involvement is like rubberstamp because their ideas and contributions are seldom taken on board on bringing revolutionary changes in the schools (Mwakatundu, classroom teacher)

In the same line, another teacher claimed:

...even when teachers are given some responsibilities to perform or attend, they are not given full power to make decisions.... They are being interrupted by the school management. So, you can be head of the department, but no power to enforce anything, so, what is that... (Jambo, classroom teacher)

**Accountability to the teaching and learning situation**

The teaching and learning situation seems to be a matter of great concern to teachers in remote school contexts. A supportive school head is described as one who is committed to addressing this situation. Classroom teachers emphasize that such a school head should be able to recognize, appreciate and reward efforts and work well done by teachers within such difficult environments; be committed to addressing teaching and learning facilities in schools, which in most cases are in bad shape; be able to address other teaching and learning destructors such as bad student discipline; ensure the fair allocation of teaching load; correct and direct teachers in a democratic and collegial manner; motivate and inspire other teachers, and always be keen to identify opportunities for teachers to upgrade their knowledge when there is a change of curriculum. Although some classroom teachers (35) who responded to this question did not perceive the teaching and learning situation as being of chief importance in defining a supportive school head, the theme ranked second in the assessment in this respect.

One of the issues noted was that school heads are not doing enough to ensure that their teachers receive the opportunity to upgrade their knowledge and skills. In the contexts of the numberless curriculum reforms frequently taking place in Tanzania, one teacher said:

Teachers are not provided with seminars and workshops related with new topics and changes of syllabus which occur many times in this country. For instance, when the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) introduced Competence Based Teaching (CBT) and Competence Based Assessment (CBA), teachers, especially in remote areas were not given training...This means lack of opportunities in remote schools... (Agness, classroom teacher)
Commitment to teachers’ affairs

Commitment to teachers’ welfare, at both individual and group levels is identified as the third major perception of a supportive school head in remote schools. While it could be practically impossible to meet all individual teachers’ interests, yet, the key issue is “showing concern”. Classroom teachers specifically describe a supportive school head as one who has the power to try hard to address teachers’ acute housing problems and to be considerate and appreciative, ensuring that teachers’ interests, values and goals are respected and considered, and who is capable of providing psychological counselling and mentoring support, especially to novice teachers. Mundu, a classroom teacher, discussing this aspect, has this to say:

...mmh, I don’t think there is any school head who can fulfil all the needs and interests of every teacher at a school...teachers have many and diverse needs and interests...but, you see...at least showing some concern...yes, that you are aware...that you are trying...

Respectful, tolerant and fair allocation of school level opportunities and resources

It clearly emerged that school heads create groups whereby some receive a higher share of the school level opportunities available, leaving others receiving next to nothing. The same applies to teaching load and respecting other teachers’ professionalism. Another critical issue is that many school heads view teachers who have opposing ideas and viewpoints as too critical and hostile. A supportive school head is therefore a person viewed as tolerant of different classroom teachers’ viewpoints and welfare. Such school heads are interpreted as accommodative. Classroom teachers specifically describe a supportive school head as someone who is patient and tolerant enough to handle and accommodate criticisms or opposing viewpoints, to fairly allocate powers, responsibilities and opportunities, thus avoiding favouritism and teachers’ groupings, as well as honestly respecting other teachers’ humanity, professionalism and given positions. One teacher noted:

...I think school heads should agree that we differ...we cannot always agree with him/her on everything...I think respect, tolerance of differences and fair treatment is important...(Mshua, classroom teacher)
Smell of development

The question of ‘development’ is another aspect the majority of remote school teachers attach to a supportive school head. To what extent can a school head make a significant developmental contribution to the school in general and to teachers in particular? A supportive school head is described as somebody who can design, attract and implement projects and funds to support school development and address teachers’ specific problems as well as developing supportive networks and connections which could address school and teacher problems. Moreover, classroom teachers are concerned about how to raise their incomes for better survival. A supportive school head is taken as one who is capable of creating and allowing opportunities for teachers to engage in alternative economic activities and, whenever possible, providing them with entrepreneurial training. One of the teachers who brought up this issue had the following view(s) on this aspect:

…you see, some school heads do not care about their schools and teachers well-being…not thinking of development at all…even do not want to allow their staff to use their ample time[when have no specific activity within school schedule] for other economic activity...(Magego, classroom teacher)

Overall, while classroom teachers’ descriptions of a supportive school head may vary greatly, this study identifies five major themes. The themes show what an ideal supportive school head in a remote school should be like. However, the teachers’ voices suggest that school heads in these schools are unsupportive.

Having identified how classroom teachers perceive a supportive school head, the following logical question is whether such perceptions in any way influence their intention to leave or stay in a remote school. In the section that follows, that question is explored.

Perceived school heads’ support and classroom teachers’ voicing/exiting intentions

The interesting question dealt in this sub-section is how classroom teachers’ perceptions of school heads’ support influence their voice and exit intentions in remote schools. A combination of open-ended questions was used in the survey questionnaire and interviews to find answers to this question. Three major perceived ways emerged: reducing teachers’ anxiety and stress, freedom and happiness and acceptance and belongingness were found to influence classroom teachers’ voicing. On the other hand, four primarily perceived ways: loneliness, conflicts and crisis, untrustworthiness and despair
were found to influence exiting. In the following paragraphs, each theme is briefly presented and enhanced by verbatim quotations.

**How classroom teachers’ perceived that school heads’ support influence their voicing intentions**

**Reducing teachers’ anxiety and stress**

Teachers in remote schools portray their work and working environment as being difficult and stressful. They are of the view that if the school head is working hand in hand with them, and offers necessary and timely support, that at least creates a sense of comfort, minimizing their work and life anxiety and stress in return. Putting it in context, one teacher indicated:

*I have been in this school for three years now. In all those years, not even a single student achieved a first division in form four national examination...the community [parents], though not cooperative, keep demanding their children to perform better...but how?...see the environment [showing poor teaching and learning school infrastructures]...mmhh...this work is stressful...a good thing, our school head is a nice person, always with us (classroom teachers) advising not to leave the school...he is trying...and we are still hoping for the better tomorrow...*(Mwamvua, classroom teacher)

**Freedom and happiness**

It was found that when a school head listens and strives to address classroom teachers’ concerns, they feel free to present and discuss their matters with that school head. They become happy that, although the working environment might not be very good, they yet have a chance to find solutions at least to their basic problems like housing through school head support. Mambia, a teacher fresh from university and newly employed claimed:

*I finished my degree in education last year [2012], and got employed this year [2013], but I never had real knowledge on the environment I will be working on...see, my first day here was difficult...almost everything appeared completely strange...we spent almost two hours with the madam [referring to the school head]...she explained a lot of things I was not aware of...we discussed...with her support I was able to get a room to rent...as you can see, mmhh...not satisfied, but I am still here...*
Acceptance and belongingness

Teachers in remote schools still live a communal kind of life. To a great extent, village societies still live and relate as one group, a community. Acceptance and belongingness are noted as being important in influencing a teacher to voice in a remote school. This is associated with the possibilities of being listened to, motivated and supported on different occasions. Putting it in context, one teacher observed:

...you see, sometimes you have a social issue where you need the school head to support you. We have teachers graduating or getting family problems...support received overtime sends signals of being valued...you feel part of the school community...(Mumba, classroom teacher)

The three themes obtained depict the importance of school heads’ support towards teachers’ voicing intentions. This is because teachers become convinced that their living and working environment could be improved. In contrast, a perceived lack of support could instigate exit in different ways as the findings presented below show.

Classroom teachers’ perception of how supportive school heads influence their exiting intentions

Loneliness

In an environment where people mainly live a communal life, a sense of isolation is indeed disturbing. Classroom teachers describe such a situation as a source of stress, anxiety, and work inefficiency. This is associated with marginalization and lack of support even in pressing issues like questing for teaching and learning facilities (like textbooks, chalk or pens). In a situation like this, a classroom teacher is left with little voicing opportunity as compared to quitting. One teacher exemplified this issue as follows:

...in the past [cannot remember which year] we had a school head who was not supportive. When teacher W [naming the teacher] was transferred here, he was, in most cases not on good terms with that school head...a lot of misunderstanding and quarrelling happened between them...school head could not listen to the teacher anymore or offer any support...the teacher decided to leave...thank God, even that school head was later on transferred (Bambino, classroom teacher).
Conflicts and crises

Teachers in remote schools associate the perception of a school head as being non-supportive not only to being a source of conflict but also a main reason why school level conflicts escalate to a crisis. Consistently favouring some and being unjust to others is described by classroom teachers as highly intolerable. Such conflicts end up causing disunity and disturbing school harmony, to the extent that many classroom teachers opt to leave. Mwenda, a classroom teacher noted:

...let me tell you, if you come here and you are not from region X then you can forget getting any opportunity of even being promoted. Look, all good positions here are taken by people from that region X. And even other teachers from that region are given many favours, while others get absolutely nothing. School managements also create groups and divide teachers...those who are on school heads’ side are favoured and those who are not simply get neglected...so teachers who cannot stand the situation simply leave.

Untrustworthiness

At the school level, it was noted that a number of decisions are made behind most teachers’ back. Lack of transparency, accountability, and not being involved in making important decisions are described by classroom teachers as among the critical sources of dissatisfaction. In such circumstances, the school head is labelled as non-supportive and as a person who cannot be trusted. If that persists beyond tolerance, a teacher is likely to leave. One classroom teacher exemplifying how a perceived unsupportive school head influenced exit by being untrustworthy said:

I must be honest...I am not sure for how long I can handle this...you cannot tell the school head anything...he is not a good person. He decides everything, dictates what has to be done...school funds...you can’t ask, he will be mad at you...I think I am tired, yes fed up (Mamamia)

Despair

When teachers, especially newcomers, find a dissatisfactory condition in a school, it is expected that the school head, as part of the management, should support them by whatever means possible. Moreover, recognition for work well done and motivation to keep up good efforts are necessary for teachers in general, but especially for those who work in remote and difficult situations. Classroom teachers express that the absence of such support in remote schools
might lead to teachers’ ‘despair’ and subsequent exit. Mariam, a classroom teacher in one of the schools describes how she was first hurt when she arrived at the school, worked hard to improve English learning in school and had at least five students in her class passing at a B + level. The school head had, however, nothing good to say about Mariam, despite poor performances in the subject for almost four years in her absence. Some of Mariam’s words on the issue:

...after four years of consistent failures in English subject in this school, the school head did not even say a word [of recognition or motivation] after at least a satisfactory performance in my presence. Well, it is my job to teach and ensure students pass...anyway, I expected at least some recognition from the management for my efforts...mmhh, it sometimes hurt...but that is the situation...given other opportunities...leaving is plausible.

It is evident from the results that lack of support from school heads influences classroom teachers’ exit intentions. Under non-supportive circumstances, teachers lose hope that their working and living conditions could be improved.

Summary
The sub-question presented under 6.2.1 explored classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head and how such perceptions influence their voicing and exiting intentions in remote school contexts. Table 10 summarizes the major perceptions held by classroom teachers in defining who is a supportive school head in a remote school. Generally, a supportive school head in a remote context is described as someone who can build and maintain harmony within the school environment; in other words, a person who recognizes teachers’ professionalism, treats them in a collegial way and, especially, involves them in school planning and decision-making.

Moreover, a school head should treat all teachers equally and with dignity, avoiding favouritism practices. Equally, that school head should be concerned with addressing teaching and learning challenges, including students’ discipline and teachers’ workload. The extent to which this person can design and implement developmental plans at the school level is also an important indicator for being labelled as supportive. Indeed, a supportive school level environment is likely to influence voicing, as it leads to a low level of anxiety and stress, influences freedom and happiness, and increases the sense of belonging and acceptance. In contrast, the presence of a non-supportive school head is perceived as being likely to escalate conflicts into crises, accelerating loneliness as well as despair, all of which might lead to exiting.

Having now presented how classroom teachers perceive the influence of a supportive school head on their voicing and exiting intentions, the section that follows presents results of how classroom teachers perceive a supportive
coworker and this person’s influence on their voicing and exiting intentions in remote school contexts.

6.2.2 Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive coworker in remote secondary schools

This section presents results of classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive coworker (collegial teacher) in a remote school. Coworker support is assumed to be important for teachers’ retention in remote schools. As noted elsewhere in this text, coworker support and school head support define ‘school level support’. The findings, or themes, with their respective number of respondents are summarized and presented in Table 11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Major perceptions (Themes)</th>
<th>Qualitized (survey) classroom teachers’ responses</th>
<th>Agreeing (N)</th>
<th>Disagreeing (N)</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Knowledge-sharing and support culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>137</td>
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</table>

As Table 11 shows, three major perceptions (themes) emerged: *accommodative collegiality*, *willing collegial presence* and *knowledge-sharing and support culture*, broadly indicating how classroom teachers define who is a supportive coworker (collegial teacher) in a remote school context. Although the three themes describing how classroom teachers define supportive peers are important in almost all teachers’ work contexts, they are especially critical in remote areas because of the unique difficulties entailed. In comparison, it is more difficult in remote than urban areas to, for instance, cope and to make friends because of the culture and peoples’ attitudes towards teachers and the teaching profession, and the hard life caused by poor housing, the lack of important social services, petty crime and other unpleasant situations. In the following paragraphs each theme is presented together with a few verbatim quotations.

*Accommodative collegiality*

In the school context, different teachers have different backgrounds, needs, aspirations, goals and interests. In a group of such variety, confusion often
arises. Most classroom teachers (114 out of 134 who responded to this issue) agreed that supportive coworkers especially comprise those who are tolerant and understand the existence of diverse and divergent collegial viewpoints. This is referred to as accommodative collegiality. A supportive coworker (collegial teacher) is described as someone who freely and willingly provides job-related or any other support that may be required by a colleague over time, who appreciates collegial presence as part of the group and is considerate to colleagues’ ideas and contributions. Further, the issue of unity, solidarity and seeking for solutions instead of blaming each other is seen as important. These are one teacher’s comments:

There are some teachers who do not consider others...only their views and interests are important. But we are many teachers here and we have to work as a group. I hate selfishness, it is a big problem amongst teachers...when a problem occurs, teachers keep on looking for a ‘witch’...this is crazy, I think (Bugusha, Classroom teacher).

**Willing Collegial Presence**

In remote schools, teachers are still greatly dependent on social and communal networks and support to make things happen. Besides, people (teachers in this case) are more concerned with whether a colleague will be present to offer assistance in times of need. What seems to be emphasized by teachers is not ‘circumstantial’, but is more internally motivated - a ‘willing’ presence, that is, someone understanding collegial specific needs and offering support accordingly. Indeed, the majority of classroom teachers (112 out of 133) who responded to this issue agreed that collegial presence is essential for considering a coworker supportive. This is a contextual example:

I think it is a question of being aware...what your collegial teacher is passing through and offer cordial assistance...we teachers do have bad and good times...celebrations like weddings, illness, funeral, and many others...support (psychological, social, economic and of such) are important for village life...we depend on each other (Edgar, classroom teacher)

**Knowledge-sharing and support culture**

The study reveals that different teachers in remote schools vary in their experience and awareness of opportunities available in remote areas and of

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50 Teachers show that sometimes when a problem arises, they keep blaming one another instead of seeking its causes and how it could best be addressed. Teachers seem not in favour of such a situation.
ways to survival. However, they might not be ready to share this with their colleagues. Such teachers are regarded as unsupportive. Classroom teachers describe a supportive coworker as one who shares experiences of and techniques for different ways towards successful survival in remote areas. These teachers emphasize the need to build a culture of mutual collegial knowledge-sharing and support for exploring survival and opportunity techniques in remote areas. They suggest, for instance, that a supportive coworker is someone who is ready to cooperate with others to form cooperative supportive unions such as a Savings and Credit Co-operative Society (SACCOS\textsuperscript{51}). Mumba, a classroom teacher discussing this issue, explained:

...teachers you see here are not the same...I mean, ages, education levels, work experiences, and so forth. Some have been in this school for many years, some have just two months...the environment is harsh, but you see...maybe if we can educate each other on how for instance get opportunities to increase our salaries (which are very low) or live better here...that is a big support...

In general terms, there are evident results that a supportive coworker is one who can listen and help fellow teachers in different times of need. Such a colleague is described as someone who embraces ‘togetherness’ instead of an individualistic kind of life. Teachers aspire towards combined efforts and joined hands in solving remote challenges. A supportive colleague is stamped as being a person who supports that viewpoint.

After seeing how classroom teachers perceive a supportive coworker, it remains to show how these perceptions influence their voicing and exiting intentions in remote schools.

**The influence of perceived coworker support on classroom teachers’ voicing and/or exiting intentions in remote schools**

Do the perceptions classroom teachers’ hold of coworker supportiveness influence their voicing and exiting intentions in remote schools? This is the question dealt with in this sub-section, the answers to which were gathered using open-ended questions in the classroom teachers’ questionnaire as well as in interviews. Three major ways (themes) emerged: collegial acceptance, environmental-adaptive knowledge-sharing and group citizenship identity, describing how these perceptions influence them to voice. On the other hand,

\textsuperscript{51} SACCOS is an example of a Microfinance Institution in Tanzania. These are mainly voluntary associations whereby members regularly pool their savings and can subsequently get loans for diverse purposes, especially development activities. They serve an important purpose of mobilizing financial resources and providing credits to many people, especially in rural areas, where the majority of the population live.
one major theme that of *conflicting contexts* broadly shows how perceived coworker support influences classroom teachers to exit. In the following paragraphs each theme is presented together with a few verbatim quotations.

**How classroom teachers perceive that coworkers’ support influences their voicing intentions**

**Collegial acceptance**

The study identifies collegial acceptance as an important influence on voicing intentions. Classroom teachers are of the view that when you are accepted by your fellow teachers, they tend to understand you as a person and accept your ways of doing things. That brings harmony, understanding, happiness and peace of mind as well as helps teachers to settle down and work. On the issue of being accepted and accepting others, one of the teachers contributes:

> You believe things will move forward...you are accepted and you accept others...you can argue and reach consensus...life becomes a little bit easy (Aishati, Classroom teacher)

**Environmental-adaptive knowledge-sharing**

Living and working environments in remote areas are relatively difficult in comparison with urban ones. Teachers emphasize environments which may allow them opportunities for learning different ways of managing to lead a remote rural life as essential for voicing. They see the likelihood of survival and wait before deciding to leave when they see possibilities of adapting to the environment, as one teacher put it:

> ...I really thank teacher M [naming a teacher in question]...I must tell, if not for his support, for sure I could have left long, yes long ago...he is a nice person...he has some business...now we are doing it together...mmhh, life is not bad, as you can see, I even have a bodaboda... (Madevu, classroom teacher)

**Group citizenship identity**

Classroom teachers describe a coworker as an influence in creating a sense of belongingness and confidence. It makes a teacher feel part and parcel of the group, which is a factor described as influencing voicing. This could also create an obligation for a teacher to perform beyond the teaching contract,

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52 Bodaboda are motorcycles which are used as a means of transportation. People hire them from one place to another at an agreed price. A two-wheel tax, literally speaking.
improving and strengthening school level teachers’ social capital. Madinda, a classroom teacher commented:

*Good cooperation among teachers is a bigger factor which leads to teachers feeling free to continue doing their work, supporting others, and reducing thoughts of quitting…you feel better about yourself and others…you support and you get supported.*

**How classroom teachers’ perceive that coworkers’ support influences their exiting intentions**

**Conflicting contexts**

Classroom teachers attach conflicting school level working contexts to the presence of violence and misunderstandings, fabricated scandals, disrespect, hatred, envy, disunity and tribalism. Such a situation creates an uncooperative sphere of colleagues, making life not only miserable but also turning it into an unbearable working environment for teachers. When Kandama, a classroom teacher, was asked how the perception that collegial teachers are not being supportive could influence a teacher to leave a remote school, he clearly noted:

*...I think it is impossible to stay with colleagues who even do not notice your presence...in many ways you need the support from your fellows....I tell you, if they don’t like you...they could even come up with something bad to hurt you...situation becomes confusing...unbearable...*

In sum, the results show that collegial support is indeed important and influence teachers’ voicing and/or exiting intentions. Voicing is influenced more by teachers’ sense of being part of a group, and of the presence of possibilities to adapt to the remote environment. On the other hand, exit is more likely as a result of perceptions of hatred, disrespect and many other disturbing situations due to an unsupportive atmosphere.

The previous sections of the second objective (that is 6.2.1 & 6.2.2) have presented data on classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head and collegial teachers, together with their influence on voicing and exit intentions. The next section is about school heads’ perceptions of supportive classroom teachers and their influence on retention efforts.

**6.2.3 School heads’ perceived classroom teachers’ support and retention efforts**

This section presents results of the sub-question set to explore school heads’ perceptions of a supportive classroom teacher and their effects on retention in
return. Table 12 summarizes five questions and their responses used to investigate school heads’ perspectives on, first, the influence of classroom teachers’ perceptions of school level support on their decision to stay/leave a remote school (questions one and two) and, secondly, school heads’ perceptions of classroom teachers’ support and their reciprocal effects on classroom teachers’ retention efforts (questions three, four and five). The presentation is organized in that logical order.

**Table 12. School heads’ perceived classroom teachers’ support and retention effects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Qualitized (Survey) responses</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreeing group</td>
<td>Disagreeing group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do SHs think that CTs’ PSLS contribute to CTs’ felt obligations to stay in a remote school?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do SHs think that increased CWs’ support could increase teachers’ commitment and make them stay in a remote school?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do SHs feel that CTs appreciate SHs’ extra retention efforts?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ retention support to CTs?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do SHs perceive that CTs’ support influences SHs’ CTs’ retention performance and commitment?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** SHs = school heads; CTs = classroom teachers; PSLS = perceived school level support; CW = coworkers

**School heads’ perspectives on classroom teachers’ perceived school level support and their retention**

The interest concerned seeing whether school heads think that classroom teachers’ perception of being supported at the school level has any effect on their decision to stay or leave a remote school. The data shows that most school heads (twelve/seventeen) view that the perceptions classroom teachers have of being supported by the school in general (school head and collegial
teachers) indeed influence their felt obligation to stay in a remote school. When asked specifically at the level of ‘collegial teachers’ (as opposed to school in general), the majority of school heads (fourteen/seventeen) believe that increased collegial support could influence classroom teachers’ commitment to school and increase their retention.

The findings are evident that, school heads think and believe that school level support, especially collegial support, is an important factor among all the efforts to retain teachers in remote schools.

**School heads’ perceptions of supportive classroom teachers and retention effects**

School heads put significant efforts into supporting classroom teachers’ retention in remote schools. The question, however, is to what extent these school heads think that such efforts are valued by classroom teachers. Alternatively, do they think that classroom teachers perceive those efforts as a waste of time? When school heads were asked about this, the results were encouraging. It was found that the majority of school heads (fourteen/seventeen) believe that classroom teachers appreciate their extra efforts to retain them. Such a perception is important to motivate and fuel school heads’ efforts of retaining classroom teachers in remote schools.

Although school heads believe that their teachers’ retention efforts are worthwhile, do they also need to be supported by their colleagues (hence defined as classroom teachers)? And does the perception of such support influence their retention efforts? It is of interest to shed more light on understanding whether school heads’ perception of being supported by their colleagues influences the efforts they put into retaining them in return. The results indicate that the majority (fifteen/seventeen) of them agree on that issue. This data suggests the importance to school heads of being supported from below by their subordinates. The fact that not even a single school head felt unsure in this respect further strengthens the knowledge that almost every school head needs to be supported to effectively offer support in return. This is even further cemented by the results from the final question, which show that most school heads (fifteen/seventeen), except for one who disagreed, and one who was unsure, think that the support obtained from classroom teachers influence their commitment and devotion to retaining classroom teachers. Still, who is regarded as a supportive classroom teacher by the school head? This question is addressed in the section that follows.

**School heads’ perceptions of a supportive classroom teacher in a remote school**

The fact that school heads equally need to be supported indeed necessitates finding out who are specifically regarded as supportive classroom teachers by
school heads in a remote school. From open questions and interviews with school heads two major themes emerged: being *cooperative and professionally committed*, and functioning as a *reminder and advisor* were noted to broadly define a supportive classroom teacher from the school heads’ perspective. In the next few paragraphs, these themes are presented with supporting verbatim quotations.

**Cooperative and professionally committed**

On the one hand, school heads define a supportive classroom teacher as one who is being cooperative. A cooperative classroom teacher is described as someone who is ready and willing to stand by a school head in performing different tasks and responsibilities. School heads are of the view that, in the midst of difficulties in remote schools, teachers should be able to stand by a school head in searching for the solutions to problems facing teachers and the entire school. They show that some teachers are unnecessarily ‘hard’ to get to listen and respond to many issues that are raised. These are the ones regarded as unsupportive. This is how one of the school heads described this during an interview:

> ...we must cooperate as a school. Remote schools have many and difficult challenges...but, some teachers are on their own...that is very bad...discouraging. I assure you, remote school challenges cannot be minimized in absence of togetherness spirit...when teachers face challenges, most simply get confused...they become problematic... (Mwakasaka, school head)

On the other hand, school heads define a supportive classroom teacher as one who is professionally committed. This is a person who is ‘aware’ of what the profession requires and acts accordingly. School heads describe such a teacher as someone who is able to fulfil his/her duties and responsibilities without being pushed. When this is the case, school heads emphasize that they are given plenty of time to follow up other important school matters and reduce unnecessary quarrels and conflicts at the school level.

> ...I think teachers are stressful...they are not adequately fulfilling their professional duties and responsibilities... you have to closely follow them and see what is happening...there quarrels/misunderstandings/conflicts begin...my time is really consumed by this... (Isaya, school head)
**Reminder and advisor**

The quality which school heads attach to a supportive classroom teacher is being a person who in good faith reminds the school head (and school leadership in general) about issues that need attention and provides advice and corrections. School heads show that they themselves are often stressed by having many tasks on their shoulders, which may make them unintentionally forget other different items on the agenda and agreements reached at formal school meetings. They further indicate that classroom teachers are regularly the ones who walk into classrooms and attend everyday school activities, thereby encountering different challenges. Therefore, they are easily acquainted with diverse classroom problems and challenges facing the school in general. In that case, the need for their advice cannot be overlooked, as Mr. Atupele indicated:

*I have been a school head for six years in two different schools. But I can assure you that my colleagues (classroom teachers) have been of great assistance...I delegate duties and responsibilities to other teachers and concentrate on critical issues (like reports required in ministry)...I travel, when I come back they give me feedbacks and advice...management becomes a bit easy that way...of course some teachers are stubborn...all they know is throwing demands on you, but they are not playing their part (school head).*

In sum, data presented under 6.2.3 indicate that the importance of school level support in retaining teachers is recognized and acknowledged by school heads. It is notable that meaningful support works both ways: classroom teachers cannot expect meaningful support from school heads without equally showing relevant support to them. To be perceived by school heads as supportive, classroom teachers need to cooperate with them in addressing school challenges. One way is for them to show their commitment to the teaching profession by knowing and attending to the duties required accordingly. That could also include properly reminding and advising the school heads on critical issues facing the school (e.g., within the classroom).

Having presented the results of classroom teachers’ and school heads’ perceived school level support and how they influence voicing and exiting intentions (under sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2, and 6.2.3), the next section (6.2.4) presents results on school level conditions which teachers perceive are important if they are to voice instead of exit remote schools.

**6.2.4 Teachers’ perceived school level conditions favouring voice over exiting a remote school**

This section presents results for the fourth sub-question of the second major research question. The aim of the sub-question was to establish conditions
under which a teacher could decide to voice instead of exit a remote school. Table 13 summarizes the survey results.

**Table 13. Conditions for teachers’ voicing in a remote school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Influential “perceived voicing” contexts</th>
<th>Qualitized survey results</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contexts/Condition(s)</td>
<td>Agreeing Group (N/%)</td>
<td>Disagreeing Group (N/%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Empowering, listening and cooperative leadership⁵³</td>
<td>119 (73.5%)</td>
<td>30 (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Habitability⁵⁴</td>
<td>116 (71.6%)</td>
<td>14 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Friendliness outside school environments⁵⁵</td>
<td>105 (64.9%)</td>
<td>26 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Investment potentialities</td>
<td>103 (63.6%)</td>
<td>36 (22.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Supportive and peaceful school working environment⁵⁶</td>
<td>99 (61%)</td>
<td>24 (14.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Life as a “challenge” mindset</td>
<td>93 (57.4%)</td>
<td>39 (24.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Patriotism &amp; Professional commitment</td>
<td>77 (47.5%)</td>
<td>41 (25.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-influential “perceived voicing” contexts</th>
<th>(Nativism)</th>
<th>Disagreeing Group (N/%)</th>
<th>Not sure (N/%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Locality policies</td>
<td>55 (33.9%)</td>
<td>65 (40.1%)</td>
<td>39 (24.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No “alternative door” beliefs</td>
<td>25 (15.4%)</td>
<td>65 (58.6%)</td>
<td>36 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conditions found in the data were grouped into two broad categories. First, influential and, secondly, non-influential “perceived voicing” contexts. The first category contains seven conditions under which their responses from the “agreeing group” were higher than those of the “disagreeing group”. Implicitly, these are conditions under which the majority of classroom teachers favour voicing before exiting a remote school. They are labelled “influential perceived voicing contexts”. In the second category two conditions were found where responses from the “disagreeing group” were

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⁵³ Supportive in solving teachers’ problems, involving teachers in decision-making.
⁵⁴ A habitable environment mainly prioritizes the presence of decent teachers’ houses and other important human services such as clean and safe water, electricity and healthy centres.
⁵⁵ Respect, recognition, valuing and support from the community surrounding the school, particularly parents.
⁵⁶ Coworkers’ support, conflicts/grievances resolution frame, palatable teaching and learning facilities coupled with students’ discipline.
higher than those from the “agreeing group”. They are labelled “non-influential perceived voicing contexts”, implying that the majority of classroom teachers would not favour voicing over exiting under those conditions. In the paragraphs that follow the conditions are presented with the support of verbatim quotations.

**Influential “perceived voicing” contexts**

**Empowering, listening and cooperative leadership**

Teachers’ empowerment at the school level is described as one of the important aspects towards positively influencing teachers’ intention to stay instead of leaving a remote school. Empowerment is identified alongside ‘attentive and cooperative leadership’. The majority of the classroom teachers (73.5%) who responded to this question supported this condition. Only 18.5% disagreed, while 8% were not sure. Empowering especially entails giving classroom teachers voice to influence classroom activities and broad school level decisions. This means that teachers are given ‘real autonomy’ on various issues at the school level. When coupled with a leadership which is supportive and cares about classroom teachers’ concerns, it is possible to find that teachers could opt to remain rather than leave.

One of the critical factors which the study identifies as leading teachers to leave is the inability to contribute to their school development because of school leadership practices. Notably, a number of teachers single out school leadership as being an important source of teachers’ dissatisfaction at the school level. Issa, one of the classroom teachers who commented on this issue, had this to say:

...many teachers have good and excellent ideas, but they are segregated...mnhh...not listened to at all... and this is highly discouraging and demoralizing....Dictatorship kind of leadership...not advisable. Whenever a teacher provides advice, he/she is seen as an enemy and enmity starts. In such situation, teachers develop inferiority complex and cannot provide their ideas or advice or suggestions... you find the school head initiating unnecessary conflicts with any teacher providing opposing or critical ideas to the management...a teacher becomes unfree, uncomfortable and decides to leave.

**Habitability**

Is the area habitable for humans? Doubtlessly, the need for basic services if teachers have to practically stay in remote schools cannot be overemphasized. The second influential condition is built around that conception. Teachers
emphasize the presence of at least a minimum of social services, and especially teachers’ housing, clean and safe water, and electricity are matters which could make them think of staying. About 71.6% of the respondents agreed on this condition, while 8.7% disagreed, and 19.1% were not sure. The issue of teachers’ housing is so critical that retention strategies must make sure to resolve it.

While solving teachers’ housing and other social problems might not be an easy task at the school level, several suggestions of how to look at it were advanced. One teacher suggested:

...if they cannot build them, then at least they should look for them within the school surrounding environment and assist in paying rent for teachers (Edda, classroom teacher)

Another teacher suggested:

School management in collaboration with the village government where the school is located needs to see the importance of building teachers’ houses around the school or near school premises. This will help in terms of managing teachers and supporting them in case of immediate problems (Magessa, school head)

Friendliness outside school environment

Teachers describe the predominant model of living in remote rural areas as being communalism. People are highly dependent on the social support within their environment for conducting different activities. The third influential condition identified is aligned to this outlook. Schools are built within communities, and teachers emphasize that they need strong support from those communities, especially parents’ support. Although in many remote schools students are locally recruited, a good number of teachers and sometimes students come from different areas all over the country. Most of them are absolute strangers to the environment. Hostile societies surrounding schools might make teachers’ life unbearable. In contrast, welcoming and supportive communities could make life easy for teachers. For instance, it was noted that many schools lack teachers’ houses. Supportive communities could organize themselves in trying to solve this problem. About 64.9% of the respondents supported this condition, while 16% did not, and 17.9% were not sure.

One reason identified as to why teachers are unwelcome and disrespected is the low value attached to education and cultural practices in remote areas. One teacher clearly noted:

I am not sure in other areas, but here in this region, a teacher is seen as an invader, without home origin, a fool. People are very
disrespectful and look down at teachers. What they are interested in is marrying and getting married. For instance, a teacher who is unmarried is highly disrespected such that many teachers see it better leaving...I have also noticed many cases of parents convincing and telling their children to devalue teachers and the teaching profession (Mwakaringa, classroom teacher)

It was also reported that some people in remote areas use teachers as their sources of income. Even the issue of witchcraft emerged. One teacher exemplified:

...there is a bad ideology among people in remote rural areas...they think teachers have a lot of money, so we sometimes get robbed ... many teachers are complaining of witchcraft... they are made as trial objects by wizards....This especially make teachers run away from these remote schools (Kibasa, classroom teacher)

**Investment potentialities**

One of the critical issues among teachers is the question of salaries. Teachers keep complaining about low salaries and the lack of opportunities in the teaching career. The majority of them (63.6%) describe the availability of opportunities for increasing their incomes as indeed being influential in their decision to stay in remote areas. However, 22.3% of the respondents did not agree on this, and 13.6% were not sure. While this is probably a problem for all teachers in the country, those in the urban centres are seen to have more opportunities for topping up their incomes, such as giving extra private teaching for payment, so-called “tuitions”. This is because the social and economic standards in urban areas are higher compared to remote rural areas. While the question of how to create such opportunities remains unanswered, this is still an important condition, as Mariam, a classroom teacher comments:

... we have complained for a long time...what we earn is very little, not enough at all...I have family and relative to support, but I cannot and I feel really bad...may be the school management can see how we can make extra money here in our environment...that is important to keep us going...

**Supportive and peaceful school working environment**

Teachers in remote areas spend most of their daily life in schools. They also deal with human beings (students). To be efficient, they need to be psychologically settled. One of the important conditions for creating a peaceful mind is identified by teachers as a supportive and peaceful school
working environment. About 61% agreed on this condition, while 14.5% did not, and 24% were not sure. Teachers are particularly concerned about collegial support and harmony at the school level. It also includes a working environment where there is no conflict. Further, the issue of teaching and learning facilities as well as students’ discipline is noted to be critical. This enables teachers to work productively and enjoy the working atmosphere.

One of the issues noted in a remote school which could help building a peaceful working environment is an organ for resolving conflicts. It seems as if teachers have no specific and reliable mechanism of expressing and solving their problems and conflicts at the school level, as one of teachers indicated:

...we teachers here have many problems. But, where do we express them? There is no conflicts or say dissatisfaction resolutions systems in schools. This means that teachers have no special and reliable place to reveal their frustrations...we all suffer internally...and I would say that this is indeed a big problem in many schools...(Ngengemkeni, classroom teacher)

*Life as a “challenge” mindset*

It was found that contemporary teachers seem to think that ‘life is easy’. Teachers are of the view that such a mindset is being developed by the theoretical college and university environment and the life they live while studying. However, the working arena for teachers in countries like Tanzania cannot be expected to be very easy. The concern was raised that students’ teachers ought to be given a special course on how to develop an appropriate mindset in line with the practical teaching environment in the country. Most teachers (57.4%) who responded to this aspect show their endless concern about the critical importance of building up in teacher trainees’ minds that life is about challenges. On this issue, one teacher commented:

Teachers we get today seem unaware of the real teaching environment in the country. Most schools are in remote rural areas...by the time they go into the teaching they should know that...they think the working environment is easy, no, it is not...I think they are ruined by the kind of life they live while studying...universities and colleges must help us on this (Mitomingi, school head).

*Patriotism and profession commitment*

The last (seventh) influential condition is about teachers being patriotic to the country and committed to the teaching profession. About 47.5% supported this condition, while 23.5% did not, and 25.3% were not sure. The findings
indicate that, in recent years, teachers have not been patriotic to their country. The findings suggest that teachers should be proud of teaching anywhere in the country without being much bothered by school level conditions given that they are ‘educating their nation’.

The other issue, which is in line with teachers being able to teach anywhere regardless of school condition, is commitment to the teaching profession. While the study did not investigate whether teachers are committed or not to their profession, data suggest that the retention difficulties noted are partly explained by teachers’ lack of loyalty to the teaching profession. Jembe, a school head observed:

*I think many people who go into the teaching career are not really interested in teaching...they are not there to make sure the profession grow...I think the nationalism spirit is also an issue...*

Although these seven conditions are supported by the majority as influencing teachers’ voicing instead of exiting in remote schools, there still remains a great deal to be done. The reason is that a close analytical comparison between “disagreeing” and “not sure” responses suggests that a good number of respondents seem not to be sure whether these conditions could really influence their voicing. Being unsure could be interpreted as being easily swept away if the condition is little twisted. This is different from those who show their stand as agreeing or disagreeing. It could be noted from Table 13 that in many instances the “not sure” responses surpass the disagreeing ones. Arguably, while those conditions are important, their implementation still needs extra care, as many teachers remain unclear whether they really influence them or not.

**Non-influential “perceived voicing” contexts**

Apart from the seven conditions which were found to influence teachers’ voice over exit in remote conditions, two conditions were identified as non-influential. It should be noted that these two conditions were initially identified in the pilot study as possibly influencing teachers’ stay instead of leaving. However, data from the survey indicate more responses from those disagreeing than from those agreeing. The two conditions are presented below.

**Locality (Nativism) policies**

In the beginning it was found in the pilot study that posting teachers in remote schools located in areas where they come from would increase their retention. This is labelled “locality retention policies”. The logic is that posting teachers in remote areas where they do not originate makes their lives miserable to the extent that they fail to stay. Therefore, it could be easy for teachers who
originately from those areas, as they are used to the environment, have relatives and friends, and it would therefore be relatively simple for them to stay. However, the findings indicate that 40.1% disagreed that such policies could lead to teachers’ voice in favour of exit in remote contexts. Table 13 indicates that 33.9% think that the policy could work, while 24.1% were not sure. One of the comments on this issue indicated:

...I am not quite sure if sending teachers into areas they come from is a solution to make them stay. I think it is important to address teachers’ problems...teachers should be able to work anywhere in the country...(Mbilinyi, classroom teacher)

No “alternative door” beliefs

The other condition which was initially considered as possibly leading to voice over exit is the lack of alternative jobs. This hinges on the belief that teachers who leave remote schools probably find employment somewhere else. It was initially noted from the pilot study that teachers could choose to stay rather than leave if there was no other job for them to join. However, the survey data indicates that 58.6% disagreed, while only 15.4% agreed and 22.2% were not sure. The data suggest that it is technically wrong to assume that teachers will stay in a remote context simply because they cannot get another job, without addressing any critical low retention causes. It is also important to note that a significant number of respondents were not sure whether the lack of alternative jobs could influence them to stay or not. This could mean that some teachers are likely to stay in a remote condition for some time, while a small change, either in improved school level support or by finding slightly better opportunities could lead to many being retained or swept away. Mwajuma, a classroom teacher commented on this:

...some teachers have left here because of poor environment. I have information others have not got another job yet... sometimes staying here is equally as being unemployed...it really makes little or no difference...

Overall, results presented under 6.2.4 show seven conditions under which teachers are likely to voice over exiting a remote school. Equally, two conditions which, although they may apply to a lower percentage, make a teacher delay leaving cannot be taken as constituting an influence on voicing over exiting. School heads, in the virtue of their position, are well placed to influence teachers’ voicing over exiting. Equally important is collegial support. However, the extent to which the conditions can effectively support teachers’ retention in remote schools is an aspect in need of further research and improvement.
6.3 Chapter summary

The first research question explored the school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. Under the first sub-question, the findings show that demographically, the majority of secondary school teachers (76.3%) in remote areas are males. There is also a significant percent (93.3%) of relatively young teachers with ages ranging from 21 to 40 years. Findings show that the time the majority of these teachers (63.8%) have been in their current work station (and profession) ranges from 1 to 5 years. In addition, most of them (94.1%) have a Bachelor’s degree and a diploma in education as their highest academic qualification. As regards the second sub-question, teachers in remote areas specifically identify the following conditions as critical school level sources of low teacher retention: accommodation – mainly the lack of decent housing; poor social services such as safe and clean water, electricity, markets/shopping areas and health centres; school level conflicts, especially between classroom teachers and their school managements (school heads), mainly due to ‘unfair practices’; poor teaching and learning situations; teachers’ involvement in decision-making as well as the lack of alternative economic activities to generate extra incomes.

The second research question explored teachers’ perceptions of school level support, and how these perceptions influence their voice and exit intentions in remote schools. With regard to research question 2(a), the findings show that classroom teachers perceive a supportive school head as someone who is committed to: building a harmonious school environment and aspiring to collaborative decision-making; the teaching and learning situation; addressing teachers’ affairs; showing respect, tolerance and fairness in allocating school level resources and opportunities; and advancing school development. Findings show that such perceptions influence teachers to voice through reducing their anxieties and stress, creating a sense of freedom and happiness, as well as a sense of acceptance and belongingness. However, the perceived absence of support could trigger teachers’ exit intentions through escalating loneliness, conflicts growing into crises, untrustworthiness and despair. Findings from research question 2(b), dealing with how classroom teachers perceive a supportive coworker in remote schools, identify three perceptions: accommodative collegiality, willing presence, and knowledge-sharing and support culture. Such perceptions influence teachers to voice, as teachers feel accepted and able to acquire remote adaptive knowledge from colleagues as well as a group citizenship identity. They could equally influence exit through instigating conflicting contexts. Research question 2(c), on how school heads perceive a supportive classroom teacher, identifies two major perception themes: cooperative and professional commitment as well as serving as a reminder and advisor. Such perceptions influence school heads’ efforts to support classroom teachers’ retention as they feel that their efforts are recognized, appreciated, and worthwhile, and indeed not a waste of time.
Research question 2(d) establishes seven conditions: empowering, listening and cooperative leadership; habitability; friendliness outside school environments; opportunities for extra earnings; a supportive and peaceful school working environment; life as a “challenge” mindset; and patriotism and professional commitment as school level conditions under which teachers could voice instead of exit a remote school. However, two conditions, locality (nativism) policies and “no alternative door” beliefs, were identified as being not influential. The major study results are summarized in Table 7.

The results show diverse ways of perceiving who is a supportive school head and collegial teacher, both from school heads and classroom teachers’ points of view. Impliedly, perceived school level support is important for teachers’ retention. However, one needs to closely and constantly learn what relevant support implies, depending on context and individuals. Moreover, the conditions emerging as favouring voicing over exiting are worth considering. Nonetheless, to be meaningfully applicable, their further development cannot be over-emphasized. Having presented the study results, the next chapter (7) demonstrates a more discursive approach to these results.
Chapter Seven: Discussion

This chapter contains a discussion of the results to which the empirical studies of the thesis have contributed, linked to research in the field. The focus of the discussion is on how teachers in remote schools can be retained banking on strategies implementable within school capacities. The study was guided by two major questions and the discussion is logically presented in line with these questions.

7.1 Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote schools in Tanzania

This section discusses the findings from the first research question. The question intends to explore school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The section is divided into two parts: first, a discussion of teachers’ demographic characteristics in remote secondary schools in Tanzania and its implications on retention efforts and, secondly, teachers’ perceived sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania.

7.1.1 Demographic factors and teachers’ retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

The section discusses the findings of remote secondary schools teachers’ demographic characteristics in Tanzania and their implications for retention efforts. Gender, age, years in the current school, and highest education level were explored. The discussion of this aspect and its implications which are drawn in the conclusive Chapter 8 are strongly built on previous research in this area.
Gender

This study found that there were more male than female teachers (76.3%) in remote schools. This is challenging, as evidence shows more attrition among male teachers (Borman & Maritza, 2008). But even when they stay, male teachers are seldom satisfied with the teaching career (Stockard & Michael, 2004). Satisfaction with a career is important for long-term retention (Lent, 2005; Dawis, 2002, 2005) and therefore such a huge male workforce is likely to leave at any time when the situation slightly changes. One possible way of retaining teachers in the remote context as far as the gender perspective is concerned could be to consider hiring middle-aged women teachers. However, teachers' social support strategies need not necessarily be gender-specific, as differences in the perception of such supports seem to be statistically insignificant (Ng & Sorensen, 2008).

Age

Findings show that the majority of teachers (76.9%) in remote schools are young, aged between 21 and 30 years. A major group of teachers (89.4%) falls below 36 years. A middle group of teachers aged between 36 and 50 years comprises only 5.9%. Moreover, about 3.3% of the teachers were found to be fifty years and above. Such age spectrums pose a significant threat to teacher retention efforts, especially in a remote context where the environment itself is highly discouraging. Evidence shows that young employees (teachers), less than 40 years of age, are less satisfied (Kavanaugh et al., 2006; Wilson et al., 2008) and more likely to leave (Borman & Maritza, 2008; Stockard & Michael, 2004). Echoing Armstrong (2014), such a young workforce in remote secondary schools is likely to change jobs and employers more often than an older workforce. Ahuja and colleagues (2007) observed that older workers were less exhausted, more committed, and less likely to be subject to turnover. The fact that 89.4% of the observed teachers’ group in this study qualified for being described as an unstable group in remote schools indeed requires extra carefully planned retention strategies. Equally, given the nature of the teaching and learning environment in most remote schools, even older teachers are likely to quit because of tiredness. Neither is the stable group, which is quite small and is, in addition, given a higher workload and other demotivators (Sumra, 2004; Mkumbo, 2012), likely to stay for long in these schools. One possible strategy as far as age and retention is concerned would be to increase the number of male teachers within a ‘stable group’, that is those aged between 36 and 50. Such a category is likely to stay, even though it might not be very satisfied with the career. Arguably, it seems logical and strategic to increase the number of both female and male teachers within a stable group.
Years in the profession

Although this study did not specifically focus on how many years teachers had been in the teaching profession, the numbers of years they had spent in the current remote schools were important to reflect on. The findings show that a majority (63.8%) of the teachers had been in these schools for between one and five years, most of whom (84.9%) had been there between one and ten years. Few teachers (1.3%) were found to have been in their current schools for more than eleven years. The findings suggest that teachers stay a good number of years in their remote schools. This echoes other studies (cf. Stockard & Michael, 2004) indicating that, even though they are dissatisfied, male teachers are likely to stay longer compared to their female counterparts. As noted earlier in this study, most teachers in remote schools were males. The low number of female teachers in the remote areas could be partly associated with the lack of housing for teachers (cf. Mulkeen, 2006; Lowe, 2006). The findings are challenging in terms of retention because, most teachers being males, as evidence suggests, staying for years does not mean that they are satisfied, and therefore regarding their age and experience, it will be wrong to assume that they will stay on. There is no shortage of evidence demonstrating that the attrition is higher among the experienced teachers, especially within mathematics and science (cf. Borman & Maritza, 2008; Crawley, 2005). Within such a context, carefully planned retention strategies need to be implemented instead of taking for granted that teachers will continue staying simply because they have done that so far.

Education level

Findings show that teachers in remote schools are well educated. The majority had a Bachelor’s degree (58.6%), followed by a diploma (35.5%). Only 4.6% had a certificate, a qualification level which, according to new teacher training policy requirements in Tanzania, will be removed as of 2015. Such teachers’ qualifications in secondary schools reflect the current policy requirements. Mounting evidence persists that the higher qualified employees (teachers in this context) are more likely to leave the profession than unqualified ones (cf. Agyeman & Ponniah, 2014; Borman & Maritza, 2008). Evidently, these teachers are likely to continue leaving the profession, and remote schools in particular, unless they are well retained.

In general, this section discusses four demographic factors: age, gender, years in the current school and profession, and qualification. Observably, most teachers in remote schools are males, who, echoing broad literature are likely to stay, however, less satisfied with the teaching career compared to female teachers. It has also been noted that most teachers are young, generally described as hard to be satisfied with their career and hence difficult to retain.
While most teachers seem to be qualified and have stayed at least more than four years in the current schools and profession, the evidence that attrition is more common among experienced teachers is an alarm clock for considering better informed teacher retention strategies rather than assuming that they will simply stay as long as they have stayed before. In the light of these findings, several suggestions are put forward in the concluding chapter (8) for consideration towards successfully retaining teachers in remote schools as far as demographic aspects are concerned. The section that follows discusses the findings of teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania.

7.1.2 School level sources of low retention in remote schools in Tanzania

One of the important steps towards designing an effective retention strategy is to identify the sources of low retention. One of the objectives of this study was to find the school organizational level sources that are perceived by teachers as hindering their stay in the remote school context. The findings identified accommodation - especially teachers’ housing, social services, school level conflicts, the teaching and learning situation, teachers’ involvement in decision-making, and opportunities for extra earnings as being the major sources of low retention in remote school contexts. In this section, these findings are discussed.

Accommodation and social services

Housing

It was clear that housing is a problem of gigantic proportions in remote schools. Consequently, teachers in remote contexts in many cases live in poor, inferior houses. Critically, even those inferior houses are hardly accessible. The evidence indicates that finding a room, even of poor quality to rent in remote areas might sometimes be an issue. The situation becomes more pressing for new teachers who have a limited knowledge of the remote area where they have been posted. Many of these teachers are forced to live in nearby towns where it is relatively easy to find accommodation and travel to and from schools every day. Within their meagre salaries, which sometimes do not even arrive in time, such conditions add more pain to their misery. More frustrating is the observation that even when found, those inferior houses are themselves located quite a distance from schools.

The findings further indicate that most remote schools are built far from human habitations. Teachers are forced to walk long distances to and from work on a daily basis. What is more critical is that such movements are not safe, as teachers risk being attacked by wild animals or robbed; let alone the significant and precious time wasted on those movements. This implies that
teachers have to walk to schools and back home during daytime. Walking at other times raises strong concerns for their security. That being the case, they may have to arrive at schools relatively late and are forced to leave early. That in turn means they are likely to fail to attend early morning or late evening teaching sessions. In such a situation, it becomes difficult for a teacher not only to stay but also to work efficiently.

Consistently with previous studies (Lowe, 2006; Bennell, 2004; Mulkeen, 2006; Mulkeen & Chen, 2008; Joyce et al., 2014; Jinyevu, 2013; Kayuni & Richard, 2007; Macdonald, 1999; Hakielimu, 2011; ITFEFA, 2010; Davidson, 2007; Sumra, 2004; Mlaki, 2015), housing for teachers appears as one of the most important factors in attracting and retaining teachers in schools located in remote contexts. Geographical locations where living conditions are extremely poor, harsh, or expensive are susceptible to high teachers’ turnover (Macdonald, 1999). In line with Macdonald’s (1999) observation, Lowe (2006) draws examples from rural schools in Texas, Bennell (2004) from Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, and Mulkeen (2006) from Malawi, Uganda, Mozambique and Lesotho. Moreover, examples from Malawi (Mulkeen, 2006) and Texas (Lowe, 2006), make it evident that the presence of houses near schools is strongly linked to the retention of especially female teachers in remote areas. In some countries, teachers’ housing problem is noted as being so extensive that it forces teachers to use disused classrooms or live in extremely inferior houses like those with ‘falling roofs’ (ITFEFA, 2010).

Within the current study’s aim with its clear findings that housing is a critical source of the low teachers’ retention source, the logical follow-up question is how this problem could be dealt with. This necessitates an overview of the initiatives that have been taken and their implications on feasibly addressing the problem. The available evidence shows that, while the Tanzanian government emphasizes the construction of teachers’ houses in a number of policy documents (cf. SEDPs I & II), the reality is puzzling. For instance, while 21,793 houses were planned to be built between 2007 and 2009, only 2,179 (10% of the target) were actually constructed (Hakielimu, 2011). Moreover, SEDP II aimed at providing adequate housing for community secondary schools, especially in rural areas, by building at least 2,000 houses every year throughout the programme time (2010-2015), and a rural school to have at least 2 staff houses by 2014 (Hakielimu, 2011). However, recent evidence shows an increase in teachers’ housing shortages from 76.8% in 2012 to 78% (in general) and 81.2% (in government schools) in 2013 (URT, 2012a, 2013). Additionally, a critical check on the government’s budgetary release and construction arrangements is worth including. For example, in 2009, when the national plan called for 139 billion Tshs to be provided for the construction of secondary school teachers’ houses,

57 It is assumed that safe day hours include those when many people are in movement. In remote areas, this could not be very early in the morning (before 6AM) or late in the evening/night (after 6PM).
unfortunately only 8.8 billion Tshs (6% of target) were released (Hakielimu, 2011). Not only that, but the communities were urged to contribute 25% and 30% of the house unit construction cost under SEDP I and II, respectively. The house unit construction cost was estimated at 12 and 40.3 million Tshs under SEDP I and II, respectively. Quite clearly, not only the government initiatives are small and the construction costs are rising fast, but the poor rural communities are already involved, too. Again, the definition of ‘communities’ seems to be blurred, and how they are supposed to participate is unclear. The importance of government involvement in solving teachers’ housing problems cannot be underestimated. However, within such a situation, my argument is that it is important to examine alternative plans of dealing with this problem in remote areas. The question is what these other alternative plans to this problem could be. In the concluding chapter a number of strategies that could be plausibly considered as alternative plans are advanced.

All teachers (141) in the current study identified teachers’ housing as a particularly critical source of low teacher retention. There is no shortage of evidence that housing conditions exert an influence on teachers’ health, attitudes, motivation, quality of life and work, and commitment (Jinyevu, 2013; Kayuni & Richard, 2007; Mlaki, 2015). In Tanzania, for instance, the housing problem is identified as an important source of the majority of school heads’ ‘occupational stress’ (Mlaki, 2015). Undoubtedly, poor quality housing conditions demoralize teachers, lower their self-esteem, escalate their poor performance, and fuel their turnover thereafter (Bennell, 2004; Davidson, 2007). This study strongly emphasizes that retention efforts for remote teachers must design and implement deliberate measures to solve teachers’ housing problem.

Social services

Social services such as clean and safe water, electricity, roads, Internet and mobile connectivity, health centres, market and shopping areas, and banking services are important for human habitation. The current study clearly finds that most of these services are underdeveloped and that the situation in remote rural areas is difficult. For instance, due to poor banking systems, teachers in many remote areas have to go to town centres to collect their salaries, a journey which could take several days an account of poor roads, especially during rainy seasons. Getting in touch with a teacher could also be a problem due to poor connectivity, but also because of the problem of charging mobile phones due to the frequent powercuts or to the complete absence of electricity. Altogether, poor social services make remote life colourless, as even recreation centres are limited. Working, like marking or preparing/lesson planning becomes limited to day hours only, as there is no electricity during the night. This study identifies social services as equal to housing in counteracting teachers’ retention in remote areas.
The current study findings run parallel to previous studies concluding that the absence of important social services has a negative impact on employees’ retention (ITFEFA, 2010; O-saki, et al., 2002). It has been previously documented that remote rural areas suffer an acute lack of services such as clean water, electricity, access to healthcare and telephone coverage (ITFEFA, 2010). More than a decade ago, O-saki and colleagues observed that the Tanzanian government deployed teachers in remote areas without any social services, which adversely affected their motivation and commitment to teaching (O-saki, et al., 2002). More than a decade later, this study observes an almost non-existing improvement, as the same social services are still very poor. This means that the development in this area has been stagnant and unsatisfactory. What is obvious is that this is likely to continue affecting teachers’ retention in remote areas. Since government efforts are not satisfactory, more research is required to find out alternative ways of improving social services in remote areas.

**School level conflicts**

The findings of the current study reflect on the controversial ideas of whether conflicts are good or bad in an organization. However, within the context of teachers’ retention, conflicts, especially when unresolved within a reasonable time, turn into sources of low retention. The majority of the teachers (about 81%) in this study consider conflicts as bad and as an important source of teachers’ attrition in remote schools. This seems to align with classical management theorists’ (cf. Fayol, 1949; Taylor, 1911) thoughts that conflict in an organization need to be avoided as it could have a negative effect on the functioning of an organization (Saiti, 2014), and that conflict is like a ‘disease’ with dissociating and dysfunctional consequences (Corwin, 1966). Still, it is equally important to note that a significant percentage (19) of teachers in the current study did not see conflicts as a critical source of low teachers’ retention in remote school contexts. On the one hand, the finding echoes the modern management outlook that conflict is a positive indicator of organizational performance that leads to better decision-making, evolution and effectiveness (Saiti, 2014). These views are clearly reflected in conflict theorists who have insisted that conflict is integral to social life itself (Weber, 1947), being essential to both the structure and process of group life, and that groups require disharmony as well as consensus to function effectively: conflict creates groups, provides a bond between opposing groups and acts as a source of flexibility and creativity within organizations (Corwin, 1966). On the other hand, despite this study’s alignment with Saiti (2014), it has found that, within school organizations, conflicts could be regarded as a general phenomenon, especially because of the diverse inherent conflicts found in this study at school level. Yet, looking on the causes of these conflicts, ‘most being associated with unfair practices’ by school heads and unsupportive
communities around schools, this study finds conflicts being more associated with negative than with positive effects. Most teachers describe conflicts as a source of disharmony in schools and, in contrast with Corwin (1966), disharmony is not treated as something desirable, especially not within the context of remote teachers’ retention.

This study identifies that a great number of conflicts at the school level take place between teachers and their management, because of unjust and unsupportive practices, as noted earlier in this discussion. While these findings are in line with Corwin (1966), who observed that almost half of the conflicts within schools were associated with teachers and members of the authority, and mainly concerned authority problems. It partially contrasts with previous studies documenting that school principals often spend their valuable time trying to solve problems that arise as a result of a conflict or disagreement among school members (Saiti, 2014; Somech, 2008). School heads are specifically identified in this study as being among the sources of conflict in remote schools. They treat teachers unequally and split them up. Some teachers, who sympathize with the school heads are favoured, receiving all school level benefits and opportunities such as attending examination sessions which involve financial gains, while others are left with nothing. Unfair treatment is seen to be extended even to planning school activities including teaching load distribution. This causes pain, anger, hatred and disharmony, not only between teachers and school heads, but also among the teachers themselves. Within such perceived unfair exchange relations, misunderstandings, tensions and unrest turn into an everyday conduct creating unconducive working situations.

The findings provide evidence that leader-member exchange, coworker exchange, ‘school organizational structural arrangements’ and organizational support can be usefully employed to extend the understanding and treatment of school level conflicts within remote school contexts. This is a result of school heads practising unfair exchanges among classroom teachers, which in turn influence exchange relations among the classroom teachers themselves and with their school heads. Such practices are well reflected in leader member exchange and coworker exchange theories (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Leah & Colin, 2013). More importantly, school heads are able to perform those unjust practices because they have the power, authority, and access to resources due to their positions as school managers and leaders, as reflected within bureaucratic organizational arrangements. Within this context, it logically becomes imperative to rethink the distribution of power, authority and access to resources at school level in a way that could reduce school heads’ unjust practices. In addition, school heads being identified as an important source of school level conflicts because of unfair practices might imply a lack of supportive knowledge. One possible explanation could be that most school heads lack a clear understanding of relevant support to classroom teachers and the strategies to implement them. This is because fairness is
clearly identified as one out of three core antecedents in organizational support theory (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Similarly, the current study identifies conflicts as being associated with poor communication within the school. Classroom teachers emphasize the poor information flow from the school management to other staff members, which leads to delays in receiving meaningful and timely feedbacks on a number of issues, as required. It has been documented (cf. De Nobile & McCormick, 2008) that communication could broadly serve four functions: directive (influencing, controlling or persuading personnel, involving orders, instructions and directives); supportive (encouragement, the raising of morale and affirmation, through praise, constructive criticism, positive feedback, demonstrating an interest in the welfare of staff members, and showing trust); cultural (informing, socializing or acculturating new members of an organization into its culture as well as maintaining the culture); and democratic (participation in decision-making, especially in reflection on changes in workplace practices in schools which demand greater participation, as in team situations). Communication in schools may take a number of forms, including organized meetings, informal chats, noticeboards, memos and handbooks (De Nobile & McCormick, 2008). Indisputably, the importance of effective communication for schools to function properly cannot be emphasized enough. It is therefore logical to argue that a lack of communication in school leaves teachers at a dilemma of what is really happening, which leads them into confusion and conflict. In such a situation, they are likely to leave. Since this study explores school level sources of teachers’ low retention, and ‘conflicts’ being found as one of them, this is partially linked to poor communication at the school level. It is important that the issue of poor communication at the school level be further explored, especially to uncover why it occurs and how to best improve it in remote school contexts.

On the other hand, schools in remote areas do find themselves in tension with communities around them. Parents are not cooperative in terms of fulfilling their obligations as agreed over time. In remote areas, many parents are poor, less educated and attach low value to education. Badly enough, teachers are not valued, respected, and treated with dignity. They are seen as strangers who have come there to destroy their cultural and moral conduct and are suspected of teaching their children bad practices. In such situations, teachers and their properties feel insecure because of intimidation, theft and other bad practices in local areas such as witchcraft.

It has been documented that, in many ways, school organizations exist in an unstable and dynamic equilibrium, to the effect that conflicts in one area could lead to adjustments in some other areas but lead to conflicts in yet other areas (Saiti, 2014). The current study findings echo previous studies (cf.
Balay, 2006, Saiti, 2014) that long unresolved conflicts in schools could trigger counterproductive behaviour, such as lack of communication, stress or regular absences, which are detrimental to human relations and jeopardize the educational process because they may decrease the levels of motivation and performance of staff and, subsequently, of students. It could equally lead to resistance towards new initiatives, inflexibility or lack of cooperation among school members, all of which would reduce the team’s effectiveness (Somech, 2008; Saiti, 2014). In the end, such practices might lead to teachers’ turnover.

School principals are specifically identifiable as main agents of the school culture and dynamics and are urged to adopt a balanced role in order to achieve a positive system of communication (Saiti, 2014). Equally, group unity and mutual approach to problem-solving is important for attaining conflict resolution (Somech, 2008). However, in contexts where school heads are noted as sources of school level conflicts, it becomes logical to question their ‘leadership and management capabilities’. To what extent are school heads capable of managing and leading remote secondary schools, let alone school level conflicts and teacher turnover in remote Tanzanian schools? Research evidence suggests ‘incapable school leadership’ as the most common cause of conflict (Saiti, 2014). Within the current study findings, it suffices noting that there are many school level conflicts, which are not only a source of dissatisfaction to many teachers, but which cannot be undermined when thinking of teachers’ retention efforts. Yet, this source has not received much emphasis in the Tanzanian context. Such conflicts are underestimated but found to be most significant in influencing teachers’ retention in the remote secondary school context.

**The teaching and learning situation**

Teaching and learning conditions in most remote secondary schools are far from being satisfactory. Important teaching and learning facilities: classrooms, books (textbooks), desks, tables, blackboards, chalk, school sewage systems and the like are neither adequate nor in good conditions. Moreover, many teachers who are posted in remote schools by the government do not report. Even the few who report stay for some days/months and then leave. That increases the teaching load of the few who remain in those schools. Additional difficulties involve students’ indiscipline and truancy. More academically unmotivated students are found in remote areas than in urban centres, which could be partly explained by the circumstance that most of their parents are poor and have little education. The remote situation in itself is equally poor and demotivating, including, for instance, the lack of reliable electricity which could enable studying even during night hours. The situation leads to teacher ineffectiveness and mass student failure. Unfortunately and unfairly, the blame is usually attributed to teachers. It is interesting that, despite being unsupportive and caring less about education, parents and students alike keep
on demanding good performances. Despite their efforts to work in difficult conditions, teachers are still perceived as non-innovative, lazy, unable to teach, and in some instances good for nothing.

This study echoes previous findings (cf. Bennell & Akyempong, 2007; Kadzamira, 2006; Moleni & Ndalama, 2004; Lumandi, 2008) that teaching and learning conditions in remote rural areas in developing countries have an adverse impact on teachers’ retention and on the quality of education provided. This has been related to the question ‘how can teachers do their jobs without the appropriate infrastructure and materials?’ The findings are in line with Mulkeen and colleagues’ (2007) observations that trying to perform a job without the appropriate infrastructure and materials is very frustrating and could trigger people in such situations to quickly consider leaving and looking for another job. There is no shortage of examples that teaching and learning situations, especially in remote areas, have deteriorated drastically in many African countries like Tanzania, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali with an insufficient supply of student textbooks and teaching materials, inadequate equipment, poor teaching conditions, large and overcrowded classrooms, high workload and a difficult school environment (Mulkeen et al., 2007; Bennell & Akyempong, 2007). Moreover, Bennell and Akyempong (2007) in a study of twelve low income countries found that rural schools mostly experienced a high staff turnover, and the highest vacancy rates. Drawing examples from South Africa for examples of poor school infrastructure, Lumandi (2008) documented some schools having classrooms with broken windows, cracked walls and without doors for a long period; some buildings were close to collapsing, yet others were available but uncompleted like being without roofs, which entailed that classes tended to be cancelled during bad weather. Indeed, with a poor quality of school infrastructure and teaching materials, coupled with difficulties in accessing opportunities for professional development in remote rural schools, teachers’ morale, job satisfaction and incentive to remain, not only in the remote schools, but in the teaching profession altogether, is highly contested (Moleni & Ndalama, 2004; Lumandi, 2008; Mulkeen et al., 2007; Kadzamira, 2006). As Mulkeen et al., (2007) observed, improving conditions of service for teachers is a promising way of increasing teacher morale, improving the quality of teaching and learning, making the profession more attractive and enhancing the retention of teachers.

**Teachers’ involvement in decision-making**

The findings show that while most classroom teachers aspire to be involved in decision-making, school heads deny them such opportunities. Remote school teachers face numerous critical situations including poor housing and lack of important services. Observations that they are denied opportunities of even being involved in issues with a direct impact on their well-being pose a
significant challenge to remote teachers’ retention efforts. This is partly due to the lack of involvement, which escalates their sense of being powerless, as they cannot influence important changes. Moreover, such situations not only reinforce teachers’ perception of lack of democratic atmosphere at the school but strengthen their stress in an already stressful remote environment.

The findings that only a few classroom teachers participate and are involved in school level decisions strongly suggest the importance of leader-member exchange and organizational support in extending the understanding of why such practices occur and how such situations could be mitigated. It is clear that school heads in most remote schools treat teachers unequally. That is why few are involved and reflects poor exchange relationships between school heads and other teachers. Such treatment equally enhances teachers’ perceived low school head support. Consequently, such a perception among teachers of unfair treatment involves the lack of ‘high quality exchange’, which is likely to affect their loyalty to the school head and the school management, decreasing their acceptance and compliance with school level decisions as not involving them.

 Doubtlessly, the limited teacher participation in decision-making may be related to ‘poor school heads’ support and exchanges practices’. One reason for that could be the lack of knowledge among school heads of how to effectively support teachers’ participation. In parallel with Grissom (2012), there seems to be a need of investing more to develop relevant competencies that would enable school managements to improve their capacities in getting teachers to participate. This is essential, because teachers’ involvement and participation foster their sense of being empowered (having voice), reducing their stress, role ambiguity and conflicts, and consequently enhancing their retention (Conley, 1991; Kim, 2002; Spreitzer, Kizilos & Nason, 1997; Wright & Kim, 2004; Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Griffeth et al., 2000).

 Moreover, the findings echo other studies of teachers’ empowerment and involvement in decision-making and retention (Shen, 1997; Laschinger et al., 2009) indicating that teachers who feel as if they have some influence over school and teaching policies are more likely to stay. Workplace empowerment has been shown to be an important precursor of employees’ positive relationship with their work, an important factor in burnout and subsequent turnover intentions (Laschinger et al., 2009; Nedd, 2006). Within organizational theory and practice, the purpose of empowerment is to increase employees’ control over their work, thereby improving job satisfaction and enhancing organizational commitment (Laschinger et al., 2009). Kanter (1979) describes four organizational empowerment structures: access to information, access to support, access to resources needed to do the job, and opportunities to learn and grow.

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58 This means having knowledge of organizational decisions, policies, and goals, as well as the technical knowledge and expertise required to be effective within the broader context of the
Opportunities for extra earnings

The importance of having adequate financial capacity for enhancing teachers’ retention cannot be overemphasized. In African contexts, the Tanzanian context in this case, where many people still raise big families, including extended ones, and in situations where bread earners are few, including those employed as teachers, the need to raise enough money for that purpose is obvious. Teachers in Tanzania have been complaining for decades about low salaries, the lack of fringe benefits and other opportunities, which taken together make life miserable.

Comparatively, teachers in urban areas have greater opportunities to participate in other income-generating activities like teaching tuitions or doing small business as compared to remote rural areas. Many people in urban centres are government employees and business personnel and have higher incomes, which enable them to pay for their children’s extra teaching. It is also easy to do business in towns compared to rural areas. Most people in remote areas are agriculturalists and poor, which makes it difficult to afford extra teaching payment for their children. Even the value attached to education is different among urban and rural parents and communities. Relatively speaking, more parents in urban centres are better educated, and possibly more able to support their children’s learning at home. This is also enhanced by the higher availability of electricity connectivity in urban centres than in rural areas.

Teachers, like many other employees, have always participated in extra activities to raise their incomes, as salaries in most cases are inadequate. However, the critical issue does not concern the different contextual conditions between urban and rural areas. It is more difficult to have something to offer to generate extra earnings in rural areas as compared to urban centres. That increases life difficulties, escalating teachers’ dissatisfaction within remote contexts. The important question, which still remains unanswered, is how to support teachers’ possibilities of generating extra incomes in remote contexts. This is of critical importance because teachers’ retention is sometimes affected by economic factors, as teachers make rational economic decisions about their careers and seek better paid work where they can (Mulkeen et al., 2007). Some teachers leave remote

organization. Information provides a sense of purpose and meaning for employees and enhances their ability to make decisions that contribute to organizational goals.

This includes feedback and guidance received from superiors, peers, and subordinates as well as the emotional support, helpful advice, or hands-on assistance which others can provide.

This refers to the ability of the individual to access the materials, money, supplies, time and equipment required to accomplish organizational goals.

This entails access to challenges, rewards, and professional development opportunities to increase knowledge and skills. This opportunity for growth may be accomplished through participation on committees, and in task forces and inter-departmental work groups.
schools because they are attracted to alternative employments in other areas (ITFEFA, 2010).

As a summing note, the low retention sources continue to influence teachers’ retention, since a significant number of teachers strongly resist rural school postings, with the critical result that rural areas fail to recruit enough newly qualified teachers (Bennell & Akyempong, 2007). The current study findings parallel what Kebabe and colleagues (2007) observed about teachers living in abysmal conditions - working long hours, in understaffed schools and overcrowded classrooms, with too few resources, for too little pay. In such situations, teachers in secondary schools, from a number of countries (like Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Uganda and Tanzania) were quoted as indicating that, although higher salaries would encourage better performance, improvements in conditions of service are especially important in promoting job satisfaction, motivating teachers, and supporting retention (Mulkeen et al., 2007). However, great caution ought to be observed towards addressing low retention sources identified in the current study. This is because the retention of teacher is a very complex matter with many variables involved and findings (hence retention strategies) that are not always in congruence. For instance, contrary to evidence from the current study, Joyce et al. (2014), drawing examples from South Africa, found that, although allowance policies such as car allowances, accommodation and other benefits are important for teachers in rural schools, they have not significantly assisted in recruiting and retaining teachers in rural schools nor been linked to improving teachers’ and learners’ performances.

The findings of the current study provide evidence that substantive efforts are to be carefully considered to address low retention sources. A comprehensive approach dealing with all sources is crucial. Some of the important sources such as school level conflicts, teachers’ involvement and empowerment could be dealt with by using available school level capacities. More studies are required to deal with how the identified sources could be effectively mitigated within school level resources, as government efforts are not enough. Having discussed the findings related to the first research question, the section that follows presents a discussion related to the second research question.

7.2 Teachers’ perceived school level support and its influence on voicing and exiting intentions in a remote school

This section discusses the findings of what teachers in remote schools in Tanzania perceive as relevant school level support and how such support influence their voicing and exiting intentions. The discussion is organized into three main sections: the first containing a discussion of different teachers’
perceptions of what is relevant school level support, the second concerning how this perceived school level support influences them either to voice or exit a remote school, and the third section relating to specific conditions under which a teacher in a remote school could decide to voice over exiting a remote school.

7.2.1 Teachers’ perceived school level support for retention

Who is a supportive school head or collegial teacher, according to classroom teachers? Who is a supportive classroom teacher, according to the school head? The findings related to these sub-questions are discussed in this section. Findings concerning classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head are discussed first, followed by their perceptions of a supportive collegial teacher, and last, school heads’ perceptions of a supportive classroom teacher are considered. Taken together, these perceptions form what is broadly regarded as perceived ‘school level support’ in this study.

Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head in remote schools

The findings regarding the sub-specific research question of how classroom teachers perceive a supportive school head in remote school contexts are discussed, whose aim was to establish the meanings and perceptions which classroom teachers attach to relevant - ‘ideal’ - support from school heads. Such knowledge is deemed vital if school heads are to provide support capable of retaining teachers in remote schools, which are difficult to staff because of their hostile environmental situations.

Findings show classroom teachers describing a supportive school head as someone who is able to build up a harmonious school environment, involve teachers in decision-making, is accountable to the teaching and learning situation, is committed to solving specific teachers’ affairs, showing respect, tolerance and fairness in allocating school level opportunities and resources and possessing a developmental outlook. The findings suggest that perceived relevant support is contextually defined as solely linked to teachers’ problems in school. The reason is that the study’s themes are built around what teachers identify as being ‘pressing needs’ for improving their welfare and making the working environment better and more satisfactory. Implicitly, the definitive perceptions are encroached within ‘low retention sources’, and therefore school heads are perceived as supportive to the extent that they are able to identify and address important obstacles to retention. Arguably, to be able to offer meaningful support with the power of retention, it is imperative to
understand the pressing problems or needs within teachers’ specific context. It could be theorized that classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive school head are framed in consideration of the ‘position’ of the latter. School heads have power and authority by virtue of their positions and should hence be able to exert influence on finding ‘solutions’ for classroom teachers’ low retention sources.

The study provides important evidence that organizational support can be useful in extending the understanding of teacher retention obstacles in remote contexts. This is because a closer look on how classroom teachers perceive an ideal supportive school head indicates the ‘lack of support’ in remote schools. Classroom teachers expect school heads to solve school level conflicts, ensure unity and solidarity within schools, be accountable and transparent, involve teachers in decision making, ensure student discipline, be fair and treat all teachers equally, support teachers in solving important problems like housing, be fair in allocating school resources and opportunities, support teachers on different occasions (like funerals or weddings) and think positively of how to ensure that schools are developing, economically, socially, and in other respects. Unfortunately, school heads are identified as being among the important sources associated with the above problems. This implies that continuous teachers’ attrition in remote schools could be meaningfully explained within ‘school management’s lack of support frameworks’.

In line with Erdogan and Jeanne (2007), findings broadly suggest that classroom teachers’ in remote schools define meaningful school level support on the basis of how they themselves are treated by their schools. Within organizational support perspectives, acts of school heads are taken as acts of the school (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Levinson, 1965). Consistently with Moore (2012), these perceptions reinforce the teachers’ sense of whether the school environment is positive or negative, which consequently influences the level of their job satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Lent et al., 2011).

One of the important angles from which classroom teachers in remote schools define supportive school heads is their ‘fairness or justice practices’. Fairness could be generally discussed as either distributive justice, - which reflects individuals’ perception that the outcomes (such as promotions, challenging working assignments) they receive are fair. This chiefly concerns the distribution of resources and decision outcomes (Adams, 1965; Greenberg, 1990). Alternatively, procedural justice (structural and social) refers to the

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62 The current study identifies, for instance, housing problems, social services, school level conflicts, the teaching and learning situation, teachers’ involvement in decision-making, and opportunities for extra earnings as being the sole sources of low retention as perceived by teachers.

63 Structural procedural justice involves formal rules and policies concerning decisions that affect employees, including adequate notice before decisions are implemented, the receipt of accurate information, and voice [i.e., employee input in the decision process] (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997)

64 Social procedural justice (sometimes called interactional justice) involves the quality of interpersonal treatment in resource allocation [e.g., treating employees with dignity, respect and honesty and providing employees with information on how outcomes are determined] (Cropanzano &
fairness of the ways used to determine the distribution of resources among employees (Greenberg, 1990). Implicitly, and in line with other studies (cf. Deutsch, 1975, 1985; Tyler, 1989; Leventhal, 1980), it is important for school heads to treat all teachers fairly, especially through high quality exchanges. This could imbibe a sense of procedural justice and other dimensions of justice and create harmony within the school context - a long-term supportive and cooperative atmosphere, and hence retention. This is because, in agreement with Kim and colleagues (2009), high quality school head exchanges increase teachers’ job satisfaction, reduce envy among teachers, and promote organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB). In contrast, poor exchanges promote dysfunctional outcomes such as increased envy among teachers, reduced citizenship behaviour and turnover in return. One way of demonstrating ‘fair and quality exchanges’ is by being ‘neutral’ in treating teachers. Yet, such practices ought to be performed with care, as equality may not necessarily remove inequity perceptions, unless all teachers are equally hard workers. Doubtlessly, school administrations have a potential role of influencing school level changes, including facilitating a ‘supportive environment’ whereby teachers could, for example, be respected, given autonomy (professional and curriculum), recognition, and other support which collectively reduces job stress, enhances job and occupational satisfaction and achieves retention even in poor working conditions (Moore, 2012; Rad & Mohammad, 2006; Kloep & Fatos, 1994; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). That contention is cemented by evidence that ‘relational inducements’ such as organizational support (from supervisors and colleagues) can play an important role in individual decisions to stay on working in an organization (Maertz et al., 2007; Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). Findings interestingly suggest a supportive school head in a remote school as a person who exhibits extra-role and in-role behaviours, performing far and beyond the formal contract.

Since the study has encountered significant complaints about the unfair distribution of school level resources, both distributive and interaction justice ought to be strengthened. In line with Leah and Colin (2013), distributive justice not only accounts for employee perceptions of the fairness of leader resource distribution, but also for the exchange of both tangible (influence on decision-making, empowerment, career advancement) and intangible (communication with leaders, having a trust-based relationship) benefits (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007), influencing exchange-relational qualities not only between classroom teachers and school heads but also mutually among classroom teachers. Cooperative conflict management styles are important in

Greenberg, 1997). Interactional justice comprises interpersonal justice (truthfulness, justification, respect, propriety) and informational justice [measures of respect and propriety] (Colquitt, 2001).

OCB is defined as employees’ extra-helping behavior, that could directly (or indirectly) benefit individuals (or organizational members), and/or an organization (Williams & Anderson, 1991). These are discretionary behaviours, not described by job definitions (Organ, 1988).
resolving school level conflicts, but this might be impossible to achieve if there is a perception of distributive injustice (cf. Rahim, 2000). More important is procedural justice. This is because giving teachers voice is perceived as being fair within the structural aspect of procedural justice. Moreover, structural procedural justice (interaction justice) is essential towards enhancing fair communication between school heads and classroom teachers as well as the perception of other dimensions of justice in schools. Previously reported, perceived organizational justice influences turnover and retention (Hemdi & Aizzat, 2007; Nadiri & Cem, 2010; Cohen-Charash & Paul, 2001; Zhang & Naresh, 2009; Fatt et al., 2010).

The perception themes generally established regarding who is a supportive school head has strong implications on the investigation of teacher retention in remote contexts. They shed important light on what key areas to concentrate on in investigating how school heads can provide meaningful support in such contexts. While the themes developed provide important knowledge of what is perceived as relevant school head support in remote school contexts from classroom teachers’ perspectives, a number of questions remain unanswered: for instance why school heads have consistently failed to provide this ‘perceived support’ leading to their being described as unfair and non-supportive?

A few speculative explanations are offered on this issue in reference to this study’s theoretical and empirical literature. One possible explanation could be the fulfilment of ‘hidden personal interests’. Arguing from LMX and CWX perspectives, it could be possible that school heads divide classroom teachers and treat them differently to restrict their voicing (or bargaining) power. That could be done intentionally to enable the school head to achieve those concealed interests at the expense of other teachers and schools. This is pertinent in ‘perceived organizational politics’ and it strongly conflicts with the perception of the justice (especially, the procedural justice) (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Kacmar & Carlson, 1997). The other likely explanation could be ‘lack of support from the school (that is, lack of school level support)’. It is likely that school heads do not receive adequate support from other teachers or from parents and village communities surrounding the schools. Findings from the current study’s first research question indicate the presence of conflicts between schools and their immediate communities. When leaders feel that they are receiving support (both from above and from below), they are likely to reciprocate with high quality exchanges (support) to their subordinates, and conversely (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Meanwhile, it is crucial to acknowledge school heads’ limitations of the extent to which they can successfully be ‘perceived as supportive’ within classroom teachers’ perspectives. However, such an understanding is important in efforts to properly consider how to meaningful support teachers’ retention in remote schools, especially from the ‘school level outlook’. Such
teachers’ perceptions have to be made known to school heads to see how they could be implemented and what are the bottlenecks.

**Classroom teachers’ perceptions of a supportive collegial teacher in remote secondary schools**

This section discusses findings of how classroom teachers perceive supportive collegial teachers in remote schools. Teachers in remote schools are faced with innumerable challenges, mainly defined within low retention sources. To be meaningfully supportive, collegial teachers need to develop communal supportive practices. They need to be collegially accommodative, willingly present for their colleagues when in need, and be knowledge sharers in how to successfully adapt the remote conditions. In a number of cases, collegial teachers are cited as being ‘selfish’ - only thinking of themselves. Findings indicate that some teachers are contemptuous, keep to themselves and do not care about others. Teachers of such calibres are seldom present for others, and are quite hard to cooperate with. Such an attitude within the remote life frame is definitely undesirable and could be a signal of being unsupportive. Most teachers emphasize togetherness - a collective life. A supportive collegial teacher is perceived within the frame of school-specific contextual problems. School problems are not the same; nor are teachers’ problems. It is therefore important for a teacher to frequently learn what problems a colleague has at a specific time, and define what support is required. The findings could certainly apply to all workplace contexts, not simply to remote areas. However, problems are perceived as harder for somebody located distantly, far away from colleagues, friends, relatives and family. The findings imply the need for teachers to develop a metacognitive knowledge of ‘understanding and supporting’ accordingly.

Findings echo Chiaburu and Harrison’s (2008) statement that coworkers are not only a vital part of the social environment at work, but they can also define it literally. This is because employees adapt their behaviour to be consistent with the norms and expectations of people around them. In line with Moynihan and Sanjay (2007), the identified themes show clearly, first, the importance of collegial support to remote teachers’ retention, and second, the need to be aware of collegial needs to be able to provide meaningful support. This is because, as Bertelli (2007) writes, individuals who perceive that they are in a friendly workplace are less likely to quit, especially in public organizations. The findings suggest that a supportive collegial environment creates a sense of ‘caring and belonging’ to a close-knit, cohesive group - a

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66 Relevant collegial support changes across time and among collegial teachers. The question is how to know what specific support is needed for different teachers at different times? This is because some teachers may not even be able to express that they need support while they definitely need it. Therefore, it takes constant learning efforts to understand collegial supportive needs and acts as required.
family influencing affiliation commitment and extra-role behaviour. In agreement with Moynihan and Sanjay (2007), teachers’ collegial networks - ‘intraschool relationships’ - could become the ties to bind teachers’ together and their schools therein, mediating the impact of negative factors or shock that frequently leads to voluntary turnover. Arguably, the higher the teachers’ collegial ties – the ‘network centrality’, based on ‘good quality collegial exchanges’ – the more they become embedded within strong interpersonal bonds which influence citizenship behaviour and retention.

It is notable within social exchange and organizational support theories that perceived high quality exchanges (among people/employees/teachers) create a feeling of obligation to reciprocate, which promotes attachment, loyalty and retention, as those exchanges create feelings of investment – a ‘social capital’ which need to be maintained (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Mossholder, Randall & Stephanie, 2005). This means that a number of ‘exchange practices’ such as in-role behaviours – e.g., ‘extra efforts in performing required duties’, citizenship behaviour or organizational commitment could be noted as ‘resources’, in social relational reciprocal norms (cf. Etzioni, 1961; Katz & Kahn, 1966; Levinson, 1965; March & Simon, 1958). Individuals seek to reciprocate in ways that maximize the likelihood that the partner to the exchange will notice the effort (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). Quality collegial exchanges are likely to fuel long-term felt obligations to reciprocate, as all teachers involved in exchanges will ensure that these efforts are noticeable and, of course, reciprocated. Within this context, the importance of understanding how collegial teachers in remote school contexts can develop a sustainable ‘intraschool social capital’ for retention purposes cannot be overemphasized. Although colleagues matter in many ways, this depends on, as Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) document, whether they are Sartre’s devils - ‘hell is other people’ - or Butler’s angels - ‘heaven is the work of the best and kindest men and women’.

Theoretically, the findings on how classroom teachers perceive supportive school heads and collegial teachers are clear that the OST/POS, LMX, and CWX theoretical/conceptual viewpoints provide important frameworks for extending the understanding of what perceived school level support is like and how it could be framed to influence retention in remote contexts. The findings show that a supportive school head is someone who is fair in allocating school level resources and powers - ‘fairness’; who recognizes, appreciates, and rewards efforts of work well done by teachers - ‘rewarding increased work efforts’; who cares and is committed to teachers’ affairs such as addressing critical teachers’ housing shortages; is respectful - ‘socio-emotional needs’;

67 Coworkers’ exchange resource may include support, advice, information, time, liking, respect, effort, goods, affiliation and friendship, money, services and status (Leah & Colin, 2013). ‘Relationship is a resource’ because social ties (e.g., leader-members, coworkers) may be employed for others (e.g., work and non-work advice) (Adler & Kwon, 2002).
and is committed to addressing issues related to teaching and learning conditions - ‘job conditions’. As noted earlier in this text, fairness, organizational rewards and job conditions are the three general antecedents of OST/POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Moreover, school level support becomes meaningful depending on the quality of exchanges between school heads and classroom teachers and among the classroom teachers themselves. Evidently, the themes found which define who is a supportive school head reflect antecedents noticeable within good quality LMX. Equally, themes concerning who is a supportive collegial teacher could be possibly meaningful in the presence of good quality CWX. Importantly, there is no shortage of evidence that OST/POS, LMX and CWX positively influence satisfaction and retention (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1997).

**School heads’ perception of a supportive classroom teacher and retention efforts**

Findings of how school heads perceive a supportive classroom teacher are highlighted in this section. Searching for a definition of a supportive classroom teacher in remote schools, findings show that school heads look on the extent to which a classroom teacher facilitates/is able to facilitate the easy and smooth running of the school. School heads have significant leadership and management duties and responsibilities on their shoulders. However, some teachers unnecessarily become another headache on school heads’ necks. Yet, it is worth finding the evidence that the importance of school level support in retaining teachers is recognized and acknowledged by school heads. Furthermore, findings show that meaningful support involves a two-way direction. For classroom teachers to obtain meaningful support from school heads, they should equally provide relevant support to school heads. To be perceived as supportive, classroom teachers need to cooperate with school heads in addressing school level challenges. One way of doing this is for classroom teachers to show commitment to the teaching profession by knowing and attending to their required duties accordingly. That could also include reminding and advising in a proper way the school heads about critical issues they face at the school (for instance within the classrooms).

The two themes generally depicting how school heads define supportive classroom teachers provide clear evidence that the concept of organizational/perceived organizational support is important for extending the knowledge of how school heads frame their definition of a supportive classroom teacher. This is mainly done within job-related parameters, including the extent to which the school head’s well-being within management and leadership tasks is reinforced. Through these defining themes, the work of school heads becomes positively enhanced, leading to reduced job stressors and increasing
satisfaction and efficiency. Such practices are among the founding strands within OST/POS theory.

There is also evidence that the LMX and CWX concepts are important for understanding how school heads’ perceived classroom teachers’ support differently affects exchange qualities and reciprocation between the classroom teachers themselves and their school heads. Echoing Erdogan and Jeanne (2007), classroom teachers who offer high support to school heads could develop high quality exchanges with school heads. These teachers are likely to develop in-role behaviour such as being professionally committed, cooperative and reminding/advising the school head about crucial issues in a good manner. Such teachers are likely to be more ‘supported’ by school heads in return (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007; Tepper & Taylor, 2003). Managerial level employees (school heads in this context) reciprocate POS with extra-role behaviours that benefit the organization (like remote schools) by helping others (for instance classroom teachers) to better carry out their jobs (Wayne et al., 1997). Arguably, a supportive treatment of subordinates and its positive consequences may originate, at least in part, from the supportive treatment that supervisors receive from the organization (Erdogan & Jeanne, ibid.). Furthermore, the classroom teachers’ ‘group’ perceived by school head as being supportive is likely to develop a high quality exchange themselves. The converse is also true for those classroom teachers who are perceived as unsupportive by school heads. Indeed, the importance of providing more knowledge to classroom teachers about how they could be meaningfully supportive to school heads and hence receive support in return cannot be overemphasized.

Taken together, in contexts like Tanzania where other attrition types have been defined as ‘hidden’, the findings echo Bockerman and Pekka’s (2008) observation that the frequent sickness absence that is notable among many teachers in remote schools could be a clear proxy of job dissatisfaction mostly related to a poor working school environment, particularly the lack of support. This implies the great need for making the school environment be perceived as positive, partly by increasing school heads’ and collegial teachers’ supportive practices. Although teachers, school heads and classroom teachers alike generally define relevant support within factors leading to better job satisfaction, findings show both perceived school head support and coworker support to extend beyond work-related aspects, contrary to Susskind et al. (2007) who found supervisor and coworker support defined within work-related assistance. Findings show that school level support, though less emphasized, could be one of the strategic ways of retaining remote teachers. OST/POS, LMX and CWX provide a significant springboard by which school level support could be meaningfully understood and used. The section that follows advances a discussion of how, specifically, teachers’ perception of
being supported/not supported at the school level influences them to either voice or exit a remote school.

7.2.2 Influence of teachers’ perceived school level support on voicing and exiting intentions

This section discusses findings of how teachers’ perceptions of school level support influence them to voice and/or exit a remote school. Figure 5 is intended to enhance the understanding of the discussion logic, particularly with regard to school level support (SLS) and voicing intention in remote schools.

Figure 5: School level support (SLS) and voicing intention: a discussion logic

![Diagram showing the influence of teachers’ perceived school level support on voicing intention]

The figure shows that teachers’ perceived presence of school level support (SLS) is reflected within the high quality exchanges that take place at the school level, as noted in LMXs and CWXs models. High quality exchanges trigger justice (distributive, procedural-interactional and structural) practices, activate strong school heads’ and coworkers’ exchange resources, address
teachers’ socio-emotional needs, and the like. Consequently, teachers’ anxieties, stress, and other dissatisfactions are likely to be mitigated. Teachers are also likely to become freer, opening up for discussing critical issues likely to cause them to leave, and so forth. This will broadly mean that perceived school level support (PSLS) triggers teachers’ beliefs that changes, improvement, adaptability and survival within difficult remote environments is possible. That generally reinforces and triggers voicing intentions and retention.

Notably, the current study themes of how SLS influences voicing do not work in isolation, but rather broadly within (and as part of) an exchange-relational chain. It could be generally posited that people are motivated to express their dissatisfaction in the quest for solutions (voice) mostly with the conviction that changes are possible. The converse could trigger exit intentions.

**Classroom teachers’ perceived school level support and voicing intention in remote schools**

The section discusses findings of how perceived school heads and collegial support influence classroom teachers’ voicing intention in remote schools. The discussion reflects two research sub-questions. The first one is: How do the perceptions which classroom teachers hold with regard to the presence of school heads’ support influence their voicing intentions? The findings of this sub-section were summarized in three main themes: reducing teachers’ anxiety and stress, experiencing freedom and happiness, and achieving acceptance and belongingness. The second sub-question concerns how classroom teachers’ perceptions of coworkers’ support influence their voicing intentions. Three themes, collegial acceptance, environmental adaptive knowledge sharing, and group citizenship identity, were found regarding this aspect. Findings related to the two sub-questions are discussed below.

Findings indicate that perceived school head support influences classroom teachers’ voicing as they see that ‘adaptability and survival is possible’ within the environment. They achieve a sense that, despite difficulties, they can still stay, and life could be manageable. Stress and anxiety caused by the difficult remote environment is mitigated through relevant support. Apart from being more comfortable, the perception of support from school heads spreads a sense of freedom and happiness among classroom teachers. A supportive school head stimulates openness and a discussion of issues that trouble classroom teachers and provides assurance that they will be handled with care. Moreover, within communal settings, the perceived presence of school heads’ support instigates classroom teachers’ sense of being accepted and belonging. That in turn influences the behavioural development of organizational citizenship. Findings advance an understanding of how perceived school heads’ support triggers classroom teachers to voicing in remote school
contexts. The findings further show that the concept of perceived school head support is useful in extending the knowledge of employee voicing ‘circumstances’ in remote contexts.

On the other hand, perceived collegial support influences a sense of collegial acceptability which is important in remote environments. In addition, it enables learning different ways from colleagues of adapting and surviving in remote areas. Of great importance is the concept of group citizenship identity, which stimulates classroom teachers to offer support beyond the formal context, strengthening social ties within the school environment and influencing teachers’ voicing in remote schools. It is obvious from the findings that perceived collegial support is important for influencing classroom teachers’ voicing intentions. Apart from school level support influencing voicing, it equally influences exit.

Classroom teachers’ perceived school level support and exiting intention in remote schools

In this section, the findings of the influence of perceived school level support on classroom teachers’ exit intentions in a remote school is discussed. The discussion is built around two sub-research questions: First, how does perceived school head support influence classroom teachers’ exit intentions? Findings concerning this sub-question were summarized in four themes: loneliness, conflicts and crises, untrustworthiness, and despair. Second, how does perceived collegial support influence classroom teachers’ exit intentions? Findings related to this sub-question were generally summarized in one major theme - ‘conflicting context’. The discussion follows that logical order.

It emerges that a perceived lack of school head support influences teachers’ turnover in remote schools. School heads in Tanzania, within the policy of school management decentralization and by virtue of their position, hold significant power and authority over a number of issues including mitigating sources of teachers’ low retention. A classroom teacher being denied support from school head could be a critical source of dissatisfaction that is hard to accommodate. Lack of support could imply that a teacher is isolated, lonely, marginalized and even denied core support like teaching and learning facilities, which leads to substantial stress, pressure and unproductivity. Moreover, due to the lack of support, even conflicts at the school level are rarely dealt with but are simply left to continue, escalating into a crisis. Such a school environment not only becomes unattractive to work in but, more fatally, classroom teachers’ hopes that the situation could be settled are strongly diminished. Equally, within an unsupportive environment, teachers are not involved in decision-making, while transparency and accountability are fading away. In situations such as these, dissatisfactions, disappointments and despair cannot be avoided.
School heads have been mandated to ensure the smooth running of schools, including listening to teachers’ problems with a supportive ear. Doubtlessly, school heads’ misconducts like being ‘unjust’ create substantial problems in schools. For instance, school heads’ failure to involve teachers in school management makes teachers feel isolated, as if not being part of the school. Teachers may feel that the place is not right for them when school heads fail to value, listen, involve them in school programmes, and other such practices. They end up being demotivated, finally finding it better to leave and seek life elsewhere. The findings strongly suggest the importance of school heads in supporting school level changes and promoting teachers’ voicing in remote schools. The knowledge sheds some light on the importance of perceived managerial-supervisory support in triggering exit among employees within remote contexts.

As for collegial teachers’ support and exit, on the other hand, findings imply that the absence of appreciation, liking and cooperation among classroom teachers signifies the presence of misunderstandings and conflicts. This means that even when teachers are in need of support they cannot get it. It also suggests that, when there are groups in schools, either because of tribalism, ethnicity, or for some other reason, teachers are divided. Such divisions create confusion and disturbances among teachers in schools. Harmonious cooperation and mutual understanding is vital within a remote communal life. The current study has observed significant conflicts among teachers, but no evidence of any systematic ways of resolving them. Being isolated or denied support by colleagues could make life miserable for a teacher and trigger exit.

Taken collectively, teachers’ perceptions of school level support have a great influence on their decision either to voice or to exit a remote school. School heads and collegial teachers influence voicing through those practices which reinforce teachers’ satisfaction and well-being within their work environment, the converse eliciting exiting. For instance, the presence of support could influence voice by increasing a sense of freedom and control -‘empowerment’- which could be positively related to happiness and well-being. Lack of support could, however, entail a great many problems, like dysfunctional communication in school, which might in turn trigger feelings of being lonely and isolated, a sense of being socially disconnected within a school community. Practices such as these might lead to social pain and alienation -‘the self in exile’ (Cacioppo & William, 2008) and many other mental, physical, physiological and health problems (cf. Marano et al., 2003; Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010; Jaremka, et al., 2013) which broadly instigate exit.

Notably, the concept of voice is important in enhancing teachers’ perceived school level support and a significant factor for creating teachers’ satisfaction, welfare improvement and retention, since voice gives teachers the access and ability to express their dissatisfaction/complaints/grievances, the
ability to articulate their interests, and an active orientation towards their work roles through participative management and decision-making. Broadly speaking, voicing gives teachers bargaining power - that is ‘empowerment’ - enhancing the perception of structural procedural justice. In line with Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), school level support furthers more voicing when teachers perceive dissatisfying situations as being controllable within the school level context. An unsupportive school environment, on the other hand, reinforces teachers’ perceptions that the dissatisfactory situations cannot be changed and the environment cannot be improved. Consequently, in line with Spencer (1986), more voicing opportunities are inevitable, if school level retention efforts are to be successful. To this end, classroom teachers ought to be well empowered, form part of school level changes, and the role of school heads’ support is evident. School level support enhances teachers’ sense of belonging and identity, whereby, according to Tajfel and Turner (1986), teachers’ ‘perception of oneness’ with the school (or school identification) increases their self-esteem, positive mood, job satisfaction and in-role and extra-role behaviour. Indeed, findings echo the critical importance of school level support in mitigating low sources of school level retention as it steers teachers’ perceptions that a dissatisfying situation is likely to change.

Within the current study findings, empowerment is worth further emphasizing. This is because empowerment not only fosters voicing practices, but it could also mitigate the effects of perceived school heads’ exchanges with classroom teachers as well as retention. This is also because, as Hackman and Oldham (1976) observed, teachers’ job empowerment (such as autonomy, job feedback like getting information, transparency, fair allocation of power - issues found to be crucial in defining a supportive school head in this study context) is likely to influence classroom teachers’ perception that their work is meaningful, that they are responsible for their work results and aware of what is happening within their work environment. As noted in Champoux (1991) and Hackman and Oldham (1976), job characteristics act as a motivator to perform, and employees become more satisfied with their job when they perform, which is more possible within an empowered context. Arguably, and in line with Harris et al., (2009), when teachers are poorly empowered, it leads to low motivation in their jobs. In such circumstances, the school head exchange relationship becomes more important for reinforcing behavioural outcomes that can be mitigated by empowerment. However, in contexts where teachers are highly empowered, the school head exchange relationship is of less importance since, regardless of the relationship between them, the job provides the motivation associated with more positive outcomes such as organizational citizenship behaviour and retention. In contexts like the Tanzanian where school heads may feel that they cannot provide meaningful support, especially due to ‘resource redundancy’, it could be generally posited that they should increase teachers’ empowerment.
Moreover, the findings provide evidence that the concepts of school level support, voice and exit are closely linked and, if well understood and used, could meaningfully influence teachers’ retention at the school level. This is because the presence of a supportive school atmosphere, as construed by the teachers themselves, would reinforce teachers’ participation and involvement in decision-making, allowing them to express their dissatisfaction. Such a kind of empowerment reenforces teachers’ perception that low retention sources could be changed. Arguably, the presence of both high quality exchanges between school heads and classroom teachers, as well as high teachers’ empowerment is likely to strongly influence teachers to perform beyond their formal teaching contracts (OCB) in remote schools, fostering retention.

On the importance of collegial support, some scholars (cf. Leah & Colin, 2013; Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008) have further shown that positively valenced collegial relationships define the workgroup culture, serving as a unique source of organizational commitment and social support, defining the social environment, serving as organizational guides because of their unique ability to clarify role ambiguity, mitigating conflicts and ameliorating overload, socializing newcomers and influencing retention in return. However, negatively valenced peer relationships may prompt competition and aggression. Consistently with Jarzabkowski (2002), collegiality has a communal aspect whereby teachers develop group togetherness through socialization and working together. Nias (1999) suggests that collegial relations appear to strengthen the moral perspectives and values of teachers and thus have the ability to reduce burnout. One reason for this is the development of a collegial culture characterized by mutual support and care, in which individuals feel able to express their emotions, negative as well as positive, to admit to failure and weakness, to voice resentment and frustration and to demonstrate affection. By contrast, a culture of individualism tends to increase the emotional stress of its members on account of misunderstandings and conflicts whereby even small interpersonal or professional differences could build up into major problems due to poor communication and related acts.

Theoretically, findings show that the concepts of LMX, CWX and OST/OST can be used meaningfully in extending the understanding of how school level support influences voice and exit and are therefore useful for teachers’ retention in remote contexts. It was noted that a supportive environment is committed to creating unity, identity and solidarity, fostering communication, participation, and generally empowering employees. Such practices reinforce voicing and retention. In contrast, a non-supportive environment will generally be against increasing employees’ bargaining power, and thus triggers exit intentions. These practices are well reflected within LMX and CWX.

Within the LMX perspective, school heads in remote schools create groups and divide collegial teachers. Classroom teachers within in-groups are
‘mutually supported’ while those in out-groups are ‘simply neglected’ (DeConinck, 2009; Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007; Schriesheim, Stephanie & Claudia, 1999). Such divisions affect the quality of exchange relationships, not only between classroom teachers and their school heads, but also among the classroom teachers themselves. An effect well reflected within CWX is that teachers within a specific group (in- or out-group, based on school heads’ divisions) are likely to involve strong positive friendships, hence exchanges of high quality among themselves and conversely for teachers from different groups (Leah & Colin, 2013; Scandura, 1999; Sherony & Green, 2002). Indisputably, perceived school heads’ support could influence voice, depending on the quality of exchanges practised among teachers, which build on teachers’ construed supportive school heads. On the other hand, it could influence exit through employee divisions, unjust practices and neglect, which hinder the unionism/unity-lessening negotiation capacity/power. Moreover, perceived coworkers’ support influences voice due to the presence of good quality exchange relationships among teachers. However, antagonistic collegial teachers’ exchange relationship, which could be reinforced by school heads’ divisions and unjust treatments, actuates departure.

As regards organizational support, a supportive school head could influence voice through justice practices, recognition, participation in decision-making, and autonomy (Ahmed, 2012). Themes such as acceptance, group citizenship identity, happiness and belongingness are socio-emotional needs (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), forming an important antecedent in organizational support theory. In line with Leah and Colin (2013), school heads’ different quality exchanges vis-à-vis teachers influence their perceptions of the extent to which school management cares about their satisfaction, welfare and retention. This is clearly notable within the core assumptions of OST/POS (cf. Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Reflecting the remote Tanzanian context, findings are in line with Wayne et al. (1997) to the purpose that managerial level employees, as well as employees who hold lower level jobs, reciprocate POS with extra-role behaviours which benefit the organization by helping others to better carry out their jobs. According to OST/POS, it leads to a felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, including participation in extra-role behaviours such as helping other employees (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Moreover, in line with Lee and Whitford (2008), the findings strongly suggest that the concepts of voice and exit are important in extending the understanding of the influence of school level support on teachers’ retention in remote school contexts. This is because, when both exit and voice are options, the decision to exit or remain is strongly affected by how effective voice would be. Arguably, if workers are sufficiently convinced that voice will be effective, then they may postpone exit, since once you have exited, you have lost the opportunity for voice, but not vice versa (Hirschman, 1970). This implies that, apart from teachers being provided with voicing opportunities,
those opportunities ought to be equally perceived as effective. The findings have a significant implication, especially within the contention that the ‘intention to leave increases with decreases in voicing possibilities’ (Hirschman, 1970). This is reflected in an important question in the context of this study: What are feasible voicing arenas and how could they be supported, to successfully retain teachers in remote school contexts?

Summary

Findings show that teachers perceive school level support as being relevant to the extent such support enhances their satisfaction and well-being in their work and living at large. Such support reflects the school situation context, its problems, values and aspirations. Moreover, the findings show the relevance of understanding the organizational support/perceived organizational support concepts, as they can widely influence teachers’ voicing/exiting and retention in remote school contexts. Equally important are the concepts of leader-member exchange (LMXs) and coworker exchange (CWXs), which are noted as being useful in mitigating exchange relations within school and influencing support perceptions among teachers. In line with other theoretical and empirical literature in the area, it suffices noting that ‘relevant support’, as defined by classroom teachers and school heads, can be useful within less fiscally dependent teachers’ retention strategies. Yet, much is still required to make them operational. The next section, 7.2.3, discusses the findings of teachers’ perceived conditions relevant for voicing over exiting a remote school.

7.2.3 Perceived school level conditions favouring teachers’ voicing over exiting a remote school in Tanzania

This section discusses findings regarding the fourth sub-question of the second major research question. The sub-question was set to establish conditions under which a teacher in a remote school could decide to voice over exit. Seven conditions: empowering, listening and cooperative leadership; habitability; friendliness outside school environments; investment potentialities; a supportive and peaceful school working environment; life as a ‘challenge’ mindset; and patriotism and profession commitment were identified perceived to influence voicing. On the other hand, two conditions: locality (nativism) policies and no ‘alternative door’ beliefs were perceived as non-influential for voicing. Each condition is briefly discussed first, followed by a general discussion.
Influential “perceived voicing” contexts

Empowering, listening and cooperative leadership

Findings within this condition show that teachers in remote schools focus on school leadership and management practices when considering a relevant situation for voicing. Three key concepts: empowering, attentiveness, and cooperative leadership are apparent within the findings. The findings echo Myers (2008) in that empowering teachers through collective participatory decision-making strengthens the perceived presence of a democratic atmosphere within schools. This enhances teachers’ perceived ability to contribute to positive school changes with regard to a number of policies and reforms which directly jeopardize their well-being. Such participation could be broad enough to include areas such as curricula and instruction, school governance or school restructuring. Empowerment and involvement strengthen teachers’ freedom, intellectualism, professionalism and more strongly emancipate them from school level injustices.

The findings also echo Glover’s (2007) classic thoughts that ‘real principals listen’. Acknowledging William Isaacs’ (1999a & b) writings on ‘dialogic leadership’, Glover insist on the power of leaders to listen when generating important changes in schools, hence reinforcing the sense of empowerment and voicing. Notably, Glover insists on reflective dialogue and open discussion, where skills such as deep listening, respecting others, suspending assumptions and voicing personal truths are important. It is evident that school heads should value teachers as leaders instead of seeing them as instruments for achieving certain ends. Doubtlessly, the need for school heads to support reflective dialogues and open discussions in ways that balance advocacy and inquiry cannot be overemphasized. Indeed, school heads’ decisions ought to be informed by teachers’ opinions and suggestions.

Moreover, the findings show that the concepts of leader-member exchange (LMX), coworker exchanges (CWX) and organizational support theory/perceived organizational support (OST/POS) offer meaningful insights into extending the understanding of how and why empowerment, listening and cooperative leadership are essential to facilitate meaningful voicing practices. This is because cooperation is enhanced through an ability to collaborate especially within strengthened collegial relations. This is clearly notable through the presence of collective help, assistance, sharing and work (Little, 1990). However, a smooth cooperative school atmosphere is possible within supportive school heads’ contexts -‘listeners’ and teachers’ empowering’, which is clearly noticeable within quality exchanges between school heads and classroom teachers, i.e., LMXs and CWXs, respectively.

The findings draw significant implications for school level leadership and management practices, including enhancing teachers’ robustly perceived sense
of ‘investment’\textsuperscript{68} capable of influencing voice and retention thereafter in remote contexts.

**Habitability**

The findings are clear that teachers in remote schools focus on the need to have a decent living environment. These include the presence of decent teachers’ houses and at least a minimum of necessary social services to make survival possible. If the area is not habitable for humans, teachers’ decision to stay may mean higher voicing costs associated with detrimental sufferings of gigantic proportions, which might be intolerable especially if alternative opportunities persist and the possibilities of changing the situation are not promising. Indeed, as rational human beings, teachers in situations such as these will not be ready to trade off their lives, but they will simply exit. The findings have important implications, especially in remote Tanzanian contexts where most schools are built in environments with notably unsatisfactory habitability conditions for teachers. As noted elsewhere in this text, more remains to be done in enhancing teachers’ living conditions in remote school contexts in Tanzania to improve voicing and retention.

**Friendliness outside school environments**

The findings show that teachers focus on being in harmony with the communities close to their school. This is essential, especially in remote contexts where life is more communally oriented. School level changes are arguably difficult even with teachers’ empowerment if conflicts persist between the school and the surrounding communities. In line with Johnson, Jill and Morgaen (2005), communities, especially parents’ support through

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\textsuperscript{68} Investment is used in this study context to mean teachers’ perceived valuable contribution to the school/profession/community. It may include: time spent, energy devoted, social and human capital accumulated over time (some of which may be specific to the teaching profession), physical establishments for generating incomes like businesses established within ‘educational supportive arrangements’ such as reduced or no tax agreements in schools and/or educational settings. Reciprocally, those investments create returns over time (increased salaries, pensions, friendship networks, reputations gained), which could be economic, social, psychological and emotional. Therefore, exiting may imply partially or totally foregoing such investments made and associated reciprocal gains. Consequently, exit costs may be broad to include economic ones (like losing income, pension, and other earnings from sources established within specific arrangements - ‘sunk costs’; or loss associated with ‘knowledge specificity’ though this does not apply much in the teaching profession and the Tanzanian context especially as teachers could easily adjust to other jobs in the Tanzanian labour market) as well as psychological and emotional costs. On the other hand, since voicing involves ‘fighting’ against dissatisfying situations, it equally involves costs mainly associated with or emerging from unpleasant outcomes/results of these voicing struggles. They may include the emotional costs of confronting people with power, the consequences of retaliation (by management), being denied support and the possibility of causing poor quality exchanges with the leadership (Withey & William, 1989; Kirby & Crissmer, 1993; Shen, 1997; Tye & O’Brien, 2002).
involvement, enhance teachers’ sense of self-efficacy and satisfaction. This is because parents’ involvement can help teachers to easily understand students individually, which reinforces their ability to provide the relevant learning support; good parent-teacher relationships enable a more amicable working partnership, which in return helps to make students more engaged in schooling. Such support benefits one of the mental rewards for teachers working with students, i.e., when students realize the importance of quality learning and achievement. Conversely, a lack of support from community, as noted in the current study, because of school-community conflicts, reduces the probability of teachers’ voicing (as it becomes more costly).

The findings show a number of bad practices that teachers in remote schools experience from their immediate communities: theft/robbery, disrespect, witchcraft, or being made into sources to make money from. The findings pose vital challenges for the need to stabilize community-school relationship and support. Within this context, school heads need to exert themselves to build collaboration with village communities through school boards and community leaders. Communities need to respect and protect teachers instead of robbing them, taking away their properties, or threatening them with witchcraft. What is more important is that parents stop indoctrinating their children to disrespect their teachers. This implies that parents and children alike need to value education and teachers. Thus, teachers will perceive remote problems as less severe, be more satisfied, and see the possibility of improvement, factors that are necessary to enhance voicing and retention. The findings echo Timothy’s (1999) conclusion that community support could help to socialize teachers, reducing the ‘isolation’ from the larger community which leads teachers to leave remote schools. However, more need to be done to establish how such support could be meaningfully, successfully and sustainably possible, especially in poor, low-educated and culturally abiding societies. Moreover, remote rural communities need to be continuously reminded of and enlightened on the importance of education and respecting teachers on the one hand, and the need to introduce students’ teachers to ways of coping with remote rural communities in diverse situations, on the other.

Investment potentialities

The findings indicate that teachers in remote areas are concerned with their economic situation. This is because teachers have been complaining of economic hardships especially due to low and unsatisfactory salaries. Although possibilities for teachers to make extra money for their well-being are difficult everywhere, remote rural contexts in particular are described as being tougher. Comparatively speaking, people in urban centres can more easily afford paying extra private teaching (tuitions) because of their earnings. Such opportunities for teaching tuitions form one example of sources used by
urban teachers to raise their incomes. In most cases, people in urban areas are business personnel and government employees, while the remote areas are mainly populated by farmers. Considering the low income a teacher earns, coupled with the lack of opportunities for extra earning, there is great likelihood that a teacher will quit a remote school.

The findings pose a strong challenge to how to boost teachers’ investments in remote areas. Such investments would enhance not only the economic stability for teachers but also lower voicing costs such as likely conflicts or poor quality exchanges with school heads and raising exit costs such as foregoing collegial friendships and attachment built over time, income loss from the job left and/or other investment sources made in the area. More research is needed to explore diverse investment opportunities viable to teachers and how that could be supported within school schedules in remote contexts.

**Supportive and peaceful school working environments**

The findings show that teachers in remote schools value a working environment that is peaceful and contains adequate supervisory and collegial support. The findings are evident that an understanding school head and collegial support are important if effective voicing has to be maintained. As noted elsewhere in this discussion, school level support enhances teachers’ satisfaction and well-being. The findings clearly imply the critical need to develop conflict resolution systems. The reason is that conflicts are associated with destroying peace and harmony within schools. In line with Rees (1991), the presence of frameworks for resolving conflicts is important for enhancing teachers’ perceived presence of a functioning voicing mechanism. Arguably, although teachers’ problems might be too many and diverse to successfully address, a sense that they are being listened to is important for supporting voicing and retention.

Equally, there are evident findings that the importance of building strong intra-school bonds, addressing teaching and learning destructors at the school level, including students’ poor discipline, cannot be over-emphasized. Within that context, and in addition to a few possible speculative explanations earlier offered in this discussion regarding the low school head support of classroom teachers, more systematic investigations need to be made to uncover why such low school level support is notable in many remote schools and to present viable remedies. Moreover, the answers must be found to how school level conflicts between teachers and management and among the teachers themselves can be successfully resolved by finding useable frameworks or strategies. Indeed, a peaceful and supportive school working environment decreases in the severity of teachers’ problems in remote areas and reinforces the perceived possibilities of performing better in their work, all of which increases exit costs, making voicing a more plausible option.
**Life as a “challenge” mindset**

The findings suggest that sometimes teachers’ decision to voice or exit is a question of a mindset, especially involving teachers’ perspectives about life and that teachers, while still students, do not seem prepared to see the reality of the working conditions in remote areas. The majority are washed away by a ‘theoretical and artificial university and college life’ and are therefore not really ready to face challenges embedded in the working environment. This phenomenon need to be urgently addressed in teacher education programmes in the country. It could be argued that teachers who are well trained to perceive life as a challenge, especially within working contexts, may not be prone to give up easily when they face difficulties. Instead, they are likely to struggle first at least for a while as they believe that changes could be achieved through struggle. That, however, does not rule out the critical importance of addressing the sources of low retention.

**Patriotism and profession commitment**

The findings show that teachers need to be patriotic to the country and committed to the teaching profession, both of which seem to be lacking in today’s teachers. The findings suggest that the majority of teachers do not identify themselves with the teaching profession, a factor which lessens their commitment and attachment to it and affects the attractiveness of the voicing option. It seems logical to stress the importance of teachers in Tanzania being loyal and patriotic to the country as they are simply Tanzanians. Despite the challenges the country might be facing over time, teachers’ practices oscillating around and towards neglecting their professional responsibilities and duties because of the governments’ ineffectiveness in addressing their problems ought to be perceived as costly and painful even by the teachers themselves. This is the case, especially as the adverse consequences are extended to parents, students, and the Tanzanian community at large, which may not be associated with the sources of teachers’ exiting. Arguably, it becomes more plausible for teachers to struggle through voicing since that is likely to enhance their self-esteem and identity as well as minimizing the negative effects of their departure for the innocent Tanzanians. The findings suggest that teachers should be ready to teach anywhere in the country for the reason that they are educating the nation. Despite those observations, however, the challenges remain of how to improve teachers’ deteriorating attachment to the teaching profession and the possibly emerging disloyalty to the nation. Within this context, it is important to reconsider who goes into the teaching profession parallel to examining how to enhance teachers’ investment in the profession. Citizenship education is another issue strongly required to enhance teachers’ sense of being loyal to their country.
Non-influential “perceived voicing” contexts

Apart from the seven conditions which were identified as being influential towards teachers’ voicing over exiting a remote school, two conditions: locality (nativism) policies and no “alternative door” beliefs were found out as being uninfluential.

Although it seems logical to think that recruiting and positing teachers from areas of their origin could strengthen voicing, yet, such an outlook need to be taken with care. Consistently with Bennell and Mukyanuzi (2005), the economic costs of voicing become higher for natives because of the burden of extended families. Arguably, it becomes less costly to support members of extended families from a distance. However, it could be more difficult if they are within your easy reach because of likely frequent visits in search for support. Therefore, in contexts where there are many de-motivators in remote schools, including low salaries and meagre investment opportunities, the exit cost may be deemed low as compared to voicing for native teachers.

Observations from ‘locality (nativism) policies’ (which is the first condition in this section) align with ‘no alternative door beliefs’ (which is a second condition in this section) to show that teachers might decide to quit even if they are not sure of alternative employment. Such observations are in some sense in contrast with a number of studies (cf. Rusbult et al., 1986; Withey & William., 1989) which observed that the exit option was greatly associated with the presence of better quality alternatives. While it is obvious that teachers who quit remote schools go elsewhere, yet, the current study does not suggest that teachers will stay because they do not have other alternatives. This is very high in teachers’ views that sometimes staying and working in remote contexts may be equated to having no job (or being jobless), as it makes no significant difference between you and other unemployed persons in the street. The findings signify that teachers may exit when the environment becomes extremely dissatisfying even in the absence of viable alternatives.

These two conditions are quite interesting in a number of ways. First, in the pilot study (within a relatively small sample), the conditions were identified as influential towards promoting voicing over exit. Yet, in the survey (with a big sample) the image was the reverse. However, secondly and more importantly, although the conditions logically became non-influential since the disagreeing was higher than the agreeing responses, the differences are worth looking at. For instance, as for the condition of local policies, the ‘agreeing and disagreeing’ responses are very close and the ‘not sure’ response is significantly high. This means that local policies may have some degrees of ‘workability’, subject to further establishment. However, the difference in response between agreeing and disagreeing about the belief in the lack of alternative jobs is significantly high, suggesting that it is more
difficult to develop into supporting voicing for low-motivated remote teachers. The findings within these two conditions further emphasize the importance of using a bigger sample to acquire a broad picture and clear understanding of an issue.

Looking at these conditions in combination, findings are in line with Rusbult et al., (1986) that for opting voicing over exit, teachers in remote schools value the extent to which they could positively and effectively participate towards a meaningful change in building a satisfactory school working environment. Consistently with Withey and William (1989) and Dowding et al., (2000), this is built into the belief that changes are possible, which perceives the voice option as a promising tool towards a successful end. These viewpoints are notable in a number of conditions such as empowerment, listening and cooperative leadership, friendliness outside the school environment, and a supportive and peaceful school working environment.

Moreover, the findings echo other studies in the area of voicing and exiting (cf. Rusbult et al., 1986; Hirschman, 1970; Withey & William, 1989) arguing that choosing voicing over exiting for teachers is an option likely to be strengthened by the extent to which teachers feel that they have invested in their profession and in the schools they are working in, including their social capital and entry costs (barriers). Those with a high investment in the profession or schools [for instance possessing a high social capital, having struggled dearly to join the profession, possessing a specific professional knowledge, or having other investments like businesses (depending on school contexts)] are likely to opt for voice because of the high exit cost. This is evident in conditions such as investment potentials, a supportive and peacefully working environment and friendliness outside the school environment, which collectively target on improving the social and economic capital attachable to and realizable within the working context.

Equally notable in the current study is the partial echoing of Rusbult and colleagues’ (1986) argumentation that voicing over exit could be more plausible to the extent that teachers’ movement elsewhere is made ‘easy and possible’ due to the presence of other quality alternatives within the labour market. However, in contrast to Rusbult et al., (1986), the current study further shows that teachers in remote contexts might opt to exit regardless of the presence of alternatives, depending on the extent to which they are dissatisfied. This is notable not only in the ‘no alternative doors’ theme but also in the ‘life as a challenge mindset’, whereby teachers might not be ready to face remote school challenges because of their mindsets. Such teachers are likely to leave even if they have no other clear alternatives.

Theoretically, apart from LMX, CWX, OST/POS, Voicing and Exiting, the findings show that motivational theories could be meaningfully used to extend the understanding of the grounds leading teachers to opt to voice over exiting a remote school. This is because a close look at the findings from conditions
such as empowering, attentiveness, cooperative leadership, friendliness outside the school environment, and a supportive and peacefully working environment broadly suggest that the decision to voice or exit is built on a variety of factors. They include, for instance, the need for achievement, recognition, possibility of influencing policies and reforms in their schools and work - which are part of the ‘motivators’ in Herzberg’s theory, improvement in coworkers’ support and better school head exchange relations - which are part of ‘hygiene factors’ in Herzberg’s theory (cf. Herzberg et al., 1959; Herzberg, 1966; Ramlall, 2004), fair treatment of teachers and the distribution and sharing of school level benefits/opportunities/resources - which are part of equity theory (cf. Robbins, 1993; Pinder, 1984; Ramlall, 2004). Moreover, the findings stress the need for decent housing and basic social services (notably in habitability conditions), the need for safety, e.g., from being attacked by wild animals, robbery, diseases, the need for love, friendship, affection, belongingness, the need to be respected and valued (by students and the community in broad), which, undoubtedly, could be meaningfully explained within Maslow’s basic needs of physiological safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization (cf. Maslow, 1943; Ramlall, 2004). Equally notable from the findings is that the voicing conditions are defined within aspects which enhance teachers’ autonomy in their work, better performance and knowledge of results and feedback, which are part of the job characteristic model (cf. Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Pinder, 1984). It could therefore be argued that teachers define ‘voicing over exiting conditions’ by focusing on aspects which enhance their motivation and satisfaction in the work and living environment, partly because they reinforce qualities of their lives and well-being (Hagerty, 1999; Diener, 1995). Implicitly, and in logical agreement with Steers and Porter (1983), it could be suggested from the findings that school managements need to create a climate conducive to realizing ‘those basic needs’, thereby reducing teachers’ frustration, and hence enhancing voicing and retention. Moreover, the findings pose a challenge to the school head to design and develop comprehensive reward systems that are more in line with ‘justice practices’.

A further critical reflection on the findings, particularly of the influential voicing conditions of ‘life as a challenge mindset’ and ‘patriotism and professional commitment’, triggers thoughts about the critical question: ‘Who actually goes into the teaching career in Tanzania’? This is because the findings, particularly with regard to these two conditions, depict teachers as having difficulty in adapting their mindset and low attachment to the profession. Such findings suggest that ‘career choice’ perspectives could be useful in offering more explanatory insights into why such a situation arises.

Within social cognitive career theory (SCCT), for instance, it could be argued that, since many teachers in Tanzania join teaching as their ‘last
resort\textsuperscript{69}, they lack internal/intrinsic motivation for it, which strongly underlines the need for more tangible external rewards or reinforcements in order to retain them (Lent, 2005). Moreover, since they perform something that is not in their interest within a poor working environment, this means that the energy to perform better is low and the difficulty of the perceived work high and probably more stressful. Such perceived failure to achieve a ‘personal performance accomplishment’ may deprive teachers of their self-efficacy, instead reinforcing a low attachment to career, making voice a less attractive option, especially in contexts with many problems like remote areas. The situation is made worse by teachers’ perceived low returns - ‘low outcome expectations - external rewards’ - (e.g., low salary and respect) from the profession, which means that they are likely to devote less effort to their tasks. According to the SCCT interest model, individuals mostly develop an interest in activities that they feel efficacious and associate with positive outcomes (Lent, 2005). Broadly, it could therefore be argued that the findings regarding these two condition viewed from a career choice perspective suggest the absence of a mutual balance between majority teachers and their work environments, i.e., schools and the profession (Dawis, 2005; Lent, 2005), which make their adjustment and attachment difficult indeed. This is further clarified in the work adjustment theory (TWA) that teachers’ failure to satisfy their psychological and/or physical needs through their schools and the teaching profession explains the incongruence between the two (teachers and schools/teaching profession). In such circumstances, teachers are likely to act with inflexibility\textsuperscript{70} and lack of perseverance\textsuperscript{71} (Dawis, 2002; 2005), making voicing a costly (less attractive) option and retention difficult altogether.

Doubtlessly, a closer look at the findings generally suggests that teachers’ decision to voice over exit in remote schools is grounded on diverse perspectives including those emanating from school managerial practices, collegial support and factors outside school environments as well as the make-up of individual teachers, the economy, motivation, grounds for the choice of career and life quality enhancement. This has strong implications in terms of thinking and providing relevant voicing arenas. Such diversity under which teachers’ voicing is grounded as is noticeable in the findings could echo Dundon and colleagues’ (2004) observations that voice as a concept appears to have many conceptualizations and definitions which cause ambiguity

\textsuperscript{69} With a few exceptions where teachers in Tanzania join the teaching profession because of their love of and personal interest in the profession, as well as the influence from significant others, including parents, friends and other people who matter to them (cf. Sumra, 2004; Mkumbo, 2012), most are pulled into the teaching career by extrinsic ‘circumstantial’ forces (see 2.2.1 in the context chapter). Although both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational aspects positively influence employees’ retention (Ramlall, 2004; Watt & Paul, 2007; Samuel & Crispen, 2009), yet, in contexts like remote schools in Tanzania, where plenty of de-motivators persist, retaining teachers of such calibres is a challenge of gigantic proportions.

\textsuperscript{70} which means being intolerant and easily dissatisfied with the environmental conditions

\textsuperscript{71} Not ready to wait and trying to adjust within the prevailing contextual condition
regarding how to exactly define and operationalize other associated concepts such as ‘employees’ voice’. Dundon et al. (2004), for instance, write that the rationale for applying employee voice can vary on economic, moral and pragmatic grounds, thereby meaning that the term can take a variety of forms in practice. Furthermore, these authors document that the depth of different voice arrangements and the aims and purposes of employer choices for employee voice remain elusive in much of the extant literature. A number of ways by which employees could voice their dissatisfactions are documented. Some of them include formal grievance procedures, suggestion systems, arbitration, mediation, employee-management meetings, counselling service, ombudsman, non-management task forces, question and answer programmes, and survey feedback (Armstrong, 2006; McCabe & David, 1992; Spencer, 1986). This could be done individually, i.e., bringing desired changes, or collectively, that is, contributing to the desired changes (Dowding et al., 2000). Moreover, both individual and collective voicing can be done directly-through two-way communication with another member of the organization (for instance when an individual discusses a problem with a supervisor or team member), or indirectly through representatives (Luchak, 2003).

Notably, since voicing is primarily about participative management (Stueart & Morgan, 2007), if well understood and used, it could help as Armstrong (2006) noted, to articulate individual dissatisfaction with management or the organization, enhance the perceived sense of collective organizational management, strongly help towards employee contributions to management decision-making, particularly regarding work organization, quality and productivity, as well as demonstrating the mutuality of the employer-employee relationship. Findings pose significant implications which are advanced in the concluding Chapter 8.

In sum, section 7.2.3 discusses conditions perceived by teachers in a remote school to be conducive to favouring voice over exit. Seven influential and two non-influential conditions that have been identified are generally discussed. The findings shed light on important areas of concentration towards influencing voicing over exiting among remote secondary school teachers. However, these conditions need to be improved before they can be used. This is partly because the definitions of those conditions are grounded on various issues which lead to difficulties in operationalization. Moreover, these conditions can be explained from a number of theoretical perspectives, including organizational support/perceived organizational support, leader-member exchanges, coworker exchanges, the exit, voice and loyalty framework as well as motivational and career choices. Equally, responses seem unstable from the viewpoint of their differences across those in agreement, disagreements and uncertainty, whereby a slight change within schools or in teachers’ labour market may lead to significantly higher or lower
changes in voicing-exiting options. Indisputably, the effective implementation of these conditions requires a broad knowledge of these aspects.

7.3 Chapter Summary

The chapter discusses findings of the two research questions which guided the current study. The first research question explored school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The findings show demographic aspects across the majority of teachers as one important challenging area in retaining remote teachers. Moreover, teachers’ stay in remote schools is hindered by the lack of decent housing, poor social services, school level conflicts, poor teaching and learning situations and the lack of opportunities for making extra incomes. The second research question explored teachers’ perceived school level support and how they influence teachers’ decision to voice or exit a remote school in Tanzania. The findings show the importance of clearly understanding how teachers define relevant support to be able to offer supportive services capable of influencing retention. More importantly, the findings suggest that much of turnover especially in remote schools could be meaningfully explained within the lack of a school level support framework. Indeed, the quality of school heads’ exchange with other teachers is important for influencing exchange qualities among other teachers and reinforce or hinder voicing in return. Equally, the second research question establishes conditions under which teachers could voice over exit in a remote school context. Although they need further development, the conditions established shed significant light on how to enhance voice and retention in remote schools.

The findings from the two research questions combined suggest a need to consider a number of aspects towards addressing teachers’ retention in remote context. This echoes what other scholars in the area of teachers’ retention (cf. Borman & Maritza, 2008; Shen, 1997) have documented, namely that studying teachers’ retention is complex, as diverse factors and processes have to be included which also interact in many diverse and complex ways to influence or hinder retention. Findings are worthwhile, especially with regard to efforts towards retaining teachers which rely more on strategies that are implementable within school level capacities.

More broadly, the findings may suggest the need to improve intra-organizational workers’ social capital, enhancing a supportive atmosphere within the working environment, including quality exchanges across workers at different levels, enhancing voicing arenas that are effective and safe for voicers, involving and empowering workers to be part of organizational changes, especially those directly affecting their work and lives and the need to ensure that workers’ voices (teachers in this context) are clearly heard in different educational reforms and restructuring. Workplace relationships are
important in organizations (cf. Sias, 2009), which arguably could to some extent mitigate most workers’ low retention sources such as unnecessary organizational conflicts even within negatively influential global reforms and restructuring in education (and other sectors). The next chapter (8) adds the concluding note to the study.
Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This chapter contains conclusive remarks. It starts by highlighting the conclusive summary of each research question’s important findings. Then, the implications of the findings to school heads, classroom teachers, and policy aspects are advanced. The chapter closes by identifying areas which need to be further researched.

8.1 Teachers’ perceived school level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

To be able to explore teachers’ retention strategies, which could be implemented within school level capacities with less dependence on funding (money) from the Tanzanian central government, the first research question was set to explore school level challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania. The question was explored through two sub-questions: first, the demographic characteristics of teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania and its implications for retention efforts, and secondly, teachers’ perceived sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania.

8.1.1 Demographic factors and teachers’ retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

Findings show that teachers’ demographic aspects are essential and pose a considerable challenge to remote secondary school teachers’ retention efforts. Most remote secondary schools are staffed by male teachers. Male teachers may stay for a while, but since they are seldom satisfied with the teaching career, the number of years they have stayed cannot meaningfully imply ‘stay stability’. It may rather catalyze their departures. This is fuelled by the fact that these male teachers are relatively well educated, experienced and generally young.
The demographic aspect is worth considering as not only male teachers are leaving to a great extent and are likely to continue leaving remote schools and the profession, but it equally poses a critical challenge to the quality of the education provided. Within that context, demographic aspects need to be given due consideration in teachers’ allocation practices, especially for remote schools.

8.1.2 School level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

Findings show that important steps towards designing effective school level-based teachers’ retention strategies in remote schools need to address five major sources of low retention: accommodation and social services, school level conflicts, the teaching and learning situation, teachers’ involvement in decision-making, and opportunities for extra earnings.

**Accommodation and social services:** The current study documents a lack of decent housing and other social services such as clean and safe water, electricity, roads, Internet and mobile connectivity, health centres, market and shopping areas, banking services as highly critical sources of teachers’ low retention in remote secondary schools in Tanzania.

**School level conflicts:** It is notable that conflicts in school organizations may be inevitable and impractical to completely erase, but that conflicts of manageable magnitude may be beneficial for school change. Cautiously however, current study findings depict school level conflicts as a potential source of low retention in remote schools. Contrary to a number of conflicts theorists (cf. Corwin, 1966; Weber, 1947), disharmony is identified as a serious source of disuniting teachers, a factor which destabilizes the ‘communal’ strand necessary for leading a remote rural life. School heads are specifically identified as a substantial cause of school level conflicts, mainly due to their unfair practices. Significant conflicts exist between teachers and their school management (school heads). Other conflicts occur between schools and their immediately surrounding communities as well as a few among the teachers themselves.

**The teaching and learning situation:** The teaching and learning situation in many remote schools is disturbing. Almost all important teaching and learning infrastructures and architectures are poor, inadequate and deteriorating. The situation contributes to teachers’ ineffectiveness, triggering poor performance, factors which contribute to lowering the value of teachers and their profession. Such a situation is significantly frustrating and stressful for teachers in remote schools.

**Teachers’ involvement in decision-making:** The findings clearly show teachers’ lamentations emanating from their lack of participation within remote schools. The lack of involvement in decision-making at the school level reinforces teachers’ sense of being ‘unvalued’, particularly, the lack of empowerment towards contributing to school and teaching profession changes
that matters the most to them. Such practices increase teachers’ demotivation and departures.

*Opportunities for extra earnings:* The small opportunity for increasing teachers’ earnings in remote areas is another important source of low retention. Teachers, like other working household members in Tanzania, face a huge burden of people to take care of. This necessitates looking for extra sources of raising their incomes. However, such opportunities are limited, especially in remote areas.

A few challenges like building roads cannot be solved within school capacities, but most challenges such as school level conflicts or empowerment through involvement in decision-making could be mitigated within school contexts.

8.2 School level support and its influence on teachers’ voicing and exiting remote schools

To provide meaningful support capable of influencing teachers’ retention, it is important to understand how ‘relevant support’ is defined. Such knowledge is important for designing and implementing visible strategies. The study therefore explored these perceptions and how they influence teachers’ intentions to voice or exit a remote school.

8.2.1 Teachers’ perceptions of school level support

Perceived school level support influences teachers’ sense of a positive school environment, entailing that the school cares and is concerned about their well-being. Such a perception enhances teachers’ job satisfaction. Findings show definitions of relevant support in remote schools as extending beyond teachers’ formal work contracts to outside school life.

Findings show that classroom teachers basically define a school head as someone who is supportive to the extent of understanding and being capable of addressing classroom teachers’ contextual specific issues - ‘needs and interests’. Implicitly, school heads need to consistently keep track of classroom teachers’ situations and then define relevant support for better life qualities and well-being. One of the notably important and relevant support aspects is the need for school heads to ensure just practices and exhibit intra- and extra-role behaviours. That will enhance teachers’ citizenship practices, which are essential for their attachment to management, to themselves and for performing beyond the formal contract. Because of their position, school heads are important in supporting school changes, including influencing a supportive school culture, which is necessary to reinforce teachers’ retention.

On the other hand, a collegial teacher who is perceived as meaningfully supportive in a remote school needs to be aware of collegial needs over time and be willing to act on them, accordingly. Such a person ought to develop a
sense of togetherness or unity. Notably, coworkers’ support significantly defines and forms part of the social environment at work. Evidently, collegial support creates a friendly working environment which could influence intra-school relationships by creating ties that bind teachers together. Arguably, such ties create a sense of ‘investment’ – a social capital, instigating a felt obligation to reciprocate - a sense of coworkers’ exchange resources in a manner noticeable by colleagues. Consequently, such ties influence retention in return.

Moreover, findings show that school heads also need to be supported if they are to increase their commitment to supporting other teachers’ retention in remote schools. It is inferred from the findings that to be labelled as supportive by school heads, classroom teachers need to frequently learn how to help school heads to achieve the best in their management and leadership responsibilities. Classroom teachers in particular need to be cooperative towards school heads, committed to the profession, as well as good advisors and reminders to the management on different school functions. A school head’s perception of being supported triggers his or her in-role and extra-role practices that are necessary to reinforce other teachers’ retention.

8.2.2 The influence of perceived school level support on teachers’ voicing and exiting intentions

There are clear findings that teachers’ perceptions of being supported/unsupported at school level influence them to either voice or exit a remote school. For instance, when classroom teachers perceive school heads as being supportive, their stress and anxieties decrease, they become freer and more willing to discuss issues with the school head, and their sense of being accepted and belonging to the school community is enhanced. Such practices motivate teachers’ positive sense that changes are possible, making voicing an attractive option. Notably, perceived school head support influences voicing by activating and stimulating classroom teachers’ ‘adaptability and survival’ possibilities within the environment. In contrast, the absence of school head support most likely instigates loneliness, school level conflicts escalating into crises, and many other troublesome phenomena arousing agitation. By virtue of their position, school heads have the power to make teachers’ life miserable. They can deny or invisibly restrict ‘support that matters’. They can become a hindering block and a teacher could be ring-fenced or unnoticed, which increases the teacher’s psychological stress. Findings clearly show that teachers’ perceptions of being unsupported by school heads trigger their exit intentions in remote school contexts.

On the other hand, the presence of collegial support enhances teachers’ perceived sense of being accepted and appreciated by their colleagues, and they can easily learn from them diverse ways of coping with remote situations, and motivate their obligations to act beyond formal contracts. Such a situation influences teachers’ beliefs that, despite difficult situations, yet life is possible,
hence influencing voicing. In contrast, the absence of collegial support makes survival difficult, triggering significant attrition. In situations where collegial teachers are not supportive, the environment becomes unsettled by conflicting misunderstandings and the lack of collegial respect. Doubtlessly, within that context, teachers are more likely to leave than stay.

It is noticeable that voice enhances teachers’ perceived school level support. As highlighted elsewhere in this text, to meaningfully promote remote teachers’ retention, such support needs to empower teachers to contribute to school changes, as one factor towards enhancing teachers’ motivation. Moreover, it could be inferred that when school level support is strong, it could reinforce teachers’ sense of oneness, belonging, identity to the group in school and to the teaching profession, enhancing in-role and extra-role behaviour, and conversely. Equally, as observed particularly in contexts where school heads cannot adequately support teachers, partially because of resource constraints, empowerment becomes essential to reinforce teachers’ motivation and retention. Evidently, school level support is important to strengthen teachers to voice instead of exit, especially as both voice and exit are options among teachers in remote school contexts. A lack of school level support sends clear signals to teachers that the voicing option is hardly likely to be effective against strengthening the attractiveness of the exit option.

8.2.3 Perceived school level conditions favouring teachers’ voicing over exiting a remote school in Tanzania

Within the interest of this study - school level strategies for retaining teachers in remote schools- conditions were established which teachers in remote schools perceive as favouring voice over exit. Seven conditions were found: empowering, listening and cooperative leadership, habitability, friendliness outside school environments, investment potentialities, a supportive and peaceful school working environment, life as a “challenge” mindset, and patriotism and profession commitment.

The findings show that the conditions are built on the school leadership and management practices of democracy, fairness, empowering, cooperation and listening - viewing teachers as leaders; the habitability of the area to which a teacher has been posted - the presence/availability/accessibility of decent housing, and core social services and the extent to which communities within which schools are built are welcoming to teachers, especially parents’ support and involvement, which enable teachers to meaningfully support students’ learning, thereby enhancing teachers’ motivation through the realization or perception of achievement or performance. Teachers need to be socialized within the wider community, a factor which reduces a sense of being ‘isolated’. Moreover, when teachers consider voicing over exiting a remote school, they look at probabilities of raising their meagre incomes within the areas where they are posted as well as the teaching and learning conditions, particularly the issue of peace, harmony, supportiveness, intra-
school bonds, and students’ discipline. The findings also show teachers’ decision to voice over exiting depending on a teacher’s perspective on life - viewing life as a challenge or simply a kind of leisure that is likely to mitigate which option to choose, at least in the short run. The question of teachers being patriotic to the country and committed to the teaching profession is equally vital for activating teachers to voice.

Broadly, the conditions are grounded on teachers’ beliefs that changes are possible and that they could positively contribute to those changes; on a feeling of an investment level within the school and the profession, that is the social and other capital dimensions, entry and exit costs; as well as on the plausibility of alternative jobs existing in the labour market. The findings echo a number of other studies on voicing/exiting contexts (cf. Rusbult et al., 1986; Withey & William, 1989; Dowding et al., 2000; Hirschman, 1970). Above all, they show the importance of addressing teachers’ sources of low retention, as teachers are likely to leave remote dissatisfying situations regardless of whether they are native to that remote local area and or they have no feasible alternative employment.

8.3 Implications of the findings

For decision makers

Remote schools teachers’ deployment strategies for retention strengthening

Demographic factors significantly predict turnover and consequently influence employees’ retention strategies (Agyeman & Ponniah, 2014). The current evidence shows that demographics among the majority of teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania are a potential retention challenge. On the basis of the analysis made in the current study - teachers’ demographic characteristics and their interpretative meaning in the light of the area-theoretical base - a number of suggestions are put forward for consideration towards successfully retaining teachers in remote schools:

1) One may consider allocating middle-aged women (40+ years) in remote schools. Women are more likely to stay in their careers when getting older. It is observed that such a group of teachers tend to be more satisfied with their careers. Male teachers, on the other hand, tend to leave the teaching career more often than women, and even when they stay, they are seldom satisfied.

2) It could be more useful to allocate more male teachers within stable age groups (35 to 49 years). Such groups are more committed and look forward to managing their careers, and are relatively easy to satisfy.

3) It could be useful to allocate a few less experienced teachers (fresh employees from colleges and universities). There seems to be high
attrition for more experienced teachers. Besides, less experienced teachers are less associated with being sources of conflicts in schools. This group could be comparatively easily managed if there is good management as they are likely to have little social ties outside work and few family problems.

4) It is advisable to strengthen other retention strategies: improving opportunities for career advancement, teachers’ security and the teaching and learning environment in general for teachers to improve their achievement (including the performance of their students in different national examinations). Such strategies could be adopted within ‘teachers’ placement policies’ and be tested over time to study their challenges and efficacies.

Strategies for addressing teachers’ housing problems for schools within remote rural contexts

The study identifies several significant sources of teachers’ low retention within remote schools, the most critical being the lack of decent housing for them. It is generally observed that government efforts to address this issue are insufficient to the extent that the problem seems to increase over time. The current study advances a number of strategies that could be plausibly considered as alternative plans towards addressing this issue:

1) Looking for companies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or community groups which could build low cost houses for teachers. The local or central government could make acceptable arrangements to provide land where such houses could be built near schools. The land given could be used within acceptable terms as collateral to securing loans from banks to build those houses. In return, these houses could be rented to teachers at a reduced price, and schools could assist, for instance, through paying part of the renting costs (depending on the financial situation of a school).

2) Locally able people could be urged to provide short-term accommodation for teachers with pressing needs like new non-native teachers, while looking for permanent housing solution. The above two practices (1 & 2) have been tried elsewhere (e.g., in Texas, Mozambique and Lesotho). In Mozambique and Lesotho, for instance, NGOs and local communities or community groups have constructed/provided teacher housing in an attempt to make rural locations more attractive (Mulkeen, 2006). Female teachers’ accommodation must be prioritized.

3) It could also be considered how teachers themselves could be encouraged to ‘invest’ in their posted remote schools through, for instance, building houses and letting them out to their colleagues at reasonable terms. This could help to minimize teachers’ housing
problems and trigger retention for both the teachers who own the houses and for those accommodated there.

4) At the policy level it is important - since the government requires that the community should participate in building teachers’ houses - that the government clearly defines the community in question and how it should participate. At the moment, it is hard to understand what the community comprises. Does the community mean parents with children in a particular school? Or does it mean all of society within which the school is situated/built? Does it include people who visit the area for a short while like business people or tourists or just indigenous people with permanent settlements in those areas? The answers to such questions need to be clearly implied in remote teachers’ accommodation policies. This implies the need for a retention policy for remote teachers.

To the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT)

• One of the most notable reasons why teachers in remote contexts are not supported by communities surrounding their schools is that most people living in those areas are poorly educated and hence do not value education and teachers. Therefore teachers are disrespected, and neither supported nor protected, and generally unwelcome. It is high time for deliberate efforts to be taken to address this situation if teachers are to be retained in remote areas. The MoEVT in collaboration with other education stakeholders need to design programmes for consistently conscientizing and enlightening remote rural communities on the importance and value of education and the need to respect, protect and support teachers posted in these areas. Such programmes will reinforce teachers’ retention.

• On the basis of current study findings, it is suggested that teachers’ attraction and recruitment practices need to be revisited. Notably, most teachers are not committed to the teaching profession to a great extent as teaching is not the career of their dream. Contexts where a significant number of students seem to join the teaching career due to ‘circumstances’ pose a potential challenge to their retention. Despite the de-motivators teachers are facing, especially in remote contexts, it could be argued from career choice perspectives that retaining teachers with no internal interests in the career is very costly, since more external rewards are required to offset the lack of internal interest. In contrast, fewer external rewards are required to retain teachers who are internally motivated. This neither rules out the importance of addressing de-motivators nor means that it is easy to acquire a sufficient number of internally motivated teachers to cover the high and fast escalating demand for teachers in Tanzania, especially within secondary education. Yet, deliberate efforts ought to be operational to reconcile ‘teaching career choice deficiencies’ by critically working on the forces currently in practice to attract them into it.
Teachers’ training institutions (universities, university colleges and other teachers’ training colleges)

- The findings show that most teachers currently trained lack adequate knowledge of how to face and adapt to challenges in different working arenas. Caveats are implied in teachers’ training programmes not making ‘teachers’ trainees’ mindset transformation’ capable of facing the real working grounds in Tanzania, its remote contexts in particular. Within such a context, teachers’ training institutions need to develop course programmes on ‘how to manage diverse teachers’ working contexts’. Theoretical and practical knowledge to enable teachers’ trainees to understand different ways of handling diverse working conditions in the Tanzanian context and beyond is vital. Special emphasis need to be devoted to remote rural areas. It is theorized that such knowledge could help graduate teachers to be aware of different situations they are likely to face in areas where they are posted and equip them with relevant tools to support their stay. That would enhance retention in remote areas, at least to some extent.

- With regard to ‘managing diverse working areas’, the issue of teachers’ trainees’ practical training arrangements need to be rethought. As a compulsory part of teachers’ training programme, each teacher trainee must attend field practice, commonly known as ‘teaching practice’ in Tanzania. However, the duration of their current stay in the field (eight weeks) is noted as inadequate for them to acquire real knowledge on the ground. It would be plausible for such arrangements to allow a longer stay, especially in remote schools, producing a written report at the end clearly explaining their field experiences especially as regards school level obstacles to their stay and how situations could be improved.

For school heads

- Findings show the presence of significant conflicts in remote schools, especially between school heads and other teachers, mainly because of school heads’ unjust practices. Conflicts seem to be a significant source of low retention in remote schools, which has however been previously disregarded. This area need to be given adequate attention in remote teachers’ retention efforts, and school heads need to avoid unfair practices. More specifically, school heads need to develop frameworks for resolving school level conflicts which, for instance, could help enhancing voicing practices.

- Findings show the presence of conflicts between schools and their surrounding communities in remote areas. That poses a vital challenge because such bad relationships position teachers in a dangerous situation as
most of them are not native to the area, which makes it easy for them to be attacked. Further, such a relationship prevents communities, especially parents, from providing adequate support to teachers and schools as required, making working and living for teachers difficult. Within this context, school heads need to work hard to build collaboration with village communities through school boards and community leaders.

- Findings about the conditions under which a teacher could voice in a remote school draw significant implications for school level leadership and management practices. It is suggested that school managements should:
  1) strengthen teachers’ involvement through power decentralization, banking more on collegial management and leadership practices and indeed avoiding dictatorial leadership
  2) set arenas for reflective dialogue and open discussion, as well as strengthening support in schools
  3) work towards improving teachers’ commitment (especially through enhancing their perceived investment) to the profession and to the schools they are working in. By doing that, teachers’ ties with their schools can be increased and perceptions that changes are possible will be enhanced.

Programmes for training school heads and classroom teachers on how to offer meaningful and retention-empowered support in remote schools

Findings of how meaningful school level support is construed shed important light on how a development of school level retention supportive programmes for schools within remote areas could be approached. Important areas for concentration are pinpointed. For instance, findings show diverse ways under which classroom teachers define school heads’ relevant support. It is, however, not evident to what extent school heads in remote schools are aware of such perceived relevant support. Moreover, findings show that school heads need to be equally supported if they have to increase their commitment to supporting other teachers’ retention. It is, however, unclear whether classroom teachers understand how to support school heads. Doubtlessly, educative programmes are required to:
  1) educate school heads on how relevant support is defined by classroom teachers. Together with school heads, strategies for how those perceptions could be implemented can be designed.
  2) educate classroom teachers on how to be more supportive to management (school heads) in remote schools. To this end, it is advised to undertake further investigations - ‘action research’ - to establish the workability of the relevant support identified in this study and found to need improvement. That will help to design suitable methods for offering educative programmes of how to meaningfully provide support
that is relevant for promoting retention which could be adaptable to many schools in remote contexts.

Teachers’ retention in remote school contexts: important aspects to consider

- Findings provide evidence that the concepts of school level support, voice and exit are closely linked and, if well understood and applied, could meaningfully influence teachers’ retention at the school level in remote contexts. The presence of a supportive school atmosphere, as construed by the teachers themselves, would reinforce teachers’ participation and involvement in decision-making and allow them to express their dissatisfaction. Such kind of empowerment reinforces teachers’ perception that the low retention sources of schools could be changed. It is inferred that the presence of high quality exchanges between school heads and classroom teachers as well as high empowerment of teachers would strongly influence the latter to perform beyond their formal teaching contracts (OCB). Empowerment is important towards voicing in remote school contexts.

- Drawing examples from secondary schools in the Tanzanian context, it is notable that voicing could enhance retention in remote situations. However, to positively realize that, teachers need to be provided with appropriate and working voicing arenas within school contexts, as well as assured protection against ‘voicing costs’.

- Parallel to providing effective voicing arenas and ensuring protection for voicing costs, it could be suggested from the findings that effective voicing conditions need to be theoretically grounded. It is notable from the findings that some theoretical grounds could be useful towards this end. Such perspectives could be those associated with:
  1) how school level support could be meaningfully performed - such as organizational support and its central construct perceived organizational support (OST/POS),
  2) those explaining school level exchange practices and effects such as leader-member exchange (LMXs) and coworkers’ exchanges (CWXs),
  3) exit, voice and loyalty models.

- Doubtlessly, relevant support which partly reflects the quality of exchanges possible to influence voice in remote schools ought to ensure the enhancement of teachers’ quality of lives, well-being, satisfaction and motivation. Therefore, alongside the three theoretical perspectives indicated above, it is arguable within the current study findings that motivational theories (for instance, Herzberg’s two factor theory, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs; a job characteristics model; and equity
theory) could be meaningfully used to extend the understanding on grounds under which teachers could opt to voice over exiting a remote school. Moreover, findings show that conditions favouring voicing could be equally looked at from the perspectives of career choice [for instance social cognitive career theory (SCCT) and the theory of work adjustment (TWA)]. From these perspectives, it is easier to explain why possibly most teachers recently trained have difficulty in adjusting to remote contexts and are more detached from the teaching profession, for which reasons it is, consequently, significantly challenging to retain them, especially in remote school contexts.

**Teachers’ retention in remote school contexts: theoretical implication**

As noted elsewhere in this text, many studies using organizational support theory (OST) and its central construct perceived organizational support (POS) have been conducted in the US. In addition, a few studies are noticeable from educational settings. Suggestions for the need of more studies emanating outside the US persist (Baran et al., 2012). The current study contributes to this area by including the Africa South of Saharan Tanzanian context in the remote educational context. OST/POS is shown as being an important theoretical framework for extending the understanding of how perceived school level support in remote schools is framed and its implication on exiting, voicing and retention. The findings show how teachers in remote schools define relevant support to the extent that it could help them to live and work better, implying that schools as organizations must value their contributions and care about their well-being. The findings extend the understanding that organizational support is useful in retaining employees across diverse contexts, drawing examples from the teaching profession and teachers within remote schools in Tanzania. Other researchers have shown that OST/POS positively influences satisfaction and retention (Erdogan & Jeanne, 2007; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1997).

Moreover, it could be argued from the findings that, although the general OST/POS assumption that ‘employees form general beliefs concerning how much the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being’ is true, a ‘specific employees’ context’ is essential for validating the applicability of this assumption. Therefore, while OST/POS gives a general guideline to what employees could expect from a supportive organization, it cannot determine its specific ingredients across contexts and time. The current findings show that the relevant support for retaining teachers in remote contexts is well understood by becoming aware of the specific problems facing teachers at the time. Bearing in mind that employees’ problems change across sectors and time, the need to ‘contextualize’ OST/POS assumption to determine what are relevant ingredients for specific employees, the sector and time cannot be over-emphasized. In addition, many studies conducted in this
area seem to be quantitative (Borman & Maritza, 2008). The current study is inspired by a mixed methods approach, another minor contribution in the field.

**Teachers’ retention in remote school contexts: methodological implications**

The study adopts a development of pragmatic knowledge inspired by mixed methods. In contexts where many variables are involved in addressing an issue, this philosophical viewpoint is useful. Arguably, in areas like remote ones within situations less developed as in Tanzania, strategizing employees’ (teachers in this context) retention can hardly be systematic and is significantly difficult by using one method alone. This is because many aspects have to be considered which are not readily known. Pragmatism allows the use of a mixed method, making it possible to examine many issues as the need arises. That enables the application in the study of a number of data collection methods such as questionnaires and interviews, collecting data in three phases, and using several theoretical viewpoints to reach a meaningful interpretation of the findings. This helped to explore and broadly understand how teachers in remote schools perceive school level support and retention challenges. Notably, this could be the theoretical inspiration for other researchers in the area of employee retention, as great philosophical and paradigmatic flexibility is paramount in researching issues of employees’ attrition and retention. Other researchers (cf. Borman & Maritza, 2008; Shen, 1997) have shown complexities in exploring attrition and retention issues due to many variables being involved which interact in complex ways to affect employee retention.

**Contribution to the knowledge object**

It has been argued that studying teachers’ retention is indeed a complex matter, as diverse factors and processes have to be considered (Borman & Maritza, 2008; Shen, 1997). Although some aspects of explaining teachers’ attrition and retention could be universal, yet, in many cases the contexts in which teachers work differ a great deal. Within this situation, acknowledging the contextual differentials in considering practicable teachers’ retention strategies cannot be overemphasized. For instance, while there is mounting evidence from the US that teachers with less experience tend to move or leave, more experienced teachers tend to stay (Shen, 1997). In the Tanzanian context, however, attrition is noted to be extremely high across all teacher categories (URT, 2008a; TESA, 2011). It has also been documented that teachers tend to leave good schools in wealthy communities in the US context (Heyns, 1988; Theobald, 1990), which is the reverse situation from the African and Tanzanian context. Moreover, although Shen (1997) found the school location as not being associated with teachers’ retention and attrition,
in the African context, the Tanzanian in particular, more attrition is noted in schools located in remote rural areas compared to urban areas (URT, 2008a; ITFTEFA, 2010). Indeed, despite the presence of many important findings of attrition and retention, different contexts are susceptible to specific attrition explanations, as are retention strategies. Given the few studies noticeable from the African context, Tanzania in particular being taken into account in most of the major reviews in the area, it is evident that knowledge from that part of the globe is limited. Coining examples from Borman and Maritza’s (2008) meta-analysis study, out of 34 studies included in their meta-analysis, hardly a single study could be perceived reflecting the African context. The current study generally adds to the already available theoretical and empirical knowledge in the area of teachers’ attrition and retention, reflecting Africa South of the Sahara, Tanzanian secondary schools, and remote contexts. More specifically, the current study contributes knowledge of how to retain teachers banking on strategies implementable within school level capacities, with less dependence on funding (money) from the country’s central government. This is critically important, as teachers’ retention strategies banking on fiscal resources, mainly from the central government, have consistently failed within the African context at large (Mulkeen et al., 2007) and seems not to be working in the Tanzanian context either.

### 8.4 Future research areas

Among the critical sources of school level teachers’ low retention are included the lack of decent teachers’ housing, social services, poor teaching and learning situations, as well as limited opportunities for teachers to raise their low salaries. Since government efforts to address these situations are noted as being inadequate, more research is required:- first, to establish how decent teachers’ housing, social services, poor teaching and learning situations could be visibly addressed with less dependency from the central government; second, to explore how teachers’ salaries can be improved within remote areas - finding out possible investment opportunities and how they could be successfully supported, particularly at school level and in broad perspectives.

Moreover, findings show that most school level conflicts are caused by schools heads, due to unfair practices, reinforced by their power of position grounded within the bureaucratic management structures and decentralization policy of schools. Critically, such school heads’ practices trigger questioning their ‘leadership and management capabilities’. To mitigate that, further decentralization at ‘school level’ is suggested. To that end, further research is needed to establish, first, how to possibly and effectively decentralize power and authority at school level in remote schools to the extent that teachers’ empowerment, involvement and participation in decision-making as well as communication would be enhanced; second, to what extent school heads
remote schools have the listening skills capable of empowering teachers and enhancing collegiality; third, to explore the extent to which school heads are capable of managing and leading remote secondary schools and their logical association with school level conflicts and teachers’ turnover in those areas in Tanzania; fourth, despite some speculative reasons provided for why school heads tend to be unfair, more research is required to establish the ‘strong genesis of their unfair practices’ in remote schools in Tanzania. Such knowledge is important to design effective mitigating strategies. Parallel to Grissom (2012), such knowledge is important to further establish evidence of the need for investing more in school management to develop relevant competencies that would enable improving its capacities to successfully solve school level conflicts, and hence reinforcing retention.

Equally, findings show that teachers’ attachment to the teaching profession and loyalty to the nation is currently deteriorating. This is partly caused by most teachers entering the teaching career due to missing other opportunities that interest them. Furthermore, they have little feeling of investment within the career and schools. Within this context, it is important to revisit who goes into the teaching profession alongside seeing how to enhance teachers’ investing in the profession. Specifically, research is required to: first, establish how the attraction and recruitment of students into the teaching career could be managed to get enough teachers trainees who are motivated by the career; second, establish how teachers’ sense of investment into the teaching career and schools could be enhanced; third, how citizenship education should be improved to necessarily enhance teachers’ sense of being loyal to their country.

Furthermore, findings show that one reason making teachers’ retention difficult at the school level is the ease by which they can move elsewhere. This is further fuelled by a liberal labour market and fast increasing demotivators in remote areas. Arguably, teachers’ retention could be enhanced if such ease of moving could be restricted, that is limiting attractive alternatives, broadly making the cost of exiting higher and that of voicing lower. To this end, more research is needed to, first: to establish how that is possible within the existing attrition scenario; second, to establish how sustainable ‘intraschool social capital’ could be developed in remote schools. Strong intraschool relationships are important to build binding ties among teachers for retention purposes.

Finally, the findings show that the availability of ‘working voicing mechanisms’ is important to support teachers’ retention in remote areas. A number of voicing ways or mechanisms are identified (cf. Armstrong, 2006; McCabe & David, 1992; Spencer, 1986). They seem, however, too general, and the extent to which they could be applicable in different specific situations is unclear. More efforts to establish working voicing arenas for remote schools in Tanzania and to test the workability extent voicing mechanisms identified in the literature in situations like remote schools in Tanzania are evident. It has
also been noted from the findings that, since voicing involves a number of practices, it has consequences which might affect voicers - 'voicing costs'. This is strengthened by Gehlbach’s (2006) observation that leaders tend to suppress voice to avoid bargaining with individuals over policy, especially when exit does little damage to the leadership. In situations such as these, the need to protect voicers cannot be underestimated if effective voicing has to be promoted (Withey & William, 1989; Near & Miceli, 1986). However, as ways by which teachers can be protected at school level against possible voicing costs have not been systematically mapped out in the Tanzanian context, this requires further exploration. Moreover, Gehlbach’s (2006) observation triggers thoughts that some leaders, school heads in this context, may not care about giving teachers voice or retention as long as they themselves are not directly affected. It is important to explore further how school leaders ought to be responsible for unnecessary teachers’ exit within their administrative schools. Additionally, although the study establishes conditions necessary for voicing, evidence shows that the aims, purpose and choice of employers with regard to certain voicing arrangements remain widely unclear (Dundon et al., 2004). Within such situations, it could also be important to establish what voice arrangements school heads would prefer and why in remote school contexts in Tanzania.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Pilot Study

Appendix A briefly documents three issues.

First, the *Pilot study topic* (initial title)-“Organizational Support and Teachers’ Retention in Remote Secondary Schools in Tanzania”.

Second, *two specific research questions* which guided this study; One, what are, and how do, school organizational level cause(s) (of) teacher retention? And two, how can teachers’ retention be supported at school level in remote schools? The two specific questions broadly solicited information on school level strategies and challenges of retaining teachers in remote secondary schools in Tanzania.

Third, *instruments* used to collect data in this study. These are Interviews [Focused Group Interviews-(FGIs), and One-to-one semi-structured interviews-OOLs], and Questionnaires with open-ended questions. Sample questions included:-

**A1: Key questions in classroom teachers’ questionnaire**

1) What are the key school levels challenges teachers face in remote schools which lead them to leave? ..........................................................

2) What feasible and sustainable strategies do you think could be implemented at school level to retain teachers in remote schools? ..........

3) What strategies do you think could be used, (and how), by the school management to retain teachers in remote schools? ....................

4) How do you think colleagues/coworkers can support and contribute to teachers’ retention in remote schools? ..............................

5) At the school level and working environment, when a teacher faces critical challenges may decide either to stay while seeking solutions, or leave the school. Under what conditions/situations do you think a teacher could choose to stay and seek solutions for the emerging challenges instead of leaving in a remote school? ........................................
A2: Classroom teachers’ focused group interviews (FGIs) guide
1) What are the critical challenges related with retaining teachers in remote schools? Can you give example(s) from your own school/experience?
2) What are school level strategies [within school capacity (implementable at school management and peers/coworkers levels), non-related to external to school fiscal resources dependence] which could be implemented to feasibly and sustainably retain teachers in remote schools?
3) What is your understanding of school organizational support (support from school management, peers/coworkers)? And how could it be used in retaining teachers in remote schools?
4) Under what condition(s)/situation(s) do you think a teacher can choose to stay and seek solutions for the emerging challenges instead of leaving, in a remote school?

A3: Key questions in school heads’ questionnaire
1) What specifically do you do (or you have been doing) to influence teachers to stay in your school?..............................................................
2) What school level strategies do you think schools’ leadership and management could use to influence teachers to stay in their respective remote schools?.................................................................
3) What are the school level challenges/difficulties do you face in your efforts towards influencing teachers to stay in your school?........................
4) What reason(s) make you think that retaining teachers in remote school is challenging?.................................................................
5) Under what conditions/situations do you think a teacher could choose to stay and seek solutions for the emerging challenges instead of leaving in the remote schools?.................................................................

A4: Interview guide for school heads
1) What are the key school organizational factors (within school context) mostly leading to teachers’ retention difficulties in your school?
2) What do you do specifically to influence teachers to stay in your school?
3) What challenges/difficulties you face in your efforts towards influencing teachers to stay in your school?
4) How do you think the challenges you face can be overcome to effectively retain teachers in your school?
5) Under what condition(s)/situation(s) can a teacher choose to stay and seek solutions for the emerging challenges instead of leaving in a remote school?
6) What strategies do you think schools’ leadership and management in remote contexts can implement to influence teachers to stay in their respective schools, which do not depend on fiscal resources, external to their schools?
Appendix B: Surveys

Appendix B1: Classroom teachers’ questionnaire

Survey questionnaire on “school level support and teachers’ retention” in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

Dear teachers, this questionnaire seeks to solicit information on how can teachers’ retention be supported from school level context. Questions involved revolve around school level factors responsible for teachers’ decision to stay. Specifically, it seeks your views and opinions on how you think teachers could be feasibly and sustainably retained by addressing school level factors, and challenges envisioned. Your participation is completely voluntary; however, your responses are indeed unique and cannot be compared to anyone else’s. There is mixture of questions, please respond in accordance to the requirement of each specific question. Please note also that, the information is and will be strictly used for academic purposes. Furthermore, it will contribute in the improvement of teachers’ support and retention in Tanzania, particularly those working in remote schools. Feel free and contribute positively as your responses are highly valuable, needed, and respected.

NOTE: School level support (SLS) is used to mean the support or assistance from the: (i) School management (i.e. school heads, assistant heads and school committee); and (ii) peers/coworkers (i.e. fellow teachers/colleagues). Therefore, perceived school level support (PSLS) is the feeling teachers get when they are assisted in different ways by their school management and colleagues. Teacher retention (TR) is used to mean keeping teachers in their respective schools and broadly in the teaching professional.

Section A: Demographic information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>No. of years in this school</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Your highest educational level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section B: School level challenges of retaining teachers in remote schools

Sections B1 to B5 summarize the “major sources” under which school level teachers’ retention challenge could be grouped. Please rank identified challenges under each major source, in each section, from the most pressing
challenge (1) to the least. Use numbers 1 to 6 according to the available choice responses. A Number can be used once.

B1: Social/Economic services related challenges
[....] Lack of essential social services {clean and safe water, transportation and communication systems (roads, Internet and mobile connectivity, healthy centres, markets, electricity, banking services), and the like}.
[....] Lack of teachers’ accommodation (especially decent teachers’ houses)
[....] Lack of alternative economic activities in remote areas

B2: Teaching and learning environment related challenges
[....] Poor and inadequate teaching and learning facilities (offices, classrooms, books, library, laboratory and chemicals, etc.)
[....] Poor students’ discipline, absenteeism, and performance.
[....] Heavy teaching load due to lack of enough teachers
[....] Psychological torture (teachers being seen as poor, failure, with low status and salaries).
[....] Teachers lacking intrinsic motivation and readiness to the profession (teaching used as a stepping stone)

B3: School level conflicts related challenges
[....] Conflicts between teachers’ themselves
[....] Conflicts between teachers and school managements
[....] Conflicts between teachers and students
[....] Socio-cultural conflicts between school and its surrounding community

B4: School management (SM) associated challenges
[....] SM not valuing, motivating, and recognizing teachers
[....] SM being unfair/unequal treatment to all teachers
[....] SM not involving teachers in school decision making
[....] Unconfident and incompetent school managements in remote schools, leading to development of enmity with criticizing and questioning teachers
[....] SM not creating effective frameworks for handling teachers’ dissatisfaction and grievances.

B5: Socio-cultural specific school challenges
[....] Groups in schools
[....] Religionisms
[....] Tribalism
[....] Witchcraft and its related practices
[....] Food insecurity
[....] Wearing systems
B6: Summarized are the major sources of school level teachers’ retention challenges (as seen from sections B1-B5). Please rank them from the most pressing challenging group (1) to the least (5). Use ranking number once.

[....] Social/Economic related challenge
[....] Teaching and Learning (T/L) environment related challenge
[....] School level conflicts related challenge
[....] School Management (SM) associated challenge
[....] Socio-cultural specific school challenges

Please indicate any other school level challenge(s) of retaining teachers in remote schools……………………………………………………………………………………………

Section C: Conditions under which a teacher could decide to stay and seek solution for his/her challenges instead of leaving, in remote schools.

Please put a tick (\(\checkmark\)) in a relevant box according to the extent you feel such a statement correctly explain the condition(s)/situation(s) under which a teacher could decide to stay and seek solution(s) for his/her immediate challenge(s) instead of leaving in remote school.

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<tr>
<th>S/ N</th>
<th>Statements</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>In contexts where school management listens and provides good cooperation to teachers on addressing their challenges. This include involving teachers in decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>In contexts where school surrounding communities respect, recognize, support and value teachers (<em>friendly outside school environments</em>)</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>In contexts where at least there are some necessary social services such as transportation and communication systems/networks</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>In contexts where at least few teaching and learning facilities can be found, and school maintains students’ discipline.</td>
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</table>
Section D: School management (SM) and coworkers’ support on teachers’ retention in remote schools

Section D1: Perceived ‘school management support’ and teachers’ retention in remote schools

The Table below contains statements indicating different ways school management (SM) could support teachers’ retention in remote schools. [Kindly put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box according to your feeling that such a statement promote teacher retention in remote school]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/ N</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Feeling that SM values me personally as a teacher by seriously solving my problems, considering my best interests when making decisions, and providing adequate support whenever required</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Thinking that SM considers my goals, values</td>
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</table>

5. In contexts where the school has good counselling and conflict resolution frameworks (participatory systems of sharing and solving problems within the school context) leading to peace and harmony in the school

6. If a teacher is patriotic to his/her country and is committed to the teaching profession

7. If a teacher has no elsewhere to go

8. If a teacher is a native of that local area

9. If teachers can have alternative economic activities and are able to exploit the available opportunities within the environment

10. Awareness and teachers’ perceptions that life is about challenges and fighting for solutions and not running away from them
and appreciates any of my extra efforts, and is proud of me being part of the school and struggle to make my job interesting

| 3. | Feeling that SM is always there to support and provide psychological counselling to new teachers posted in remote schools |
| 4. | Feelings that SM provides motivational support (hardship allowances, recognizing and rewarding teachers’ achievements and performance, medical support to teachers, upgrading opportunities like on job training, providing lunch) and other fringe benefits |
| 5. | Feelings that SM warns and gives teachers directives when they make mistakes instead of blaming and reporting them to the higher authorities |
| 6. | Feelings that SM helps building and maintaining good relationship within the school community, solving conflicts between school and its surrounding community, and involves teachers in decision making. |
| 7. | Feelings SM support teachers in getting accommodation whenever possible |
| 8. | Feelings that SM is concerned about teaching and learning environment, including maintaining school discipline, fairly allocating teaching load, and it timely arranges training seminars to keep teachers’ updated |
| 9. | Feelings that SM fairly allocates responsibilities, powers, opportunities (like mock and national examination invigilation, travel allowances to deliver official documents) at school level (avoiding favouritism). This also include respecting other teachers’ positions and responsibilities as well. |
| 10. | Feelings that SM provides opportunities for teachers to engage in alternative economic activities including giving them school farms and school income generating opportunities |
Feelings that SM develop and manage well school projects for improving school and teachers’ economic conditions. This include arranging entrepreneurship seminars to teachers, and creating financial assistance like school SACCOS.

Feelings that SM identifies and builds good relationships and cooperation with different organizations which could help addressing teachers’ challenges in remote schools.

Feelings that SM agrees and is tolerant to criticisms from teachers and take them as challenges, instead of being source of grievances between school management and teachers.

Feelings that SM creates socialization events in helping uniting the entire school community and build friendly environment with peace and harmony. This could also include supporting teachers in their different social activities (wedding, funeral, etc.).

Please provide any other way(s) you think school management could use to support teachers’ retention in remote schools.

Section D2: Perceived ‘coworkers support’ and teachers’ retention in remote schools.

The Table below contains statements showing how coworkers could support teachers’ retention in remote schools. [Kindly put a tick (√) in the appropriate box according to your feeling such a statement could promote teachers’ retention in remote schools]

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<th>S/N</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Feeling that coworkers are freely willing to support me in different ways</td>
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<td>(psychologically, socially and economically) whenever required.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Feelings that coworkers are proud of me being part of them, care about my opinions, and provide cooperation (like team teaching) in making my job interesting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Feeling that coworkers educate themselves on techniques and strategies for designing and running different projects like agriculture, livestock keeping and exploiting available opportunities at the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Feeling that coworkers do not blame each other in times of problems rather seek problem sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Feelings that coworkers provide motivational incentives in different ways whenever their colleague makes achievements like good performance, educational advancement, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Feelings that coworkers organize cooperative unions within school to support each other like seeking loans, tender bidding, doing business and engaging in other social and economic activities. This could also include willingness to establish workers’ SACCOS at school level.</td>
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</table>

Please indicate other way(s) you think peers could support teachers’ retention in remote school……………………………………………………………………………………………………

_I would like to thank you for your time and cooperation_
Appendix B2: School heads’ questionnaire

Survey questionnaires on ‘school level support and teachers’ Retention’ in remote secondary schools in Tanzania

Dear school head, this questionnaire seeks to solicit information on how can teachers’ retention be supported from school level context. Questions involved revolve around school level factors responsible for teachers’ decision to stay. Specifically, how you as head of school practice teacher retention and challenges you face. Your participation is completely voluntary; however, your responses are indeed unique and cannot be compared to anyone else’s. Please note also that, the information is and will be strictly used for academic purposes. Furthermore, it will contribute in the improvement of teachers’ support and retention in Tanzania, particularly those working in remote schools. Feel free and contribute positively as your responses are highly valuable, needed and respected.

NOTE: School level support (SLS) is used to mean the support or assistance from the: (i) School management (i.e. school heads, assistant heads and school committee); and (ii) peers/coworkers (i.e. fellow teachers/colleagues). Therefore, perceived school level support (PSLS) is the feeling teachers get when they are assisted in different ways by their school management and colleagues. Teacher retention (TR) is used mean keeping teachers in their respective schools and broadly in the teaching professional.

Section A: Closed-ended questions-‘school heads’ perceived collegial support’ and teachers’ retention effects

The Table below contains statements indicating school heads’ perceived support from other teachers (colleagues). Such support can affects school heads’ commitment and performance on other teachers’ retention support. [Kindly put a tick (√) in the appropriate box according to the extent you feel such statement is correct]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Statements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you feel that the support you get from other teachers influence the support you give to them in return?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do you feel that teachers appreciate any of</td>
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</table>
Section B: Open ended questions

1) What specific school level strategies do you think school management could use to feasibly support teachers’ retentions in remote schools?

2) Why do you think most school managements in remote schools fail to feasibly implement such strategies?

3) Under what conditions/situations do you think a teacher could decide to stay instead of leaving in a remote school?

I would like to thank you for your time and cooperation.
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