



School Policy Practices and Teacher Job Satisfaction: A Herzbergian Analysis of Pre-Primary School Teachers in Kilifi North Sub-County, Kilifi County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

School policies play a pivotal role in providing a structured frameworks of standards and regulations that promote positive behavior and foster academic success. These school policies can have both direct and indirect effects on learners, educators and the larger educational context. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between school policies and job satisfaction among teachers in pre-primary schools in Kilifi North Sub County, Kilifi County. The study was premised on Herzberg's Two-factor theory. Descriptive correlational design was adopted for the study. The study had a population of 249 participants, including 83 head teachers and 166 pre-primary teachers. A sample size of 215 respondents was chosen that included; 76 head teachers, 139 pre-primary teachers and selected through multi-stage sampling. Data was collected using a questionnaire for teachers and an interview schedule for head teachers. To ensure reliability and validity of the research instruments, pre-testing was done on 3 ECDE teachers and two head teachers in two selected preprimary schools in Kilifi North Sub County. Descriptive statistics, including means and percentages, were used to summarize the findings, which were presented in tables, graphs, and pie charts. Inferential analysis involved the use of Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationships among the study variables. The study also used qualitative data to triangulate the findings of the quantitative data. Findings showed that there was positive and statistically significant relationship between school policies and teachers' job satisfaction ($r = 0.760, p < 0.01$). The study recommended that policy makers to review some of the school policies to improve teachers' job satisfaction.

Keywords: School policies, job satisfaction, pre-primary schools, Early Childhood Education

INTRODUCTION

According to Toropova et. al. (2021), teachers' job satisfaction is affected by factors such as the school's working conditions, teacher cooperation, learner discipline, teacher characteristics and task load. In addition, Dicke et al. (2019) assert that job satisfaction of the teacher, their well-being and retention is associated with disciplinary climate, student performance and school working condition. Brezicha et. al. (2020) acknowledge the importance of teachers' involvement in decision making process because it promotes the sense of belonging thus job satisfaction. Furthermore, teacher job satisfaction is associated with school culture and curriculum autonomy (Xia et al., 2023). Futterer et. al. (2023) advance the discourse by agreeing that both conducive school working environment and training opportunities for teachers play a vital role in teachers' job satisfaction and teacher retention. In China, Liu et. al. (2020) asserted that teacher job satisfaction was influenced by teacher motivation, disciplinary procedures, school working environment, and school climate. Sahito and Vaisanen (2020) listed job dissatisfiers as: unconducive school working environment, poor remuneration, lack of career progression, unclear teacher promotion procedures and unfriendly co-worker relationships. This finding also agreed with Ortan et. al. (2021) who found out that facets for job satisfaction were interpersonal relationships, school working environment, promotion procedure, school management, teacher workload and administrative duties.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Organizational factors such as salary, work tenure, workload, promotion procedures and supervision affect level of satisfaction in any organization (Landon et al., 2023). Quality education and good performance is linked to



good interpersonal relationships and teachers' job satisfaction (Harrison et al., 2023). Tria (2023) highlighted factors associated with teachers' job satisfaction such as school climate, self-efficacy, relationship, supervision, compensation package, organizational culture, monetary reward, job stress, decision making style, principal leadership style, burn-out, motivation, school support. According to Zheng et. al. (2023) working long hours adversely affect one's health as well as job satisfaction. A study in Indonesia by Sriadmitum et. al. (2023) found out that schools with conducive working environment, friendly rules and regulation enhance teacher performance and job satisfaction. Kyangwe et al. (2023) noted that teachers' job satisfaction was associated with supportive school working environment, good remuneration, motivation, good interpersonal relationship, duties and responsibilities, effective school leadership style, professional development and accountability issues. Worth and Van den Brande (2020) found out that most of the teachers were dissatisfaction because of lack of autonomy on work they do and working for long hours in the schools. Further, Adeoye's (2023) study highlighted factors that promote teachers' job satisfaction such as conducive working condition, promotional procedures, fair wage, teacher capacity building. A survey study by Hur et. al. (2022) found out that pre-school teachers were leaving teaching because of lack of teacher support policies and poor salaries. Tamene et. al. (2023) reported further that job satisfaction was associated with on-job training, supportive leaders, effective supervision and recognition. These studies did not focus on influence of school policies and job satisfaction with specific reference to Herzberg's Two-factor theory. Additionally, the reviewed studies were not conducted on pre-primary schools teachers in Kilifi County.

Statement of the problem

The County Government of Kilifi County is committed to providing quality education in pre-schools. However, several studies (Ngare 2018; Koros et. al., 2018; Kiarie et. al., 2017 & Mosomi, 2015), reported teacher job satisfaction occasioned by inadequate teaching resources, heavy workload, unfair wages and unfavourable school working environment. From these studies, limited attention has been given to the significance of school policies. A lack of focus on importance of policy results in inconsistent decision-making, increased workplace conflicts, and consequent poor achievement of educational outcomes. The current study analyzed teacher job satisfaction while distinguishing between motivator factors (such as achievement and recognition) that enhance satisfaction and hygiene factors (such as policies and working conditions) that prevent dissatisfaction. This distinction enabled a systematic examination of how school policies and professional incentives differentially influence teachers' levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for pre-primary teachers in Kilifi North Sub-County, Kilifi County.

Research hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between school policies and teachers' job satisfaction.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by Herzberg Two factor theory (1959). According to the proponent there are two types of factors that is motivators and hygiene factors. Motivator factors are advancement, the work itself, possibility for growth, responsibility, recognition and achievement. On the other hand, hygiene factors include interpersonal relations, remuneration, company policies, administration, relationships with supervisors, supervision, job security, interpersonal relationships, job status, personal life and working conditions. Intrinsic factors all workers to be content in their jobs and promote growth. Hygiene factors are extrinsic needs that are not related to workplace in order to prevent dissatisfaction. To promote high productivity, performance and staff motivation motivator factors must be provided in work place.

METHODOLOGY

The study embraced a descriptive correlational design. The target population of the study was 83 head teachers and 166 ECDE teachers. The sample size for the study was 215 respondents which was determined by the Kjeric and Morgan (1970) sampling table (see Table 1.1). Quantitative data was collected using a questionnaire while an interview schedule was used to gather qualitative data for triangulation. A pilot study was done prior the actual study to ascertain the credibility of the research tools; and to mitigate the weaknesses of a self-reporting such as overrating or underrating. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential



statistics. The qualitative data was analysed thematically and in narrative form and was used to corroborate the quantitative findings.

Table 1.1: Sampling Table

Sample Category	Sampling Technique	Target Population (N)	Sample (N)	Instruments
Head Teachers	Purposive Sampling	83	76	Interview Schedule
Teachers	Simple Random Sampling	166	139	Questionnaire
Total	—	249	215	—

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of the study was to examine the relationship between school policies and job satisfaction among teachers in pre-primary schools in Kilifi North Sub County, Kilifi County. Data collected was based on teacher self-reports measured on a 4-point Likert scale and rated as: very satisfied (VS = 4), satisfied (S = 3), slightly satisfied (SS = 2) and not satisfied (NS = 1). The study considered clocking in and clocking out times, promotion procedures, complaint procedures, accountability, training, discipline and school rules. Findings are summarized in Table 1.2. Indication of satisfaction was conceptualised by summing up frequencies on the ‘Very Satisfied’ and ‘Satisfied’ options; percentages are indicated in brackets.

Table 1.2: Teachers’ responses on school policies and teachers’ job satisfaction

Indicators	VS	S	SS	NS	Mean	Std. dev
I am satisfied with clocking in and out times	51(37)	51(37)	22(15)	15(11)	2.99	0.98
I am satisfied with promotion procedures used by the school administration	27(19)	38(26)	25(18)	51(37)	2.28	1.15
I am satisfied with the complaint procedures established in the school	31(22)	37(27)	34(24)	38(27)	2.42	1.11
I am satisfied with the accountability policies established in the school	31(22)	44(31)	33(25)	31(22)	2.55	1.06
I am satisfied with the kind of disciplinary measures used by the school administration	43(31)	49(35)	21(15)	26(19)	2.78	1.08
I am satisfied with procedures for training and capacity building	38(27)	29(21)	39(28)	33(24)	2.48	1.13
I am satisfied with schools’ rules and regulation	38(27)	67(48)	24(18)	10(7)	2.96	0.86

Table 1.2 shows a favourable finding that most (102, 74%) of ECDE teachers were satisfied with clocking in and out times, as indicated by mean of 2.99 and standard deviation of 0.98. Further, 65 (45%) of ECDE teachers in pre-primary schools agreed that they were satisfied with promotion procedures used by the school administration. This was indicated by a mean of 2.28 and std. dev. of 1.15. Findings of Table 1.1 further show that majority of ECDE teachers 105 (75%) agreed that they were satisfied with schools’ rules and regulation. This was represented with a mean = 2.96 and standard deviation = 0.86. The findings were in line an excerpt from one



head teacher that *“Our school has strict rules to govern both teachers and learners. For instance, cases of teacher lateness are not allowed in our schools”* (head teacher, 15). The above mentioned findings are consistent with King’oo (2016) who agreed that most of the teachers were happy with school rules and regulation. On the contrary Mutune et. al. (2019) established that some schools had unfriendly school rules such as denying teacher social interaction with colleagues which resulted to job dissatisfaction.

The study also indicates that 92 (66%) of ECDE teachers were satisfied with the kind of disciplinary measures used by the school administration. This was shown by a mean score of 2.78 and std. dev. = 1.08. A comment from one of the head teachers from a private school was that; *“Our school has strict measures against teacher absenteeism. For instance, Kshs. 500 is deducted from monthly salary for teachers who are absent without genuine reason”* (head teacher, 9). Similar findings were also reported by Ingersoll et al. (2016) who noted that school policies which are too demanding led to teachers’ job satisfaction. Such may be the reason for the dissatisfaction of the 34% in the current study. The findings also show that 75 (53%) of ECDE teachers were satisfied with the accountability policies established in the school. This is reflected by a mean of 2.55 and standard deviation of 1.06.

On the other hand, higher levels of dissatisfaction were registered on the other three indicators: only 68 (49%) of ECDE teachers were satisfied with the complaint procedures established in the school as reflected by a mean of 2.42 and std. dev. = 1.11. One of the head teacher noted, *“We have a friendly working relationship with my teachers and they are also involved in decision making process in our school (head teacher, 12)”*. This was also supported by Brady and Wilson (2021) who noted that lack of personal autonomy and strict monitoring procedures result to job dissatisfaction.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 1.2, only 67 (48%) of ECDE teachers reported being satisfied with procedures for training and capacity building. This was equivalent to a mean of 2.48 and std. dev. = 1.13.

The hypothesis tested was:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between school policies and teachers’ job satisfaction.

The finding is presented in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Pearson correlations of school policy and teachers’ job satisfaction

Paired Variables	Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
School policy and teachers’ job satisfaction	.760**	.000	139

The results in Table 1.3 shows that there was a significant relatively high and positive relationship between school policies and teachers’ job satisfaction ($r = .760, p < 0.01$).

This study supports the assertion by Okatch (2022) that teachers’ job satisfaction is influenced by good reward package, prompt promotion, training opportunities, consultation and recognition. The current finding is also consistent with Odeny (2019) in Rangwe Sub-County, Kenya who established that there is a relationship between principals’ recognition practices, school working environment, supervision practices, promotion procedures and teachers’ job satisfaction. In summary, in order to promote quality education for early years, the Kenyan government should align ECDE policy framework with global standards. Additionally, to improve teacher retention and job satisfaction the County government should focus on the disciplinary measures instituted in preprimary schools to ensure they meet international standards. Complaint procedures should also be streamlined to allow teachers to channel their concerns in good time. An important area of focus is teacher training and capacity building, which registered the lowest satisfaction index among the seven policy concerns. This is likely due to the fact that Kenya is going through a curriculum change process to accommodate the new Competency Based Education tenets, thus requiring teachers to be trained and retooled on specific content and methodological issues.



Recommendations and further studies

The study is significant to the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) to offer more training through continuous training and mentorship program to school head teachers to improve school leadership thus promoting teacher morale, job satisfaction and instruction quality. Additionally, school administrators should apply this findings to inform their decision making on priority areas for their focus in policy planning. Further, the Kilifi County government should evaluate and review the existing policies as applied especially in private schools to comply with Kenya's ECDE policy guideline especially on promotion, improve career progression as well as well-being of pre-primary teachers. Moreover, the study recommends a further study to be conducted on school policies at other levels of learning to compare and contrast the study findings with current study. Finally, a similar study may also be conducted in other Counties in Kenya to provide comparative analysis across Counties.

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