

1 **PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS TOWARDS THE USE OF HUMAN CAPITAL**
2 **MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (LAWSON) IN PAYROLL**
3 **MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TANZANIA**

4 ***Abstract***

5 *A case study on the perceptions of teachers on the use of Lawson in*
6 *payroll management in public secondary schools in Tanzania was*
7 *undertaken. The study sought on assessing the level of satisfaction of*
8 *teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania towards efficiency*
9 *and effectiveness of Lawson in managing payroll. The study employed*
10 *mixed methods of data collection including the use of instruments*
11 *such as an interview guide, questionnaires and documentary review*
12 *checklist. The study found that, teachers in public secondary schools*
13 *in Tanzania are aware of the existence of Lawson system. Moreover,*
14 *it was found that Lawson is a reality not a myth in payroll*
15 *management of public servants in Tanzania. However, teachers in*
16 *public secondary schools have narrow understanding of how the*
17 *Lawson system works. The main reason is that, they are not given*
18 *opportunity to attend training and orientations about the system. This*
19 *study recommends the need to venture on other studies to find out the*
20 *way to enlighten teachers and other public employees on the*
21 *importance of the Lawson system. This can go hand in hand with the*
22 *efforts of ensuring that, public employees have a portion to interact*
23 *with the system.*

24
25
26 **Key Words:** Human Capital Management Information System (HCMIS),
27 Lawson, Public Sector, Secondary Schools, Tanzania,
28

29 **INTRODUCTION**

30 Novel technologies, business, services competitiveness and customers' expectations
31 are continued shaping most organization around the World. In contemporary organizational
32 management and leadership approaches, use of e-government to access, store and sharing of
33 information among employees and management is vital and inevitable. In most organizations,
34 information is the source of employee's job satisfaction, productivity and organization
35 growth (Msuya, 2016). Payroll management in organization development is a key component

36 to efficiency and effectiveness on the employees' management in the public service in
37 Tanzania.

38 A well designed and comprehensive Human Capital Management Information System
39 or Lawson (HCMIS) provides the needed information within the shortest period and reduced
40 cost (Pattanayak, 2008). Payroll management is basically employees' records management
41 which involves creating records, deleting records and save records for employees according
42 to their information given to the administration of the organization. Payroll management
43 deals with the entire lifecycle of the employee from recruitment to retirement (URT, 2013).
44 Due to this fact, the government of Tanzania has always bothered to update and reorganize its
45 functions and duties from time to time.

46 **LITERATURE REVIEW**

47 The swiftly growing and use of information technologies has changed cultures of
48 many organizations worldwide. For instance, in UK the government agencies decided to
49 adopt the use of Human Resource Information System as the need to respond to an
50 increasingly demanding public, listing increased customer responsiveness and improved
51 quality of services (IBM GHCS 2000). Similarly, most Asians nations decided to adopt the
52 use of Human Resource Information System in change the bureaucratic culture of most
53 government which halted the adoption of bottom-up approach (community centered approach
54 (The Global Human Capital Study (2005).

55 As results of global development sparks, a decade ago, some organization in Tanzania
56 started to use of Human Resource Information System. Earlier studies by Gupta (2006) and
57 Magenda (2011) have unearthed the significances of using Human Resource Information
58 Systems in Tanzania. As pointed by Gupta (2006) human resource information system helps
59 in storage of employees' records that can be retrieved and updated easily. In his later study,
60 Bhattacharya (2010) added that Human resource information system to a great extent

61 facilitate in compiling employee related information for subsequent use of the same for
62 human resource activities also fulfill the strategic intent of the organization. Furthermore,
63 Paul (2011) insisted on the need for organizational change to accept use of Information
64 Technology in the management of their employees.

65

66 **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

67 In the current trend of high enrolment of civil-servants and expansions in the public
68 sector in Tanzania, demand to take a new route in the administration and management of
69 the Public Service is impelling. The pressure to transform from a centrally controlled
70 bureaucracy to a more decentralized, flexible and initiative-led institution was no longer
71 inevitable in 2000s. A number of reasons behind this move were outlined such as to
72 introduce new policies, principles and practices that ensured that public servants became
73 motivated, conducted themselves to the highest ethical standards, and that they put their
74 skills and talents to productive use (URT, 2013). As the strategies to attain such goals,
75 different initiatives were developed and implemented (URT, 2008).

76 One of the initiatives is the Tanzania's Public Service Reform Programme (PRSP)
77 which aimed to streamline government, reduce employment numbers, introduce wage bill
78 control, and improve public service incentives, accountability, skills, service delivery and
79 management systems (URT, 2006). The goal was a smaller, affordable, well-compensated
80 public service with the emphasis on results and outcomes. Streamlining the government
81 and introducing wage bill control alongside with PSRP was the introduction of HCMIS.
82 This information system is introduced in human resources management on the assumption
83 that, greater efficiency and effectiveness can be achieved in public service delivery (URT,
84 2008).

85 Despite the enthusiastic spirit of the current government to curb grand corruption
86 and unwise use of resources by vanishing all ghost workers from the payroll, one may be
87 tempted to assess the perceptions of employees on the use of Lawson in payroll management.
88 Therefore the current study particularly was sought to examine the perceptions of teachers
89 in public secondary schools on the use of Lawson in payroll management in Tanzania.

90 **METHODOLOGY**

91 This study employed a mixed research approach. Creswell (2012) defined a mixed method
92 research as a procedure for collecting and analyzing data by mixing both quantitative and
93 qualitative methods in a single study or series of studies at the same moment to understand a
94 research problem. Data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary
95 source data were generated through questionnaires and interviews, while the secondary source data
96 were obtained from official documents through documentary review checklist. Data collecting
97 instruments were validated and tested for reliability. Official permission for data collection was
98 sought from the Municipal and District Executive Directors as a relevant authority. Participants of
99 this study were contacted for their consent and participants' names were kept anonymous. The
100 study used a cross-sectional research design to collect data from 100 respondents.
101 According to Cohen, et al (2007) a cross-sectional study is one that produces a 'snapshot' of
102 a population at a particular point in time. The study was conducted in the public sector in
103 Tanzania.

104

105

106 **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

107 The findings and discussion of this research study are presented in this section. Both
108 quantitative data and qualitative information collected from teachers and heads of schools
109 from public secondary schools are presented and discussed.

110 **Perceptions of Teachers on Use of Lawson in Payroll Management**

111 The results presented in Table 1.1 bellow indicate that, teachers in public secondary
 112 schools in Tanzania were neither in favor of positive nor negative statements. In addition,
 113 findings in Table 1.1 further reveal that teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania
 114 were generally unaware of many activities done by the Lawson. This is evident when
 115 analyzing the average performance on positive statement on the use of Lawson (Mean =
 116 2.53). Similarly, the average mean performance of the teachers on negative statements on the
 117 use of Lawson was low (Mean = 2.45).

118 **Table 1: Teachers’ Perceptions on Use of Lawson in Public Secondary Schools**

Positive Statements	Mean	Std.Devi ation
HCMIS (Lawson) as a system performs excellently	2.56	1.166
HCMIS (Lawson) is well organized	2.51	1.059
HCMIS (Lawson) is somehow expensive	2.74	1.143
HCMIS (Lawson) is a transparent system	2.54	1.086
HCMIS (Lawson) controls payroll malpractices	2.65	1.132
HCMIS (Lawson) has eradicated promotion delays.	2.16	1.269
Average Mean	2.53	
Negative Statements		
HCMIS (Lawson) is poorly structured	2.21	1.057
HCMIS (Lawson) is difficult to be used	2.13	1.031
HCMIS (Lawson) is too complicated to use	2.15	.936
HCMIS (Lawson) creates godlike HRs	2.51	1.168
HCMIS (Lawson) creates godlike IT experts	2.60	1.163
HCMIS (Lawson) is not a participatory system	2.73	1.213
HCMIS (Lawson) is weaker due to poor power supply, poor bandwidths and poor	2.85	1.218

infrastructure

Average Mean

2.45

119 **Source: Field Data, 2016 Key: 4 = completely true, 3 = True, 2 = not true and 1 =**
120 **completely not true**

121

122 Doubtless, the current study findings are an indication that teachers in public
123 secondary schools are not interacting with the Lawson (software) in their day to day
124 activities. However, the findings have clearly revealed that teachers in public secondary
125 schools are familiar with the existence and use of Lawson in managing their payroll and
126 promotion.

127 On the other hand, the negative perception of teachers in public secondary schools in
128 Tanzania may have been influenced by lack of neutral scale in used the likert scale
129 questionnaire. The used likert-scale type questionnaires had only four scales without the
130 neutral scale. In most studies that intended to measure employees' attitudes, feelings and
131 perceptions use of neutral scale is said to increase the probability of guess responses. As put
132 forward by Clason & Dormody (1994) use of four-point scale without neutral response help
133 to minimize undecided responses. Similarly, numerous studies have used four-point (Behnke
134 & Kelly, 2011; Robinson & Shepard, 2011).

135 **Perceptions of Head of Schools on the use of Lawson in Payroll Management**

136 **Lawson Ensures Records Keeping**

137 Data obtained during the interview with head of schools revealed that Lawson has
138 continued simplifying the tidy work of previous manually approval of staff data in various
139 public secondary schools. Now, the Lawson has simplified process of filling new data and
140 retrieving data for in-service teachers. It was further argued that, head of schools together
141 with staff from Human Resource department at the respective district or municipal can update
142 any data, add or remove any name of employee than experienced previously. Head of school

143 commended the ability of Lawson to tracking and establish the status of employees in each
144 department and specific school.

145 In addition, it was argued that use of Lawson has simplified the process of preparing
146 monthly salary and cleaning of ghost workers. This could be further interpreted that, before
147 the use of Lawson there was misappropriation of government funds by paying salaries to
148 ghost (pseudo) workers in Tanzania. During the interview one head of school from city
149 council said that:

150 *Lawson has been very effective during payroll verification of our staff. Now it*
151 *is easy to control the teachers who are present and absentees during payroll*
152 *verification before payment of monthly salaries.*

153
154 The above verbatim quote suggests that before the use of Lawson in public sector, it
155 was difficult in managing employees' records. As pointed out earlier management of
156 employees' records and removal of ghost workers from the public payroll in Tanzania has
157 been a critical challenge over decades (Daily Nation, 2016). As observed by Sawe and
158 Maimu (2001), despite of the ability to identify some 16,000 ghost workers out of a total of
159 around 350,000 employees of public sector in Tanzania, the follow-up attempts to reconcile
160 the census data with the actual payroll were unsuccessful. Moreover, the current study
161 findings support the contemporary efforts made by the government of Tanzania to lessen the
162 government expenditures for ghost workers amount to \$ 2 million due a month (UWEZO,
163 2016).

164 **Lawson Ensures Effective Communication**

165 It was noted that Lawson has been an effective communication tool among head of
166 institutions and the government. Data obtained during the interview with head of secondary
167 schools indicated that Lawson has facilitated sharing of reliable information from the

168 government. Moreover, head of schools insisted that Lawson has managed to update
169 employees' bio data and other information on time.

170 The above findings corroborate with earlier study by IBM GHCS (2005) that Lawson
171 is effective to be used by the government agencies to ensure effective communication
172 between employees and institutions. These current study findings are well versed in the
173 previous study by Sawe and Maimu (2001) who asserts that the main challenge with
174 Tanzania Civil Service was the lack of systematic data collection and dissemination of
175 information among the employees. As a result, lack of effective communication may lead
176 directly to a crisis in personnel information management and an inability to target the wage
177 bill and plan human resource deployment.

178 **Lawson Ensures Transparency and Accountability**

179 During the interview respondents insisted that Lawson has opened room for
180 accountability, transparency and integrity. It was further argued that, head of schools and
181 staff responsible for salary and payroll management do not temper with the salaries and other
182 employees' benefits. During the interview one head of secondary school said that;

183 *I can assure you that, since its establishment, Lawson has increased*
184 *accountability, transparency and integrity among the district officials and HR*
185 *staff. No more corruption and delay of getting information from the district*
186 *HR department.*

187
188 The current study findings had proved the critical challenges of lack of transparent in
189 the previous payroll management of public servants in Tanzania. As noted by Schalkwyk
190 and Widner (2012) the previous payroll system in Tanzania was coupled with inadequacies
191 in record keeping systems and difficulties integrating the Ministry of Finance and civil
192 service records, which meant that some people continued to collect pay after termination.
193 inadequacies in the payroll and record keeping systems, coupled with difficulties integrating

194 the Ministry of Finance and civil service records, meant that some people (ghost workers)
195 continued to collect pay after termination, while new employees often.

196 Despite of the very fascinating qualities of using Lawson in public secondary schools,
197 Lawson is said to have some critical challenges that warrant for its review. During the
198 interview, both teachers and head of schools acknowledges that were familiar with some
199 challenges that makes Lawson malpractices.

200

201 **Late Updating of Employees' Data**

202 Available data reveal that teachers were complaining of late updating of their bio data
203 and other employment records. It was learnt that, data for new and in-service employee are
204 not instantly updated in Lawson. This delay has caused a number of challenges for employees
205 to get their work benefits instantly and other related rights. It was further argued that
206 inadequate of qualified staff to manage and use Lawson has created unnecessary delays in
207 promotions and other teachers' benefits.

208 The current findings affirm the previous study by Schalkwyk and Widner (2012) who
209 found that some staff responsible for payroll was computer illiterate and unmotivated.
210 Furthermore, Sawe and Maimu (2001) noted that despite of the influential computer staff
211 responsible for payroll management in Tanzania, deliberately they frustrated the process of
212 updating the payroll as most of them had a stake in the continued existence of ghost workers

213 **Lawson is Not for All Employees**

214 During the interview, teachers were demanding for the personal accessibility to Lawson for
215 effective management of their data and getting information. Teachers were blaming the
216 government for failure to create access of Lawson for every employee in public sector like
217 the open access to UTUMISHI portal. During the interview one teacher said that:

218 *We are the public servant, trusted to teach students but we cannot access*
219 *our own employment records through Lawson. Lawson must be made*
220 *accessible to every public servant to create trust on information and sharing*
221 *of the results.*
222

223 From the above quote, it implies that employees in public sectors could use the
224 Lawson for verification of their bio data rather than waiting for one staff at district level. It
225 can be further interpreted employment data for various employees could be update and used
226 accurately if only every employee could update and verify his or her own data. The above
227 findings are in line with Sawe and Maimu (2001) who found that 500 employees in public
228 sector in Tanzania were reinstated after mistakenly deletion from the government payroll in
229 1996.

230 **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

231 The findings of the present study have provided answers to the main objective and
232 suggest that teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania are aware of the existence of
233 Lawson system. Additionally, it can be concluded that, HCMIS is a reality not a myth in
234 payroll management in Tanzania. Despite of these two facts, the employees have parochial
235 understanding of how the system works. Those who seem to be well versed with how the
236 system works are the human resources officers and to some extent head of schools. The main
237 reason is that, they are given opportunity to attend training and orientations about the system.

238 This study recommends the need to venture on other studies to find out the way to
239 enlighten public employees the importance of the system. This can go hand in hand with the
240 efforts of ensuring that, public employees have a portion to interact with the system.
241 Allowing them to interact with the system does not mean leakage of information but creating
242 a mechanism of access control for security purposes.

243
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247

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