

 Research Article

Relationship Between Enthusiasm in Teaching and Teacher Turnover in Public Secondary Schools in Bushenyi Ishaka Municipality, Uganda

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Abstract

Teacher enthusiasm, defined as the integration of positive emotional experiences—such as enjoyment in teaching—with their outward expression through observable behaviors, is widely recognized as a vital attribute of effective and high-quality instruction. Although research on teacher enthusiasm has a long tradition within educational psychology, much of it has predominantly emphasized teachers' external manifestations during instruction, including voice, tone, facial expressions, and body movements or gestures. The present study explores the relationship between enthusiasm in teaching and teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka Municipality, Uganda. Specifically, it assesses the extent to which enthusiasm in teaching relates to teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality. The research design was a cross-sectional design. A mixed-approach research approach, which blends quantitative and qualitative methods within a single study, was used. The population size was 4454, and the sample size used was 367 respondents selected randomly but proportionately depending on the number of teachers and students using Sloven's formula. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires and interview guides. The collected quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis with the aid of SPSS software version 27.0. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed. The reliability of 0.872 was established using the Cronbach formula. Frequencies, means, and percentages were also employed. The findings revealed a strong negative correlation between teaching enthusiasm (TE) and teacher turnover (TT), with a correlation coefficient of -0.789 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that higher teacher enthusiasm is associated with lower turnover rates. The multiple regression analysis showed that motivation contributes significantly to teacher turnover, explaining 64.5% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.645$). The model underscores the importance of teacher enthusiasm in reducing turnover rates. Therefore, teachers who demonstrate high enthusiasm for their work are more likely to stay in their positions, leading to a reduction in teacher turnover. Given the above findings, it is recommended that educational leaders prioritize the development of supportive teaching environments. By focusing on these areas, schools can improve teacher satisfaction and retention, ultimately leading to a more stable and effective educational setting for students.

Keywords: Enthusiasm, Teacher Turnover, Public Secondary Schools, Uganda

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Received

April 12, 2025

Accepted

August 16, 2025

Published

November 3, 2025

Citation: Bindeeba, T. A., Muhammad, T., Aja, L., & Tumwesigye, A. B. (2025). Relationship between enthusiasm in teaching and teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Bushenyi Ishaka Municipality, Uganda. *Journal of Research in Education and Pedagogy*, 2(4), 555–573.

DOI: [10.70232/jrep.v2i4.107](https://doi.org/10.70232/jrep.v2i4.107)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term enthusiasm originates from the Greek word enthousiasmos, which signifies “divine inspiration.” Historically, it was interpreted as a phenomenon in which a deity enters an individual, filling

the person's soul with energy, thereby placing them in a state of inspiration or ecstasy ("en" meaning "in" or "into," and "theos" meaning "god"). In contemporary contexts, this quality is often used to describe effective teachers (Orosz, Tóth-Király, Bóthe, Kusztor, Zű Kovács, & Jánvári, 2015). Teacher enthusiasm is widely regarded as a vital attribute of effective and high-quality teaching. It embodies the integration of positive emotional experiences—such as the enjoyment of teaching—and the outward demonstration of those emotions through instructional behaviors (Keller, Hoy, Goetz, & Frenzel, 2016). This attribute enhances students' academic achievement by enabling teachers to convey energy, interest, and passion for the subject matter in dynamic and engaging ways. Consequently, enthusiasm reflects teachers' capacity to express themselves effectively while communicating the significance and value of the material being taught (Song, 2022).

Within the classroom context, teacher enthusiasm is often conceptualized as an affective state characterized by enjoyment, excitement, and pleasure, coupled with expressive behaviors. It may also be considered an intrinsic element of teachers' motivation, manifested in high-quality instructional practices, although its influence can differ across learning environments (Keller, Becker, Frenzel, & Taxer, 2018).

Although research on teacher enthusiasm has a long tradition in educational psychology, earlier studies primarily emphasized observable aspects of teachers' behavior during instruction, such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language (Dewaele & Li, 2021). Kasalak and Dağyar (2021) examined the effects of demographic factors and teacher burnout on teaching enthusiasm in a sample of high school teachers (grades 9–12) in Antalya, Turkey, during the fall semester of the 2020–2021 academic year. Their findings indicated that gender and teaching seniority were significant predictors of enthusiasm. Conversely, class size was the only variable that did not significantly influence either teaching enthusiasm or subject enthusiasm. Emotional exhaustion and diminished personal accomplishment were significant predictors, with emotional exhaustion emerging as the dominant factor.

In the field of education, Keller, Hoy, Goetz, and Frenzel (2016) noted the absence of a universally accepted definition of teaching enthusiasm. Nevertheless, there is a broader consensus that teacher enthusiasm can be assessed in two distinct ways. The first concerns experienced enthusiasm, which is evaluated through teachers' subjective feelings, while the second concerns displayed enthusiasm, which is assessed through observable behaviors demonstrated during classroom instruction (Valentín et al., 2022).

Kunter and Holzberger (2014) emphasized that teacher enthusiasm represents a central element of effective, high-quality teaching, as it is closely tied to teachers' competence and motivation. Teachers who demonstrate stronger motivation to teach and foster student engagement and achievement tend to display higher levels of enthusiasm, both in feeling and behavior. Keller et al. (2018) further argued that enthusiasm is advantageous not only for students but also for teachers themselves, as it is positively associated with occupational well-being factors, including self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and lower levels of burnout. Similarly, Asare et al. (2012) highlighted the necessity for well-trained and motivated teachers—particularly at the foundational education level—who can ensure that all children acquire meaningful learning. Achieving this requires policies and incentives that encourage teacher motivation and retention.

Maiers and Sandvold (2017) observed that some teachers exhibit higher levels of enthusiasm, commitment, and classroom engagement, which may contribute to improved student outcomes. However, teachers frequently encounter challenges such as job insecurity, limited income, cultural and linguistic barriers, increasing workloads, and diminished confidence, all of which may test their perseverance and compassion (Sudina & Plonsky, 2021). According to Mitchell (2013), a number of studies have established associations between teacher enthusiasm and enhanced student achievement, improved test performance, stronger recall, increased on-task behavior, more positive attitudes toward learning, heightened intrinsic motivation, greater vitality, and higher ratings of teacher effectiveness. Furthermore, enthusiasm can yield benefits for teachers themselves when it permeates the instructional process.

Frenzel, Becker-Kurz, Pekrun, Goetz, and Lüdtke (2018) described experienced enthusiasm as encompassing positive emotions and excitement toward teaching and engaging with students, often contrasted with teaching-related enjoyment. Although enthusiasm entails enjoyment, it extends beyond simply finding pleasure in teaching. For instance, while enthusiasm and enjoyment are often regarded as similar emotional constructs and are frequently observed in educational contexts, enthusiasm is considered to involve a higher level of activation compared to enjoyment (Burić & Moe, 2020). Nabbanja (2022) recommended that secondary schools in Mukono Municipality, Uganda, should provide sufficient non-

monetary incentives—particularly job security assurances and recognition of high-performing teachers—in order to support retention. Moreover, schools should reinforce maintenance (hygiene) factors that reduce dissatisfaction, while simultaneously enhancing motivators that increase job satisfaction, both of which are essential for teacher retention.

Perryman and Calvert (2020) argued that teacher passion plays a critical role in influencing turnover rates in the United Kingdom. Similarly, Morris (2021) contended that passionate teachers are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction. Teachers who are enthusiastic about their work and confident in their ability to make meaningful contributions to students' lives are significantly more likely to remain in the profession (Morris, 2021). Perryman and Calvert (2020) believe that issues, including workload, administrative responsibilities, and work-life balance, can gradually sap employee enthusiasm and increase turnover. According to Ruchinski, Brown, and Downer (2018), enthusiastic teachers are typically more effective in the classroom, which results in greater student outcomes and higher levels of engagement. According to Tai, Bellingham, Lang, and Dawson (2019), there is a correlation between teacher performance and student accomplishment in the United Kingdom. Teachers who inspire their pupils and receive good feedback are more likely to be recognized for their efforts, which in turn leads to lower turnover rates and more work satisfaction.

According to Budiharso and Tarman (2020), a key element affecting teacher turnover rates and overall educational quality in Japan is a teacher's enthusiasm for their work. Education is highly valued in Japanese society, and educators are expected to be committed to and passionate about what they do (Ogawa, Kuwabara, & Takeshima, 2022). According to Ogawa et al. (2022), collaboration and ongoing professional development are highly valued among educators in Japan. Schools that offer strong support systems, mentorship programs, and peer-learning opportunities are more likely to retain engaged teachers because teachers who are passionate about their work value these chances for development and enhancement (Pan, Nyeu, & Cheng, 2017). However, a lack of opportunities for professional growth or support can make instructors feel frustrated and disillusioned, which increases turnover (Marufu, Collins, Vargas, Gillespie, & Almghairbi, 2021). According to Marufu et al. (2017), educators who are passionate about helping their students grow both academically and personally are more likely to remain in the field for a long time, which lowers turnover rates. Stronge (2018) asserts that passionate educators frequently place a high value on developing close bonds with their pupils and fostering a supportive learning environment. Anderson et al. (2020) assert that educators who really care about their students' well-being and who are enthusiastic about their subject matter can cultivate a sense of trust and involvement in their students, which improves academic performance and raises teacher and student happiness.

Teacher enthusiasm has a significant impact on both teacher turnover rates and the general standard of education in Ghana (Annan, 2020). Thus, according to Annan (2020), educators in Ghana are frequently motivated by a deep love of learning and a wish to have a positive influence on the lives of their pupils. According to Owusu (2021), instructors who are sincerely committed to their work and are excited about it are more likely to remain in the sector, which lowers turnover rates. Supportive school leadership and peer networks can help maintain teacher enthusiasm in an environment where educators frequently confront considerable problems like low pay, high class sizes, limited resources, and infrastructure deficiencies (Owusu, 2021). In general, teacher passion has a big impact on Ghana's school quality and teacher turnover rates (Annan, 2020). Ghana can foster a culture of enthusiasm and dedication among educators, leading to improved retention rates and better outcomes for students, by addressing issues like insufficient resources, low salaries, and a lack of support, as well as by offering opportunities for professional development and recognition (Amegatsey, Odoom, Arpoh-Baah, & Okyere, 2018).

In South Africa, teacher zeal has a significant impact on both the general standard of education and teacher turnover rates (Dludla, 2019). A lot of South African teachers, according to Dludla (2019), are enthusiastic about teaching and dedicated to changing their students' lives for the better. Dedicated educators who are passionate about what they do have a higher likelihood of: remaining in the field for a long time, which lowers turnover rates. On the other hand, obstacles like poor pay, insufficient resources, and difficult working circumstances can stifle enthusiasm and increase attrition. Supportive school leadership and a strong sense of community can sustain teacher enthusiasm in an environment where educators frequently confront considerable problems, such as big class sizes, limited resources,

and socioeconomic inequities (Amegatsey, Odoom, Arpoh-Baah, & Okyere, 2018). Nonetheless, turnover and burnout may result from a lack of encouragement and acknowledgment.

Enthusiastic teachers can inspire and motivate students to achieve academic success in Tanzania, where access to high-quality education is essential for both individual and national development (Mkimbili & Ødegaard, 2019). Positive learning environments created by passionate educators, according to Morgan (2023), boost student performance and engagement, which in turn can increase teacher satisfaction and retention. In general, teacher passion has a big impact on Tanzanian teacher turnover rates and educational quality (Morgan, 2023). Tanzania offers opportunities for professional development and recognition, fostering a culture of enthusiasm and dedication among educators, which leads to improved retention rates and better outcomes for students. Tanzania addresses issues such as low resources, low salaries, and lack of support (Abdu & Nzilano, 2018).

In Uganda, teacher enthusiasm has a significant effect on both the overall quality of education and teacher turnover rates (Namboozee, 2019). Opio (2021) and Namboozee (2019) claim that the following ways that teacher zeal affects teacher turnover in Uganda: Enthusiastic teachers can inspire and motivate students to achieve academic success through positive learning experiences that contribute to improved student engagement and performance, which can lead to higher teacher satisfaction and retention. In schools where teachers often face challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, and infrastructure deficiencies, supportive school leadership and a strong sense of community help sustain teacher enthusiasm. Many teachers in Uganda are passionate about education and see teaching as a way to positively impact their communities and the future of the country. Burnout and turnover, however, can be exacerbated by a lack of opportunities for professional growth, acknowledgment, and support.

1.1. Literature Review

Shao (2023) examined the association between teacher enthusiasm and teacher self-efficacy, grit, and psychological well-being among Chinese teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL). The findings revealed that teacher enthusiasm exerted an indirect influence on psychological well-being through the mediating role of grit, thereby underscoring the significance of teacher motivation and engagement in fostering well-being. As highlighted by Buric and Moe (2020), enthusiasm represents a crucial component of effective teaching, contributing positively to teachers' well-being and instructional practices, as well as to students' cognitive, emotional, and motivational development. Although prior research has predominantly emphasized its beneficial outcomes, limited attention has been paid to the interplay of factors that shape enthusiasm in teaching. A review of the existing literature indicates that information concerning teacher enthusiasm and its implications for teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality is either scarce or entirely absent, thereby justifying the present investigation. According to Schuls and Flores (2020), teaching zeal has a big impact on teacher turnover rates in the United States. By boosting job satisfaction, raising student achievement, creating a positive school climate, empowering teacher leadership, and tackling systemic issues through advocacy and policy work, enthusiasm in the classroom generally protects against teacher turnover in the United States (Mullen, Shields, & Tienken, 2021). To build environments where teachers feel respected, encouraged, and empowered to make a difference in the lives of their children, however, requires continuous support from schools, districts, and legislators (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

A study by Ntagahali (2016), titled "The Influence of Working Conditions on Teachers' Job Satisfaction: The Case of Kisarawe District Public Secondary School Teachers, Tanzania", was designed to achieve three objectives. The first was to examine the influence of teachers' working conditions on the job satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Kisarawe District. The second aimed to determine the overall level of teachers' job satisfaction within the Kisarawe District Council. The third sought to analyze how working conditions affect both job satisfaction and teachers' performance in the district. The research was guided by Maslow's Need Motivation Theory and Herzberg's Hygiene Theory. Employing a descriptive survey design with a case study approach, data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, observation checklists, and document reviews. The sample comprised 107 respondents, including 100 classroom teachers, one District Education Officer (DEO), five school heads, and one Teachers Service Department (TSD) officer. While the DEO, TSD officer, and school heads were purposively sampled, classroom teachers were selected using purposive random sampling. Schools were chosen through stratified

simple random sampling. Data were analyzed using frequency distribution tables, percentages, graphs, and charts. The findings revealed that teachers were working under unfavorable conditions characterized by a lack of in-service training, limited promotion opportunities, and insufficient teaching facilities, such as chairs and housing. Many teachers resided far from their schools, hindering their ability to effectively meet daily responsibilities and ultimately reducing their morale. This situation contributed to teacher absenteeism and tardiness, which in turn negatively impacted students' academic achievement. The study recommended that the government address these challenges by ensuring the provision of adequate teaching resources, opportunities for in-service training, promotions, and suitable accommodation for teachers.

Similarly, Ekabu (2018), in his study “Motivational Factors and Turnover Intention of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Meru County, Kenya”, examined the relationship between teacher remuneration, staff development opportunities, promotional prospects, working conditions, and turnover intention among public secondary school teachers in Meru County. A descriptive research design combined with a mixed-methods approach was employed. The target population consisted of 2,599 participants, including 2,586 teachers, 15 head teachers, and 8 sub-county staffing officers. From this group, 520 respondents participated, comprising 503 teachers, 15 head teachers, and 2 staffing officers. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 21, while qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically. Hypotheses were tested using Pearson's correlation coefficient and the Chi-square goodness of fit test at a 95% confidence level ($p = .05$). The results indicated that all independent variables—remuneration ($r = -.387, p < .001$), staff development opportunities ($r = -.371, p < .001$), promotional prospects ($r = -.524, p < .001$), and working conditions ($r = -.488, p < .001$)—showed a significant negative relationship with teachers' turnover intention. These findings suggest that the four variables had a strong and significant influence on teachers' intentions to leave the profession. The study concluded that teacher motivation in Meru County was low, with many teachers displaying poor morale and limited commitment to their work, leading to high turnover intentions. Based on these results, it was recommended that the Teachers Service Commission of Kenya, the Ministry of Education, school boards of management, and other stakeholders at both national and county levels prioritize improvements in remuneration, staff development, promotional pathways, and working conditions as essential strategies for motivating teachers and reducing turnover, thereby ensuring teacher retention in the profession.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Teacher turnover in Uganda's secondary schools rose from 4% in 2011 to 8% in 2016, before declining to 6% in 2017 (Arinaitwe & Corbett, 2022). This figure corresponds to the continental average of approximately 5%. However, the use of aggregated data—rather than distinguishing between urban and rural schools or by subject specialization—likely conceals the higher turnover rates that prevail in rural settings (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). In Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality, most teachers leave their schools either in search of better opportunities or to pursue alternative professions, resulting in an annual turnover rate of 4.7%, equivalent to about 11 teachers per year (Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipal Report, 2023).

Challenges related to teacher welfare and professionalism continue to persist, contributing to an increase in teachers abandoning the profession. A major factor underlying this problem is the limited availability of promotional opportunities. Career advancement has become highly competitive and, in some instances, inaccessible to many teachers. The education service positions are difficult to obtain due to rigid staffing ceilings and restrictive conditions. Moreover, opportunities for professional development are scarce; study leave is not readily granted, and schools often lack the financial resources to support further training (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). Although teacher turnover remains a notable issue in Uganda's secondary schools (Guajardo, 2011), little evidence is available to clarify the role of motivation in shaping turnover trends in public secondary schools within Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality. This gap in knowledge constitutes the foundation of the present study.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The study achieved the following objectives:

1. To find out the demographic profile of teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka

Municipality, Uganda

2. To investigate the relationship Between Enthusiasm in Teaching and Teacher Turnover in Public Secondary Schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka Municipality, Uganda

2. METHODOLOGY

This section explains the research design, study area, population, sample size and selection, sampling methodologies, data collection tools, research procedure, data quality control, data management, and analysis, as well as the variables' measurements and ethical considerations.

2.1. Research Design

In this study, a cross-sectional research design was employed. For this type of observational research, data from a population or a representative subset must be collected at a specific time. This method was selected because it provides a snapshot of a population (Thomas, 2020).

2.2. Research Approach

This study made use of the mixed-approach research approach, which blends quantitative and qualitative methods within a single study. This was used to provide a fuller understanding of the research subject (Creswell, 2014).

2.3. Target Population

The target population for this study was 4454 participants comprising 04 headteachers, 232 teachers, and 4218 students from the four public secondary schools in Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality (Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality Report, 2023). Table 1 shows the distribution of the study population by school.

Table 1. Target Population

S/n	School	Head Teachers	Teachers	Students	Total
1	A	1	50	780	831
2	B	1	50	720	771
3	C	1	91	2068	2160
4	D	1	41	650	692
Total		04	232	4218	4454

2.4. Sample Size

The sample size of the study was obtained based on the four schools in Bushenyi Ishaka Municipality using the Slovene formula.

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

where; n = minimum desired sample size; N = the target population (4454), e = margin error (0.05).

$$= \frac{4454}{1 + 4454(0.05^2)} = \frac{4454}{12.135} = 367$$

This sample included 4 head teachers, 19 teachers, and 344 students. The teachers and students were selected randomly but proportionately to reflect their actual numbers in the teacher-student sample. The actual number of teachers and students from each school was also proportionately determined. Table 2 shows the distribution of the sample size by school.

Table 2. Sample Size

S/n	School	Head Teachers	Teachers	Students	Total
1	A	1	4	64	69
2	B	1	4	59	64
3	C	1	8	168	177
4	D	1	3	53	57
Total		04	19	344	367

2.5. Sampling Techniques

The schools were identified by the letters of the alphabet A, B, C, and D for confidentiality purposes. The teachers and students from each school were selected randomly but proportionately, depending on the number of teachers and students each school had in the total number of teachers and students for all schools. Headteachers were selected purposively, since there were only four (4) headteachers in four (4) public secondary schools in Bushenyi - Ishaka municipality, Uganda.

2.6. Data Collection Sources

For this study, only primary data was used because it has a high level of accuracy, relevance, originality, and is up-to-date (Kabir, 2016). Primary data was collected by use of questionnaires. The information was collected and recorded by the researcher based on the views and opinions of the respondents about the study variables.

2.7. Data Collection Instruments

The data was gathered from primary sources (Amin, 2005) using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect primary data as explained below.

2.7.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is an instrument that is composed of related questions designed to collect information from teachers and students (Amin, 2005). To obtain primary data, interview guides and self-administered questionnaires were employed. Primary data refers to information collected directly from the source, commonly through field surveys, questionnaires, and similar methods. In contrast, secondary data refers to information derived from journals and databases that are typically precompiled and accessible as open-source resources. Both open-ended and closed-ended items were designed, as they are easy for respondents to answer, require minimal time, and help maintain focus on the research topic. These were used to collect quantitative and/or qualitative information.

Self-administered questionnaires type of questionnaires were easy to administer to respondents in a very short time, even when the researcher was not present. The questionnaires were appropriate for large samples because they minimized the time burden for both respondents and the researcher during administration and analysis (Amin, 2005).

The use of questionnaires was justified, as the study investigated variables that cannot be directly observed, such as past experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and opinions. Given the large sample size, time constraints, and the literacy level of the target population, questionnaires were considered the most suitable data collection instrument (Amin, 2005).

For this research, the questionnaire consisted of six major parts, namely: (i) the introduction, (ii) demographic information, that is, age, gender, and teaching experience, (iii) motivation, (iv) teacher turnover, (v) open-ended questions, and (vi) conclusion.

2.7.2. Interview Guide

An interview guide refers to a set of oral questions administered to participants through direct face-to-face interaction. For this study, a semi-structured interview guide was designed and applied to collect qualitative data. This guide facilitated the gathering of exploratory data by eliciting detailed and specific information from respondents. Comprising open-ended questions, the interview guide encouraged in-depth responses, providing rich and nuanced insights into the research topic. Obtaining maximum cooperation from respondents was essential to ensure the consistency and reliability of the information gathered. Thus, interview guides were used for collecting qualitative data and to obtain more specific information. The interview guide included open-ended questions that called for responders to provide in-depth responses. Due to the follow-up questions' probing nature, the interview guide assisted in enabling the participants to provide comprehensive information. Purposively, Headteachers responded to the interview guide.

2.8. Piloting the Study

To guarantee that the research instruments were both accurate and easily comprehensible to participants, a pilot study was conducted at Plus Two High School in Bushenyi District. This institution was chosen because it lies within the study's geographical scope in Bushenyi–Ishaka Municipality and shares similar characteristics with the schools selected for the main study. The pilot exercise enabled the researcher to refine, restructure, or eliminate ambiguous questions, thereby enhancing the clarity and appropriateness of the instruments.

2.9. Validity of Instruments

According to Sürücü and Maslakci (2020), validity refers to the precision and expressiveness of conclusions drawn from research findings. It denotes the extent to which results obtained from data analysis genuinely represent the phenomenon under investigation. Content validity, in particular, is enhanced through expert evaluation. In this study, the content validity of the questionnaires was verified through pretesting, ensuring that the instruments met acceptable standards. Essentially, validity in this context focused on determining whether the questionnaire and interview guide effectively measured what they were intended to measure. Furthermore, to ascertain instrument validity, the minimum Content Validity Index (CVI) was calculated using Amin's formula (Amin, 2005), expressed as $CVI = R/N$, where R represents the number of valid items and N denotes the total number of items.

Table 3. Calculated Content Validity Index of the Questions

Questionnaire	Content Validity Index
Questionnaire for head teachers and teachers	$CVI = \frac{43}{50} = 0.86$

From Table 3, it can be seen that the computed CVI is 0.86, which is above the minimum 0.7 suggested by Amin. Therefore, the instrument was proven valid.

2.10. Reliability of Instruments

To ensure reliability, a pilot study was conducted to pretest the instruments. This procedure aimed to determine whether the tool consistently measured the intended construct. The reliability of the instruments was then assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha (α) coefficient, which evaluates internal consistency by examining the extent to which individual items are correlated with the overall set of questions. An instrument is generally regarded as reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha (α) coefficient exceeds the threshold value of 0.7 (2005).

Table 4 indicates that the computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.872, which is higher than 0.7. Hence, the questionnaire was reliable.

Table 4. Computed Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
.872	43

Source: Primary data, 2024

2.11. Validity and Reliability of the Qualitative Data

The reliability and validity of the qualitative data were ensured through the following.

Validity of the Qualitative Data

Face Validity: This was ensured by ensuring that the instrument measured what it sought to measure.

Content Validity: A verification was one to ensure that the data collection methods and instruments cover all features of the research area.

Criterion Validity: The data were correlated with another measure to confirm the accuracy

Member checking: This was ensured by verifying if the respondents' statements were true statements by sharing the data with the participants and imploring their feedback.

Reliability of the Qualitative Data

Inter-rater Reliability: It was ensured that multiple coders were consistent and interpreted the data.

Intra-rater reliability: This was ensured by verifying that the coder constantly codes and interprets the data over time.

Test-retest Reliability: The reliability was ensured by establishing that the data collection methods and instruments yielded consistent results when administered at diverse times.

Data Triangulation: Multiple sources of data and methods were used to verify the accuracy and consistency of the data.

Audit Trial: The detailed records of the research process were ensured, which included data collection, coding as well as analysis to ensure transparency and accountability.

Peer Debriefing: The research process and findings were discussed with the peers to obtain new insights and perspectives.

Thick Description: A thick description was ensured by providing detailed contextualized descriptions of the participants and research settings.

2.12. Quantitative Data Analysis

This was comprised of quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The accuracy and completeness of the field data were carefully reviewed prior to analysis. The data were cleaned and organized using Microsoft Excel, after which they were transferred into SPSS version 27.0 for further processing. To assess the influence of motivation on teacher turnover in public secondary schools, both descriptive statistics—including frequencies, proportions, means, standard deviations, and Pearson's correlation coefficient—and inferential statistics, such as regression analysis, were applied. Frequencies and percentages were particularly utilized, as they enable readers to interpret the findings more readily. While frequencies present the number of responses and respondents within a specific group, percentages provide a means of comparing subgroups that differ in size or proportion (Siedlecki, 2020). Furthermore, correlation and regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among the variables.

Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was calculated using the following formula;

$$r = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum (y_i - \bar{y})^2}}$$

where;

- x_i are the values of the independent variable in the sample
- $\bar{x}$ is the mean of the independent variable
- y_i are the values of the dependent variable in the sample
- $\bar{y}$ is the mean of the dependent variable

2.13. Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis. Recorded interviews were transcribed, coded, and organized into sub-themes and broader themes in alignment with the study objectives. The collected audio tapes were transcribed into text for easy analysis. This approach to qualitative data analysis was chosen due to its efficiency in terms of both time and cost. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews to identify recurring themes. The significance of the data was interpreted after the information had been systematically categorized, documented, reflected upon, and analyzed (Amin, 2005).

2.14. Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were consistently upheld throughout the research process. This involved obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, balancing potential risks and benefits, maintaining integrity, and respecting participants' rights. In addition, ethical clearance was secured from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Kampala International University, Uganda, prior to administering research instruments in the field.

Informed consent: Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Respondents were fully informed about the study's objectives, procedures, expected duration, and potential benefits. They were assured that their information would not be disclosed to third parties without explicit consent.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Data collection was strictly for academic purposes and treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Participants were assured that their personal information would remain protected, and identifiers would not be recorded. To reinforce this, the questionnaires included a note instructing respondents not to write their names.

Integrity: The principle of integrity was maintained by treating participants with respect and ensuring honesty in data collection, presentation, analysis, and interpretation. All findings were strictly grounded in the collected data. Participants' rights were observed by conducting interviews and administering questionnaires at convenient times.

Anonymity: Respondents had the right to remain anonymous, and their identities were not revealed in the study report. Sensitive or classified data were carefully managed and used solely for academic purposes. A written statement clarifying this was included on each questionnaire, given the ethical sensitivity regarding human dignity. The disclosure of classified information, particularly data linked to audit findings, was avoided. Proper acknowledgment of cited authors was ensured through accurate citations and referencing. The researcher adhered to established research norms and followed all methodological steps to guarantee scientific validity. Fairness was upheld in respondent selection through appropriate sampling techniques, and findings were presented in a generalized manner.

3. RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings on students' background characteristics, the dependent variable, and the independent variables. The qualitative data complemented the descriptive statistics by providing

additional contextual explanations, as detailed in the relevant sections.

3.1. Response Rate

The initial target sample consisted of 367 respondents: 344 students and 19 teachers for the questionnaire survey, along with 4 head teachers for interviews. Ultimately, complete questionnaire responses were obtained from 320 students and 15 teachers, and interviews were conducted with 4 head teachers. This resulted in a total of 339 respondents out of the expected 367, representing a response rate of 92.38%. This is considered highly adequate, as Mellahi and Harris (2016) note that a minimum response rate of 50% is acceptable in social science research.

3.2. Background of Respondents

The bio data of respondents includes the gender, age groups, number of years spent at school, marital status, and education levels of both teachers and students from public secondary schools.

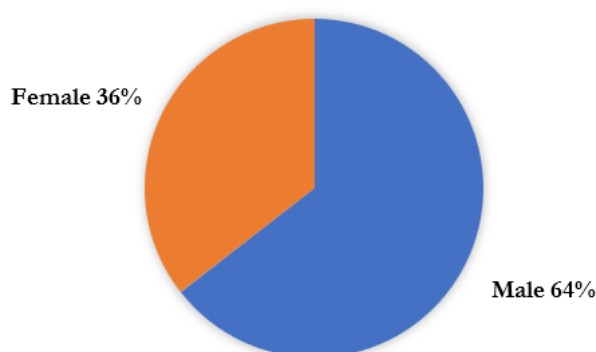


Figure 1. Gender Distribution of Respondents

From Figure 1 above, it can be observed that the sample is predominantly male, with 216 (64%) male respondents compared to 119 (36%) females, of the 335 respondents.

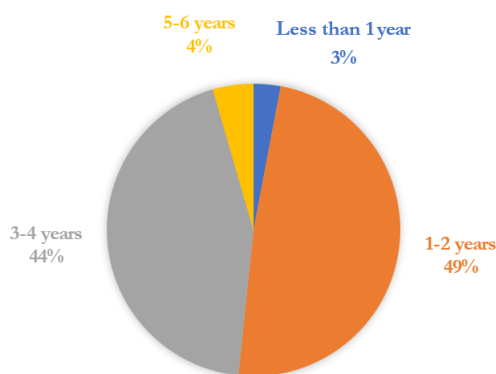


Figure 2. Period Spent at School by the Respondents

From Figure 2 above, it can be seen that nearly half of the respondents 163, (49%), have been in their positions for 1-2 years, followed closely by those who have spent 3-4 years 147, (44%). Only a small number (percentage) of respondents have been at their school for less than a year 10 (3%) or 5-6 years 15 (4%).

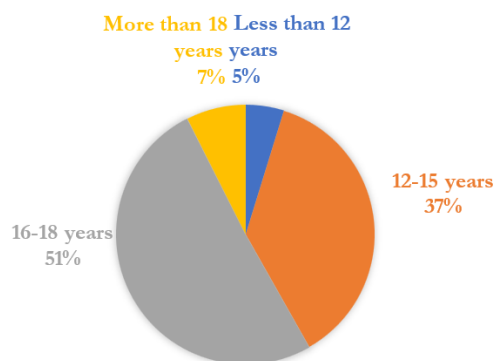


Figure 3. Age Distribution of Respondents

The Figure 3 above shows the age distribution shows that the majority of respondents are within the 16-18 years age group 170, (51%), followed by those aged 12-15 years 124, (37%), with a smaller number of respondents aged less than 12 years 16, (5%) or more than 18 years 25, (7%).

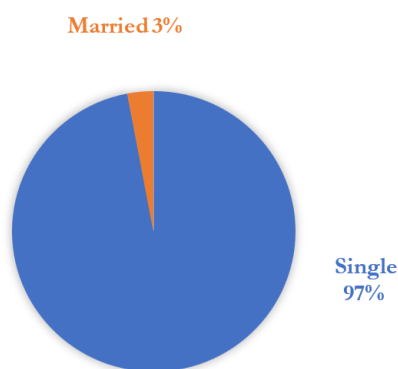


Figure 4. Marital Status of Respondents

Figure 4 above indicates that 325 (97%) respondents are single, with 10 (3%) being married, and none is divorced.

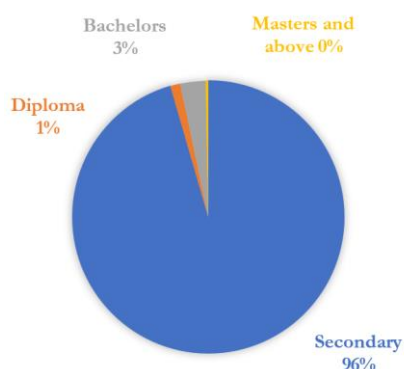


Figure 5. Education Level of Respondents

Education level (Figure 5) reveals that the majority of respondents, 320 (95.52%), have a secondary education level, with a smaller proportion, 4 (1.19%), holding a diploma, 10 (2.99%) a Bachelor's degree, and only 1 (0.30%) holding a master's degree or above.

This demographic profile provides insight into the characteristics of the sample population, which can influence their perspectives on teaching enthusiasm, preparation, and student engagement.

3.3. Descriptive Statistics on Responses from Teachers

The questionnaire was distributed to teachers in public secondary schools, and out of the 19 teachers who received the questionnaire, only 15 teachers returned the filled questionnaires, and their responses were measured using frequencies, percentages, and means, and the results were tabulated in the following Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics on the Extent to which Enthusiasm in Teaching Relates to Teacher Turnover in Public Secondary Schools

Item	F/%	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
I am passionate about teaching my subject matter	F %	- -	2 13.3	10 67.7	3 20	3.07
I am satisfied with the level of support I receive from school administration	F %	11 73.3	1 6.7	3 20	- -	1.47
I feel recognized and appreciated for my effort as a teacher	F %	12 80	- -	3 20	- -	1.40
I often collaborate with colleagues on lesson planning or professional development	F %	- 6.7	1 73.3	11 20	3 20	3.13
There are sufficient opportunities for career growth and advancement within the school	F %	12 80	3 20	- -	- -	1.20
My job means a lot to me more than just money	F %	- 20	3 6.7	1 73.3	11 20	3.53

Note: Strongly disagree (SD) =1; Disagree (D)=2; Agree (A)=3; Strongly Agree (SA)=4

The responses indicate mixed levels of satisfaction and motivation among teachers in various aspects of their work environment and professional engagement. Starting with a passion for teaching, a high percentage of respondents with 67.7% agreed and 20% strongly agreed that they are passionate about teaching their subject matter, reflected by a mean score of 3.07. This suggests that most teachers feel strongly connected to their roles and have a genuine interest in the content they teach, which can positively impact student engagement and learning. In terms of administrative support, however, there is a notable dissatisfaction, with a majority 73.3% strongly disagreeing and 6.7% disagreeing that they receive adequate support, yielding a low mean score of 1.47. This highlights a critical area where schools might improve to ensure teachers feel supported and valued, which can significantly influence morale and retention.

Recognition and appreciation for efforts seem to be lacking as well, with 80% of teachers expressing a strong disagreement regarding feeling valued for their contributions (mean of 1.40). Such low recognition can lead to feelings of undervaluation, impacting motivation and job satisfaction. Conversely, collaboration with colleagues is relatively well-rated, with 73.3% agreeing and 20% strongly agreeing that they often collaborate on lesson planning or professional development (mean score of 3.13). This camaraderie among colleagues may help mitigate some negative feelings about administrative support and recognition. Career growth opportunities, however, are viewed very poorly, with 80% strongly disagreeing and 20% disagreeing about sufficient advancement options, resulting in a low mean of 1.20. Finally, teachers' intrinsic motivation appears high, with 73.3% strongly agreeing and 6.7% agreeing that their job means more than just financial rewards. This sense of purpose suggests that many educators are committed to their profession despite challenges, though improving support structures could further bolster job satisfaction.

3.4. Qualitative Results

In support of qualitative results, the qualitative results from headteachers' responses on enthusiasm in teaching and how it relates to teacher turnover in public secondary schools indicated that;

One head teacher disclosed that;

"... but teachers work in poor conditions and their enthusiasm is affected with lack of in-service training, promotion as well as necessary facilities like chairs, housing".

Another head teacher disclosed that;

“... but enthusiasm in teaching is also affected by teachers traveling long distances, because most of them live a long distance from schools where they teach hence affecting them to fulfill their day- to- day responsibilities which leads to lowering their morale of work”.

Another head teacher disclosed that;

“... lack of enthusiasm in teaching results into teacher absenteeism and lateness which leads to lower students’ academic performance, though it can be improved through providing them adequate teaching facilities, in-service training, promotion, accommodation”.

Another head teacher disclosed that;

“... but thinking of enthusiasm in teaching, education stakeholders at all levels should consider issues of remuneration, staff development, promotions, and working conditions as an essential element in motivating and reducing turnover intentions, hence improved teaching service”.

3.5. Descriptive Statistics on Responses from Students

A questionnaire was administered to students in public secondary schools in Bushenyi- Ishaka Municipality. 344 questionnaires were given out, and only 320 managed to return, and the responses were measured using frequencies, percentages, and means to determine how the students responded to a number of issues put to them as follows;

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics on Assessing Teaching Enthusiasm and Its Impact on Teacher Turnover

Statements	F/%	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean
Teachers who are enthusiastic about their subject matter are less likely to leave their positions.	F %	180 56.25	80 25	10 3.13	30 9.38	20 6.25	4.16
High levels of teaching enthusiasm contribute to greater job satisfaction among teachers.	F %	195 60.94	65 20.31	15 4.69	25 7.81	20 6.25	4.22
Teachers who display enthusiasm in their teaching are more likely to build strong relationships with their students	F %	250 78.13	60 18.75	- -	3 0.94	7 2.19	4.70
Teachers who are passionate about teaching are more engaged in professional development activities.	F %	197 61.56	63 19.69	10 3.13	25 7.81	25 7.81	4.19
Enthusiastic teachers often feel more supported and valued by their school administration.	F %	53 16.56	17 5.31	15 4.69	189 59.0	46 14.4	2.51
Students respond more positively to teachers who show enthusiasm for their subjects.	F %	230 71.88	50 15.63	10 3.13	20 6.25	10 3.13	4.47
Overall Mean		1105	335	60	292	128	4.04

Note: 5-Strongly Agree (SA) 4-Agree (A) 3-Neutral (NS) 2-Disagree (D) 1-Strongly Disagree (SD).

The data presents a compelling view of students’ perceptions about the significance of enthusiasm in their professional roles, particularly concerning job satisfaction, student relationships, and retention rates. Notably, 56.25% of students strongly agree that enthusiasm for subject matter correlates with lower turnover rates, reflected in a mean score of 4.16. This finding underscores the idea that when teachers are passionate about their subjects, they are more likely to stay in their positions. Furthermore, the fact that 60.94% of students recognize that high levels of teaching enthusiasm lead to greater job satisfaction, with a mean score of 4.22, indicates a strong link between a teacher’s enthusiasm and their overall fulfillment in their role. This relationship is critical, as it suggests that fostering an environment where teachers can express enthusiasm for their subjects can lead to a more stable and committed workforce. In terms of student relationships and engagement, the data show a robust correlation between teacher enthusiasm and positive student interactions. A substantial 78.13% of students believe that enthusiastic teaching fosters strong relationships with students, resulting in a mean score of 4.70. This emphasizes the role of enthusiasm in cultivating a positive classroom atmosphere, where students feel valued and engaged. Furthermore,

61.56% of students acknowledge that enthusiastic teachers are more engaged in professional development, with a mean score of 4.19.

Despite these positive perceptions, a concerning aspect emerges regarding administrative support. Only 16.56% of students feel that enthusiastic teachers are often valued by their administration when exhibiting enthusiasm, reflected in a low mean score of 2.51. This indicates a significant gap in recognition and support for enthusiastic teaching, suggesting that teachers may feel their efforts go unnoticed. Additionally, 71.88% of students observe that students respond more favorably to enthusiastic educators, as indicated by a mean score of 4.47. This suggests that enthusiasm is not only a personal attribute of teachers but also a critical factor influencing students' learning experiences and engagement levels. While teachers who display enthusiasm may create an inviting classroom environment that enhances student participation and motivation, the lack of administrative recognition could hinder their motivation to pursue further growth and collaboration. Addressing these gaps in support could not only enhance teacher morale but also improve retention rates by creating a more supportive and collaborative environment. Overall, the data reveal a strong connection between teaching enthusiasm, job satisfaction, and student engagement, while highlighting the need for improved administrative recognition and support to maximize the positive impacts of teacher enthusiasm on both educators and students.

3.7. Correlation Analysis

Understanding the relationships between the research variables was aided by Pearson (r) correlations. The outcomes were derived from data that were gathered and examined using the SPSS program.

Table 7. Correlation Results on Teaching Enthusiasm (TE) and Its Impact on Teacher Turnover (TT)

		TT	TE
TT	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.789**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	335	335
TE	Pearson Correlation	-0.789**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	335	335

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

From Table 7 above, the results show that there is a strong negative relationship between Teaching Enthusiasm and Teacher Turnover of public secondary schools ($r = -0.789$, $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). The relationship is statistically significant at 0.05, meaning that when teachers' enthusiasm is high, they tend to love their job better, and this in turn leads to a reduction in their turnover, and the converse is true. This was supported by one of the head teachers who said that *"teachers who are highly enthused, tend to look at their job positively and this has made them to spend more time on job hence reducing their turnover"*.

4. DISCUSSIONS

The findings from the correlation analysis underscore the significant relationship between teaching enthusiasm and teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka municipality. The strong negative correlation between teaching enthusiasm and teacher turnover ($r = -0.789$, $p = 0.000$) indicates that teachers who exhibit high enthusiasm for their roles are more likely to experience job satisfaction, which in turn reduces their likelihood of leaving their positions. This is consistent with existing literature that highlights the importance of teacher enthusiasm in fostering a positive teaching environment. For example, according to Ogawa et al. (2022), collaboration and ongoing professional development are highly valued among educators in Japan. This study indicates that, while teachers in public secondary schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka municipality collaborate with colleagues on lesson planning and professional development, they lack sufficient opportunities for career growth.

The findings were in agreement with Shao (2023), who examined the relationship between teacher enthusiasm, self-efficacy, grit, and psychological well-being among Chinese teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL). The study demonstrated that teacher enthusiasm indirectly influenced psychological well-

being through the mediating role of teacher grit, thereby underscoring the significance of enthusiasm and engagement in enhancing teacher well-being.

The strong negative correlation between enthusiasm and teacher turnover, established in this study, is in line with findings of Morgan (2023), who established that teacher passion has a big impact on Tanzanian teacher turnover rates and educational quality.

Similarly, in line with Nabbanja (2022), who recommended that secondary schools in Mukono Municipality in Uganda should provide sufficient non-monetary incentives—particularly job security assurances and recognition of high-performing teachers—to support teacher retention. In line with this, the present study highlights the necessity for schools in Bushenyi–Ishaka Municipality to acknowledge teachers’ contributions, strengthen administrative support, and create ample opportunities for career advancement as essential measures for sustaining teacher retention.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Results of the study show that there is a strong negative relationship between Teaching Enthusiasm and Teacher Turnover of public secondary schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka Municipality, Uganda. The relationship is statistically significant at 0.05, meaning that when teachers’ enthusiasm is high, they tend to love their job better, and this in turn leads to a reduction in their turnover, and the converse is true. Quantitative results indicate that teachers in public secondary schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka municipality;

- are passionate about teaching their subject matter,
- often collaborate with colleagues on lesson planning or professional development, and
- to them, their job means a lot more than just money.

However, they:

- are not satisfied with the level of support they receive from the school administration,
- feel that their efforts as teachers are not recognized or appreciated, and
- lack sufficient opportunities for career growth and advancement within the school

The results of this research offer valuable perspectives on the determinants of teacher turnover in public secondary schools within Bushenyi–Ishaka municipality, Uganda, particularly highlighting the role of teaching enthusiasm. The significant negative correlation identified between enthusiasm and teacher turnover indicates the crucial influence of a supportive and stimulating educational climate in mitigating attrition. Teachers who exhibit strong enthusiasm for their profession are more inclined to remain in their roles; therefore, schools should give priority to strategies that cultivate enthusiasm and motivation among educators. Such efforts may include implementing recognition schemes, providing continuous professional development, and establishing an institutional culture that appreciates and rewards teacher contributions.

Below, we state some of the limitations of the study.

- Sample size: In the determination of the sample, we assumed a target population of 4454 consisting of students, teachers, and headteachers without segregating them. Sloven’s formula yielded a sample size of 19 for teachers, which might not properly represent the population of teachers in Bushenyi – Ishaka municipality.
- Data quality issues: We do not discount that there could be some errors during data collection and analysis.
- We limited our study to public secondary schools in Bushenyi – Ishaka Municipality, which might not give a proper representation of all secondary schools in the study area.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the challenges of teacher turnover in public secondary schools, it is essential for educational leaders to implement strategies that foster teaching enthusiasm among staff. One effective approach could be the establishment of recognition programs that celebrate teachers’ achievements and contributions. By regularly acknowledging the hard work and dedication of teachers, schools can boost

morale and reinforce a positive school culture. Additionally, providing opportunities for teachers to share their experiences and success stories can create a sense of community and motivation, encouraging them to remain committed to their roles.

For future studies, we recommend the following:

- Exploring other psychological or organizational factors that influence teacher turnover,
- Use of longitudinal research design
- Replicating the study in other regions, or both public and private schools, for comparative purposes.
- The overall contribution of enthusiasm to motivation as a motivating factor.

Research Ethics. This study was reviewed and approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of Kampala International University (Approval Number KIU-2024-488). All participants provided written informed consent before their participation, and were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and how their data would be stored and used. Participants were assured of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty and that their anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained.

Data Availability Statement. All data and materials used can be obtained from the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest. The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding. This research received no external funding.

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