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Determinants of Job Satisfaction among High School Teachers in Kenya

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to identify the determinants of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county. The objectives of the study were to: identify the determinants of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county, rank in order of importance the determinants of job satisfaction, determine satisfaction levels of secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county and come up with recommendations for improving job satisfaction. This study targeted all the 468 secondary school teachers in the 32 public secondary schools in Murang'a South Sub-county. Simple random sampling technique was employed to get a sample of 25 schools. Stratified sampling technique combined with simple random sampling technique was used to get three male and three female respondents from each school giving a sample of 150 respondents. A self-developed questionnaire was administered to the respondents who were given time to fill in the required information. The data collected was coded and then analysis done using SPSS computer software. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics. The major determinants of satisfaction among teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county in order of importance were: pay/compensation, career progression/development, promotion opportunities, working conditions, recognition, workload, involvement in decision making and communication. Majority of the teachers in the sub-county were dissatisfied with their jobs and would not choose the teaching career if they were to start all over again. Dissatisfaction increases with age while being single affects satisfaction. The number of years a teacher spent in one job group affected job satisfaction. It is recommended that quick action be taken in addressing each of the determinants of job satisfaction with a view of increasing job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county. As well, there is great need for the Teachers Service Commission to carry out job satisfaction surveys throughout the country among secondary school teachers with the aim of making the teaching profession more lucrative and attractive. Lastly, research should be carried out on the causes of increasing turnover in the teaching profession and then corrective measures taken.

Keywords: Job dissatisfaction, job satisfaction, promotion, recognition, work environment

1. Introduction

The success of any organisation depends on the performance of its employees. A good company can become the best only with the sincerity and dedication of its employees. Employees can give their best if they are satisfied with their jobs. Job satisfaction can be an important indicator of how employees feel about their jobs and a predictor of work behaviours.

Job satisfaction refers to the attitude that people have about their jobs and the organizations (Al Zubi, 2010). It refers to the attitudes and feelings people have about their work. Job satisfaction also implies doing a job one enjoys, doing it well, and being suitably rewarded for one's efforts. It further implies enthusiasm and happiness with one's work. The happier people are within their jobs, the more satisfied they are said to be.

Job satisfaction brings certain benefits. Job-satisfaction leads to an increase in productivity (Wentzel & Wigfield, 2009). Satisfied employees tend to have high retention rates; they are more dedicated to the organization and tend to yield higher job performances (Arif & Chohan, 2012). Job satisfaction is regarded as a main component of the work environment and one of the main factors determining organizational climate (Conley, Bacharach & Bauer, 1989).

A number of factors have been cited to be determinants of job satisfaction. They include empowerment, workplace environment, job loyalty, job performance, working conditions, pay and promotion, job security, fairness, relationship with co-workers and supervisors (Parvin & Kabir, 2011; Javed, Balouch & Hassan, 2014; Tien, 2018).

2. Statement of the Problem

Workforce is the most important factor and the only sustainable long-term competitive advantage of an organization. Teachers are arguably the most important group of professionals for the nation's future. Over the years,

Kenya National Union of Teachers has been agitating for better salaries, benefits and an improvement of teachers' working conditions.

Employee turnover is common world over. The major cause of employee turnover has been cited to be low job satisfaction (Branhan, 2005). Job satisfaction has been associated with lower levels of labour turnover, greater productivity and fuelling of corporate profits (Cascio & Boudreau, 2009). In Murang'a South Sub-county, turnover of secondary school teachers has continued to increase with 63 teachers out of 468 leaving in the last two years (District Education office). This has been attributed to low job satisfaction.

An understanding of determinants of job satisfaction in the modern world would be crucial as it would generate adequate knowledge for use mainly by the employers to improve terms of service. Known determinants of job satisfaction from literature review include: compensation, supervision, work environment, on-the-job training, recognition, communication and promotion. These determinants are known to vary from place to place and from time to time. Thus, there is need to establish the determinants of job satisfaction in this area and thus come up with ways of improving it. This study therefore was carried out to find out the determinants of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county.

3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective was to find out the determinants of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county. The specific objectives of the study were to: identify the determinants of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county, rank in order of importance the determinants of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county, determine levels of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county and come up with recommendations for improving job satisfaction.

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1. Affect Theory

The main premise of this theory is that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job. Further, the theory states that how much one values a given facet of work (e.g. the degree of autonomy in a position) moderates how satisfied/dissatisfied one becomes when expectations are/aren't met. When a person values a particular facet of a job, his satisfaction is more greatly impacted both positively (when expectations are met) and negatively (when expectations are not met), compared to one who doesn't value that facet.

4.2. Dispositional Theory

The theory that suggests that people have innate dispositions that cause them to have tendencies toward a certain level of satisfaction, regardless of one's job. This approach became a notable explanation of job satisfaction in the light of evidence that job satisfaction tends to be stable over time and across careers and jobs. Research also indicates that identical twins have similar levels of job satisfaction.

4.3. Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg (1959) performed studies to determine which factors in an employee's work environment caused satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The Two factor theory attempts to explain satisfaction and motivation in the workplace. This theory states that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by different factors – motivation and hygiene factors, respectively. Herzberg found out that there are six factors causing dissatisfaction and six factors causing satisfaction. The factors causing satisfaction are: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth. Factors causing dissatisfaction are: company policy, supervision, relationship with the boss, working conditions, salary and relationship with peers.

5. Determinants of Job Satisfaction

In Poland, the following factors determined the level of satisfaction of local government employees: collaboration in the provision of services, the stability of professional development, relationship with supervisor and working conditions (Błoński. & Jefmański, 2013). In a Vietnamese study, Tien (2018) found that satisfiers of teaching career overwhelmingly were intrinsic factors. These include career achievement, work itself, advancement, responsibility, job security and support from students' parents. Dissatisfiers were found to be extrinsic factors and included promotion, pay, supervision, students' behavior, job pressure, teacher status, teacher training, working conditions, recognition, school policies, relationship with co-workers, school reputation and career support from school.

In a Nigerian study, Adeoye, Akoma and Binuyo (2014) established that there is a significant difference between the age, marital status and educational background. Educational background contributed most with a t-value of 3.618; followed by marital status with t-value of 2.429 and age with t-value of .281. Ngigi, and Orodho (2014) in a Kenyan study found that majority of special education teachers and head teachers were not satisfied with the current remuneration package. Majority of special educators were not satisfied with their job and felt overworked and reported they were likely to leave in the next 5 years. Age, gender, work experience, marital status, dependent children and parents were having positive impact on the job satisfaction (Jathanna, Melisha, Mary & Latha, 2011).

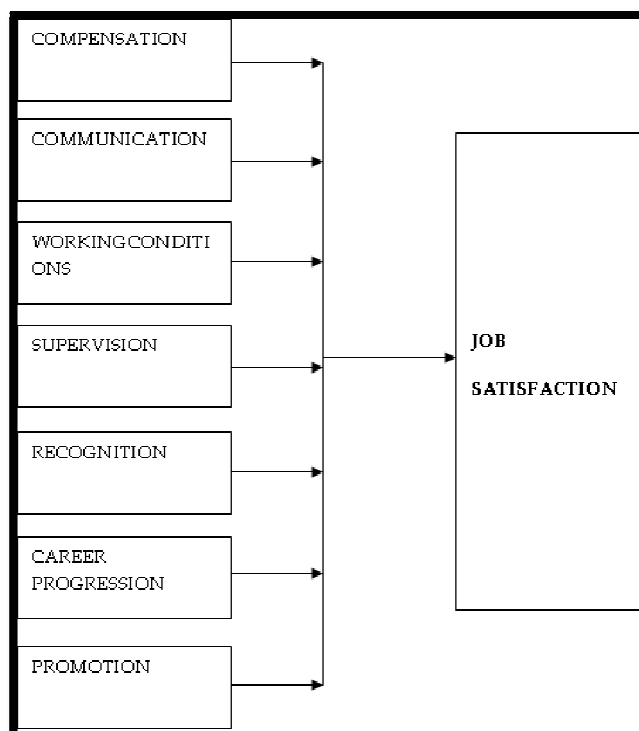


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

6. Research Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted. This was chosen because it is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena or subjects of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This design enabled the researcher to collect information on the determinants of secondary school teachers' satisfaction in Murang'a South Sub-county. The study population was all secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county. There are 32 public secondary schools with 468 teachers (DEO's, office). All the secondary school teachers in the area were targeted in the study. This study used 30% of the total target population. Thus, thirty percent of 468 provided a sample of 150 teachers. 25 schools were selected using simple random sampling from the total of 32 schools in the sub-county. From each selected school, stratified sampling was used to group the teachers into two by use of gender. From each gender in a school, six teachers were selected using simple random sampling such that three male and three female teachers were selected from a school. The research instrument to be used was a self-developed questionnaire. After building rapport through one to one discussion with school heads, the questionnaires were left behind and collected at an agreed time. Raw data was edited, coded and fed into the computer. Data analysis was done by use of descriptive statistics. Data was analyzed by use of SPSS computer software. The determinants of job satisfaction were described using descriptive statistics (mean and percentages) and summarized using tables. Data was also presented qualitatively followed by elaborate discussions.

7. Findings and Discussions

7.1. Determinants of Job Satisfaction

Table 1 below shows the responses given.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Pay/Compensation	132	88
Career progression	126	84
Promotion opportunities	105	70
Working conditions	81	54
Recognition	75	50
Workload	75	50
Involvement	63	42
Communication	60	40

Table 1: Determinants of Job Satisfaction

7.2. Compensation /Pay

88% of the respondents reported compensation is a major determinant of job satisfaction. It was ranked as the number one determinant. According to society for Human Resource Management, pay has remained one of the top five job satisfaction aspects most important to employees. Respondents also indicated that the major reason for the increase in turnover was the pay received. 68% of the respondents reported they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their monthly pay. This is not good for the sub-county in that this number could be on its way out on getting greener pastures or may not be productive. Results of a survey conducted by Society for Human Resource Management in 2009 in US showed that three out of every ten employees were dissatisfied with their salaries. 68% in this study is rather high.

7.3. Career Development

84% of respondents reported career development to be an important contributor to job satisfaction. 68% of the respondents reported that they were dissatisfied with the opportunities available for career advancement. This means teachers may not be getting these opportunities which they feel are crucial. Only 12 % of teachers indicated that they were satisfied with Teachers Service Commission sponsored training and seminars. The role of training cannot be overemphasized but it is an important avenue for professional development. With only 12% of respondents indicating that they were satisfied with accessibility to such training, it shows that the majority do not access or are a reserve for a few.

7.4. Promotion

70% of the respondents reported that promotions are an important determinant of job satisfaction. Promotion at the work place normally acts as a motivator to employees. In the teaching profession, promotion to some job groups e.g. job group L are automatic whereas to others e.g. M, N, P, and Q one has to undergo a rigorous interview. 16% of the respondents reported that they had been in the same job group for over 24 years. Only 56% of the respondents had been in the same job group for less than five years with only 22% having been in one job group for less than three years. It is quite evident that a majority of the teachers had stagnated in the same job group for a considerable period of time. It is therefore not surprising that 78 % of the respondents reported that they were either dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied with promotion opportunities. Some respondents expressed that they did not know the criteria being used while promoting. They felt that favouritism took centre stage.

7.5. Work Environment

54% of the respondents reported work environment as an important aspect in determining job satisfaction. The creation of conducive work environment can either motivate or demotivate the employees. Work environment plays an important role in employee job satisfaction. 54% of the respondents were dissatisfied with their work environment. This could mean the work environment was not conducive. Working tools and basic comfort may have been lacking. Such dissatisfaction could greatly impact on employee's productivity. 36% of the teachers reported that the way employees are treated by the management is a determinant of job satisfaction. Mistreatment by the management can act as a demotivator.

7.6. Recognition

50% of the respondents saw recognition as an important determinant of job satisfaction. Acknowledgement is a powerful motivator. If employees are praised and acknowledged for their efforts, they will feel better about themselves and about the hard work they have put in. Only 24% of the respondents reported they were satisfied with the recognition they received. This shows recognition is not a common practice. Acknowledging employees' performance through praise (private or public), awards and incentives is believed to be a cost – effective way of increasing employee morale, productivity, competitiveness and satisfaction.

7.7. Workload

In a school setting, workload refers to the number of lessons taught per week. 50% of the teachers reported low workload as an important determinant of job satisfaction. In the last few years, secondary schools have been experiencing shortages in staffing due to increase in enrolment and turnover. As a result, those in secondary schools end up taking huge workloads.

According to the Teachers Service Commission, a teacher in a secondary school is supposed to teach 27 lessons per week. This is no longer being adhered to due to serious shortages in staffing. Cases of teachers handling huge workloads are now quite common in schools. 46% of the respondents reported they were dissatisfied with their current workload. This means they may be teaching more than maximum workload. Besides teaching, a teacher has got many other responsibilities in school. They include participation in co-curricular activities e.g. games, drama and music. They are also involved in supervision of students during the day and at night. A teacher is expected to attend to all these besides teaching.

7.8. Involvement in Decision Making

42% of the respondent reported that involvement in decision making was an important aspect in determining job satisfaction. Involvement in decision making showed that the management had faith in the employees and also valued them. Involvement also shows the willingness of the organization to embrace an open-door policy. Only 28% of the respondents were satisfied with involvement in decision making. This shows that involvement had only been embraced to a very small extent. Majority of the respondents still felt there was much to be done. Involvement is important because it breeds the element of ownership in the employees.

7.9. Communication

40% of the respondents reported that two-way communication is an important determinant of job satisfaction. Communication refers to the transmission of information both downwards and upwards. In schools, information flows from the school administration to the teachers and from the teachers to the school administration. Usually the employer (Teachers Service Commission) does not communicate directly to the teachers but through the school administration. 30% of the respondents reported they were satisfied with communication channels in the school. This is a relatively low percentage. It shows that communication channels may be wanting. This may mean that policies and other guidelines from the employer do not reach the teachers as expected.

7.10. Job Satisfaction Level

Only 20% of respondents reported that they were satisfied with their jobs with 78% reporting that they were dissatisfied. This shows that majority of the teachers in the sub-county were dissatisfied. This is in contrast with studies carried out in other areas where satisfaction levels were more than 50%.

A 2002 study of US physicians from 33 different specialities found that more than 70 % of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their careers. Similarly, the Canadian 2007 National Physician Survey found that 75% of all physicians were generally satisfied with their professional lives. According to a study by Society for Human Resource Management conducted in 2009 in the US, 86% of employees indicated overall satisfaction with their current position, with 41% of employees reporting they were very satisfied. In Namibia, regarding general satisfaction, approximately half of teachers showed a neutral attitude while about 40.0% indicated dissatisfaction.

There was very little difference in dissatisfaction between males and females. 77.78% of the male respondents were dissatisfied while 78.26% of the females were dissatisfied. The percentage of dissatisfied females was higher albeit by a small margin. These findings seem to contrast with findings from other studies where the dissatisfaction level of females is usually lower than that for males.

Dissatisfaction was seen to be slightly affected by the age as shown in Table 2.

Age	Frequency	Percent
25-35	21	77.78
36-45	84	77.78
46-55	12	80.00

Table 2: Dissatisfaction Level According to Age

Table 2 shows that for the age categories 25-35 and 36-45, the percentage of dissatisfied teachers was the same but for the 46-55 age category, the percentage increased. This seems to imply that dissatisfaction may be increasing with age. The teaching experience did not seem to affect the dissatisfaction level as shown in Table 3.

Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percent
0-10 years	33	78.57
11-20	72	80
21-30	12	66.87

Table 3: Dissatisfaction According to Teaching Experience

Table 3 shows that the highest percentage of dissatisfaction was among respondents having 11-20 years teaching experience. This group happens to be the middle-aged group.

The number of years spent in the current job group seemed to dictate the dissatisfaction level as shown in Table 4.

Job Group	Frequency	Percent
0-5	75	75.76
6-10	27	81.81
11-15	12	100.00
21-25	6	100.00

Table 4: Dissatisfaction According to Number of Years Spent in the Current Job Group

Table 4 shows that dissatisfaction increases with years spent in the same job group. The more the years spent in a job group, the more the likelihood of being dissatisfied. Employees normally expect that after a given period of time e.g.

three years, they would get promoted to the next job group. When this does not happen, then dissatisfaction is likely to set in. 42.86% of the Diploma holders reported that they were dissatisfied while 86.49% of the Bachelor's degree holders were dissatisfied. 60% of the Master's Degree holders reported that they were dissatisfied while 100 % of the Doctorate holders were dissatisfied. The two groups with the highest incidences of dissatisfaction were Bachelors and Doctorate Degree holders. This may be as a result of having high expectations which perhaps ended up not being met. Having a doctorate degree is not a requirement for one to teach in Kenyan secondary schools. Doctorate degree holders could be feeling misplaced hence the dissatisfaction. According to Clark and Oswald (1996), the more educated have higher expectations for the pecuniary and non-pecuniary returns from their jobs, and so are more easily disappointed and dissatisfied. General studies typically show that the more educated have lower job satisfaction.

Only 54.26% of the married respondents were dissatisfied with their jobs while 100% of the respondents who were single were dissatisfied. Only 50% of the respondents who were divorced were dissatisfied. For the single respondents, it can be deduced that as a result of not having someone to share the burden of life's worries, the element of dissatisfaction tends to set in and takes centre stage.

56% of the respondents said that if they were to start all over again, they would not choose teaching as a career. Such an attitude could have developed over time as they discharged their duties or they landed in the teaching profession accidentally. There could be a bigger problem than meets the eye in that these teachers who now cannot choose teaching as a career and are dissatisfied, are supposed to guide the delicate youth in the sub-county.

7.11. Increasing job Satisfaction

There are various avenues through which job satisfaction can be increased in the sub-county. Job satisfaction is important because it has been found to be related to productivity. The respondents felt that better salaries and allowances would greatly boost the morale of teachers and consequently improve job satisfaction. It was evident that they were getting a lower pay than civil servants and therefore observed that the solution lay in harmonization of salaries. Allowances paid to teachers are not in line with government guidelines. Respondents expressed that it was important to follow government guidelines. The respondents felt there should be more fringe benefits for teachers. They should include overtime payment, study tours and car loan schemes.

Another way of increasing job satisfaction was through assistance in professional growth and development. Respondents floated the idea that there should be regular refresher courses for the teachers. It was clear that some teachers had never attended any refresher courses and especially those organized by the Teachers Service Commission. The respondents also saw it as important to train school administrators on management skills to reduce conflicts and tension in schools which were as result of ignorant administrators hence the great need for them to undergo periodic training. Appointment to administrative posts should be on merit in order to ensure that only qualified persons take up administrative posts. Teachers should be given study leaves with pay. This is aimed at ensuring that teachers get adequate training opportunities. Scholarships can also be awarded to willing and qualified teachers to ease the burden of fees payment.

The career path for teachers was not clear. As such there should be avenues for career advancement which should have commensurate pay. In-service courses, workshops and seminars need to be held periodically. There should be a creation of more promotion opportunities with well-defined criteria of promotion to avoid stagnation in the same job group for years. The practicability of automatic promotion to the next job group after every three years can be considered. Respondents were at pains to explain the current system where respondents were going through very torturous interviews. Respondents actually felt a private organization should be sub-contracted to be conducting interviews followed by recommendations for promotion. Some felt that the interviews should be dropped all together.

There is need to employ more teachers to ease the heavy workloads on the shoulders of many teachers. This should go hand in hand with review of CBE (curriculum-based establishment) in order to mitigate the effect of heavy work load. The working environment also needs to be improved. Better physical facilities should be provided and perhaps standardized in all the schools. Respondents pointed the need for recreational facilities within the reach of teachers. The staffroom should be more teacher friendly in terms of comfort.

Teacher recognition which should not only be verbal should be enhanced. There are many sacrifices made by teachers which go unnoticed. Respondents felt that recognition should be by a promotion or by salary increase. Other forms of recognition should be tours and cash prizes.

Communication is crucial in any organization. The respondents felt there was the great need to improve communication. Communication needs to be personalized and given a human face. Draconian rule in schools should be removed and efforts made to build positive relationships. Respondents expressed the importance of involving employees in decision making. The participation in major decisions could make them own such decisions and hence greatly assist in the implementation stage.

8. Conclusions

- The major determinants of satisfaction among teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county in order of importance were: pay/compensation, career progression/development, promotion opportunities, working conditions, recognition, workload, involvement in decision making and communication.
- Majority of the teachers would not choose the teaching career if they were to start all over again.
- Majority of the teachers in the sub-county were dissatisfied with their jobs.

- Dissatisfaction increases with age.
- Being single affects dissatisfaction/satisfaction.
- The more the years spent in one job group, the more the chances that one would be dissatisfied.

9. Recommendations

- It is recommended that quick action be taken in addressing each of the determinants of job satisfaction with a view of increasing job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Murang'a South Sub-county.
- There is great need for the Teachers Service Commission to carry out job satisfaction surveys throughout the country among secondary school teachers with the aim of making the teaching profession more lucrative and attractive.
- Research should be carried out on the causes of high turnover in the teaching profession and then corrective measures taken.

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