**INFLUENCE OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT ON JOB SATISFACTION AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN NAKURU WEST**

**SUB COUNTY, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

Theoretically, Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theoryhypothesizesjob satisfactionto be influenced by a host of factors among them the work environment. The study, therefore, sought to determine the influence of work environment on job satisfaction among public secondary school teachersin Nakuru West Sub County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and targeted 326 teachers from 9 public secondary schools in the area. Using data collected throughpretested structured questionnaires from 150 randomly selected teachers, the study established that work environment (β = 0.476; p ≤ 0.05) significantly influencedjob satisfaction among school teachers implying that improvements in the work environment would necessarily raise their levels of job satisfaction. Therefore, the study recommends that the school management together with other stakeholders should do more to improve theworking conditionsand state of facilities and also provide adequate teaching and learning materials.

***Keywords:*** *Job satisfaction, work environment, working conditions, state of facilities*

**1. Introduction**

Recent studies on job satisfaction within the teaching profession suggest that there are several factors contributing to either satisfaction among this class of workers but these factors vary contextually, hence, cannot be generalized. For example, Halpert(2011) in a study in the US found that a significant proportion of teachers were still not satisfied with their jobs and this was attributed to school factors, such as; the volume of non-teaching workload, equitability in the distribution of work, and professional autonomy, were found to influence the job satisfaction of secondary school teachers significantly. In contrast, in the UK, a study by Killworth (2018)revealed that school employees in the UK are more committed to their schools than employees of other non-teaching organizations elsewhere in the economy. However, when the level of satisfaction was compared within the teaching in other Western and European countries, it was established that teachers in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Bulgaria, Canada (Alberta), Denmark, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Sweden, the USA, Brazil, Italy and Norway were much happier with their jobs than those in the UK (Schleicher, 2015).

In South Africa Iwu, Gwija, Benedict and Tengeh (2013) found that working conditions, job security, and perceived growth opportunities were contributing factors to secondary teachers’ job satisfaction. Okonkwo and Obineli (2011) in Nigeria argued that inspired workplace will result in inspired workers and draws attention tothe importance of work performance, the social relationships, quality, and style of buildings and offices. In Kenya, studies on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers have yielded mixed results making them inconclusive. For example, Omondi (2015) study on job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Mombasa County, Kenya established that teachers were satisfied with their overall performance on the job. However, Nzomo’s (2016) reported that examination of factors affecting job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Machakos County, Kenya revealed that the teachershad low levels of job satisfaction with most teachers.

Studies on job context factors in Nakuru County have not explicitly linked the problem with secondary teachers’ job satisfaction. For example, Mwangi (2012) study in the then Nakuru North District which focused mainly on secondary school teachers’ relationship with their principals. It can be deduced from the majority of studies reviewed above that that job satisfaction among secondary school teachers was still a challenge in several contexts globally. However, it is also evident from the studies that job context factors affecting teacher job satisfaction vary from context to context and, therefore, are not necessarily generalizable. It can be deduced from the majority of studies reviewed above that that job satisfaction among secondary school teachers was still a challenge in several contexts globally. However, it is also evident from the studies that jobcontext factors affecting teacher job satisfaction vary from context to context and, therefore, are not necessarily generalizable.

# **2. The Problem**

One of the most important issues dealt with in today’s schools is how to increase the quality of education and teachers’ job satisfaction plays a very important role in this regard (Ghavifekr& Pillai, 2016). Teachers job satisfaction reflect on their students and, therefore, efforts should be undertaken to ensure they derive maximum satisfaction with their occupations. However, in Kenya, despite significant redress of issues affecting teachers job satisfaction by multiple stakeholders, most teachers are unsettled in their work-stations while others are contemplating quitting the profession altogether for other promising careers. If the performance and teacher job change trends are taken into consideration, it would suggest that there is a deep-rooted systemic problem in the profession affecting job satisfaction among secondary school teachers (Ogonda, Orwa, Wambua&Muli, 2015). This is already reflecting on their performance in areas where teachers are least satisfied such as in Nakuru West Sub County. Further, going by the levels of teacher job change in the area, where a good number –a cumulative average of 16% between 2015 and 2018 -of teachers have been lost to other professions with majority 11.2% going to the County Governments (Nakuru County Education Office, 2019), it would lead to the conclusion that a growing number of teachers in the area are not satisfied with the teaching profession and career experiences as a whole. One of the theoretical factors linked with job satisfaction in Hertzberg’s Two Factor Theory is work environment. Working environment refers to conditions in and under which work is performed as regards the work environment and the time, place and organization of work (International Labour Organization, 2018; Clements, 2015). The work environment should create enabling workingconditions and promote employee performance andproductivity. The work environment in the school context can be measured on the basis of three constructs; working conditions; availability of teaching material, and; state of facilities. However, studies done,so far, in Nakuru County (for example, Mwangi, 2012; Kamunjeru et al., 2012) have not explicitly linked work environment with secondary teachers’ job satisfaction. Moreover, the uniqueness of job contextual factors such as work environment makes it difficult to generalize theoutcome of other similar studies to the area, since job satisfaction is not always caused by the same factors. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the influence of the work environment on job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County.

# **3. Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the study was toinvestigate the influence of the work environment on job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County.

# **4. Literature Review**

*4.1.1 Influence of working conditions on Job Satisfaction*

Working conditions play a very central role in influencing job satisfaction of any employee.In the teaching fraternity, issues about working conditions have been raised by several stakeholders. The nature of the geographical location of the school; the climatic conditions, the school’s relations with the local community, availabilityof well-equipped classrooms to facilitateteaching and learning, availability of a well-equipped library, proper housing and sanitary facilities, water and electricity, and security are matters of great concern to the teachers. Two recent studies conducted in the US by Boyd, Grossman, Hamp, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2008) and Shaw and Newton (2014) found that, in addition to salaries and benefits, favorable working conditions substantially influence teachers’ output. Working conditions are important predictors of New York City teachers’ decisions to change schools or leave the profession, even after accounting for differences in student demographic characteristics across schools. The studies further found strong evidence suggesting that working conditions and particularly the quality of a school’s leadership, are related to teachers’ stated career intentions.

Njije (2013) examined job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Nairobi County. The study revealed that the teachers were satisfied in the job factor of interpersonal relationships and the lowest level of job satisfaction was recorded in the job factor of the work environment and working conditions. The influence of working conditions on job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in large urban contexts such as Nakuru West Sub County has, however, had not been examined, therefore, necessitating the study.

*4.1.2 Influence of Availability of Teaching Material on Job Satisfaction*

Blaauw et al., (2013) observed that teacher satisfaction is affected in lower grades in South African schools due to lack of adequate textbooks. Teachers may be committed to doing their best to teach reading but their efforts may be rendered futile in situations where there is a lack of the most important resources necessary for teaching and learning. Okeke and Mtyuda (2017) in Nigeria allude to the fact that lack of resources is a cause of dissatisfaction in schools. It is often frustrating for teachers to work without basic resources that are required to ensure effective teaching and learning. Chimombe (2011) in Zambia asserted that physical resources enhance the conducive environment that promotes effective teaching and learning.

Yuma (2011) in Malawi linked performance in examinations with the state of teaching and learning resources in schools noting that students from poor backgrounds perform poorly in examinations because the schools they attend are often deprived of vital facilities. In Kenya, Matoke, Okibo, and Nyamongo (2015) explored the determinants of teacher motivation in public secondary schools in Masaba South Sub-County, Kenya. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant regression between environmental factors and teacher motivation in Masaba South Sub-County. Lumuli (2009) that provision of adequate teaching and learning resources at all levels including human resources enhance quality and relevance of imparting skills to learners confirms the findings of the study.However, in Nakuru County, not known how this contributes to job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Nakuru West Sub-County.

*4.1.3 Influence of State of Facilities on Teachers Job Satisfaction*

The provision of modern equipment and facilities, quality furniture, well-ventilated offices, well-spaced offices, secured, well-spaced staff quarters, among others is some of the conditions that are required for job satisfaction in an organization/institution. In another study, Karanja (2015) carried out a study on the influence of the learning environment of infrastructural projects on students’ academic performance in public schools in Mukuru slum. The study revealed that temporal learning facilities created an uncomfortable and uninviting workplace for teachers, the same also led to poor pupil concentration and hyperactivity, lethargy, or apathy, which created a stressful set of working conditions for teachers. The study established that teachers deployed in slum areas lacked sufficient learning materials and that they were faced with too much work, caused by the influx of students in the schools which resulted to stress and dissatisfaction in their work.

Mugambi (2014) conducted a study on teachers’ perceptions of how selected school factors affect learning in secondary schools in TharakaNithi County, Kenya. The findings revealed that the majority of the teachers felt that the classrooms were not attractive and friendly. Most of the classrooms were congested while and did not meet the hygienic threshold befitting the standards required in the secondary school learning environment. This implied that the indoor learning environment in most secondary schools was not simulative and conducive as it ought to be for students. However, similar studies on state of facilities in learning institutions have not been done on public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub County.

**4.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Motivation-Hygiene Theory; also known as the dual-factor theory, proposed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959. Herzberg, developed the theory that people’s job satisfaction depends on two kinds offactors; factors for satisfaction (motivators/satisfiers) and factors or dissatisfaction (hygiene factors/dissatisfies). Performance, recognition, job status, responsibility and opportunities for growth all fall under motivators/ satisfiers. Hygiene factors are about salary, secondary working conditions, the relationship with colleagues, physical workplace and the relationship between supervisor and employee. In his theory, Herzberg claims these factors function on the same plane (Muraina&Muraina, 2015). In other words, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not polar opposites. Taking away an employee’s dissatisfaction – for example by offering a higher salary – does not necessarily mean the employee will then be satisfied. The employee is just no longer dissatisfied (Herzberg, 1959).

One issue is the fact that humans tend to look at the aspects of their work that they like and project them onto themselves when things are going well. When times are bad, external factors seem to play a larger part.The Application of the Two-Factor Theory is definitely well established within organizational settings. In fact, every leader has the responsibility to ensure that their employee's hygiene factors are attended to and that proper motivators are implemented to increase job satisfaction. Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory provides a good starting point to investigate job contextual factors affecting employee job satisfaction such as those affecting teachers in secondary schools. There’s not much point in motivating secondary teachers if the hygiene factors aren’t taken care of. Motivating secondary teachers really work when the things that bother them – the things they complain about disappear.

# **5. Research Methodology**

*5.1**Research Design*

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was useful in obtaining both qualitative and quantitative data from the teachers regarding the subject at hand. The design is also useful when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Kombo &Tromp, 2006).

*5.2 Target Population*

The target population in academic research refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2013). The study targets 326 teachers in all the 9 public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub County.

*5.3 Sampling and Sampling Techniques*

The study employed the formula proposed by Nassiuma (2000) to calculate the required sample size from the target population of 326, thus;

Where n = sample size, N = population size, c = coefficient of variation (≤ 30%), and e = error margin (≤ 3 %). This formula enables the researchers to minimize the error and enhance stability of the estimates (Nassiuma, 2000). Substituting into the formula:



Thus, a sample size of 150 respondents obtained from the above formula. Since the number of teachers is high, systematic random samplingwas used to select teachers for the study. The use of both sampling methods was intended to make thesample representative enough of the entire population under study while also introducing the element of randomness.

*5.4 Instrumentation*

In this study, the researcher made use of the questionnaire to collect primary data and from both the teachers and principals. Questionnaire method is the most commonly used in survey studies and was preferred in this study because it is an efficient way of generating large amounts of data, of reaching a wide population and is also easy to administer (Kombo &Tromp, 2006).

*5.5 Pilot Test, Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments*

Piloting was done in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County before the actual collection of data. The results of the pilot studyassisted the researcher in evaluating the precision of the questionnaire items to improve the quality of the data collection instrument.

Content validity was also used in this study for the purposes of determining whether the instrument really measures what it is designed to measure (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).Hence, the instruments were given to the researcher’s supervisors at Kabarak Universityto evaluate them for content validity. The recommendations from the researcher’s supervisors helped in the restructuring of the instruments by incorporating the missing information, omitting irrelevant questions and paraphrasing questions that appear ambiguous to the respondents.

For validity, the internal consistency approach was used to determine the reliability of the instruments. The Cronbach’s coefficient Alpha was applied to the results obtained from the pilot test to determine how items correlate among them in the same instrument.A reliability coefficient of coefficient ἁ= 0.875was yielded and was greater than the recommended threshold ἁ ≥ 0.70 (Bhattacherjee, 2012) and was, therefore, adopted for the study.

*5.6 Data Analysis Techniques and Presentations*

Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive analysis was done using means and standard deviations to describe the basic characteristics of the population. Inferential statistics involved the use of Pearson’s Product Moment correlation and linear regression model to determine the nature of the relationship between the variables with the linear regression model assumed to hold under the equation;



Where;

*y* = Job Satisfaction among Secondary School Teachers

*b0* = Model Constant

x1 = Work Environment

*b1*, the coefficients of the variable to be determined by the model

*e* = the estimated error with zero mean and a constant variance

1. **Results**

# *6.1 Introduction*

This chapter presents the data analysis results and discussions. Table 1 shows the response rates.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No. of questionnaires Issued** | **No. of questionnaires Returned** | **Response Rate (%)** |
| 150 | 110 | 73 |

The high questionnaire response rate (73%) shown in Table 4.1 resulted from the method of administration of the instrument, which was in this case self-administered. This was acceptable according to Moser and Kalton (2017). This method also ensured that the respondents’ queries concerning clarity were addressed at the point of data collection; however, caution was exercised so as not to introduce bias in the process. The other questionnaires were not returned by the respondents, hence, they were not included in the study.

*6.2 Percentagesand Mean Statistics on Perception of the Work Environment*

Questionnaire items on the work environment were selected and their percentage scorescomputed and the means and standard deviations determined. This provided the basic trends of the data from which the reactions could be analyzed. The findings are presented in Table 2.

### **Table 2: Work Environment on Job Satisfaction**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **SD** | **D** | **A** | **SA** | **Mean** | **St.** |
| **Statement** | **%** | **%** | **%** | **%** |  | **Dev** |
| The class room have chairs for teachers | 15.5 | 53.6 | 26.4 | 4.5 | 2.20 | 0.752 |
| The classroom have tables for teachers | 3.6 | 87.3 | 7.3 | 1.8 | 2.07 | 0.422 |
| The classroom are well ventilated | 1.8 | 63.6 | 30.9 | 3.6 | 2.36 | 0.586 |
| There is adequate lighting | 7.3 | 58.2 | 31.8 | 2.7 | 2.30 | 0.643 |
| Classrooms are overcrowded | 1.8 | 15.5 | 75.5 | 7.3 | 1.41 | 0.849 |
| Teachers have ample office space | 2.7 | 3.6 | 40 | 53.6 | 1.70 | 0.698 |
| We have adequate toilet facilities in our school | 7.3 | 87.3 | 3.6 | 1.8 | 2.00 | 0.428 |
| We have safe drinking water for teachers | 8.2 | 83.6 | 7.3 | 1.0 | 2.01 | 0.439 |
| The school provides meals for teachers | 7.3 | 61.8 | 26.4 | 4.5 | 2.28 | 0.665 |
| There is adequate internet connectivity for teachers | 84.5 | 7.3 | 5.5 | 2.7 | 1.26 | 0.686 |
| There are adequate reference materials for teachers | 65.5 | 27.3 | 5.5 | 1.8 | 1.44 | 0.684 |
| **Aggregate** | |  |  |  | **1.912** | **0.623** |

The results in Table 2 indicate that the classrooms did not have chairs for teachers as indicated by majority 53.6%) who disagreed. Majority (87.3%) of the respondents also disagreed that their classroom had tables for teachers. This shows that the schools were under-furnished for teaching and learning and could be a reason behind the lack of job satisfaction among the teachers. Indeed, the findings agree with Ntumi (2016) who found that teaching and learning in schools are hampered by lack of tables and chairs in the classrooms and this was a cause of lack of job satisfaction. The findings also indicate that the classrooms were not well ventilated as indicated by most respondents who disagreed (63.6%). Most schools’classrooms also lacked adequate lighting as indicated by most teachers who disagreed (58.2%). This was likely to affect the job satisfaction of teachers as ventilating and lighting the classrooms was important to teacher job satisfaction as they are the primary workstations of the teachers.

According to astudy by Okonkwo and Obineli (2016), conditions such as suitable temperature, humidity, ventilation, lighting, cleanliness of the workplace and adequate tools and equipment are important in job satisfaction. Good working conditionsprovide greater physical comfort for teachersand boost their morale. While very poor conditions breed frustration and regret and consequently a highsense of dissatisfaction. This is because a workplace environment with essential facilities is a prelude to job satisfaction among workers. Environment conditions enhance working. Most teachers agreed (75.5%) that their classrooms were overcrowded. The overcrowding of classrooms could necessarily lead to dissatisfaction among teachers as pointed out by Khan and Iqbal (2014) who found in their study that one of the major constraints that affect teacher job satisfaction was overcrowding in classrooms. Further, most programmes of instruction and pupil service require adequate physicalfacilities including school buildings, grounds, and equipment. Mugambi’s (2014) study in TharakaNithi County, Kenya had also revealed that the majority of the teachers felt that the classrooms were not attractive and friendly. Most of the classrooms werecongested while and did not meet the hygienic threshold befitting the standards required in the secondary school learning environment.

The findings also indicate that the teachers did not have ample office space as indicated by most of the respondents who disagreed (53.6%). This could affect the level of job satisfaction of the teachers as indicated by Shonje, (2016) who linked low level of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Tanzania to among other things a shortage of office space and chairs. Further, most of the teachers also disagreed (87.3%) that their schools had adequate toilet facilities while 83.6% also disagreed that their schools had safe drinking water for teachers. Most of the schools in the area also did not provide meals forteachers as indicated by majority (61.8%) of the teachers who disagreed. This could also affect their levels of job satisfaction as indicated by kelvin (2016) whose study revealed that provision of free/subsidized meals and refreshments contributed to teacher job satisfaction. Most schools did not have adequate internet connectivity for teachers as indicated by most teachers who disagreed (84.5%) and also lacked adequate reference materials for teachers (65.5%). Currently, the internet is a very important teaching and learning resource as it enables both the teacher and learner to access important reference material which is not easy to obtain locally and as such the availability of the internet can enrich learning. Therefore, lack of internet or inadequatesupply of internet could potentially lead to loss of job satisfaction among teacher in this digital world.

Further, as learning is a continuous process, adequate reference material in hard copy is equally important. Tayyar (2014) observed that teacher satisfaction is affected in lower grades in South African schools due to lack of adequate textbooks. Teachers may be committed to doing their best to teach reading but their efforts may be rendered futile in situations where there is a lack of the most important resources necessary for teaching and learning. Further, the overall work environment index determined by aggregate mean (m = 1.912) and standard deviation (SD = .623) observed suggests that there was general disagreement with the statements describing the working environments in the schools. These are indications that the configurations of the working environment in the public secondary schools especially in terms of the state of physical infrastructure and teaching and learning material as well as water and sanitation were unsatisfactory. Chimombe (2015) in Zambia had asserted that physical resources enhance the conducive environment that promotes effective teaching and learning while Tayyar (2014) established that inadequate teaching materials and housing were critical dissatisfies among teachers. Situations in which teachers have to perform their professional duties with little or no resources can be very demanding indeed and eventually impact their job satisfaction negatively.

*6.3 Regression of Work Environment on Job Satisfaction among Teachers*

Bivariate regression analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a significant relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction among Teachers. The results were then used to test the corresponding hypothesis stated for the study. The decision rule was to accept the hypotheses if the corresponding p-values was greater than p ˃ 0.05. The findings are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Regression of Work Environment on Job Satisfaction among Teachers**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|  | B | Std. Error | Beta |  |  |
| (Constant) | 6.375 | 2.568 |  | 2.482 | 0.015 |
| Work Environment | 0.505 | 0.12 | 0.476 | 4.191 | 0.000 |
| R | 0.476 | F | 17.562 |  |  |
| R Square | 0.227 | Df | (1,107) |  |  |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.206 | Sig. | 0.000 |  |  |
| a Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction | | | | | |
| b Predictors: (Constant), Work Environment | | | | | |

Table 3 shows that the model Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient is R = 0.476 and the model adjusted R-square, R2is 0.206 which suggests that the model with the schools’ Work Environment as the independent variable could explain up to 20.6% of the variations in the dependent variable, that is, job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Nakuru West Sub County. The rest of the variations could be explained by the variables not fitted in the model. Moreover, the model’s F-statistic is 17.562 with p = 0.000 ≤ p = 0.05 with 1,107 degrees of freedom, which further confirms that the explanatory variable, Work Environment, is significant in explaining variations in the dependent variable. In addition, the findings on the model coefficients suggest that Work Environment had a significant, positive and moderate relationship with job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Nakuru West Sub County (β =0.476; p ≤ 0.05).

This finding implies that a unit increase in Work Environment will necessarily translate to a + 0.476 increase in standard deviations in variations of job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Nakuru West Sub County. These findings are consistent with those of Boyd et al., (2006) as well as Shawand Newton (2014) in the US which that found that working conditions substantially influence teachers’ output and are important predictors of New York City teachers’ decisions to change schools or leave the profession. They also agree with Okonkwo and Obineli (2016) who found that many teachers in public schools lack job satisfaction resulting from the poor condition of the environment of their workplace. Okeke and Mtyuda (2017) also found that lack of resources is a cause of dissatisfaction in schools. It is often frustrating for teachers to work without basic resources that are required to ensure effective teaching and learning.

1. **Recommendations**

The findings revealed that the state of the schools’ work environment was not satisfactory, however, improvements on this could significantly raise the levels of teacher job satisfaction. Therefore, the study recommends with respect to policy that the Ministry of Education should make minimum policies on the level of school infrastructure required for public secondary schools and also make provisions for upgrading existing school infrastructure.

**8. Conclusions**

The study established that classrooms in secondary schools in the area were not well ventilated and that most of the schools did not have adequate toilet facilities nor safe drinking water for teachers. Most schools also lacked ample office space for teachers and also claimed that the classrooms were overcrowded. Most of the schools in the area did not provide meals for teachers and did not have adequate lighting and internet connectivity for teachers. They also lacked adequate reference materials for teachers. Therefore, based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that work environment significantly influencedsatisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Nakuru West Sub County, Kenya. The positive and moderate relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction observed implied that improving the work environment in the schools would lead to improvements in teachers’ job satisfaction.

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