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Relationship between Teachers' Involvement in Decision-Making and Their Job Satisfaction in Public Secondary Schools in Mandera North Sub-County, Mandera County

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Abstract:

Work satisfaction plays a vital role in entire commitment, which directly impacts productivity within the working environment. Teachers' satisfaction, thus, has a significant influence on their work relations with teachers who are satisfied feeling committed to their assigned roles at school. The main aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between the involvement of teachers in decision-making and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Mandera North Sub-County, Mandera County. The study was anchored on Herzberg's theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theories. The study adopted a mixed methods methodology where both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. Public secondary schools formed the unit of sampling for the study, and three schools were selected from a total of 9 public secondary schools in Mandera North Sub-County. Out of the target population of 104 teachers, 31 teachers were selected to serve as respondents. The Sub-County Director of Education (SCDE) in Mandera North Sub-County was selected purposively. The study found that most of the teachers were highly involved in decision-making (61.3%), 25.8% of teachers were moderately involved in decision-making, and 12.9% of teachers were poorly involved in decision-making. The mean score for involvement in decision-making was $M=2.7152$ and $SD= 0.6937$. Regression analysis was also conducted to determine the association between the variables. The findings show a significant positive relationship between teachers' involvement in decision-making and teachers' job satisfaction ($P<0.05$). The study concludes that involvement in decision-making improves satisfaction because it increases a sense of belonging when teachers are granted the opportunity to participate in crucial decision-making aspects within their educational institutions. These findings recommend that principals promote teachers' involvement in decision-making activities in school, such as workload planning, financial management, conflict resolution, and academic and co-curricular activities. Creating an environment where teachers feel valued and included in decision-making processes enhances their sense of belonging and increases job satisfaction.

Keywords: Collaborative approach, decision-making, teachers' involvement, job satisfaction, participatory leadership

1. Introduction

Work satisfaction plays a vital role in entire commitment, which directly impacts productivity within the working environment. Teachers' satisfaction, thus, has a significant influence on their work relations with teachers who are satisfied feeling committed to their assigned roles at school. This is evident in the research outcomes done in North Carolina among 42000 educators, which indicated that the educators were not content with their work environment. Teachers lamented the lack of adequate time to give optimal input to teaching output, regarding it as one of the factors prompting them to quit their jobs (Curry et al., 2019).

To the contrary, a MetLife study done in 2009 carried out among 1000 public school educators noted that the majority of teachers were contented with their teaching roles, indicating that they had been well remunerated and equally felt respected by the society (Poon et al., 2019). Nonetheless, other scholars have found varying disparities between teaching in private schools and government schools, with notable disparities in regard to remuneration, workload and learning equipment. They asserted that adopted management practices have a direct correlation to job output among teachers, which in turn affects students' classroom performance (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Previous studies, therefore, call for school management to focus on teacher motivation and retention, which may lead to a beneficial association with experienced teachers.

In a study conducted in Nigeria to assess factors influencing teacher performance and retention, the research found a positive association between job performance and retention in private learning institutions (Ifechi et al., 2022). As per the principals interviewed, the empathetic concern had a significant influence on teacher job satisfaction, while there was no weighty association between job performance and rewards and punishments. The study found out that teachers

who worked in institutions that implement positive conduct geared approaches achieved better performance scores in reviewing, reinforcing and teaching. In addition, trained teachers achieved better performance than non-trained teachers.

Another study carried out in Uganda to assess the factors that influenced teachers' motivation concluded that factors that influenced teacher motivation were administrative rapport, professional development and the teacher's remuneration (Zhang et al., 2021). This is an indication, therefore, that teachers bearing a high satisfaction level find the job more enjoyable, feel motivated towards their job and have effective deliverables to the students, which raises the overall student performance. They conclude that work satisfaction is important because it is a crucial component of an entire education system, which is also determined by the adopted management practices.

Management practices from a school's perspective refer to the provision of an accommodating environment for education so that they may render services effectively in an organization. Mailool et al. (2020) agree that management practices in secondary institutions revolve around creating an enabling environment for the teachers, which fosters teachers' morale, thus raising their commitment to the task and, in the end, leading to professional development. Others also point out that the provision of effective management practices involves involving teachers in decision-making, motivation, appropriate record-keeping, adequate welfare, provision of infrastructure and granting them opportunities for professional development (Azizi et al., 2021).

Since education is a key ingredient in the development of an economy, the Kenyan government enacted reforms such as the FDSE and FPE as per the Basic Education Act. Although much of the obligation lies on the government, teachers and learners have a role to play in ensuring that gains are realized from the existing education system. Teachers, as human input, transfer knowledge to learners effectively and are a substantial resource that is irreplaceable in relation to other inputs of the education system (Jiang & Yang, 2022). Although much of the teachers' willingness to impact student learning depends on personal factors, the working environment plays a determinant role in determining the quality of instruction from a learning institution. Previous studies have drawn a relationship between a stressful working environment and poor learning outcomes, absenteeism, indiscipline, slowdowns and teacher strikes. Different studies add that a properly managed institution always acts as the primary source of productive gains for teachers. In such situations, the teaching job has been found to be a well-demanding job but has often fallen short with respect to the pay.

Mandera County continues to encounter protracted conflict from targeted attacks, clan conflicts, and different livestock raids. This has resulted in a majority of non-resident teachers seeking transfers to safer areas, such as their respective households. Additionally, trained teachers quit their profession with the aim of acquiring better-paying jobs. Teachers also join unions which seek negotiations through frequent strikes witnessed over the past years. Although the majority of the studies conducted in Mandera County have focused on the influence of principals' leadership styles on teacher performance, only a few studies have focused on investigating the relationship between the involvement of teachers in decision-making and teacher's job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Mandera North Sub-County, Mandera County.

1.1. Problem Statement

In Kenya, the majority of the studies have pointed to various problems that may lead to job dissatisfaction among educators (Budhathoki, 2021). A study conducted in Mandera County found that most schools in the Mandera North sub-county encounter problems associated with infrastructure, which negatively hinder the effective delivery of quality public education. Some of the barriers to effective delivery of public services include water shortages, poor roads, lack of infrastructure and absence of maintenance of existing facilities. According to the study, the area even got worse during the rainy season, which rendered the roads impassable. Other problems facing the area included a lack of electricity and an unkempt school learning environment. The surroundings include obsolete infrastructure, overgrown vegetation, and unmaintained buildings, which made the school seem unaccommodating. Schools in Mandera are faced with a profound shortage of teachers owing to the fact that many teachers exited the region due to insecurity (GOK, 2021). In order to counter the teachers' turnover, the majority of the principals are forced to hire untrained teachers who have less training and minimal input towards decision-making in schools (Budhathoki, 2021). This has, therefore, raised the workload of the available teachers and worsened the working conditions in most schools. Most schools in Mandera do not motivate their teachers and do not involve them in decision-making (CDE, 2021).

1.2. Research Objective

The main objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' involvement in decision-making and their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Mandera North Sub-County, Mandera County.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design to assess the existing status at the time. A descriptive research design is a method of research that concerns itself with the present phenomena in terms of conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, relationships, or trends.

2.2. Target Population

The target population was school principals and teachers who selected public secondary schools in Mandera North Mandera County. Mandera North Sub-County has a total of 9 secondary schools and 104 teachers.

2.3. Sample Size Determination

The researcher used different sampling techniques to identify the study sample. Due to the diversity of the target population, the researcher sought to employ a multi-stage sampling technique. The first stage of sampling was the selection of schools from the population of 9 schools. Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) argue that for small populations, a sample of between 10 to 30 % is adequate. The researcher worked with the upper limit of 30% in the selection of schools, yielding 3 schools. Once the 3 schools were selected, the 3 principals of those schools were purposively sampled as study respondents. The next step was to obtain a sample of the teachers from the 104 teachers using a sample of 30% of the teachers. This yielded 31 teachers who had to be distributed equally among the 3 selected schools, translating to 8 teachers per school. Simple random sampling enabled the researcher to obtain the sample without bias. The researcher went to the staff room and sampled 8 teachers per school by the use of a computer table of random numbers. The selected teachers filled in the questionnaires. The SCDE of Manderu North Sub-County was selected purposively. This arrived at the sample size below;

Category	Total Population	Sample	Sample Size %
SCDE	1	1	100%
Principals	9	3	30%
Teachers	104	31	30%
Total	113	35	

Table 1: Sample Size
Source: Researcher (2020)

2.4. Data Collection Instruments

The study employed instruments, such as interviews, document analysis and questionnaires, to gather data.

2.5. Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected were coded and then fed into SPSS version 26 for analysis. Data were analyzed through the use of Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), Version 26.0. Data collected through questionnaires were analyzed through descriptive statistics comprising frequencies and percentages. The relationship between the involvement of teachers in decision-making and their work satisfaction was assessed through a simple linear regression model:

$$\text{Teachers' Job Satisfaction} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Involvement in decision - making} + \varepsilon$$

Where: β_0 is the regression constant, β_1 is the regression coefficient and ε is the error term.

The ethical considerations were also addressed to ensure that there was confidentiality and integrity throughout the entire research process.

3. Results

3.1. Response Rate

The study administered 31 questionnaires to teachers and 9 interview guides to school principals. All the questionnaires were duly filled out and completed, translating to a response rate of 100%. The high response rate was attributed to a good rapport with the respondents and because the researcher self-administered the questionnaires to ensure a maximum response rate.

3.2. Demographic Characteristics

The majority of the teachers were male (67.7%), while female teachers accounted for 32.3% of the respondents. Further, a majority of the teachers (48.4%) had taught for 1 to 10 years, 22.6% of the teachers had taught for 11-20 years, 16.1% of the teachers had taught for less than one year, while 12.9% of the teachers had taught for more than 20 years. The study found that the majority of the teachers (54.8%) were holders of bachelor's degrees, 35.5% of the teachers were diploma holders, and 9.7% of the teachers had a master's degree. A majority of the respondents (48.4%) were department heads, 38.7% were heads of subjects, and 12.9% of the respondents were deputy principals.

	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	21	67.7
	Female	10	32.3
		31	100
Years of Practice	Less Than 1 Year	5	16.1
	1-10 Years	15	48.4
	11-20 Years	7	22.6
	More Than 20 Years	4	12.9
		31	100
Educational Qualification	Diploma	11	35.5
	Bachelors	17	54.8
	Masters	3	9.7
		31	100
Position	Head of Subject	12	38.7
	Head of Department	15	48.4
	Deputy Principal	4	12.9
	Total	31	100.0

Table 2: Profile of the Respondents
Source: Research Data (2023)

3.3. Involvement of Teachers in Decision-Making and Their Job Satisfaction

Using the table containing an array of statements, the researcher sought to find out the relationship between the involvement of teachers in decision-making and teacher job satisfaction, and these were the responses when asked as in the table below:

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
The principal usually consults me while making decisions that affect the school	2	10.0%	2	10.0%	5	25.0%	4	20.0%	7	35.0%
During staff meetings, teachers' views are taken seriously	2	10.0%	2	10.0%	2	10.0%	4	20.0%	10	50.0%
Teachers have been delegated duties by the principal	2	10.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	25.0%	13	65.0%
Teachers are appointed as class teachers and housemasters	1	5.0%	0	0.0%	1	5.0%	5	25.0%	13	65.0%
I feel part and parcel of the decisions that happen in this school	2	10.0%	2	10.0%	4	20.0%	7	35.0%	5	25.0%
I support school programmes because I am consulted when making decisions	2	10.0%	3	15.0%	1	5.0%	7	35.0%	7	35.0%

Table 3: Likert Scale on Involvement of Teachers in Decision-Making and Their Job Satisfaction

Based on table 3, the majority of the teachers were highly involved in decision-making (61.3%), 25.8% of them were moderately involved, and 12.9% of them were poorly involved. The mean score for involvement in decision-making was $M=2.7152$ and $SD= 0.6937$.

3.4. Thematic Analysis

During the interview, the principals explained that they involved teachers in decision-making in schools. The researcher asked the principals, "Do you involve your teachers in decision-making in this school?" The principals stated that teachers who are involved in making key decisions in schools improve their engagement, satisfaction, and productivity. One principal explained:

We believe in a collaborative approach, and teachers play a pivotal role in shaping policies, curriculum changes, and other significant decisions. Regular staff meetings provide a platform for open discussions, where teachers share their perspectives and insights. Additionally, we have established committees that focus on specific areas, such as professional development and school events, allowing teachers to actively contribute to the decision-making process (Principal 1).

Another principal explained:

Teachers are actively involved in decision-making processes to ensure their voices are heard and valued. Whether it's shaping curriculum updates, implementing new teaching methodologies, or planning school events, teachers participate in committees and forums designed to elicit their input. This collaborative approach not only enriches the decision-making process but also enhances the overall sense of community within the school (Principal 3).

The above findings are consistent with those of Nie et al. (2019), who found out that as part of management, head teachers invited senior assistants and teachers who gave their input in the administration of the school. They asserted that such involvement instilled the motivation that teachers were treated as competent professionals whose insights and opinions added valuable inputs to the decision-making process, thereby facilitating genuine participation. Nie et al. (2019) note that they feel valued by the opposing viewpoints and are open to disagreements. Similarly, Mulatya (2022) asserted that teachers who were talked to portrayed the friendliness, openness and sincerity of their head teachers as the few encouraging factors that made it easier for them to engage in school administrative decision-making.

3.5. Regression Modelling

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.536	.782		4.521	.000
	Involvement in decision-making	.025	.273	.034	2.137	.041

Table 4: Regression Coefficient between Involvement of Teachers in Decision-Making and Their Job Performance
a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Job Satisfaction

The results showed that there was a positive association between involvement in decision-making and teachers' job satisfaction ($P < 0.05$). These results are corroborated by Migwi (2018), who found a significant positive relationship between the practice of participatory decision-making and public secondary teachers' job motivation. Similarly, Sirima et al. (2010) found that teachers' participation in decision-making has a significant influence on job satisfaction levels among teachers.

From the regression coefficients in table 4, the p-values for both the constant and the regression coefficient are all less than 0.0001. This means that the constant and the respective regression coefficient are significant. Therefore, teachers' involvement in decision-making is a significant predictor of Job Satisfaction in Public Secondary Schools in Mandera North Sub-County, Mandera County. The regression coefficient is positive. This means that involvement in decision-making among teachers improves teacher satisfaction at work. The regression model for predicting job satisfaction from involvement in decision-making is, therefore, written as:

Job Performance = 3.536 + 0.025 Involvement in Decision-Making

4. Discussion

The above findings are consistent with those of Nie et al. (2019), who found out that as part of management, head teachers invited senior assistants and teachers who gave their input in the administration of the school. They asserted that such involvement instilled the motivation that teachers were treated as competent professionals whose insights and opinions added valuable inputs to the decision-making process, thereby facilitating genuine participation. Nie et al. (2019) note that they feel valued by the opposing viewpoints and are open to disagreements. Similarly, Mulatya (2022) asserted that teachers who were talked to portrayed the friendliness, openness and sincerity of their head teachers as the few encouraging factors that made it easier for them to engage in school administrative decision-making.

The findings are also consistent with those of a Malaysian study, which found that the majority of the head teachers in the research acknowledged that school reforms that aimed at achieving considerable gains must involve more than just the principal (Yeap et al., 2021). They also encouraged creative problem-solving and invited teachers to join them in solving old issues. In addition, these head teachers employed power in their leadership models, which allowed the administration to view democratic participation as a right rather than a privilege at the discretion of the head teachers.

From the above study, it can be concluded that collaborative approaches can be instrumental in shaping policies within the school set-up. When the decision-making at the school level is collaborative and participatory in nature, the teachers feel valued and are more likely to participate in decision-making in the school. These findings advocate for leadership models that empower teachers, recognize their expertise, and view their involvement in decision-making as a fundamental right, ultimately contributing to a more collaborative and effective educational environment.

5. Conclusion

The research found a positive correlation between teachers' involvement in decision-making and their overall job satisfaction. This association may be linked to the observation that teachers granted the opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes within their educational institutions tend to develop a heightened sense of belonging. Better participation of teachers in school management variables such as school financial management, conflict resolution examination matters, staff welfare, disciplinary matters, and school academic and co-curricular activities would positively enhance the teacher's level of commitment because it will no doubt lead to a high level of job satisfaction. However, teachers who are not involved in decision-making will experience unhappiness, dissatisfaction, and a lack of cooperation in their professional roles. These findings are similar to previous studies that have found that effectiveness and active participation in decision-making contribute significantly to enhanced job satisfaction. These studies have found a positive impact of decisional participation in improving job satisfaction among teachers.

6. Recommendation

Principals should promote teachers' involvement in decision-making activities in school. This involves extending participation opportunities to teachers in key school management areas such as workload planning, financial management, conflict resolution, and academic and co-curricular activities. Creating an environment where teachers feel valued and included in decision-making processes enhances their sense of belonging and increases job satisfaction.

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