

An Inquiry into Job Satisfaction Habits among Private Secondary School Teachers in Kenya

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Abstract

Despite the rapid growth in the number of private secondary schools, there seems to be lack of job satisfaction among teachers in these schools. What factors therefore influence job satisfaction among teachers in private secondary schools? The issue of job satisfaction is therefore prevalent among private secondary school teachers and is a major challenge not only for the teachers themselves but also for the sponsors and managers of these schools. This is evident in the high turnover of teachers, low morale when performing their teaching duties, and lack of commitment in the tasks and responsibilities given. Mudanyi in Ngamau et al (2006) in a special report on private secondary school asserts that, "Nomad teachers who jump from one school to another, are a destabilizing factor." The researcher's concern is to identify factors that affect teacher motivation in private schools. Unfortunately what is known about private schools is their overall performance in National examination. Not much has been done in way of research in relation to the factors that influence job satisfaction. A crucial gap therefore exists about what motivates or demotivates the teachers in private secondary schools in Kenya.

Keywords: Teachers, Education, Job Satisfaction, Work

1. Introduction

Since independence the demand for access to secondary education has been on the increase. This has been prompted by the high enrollment of primary school going children and the desire to improve job opportunities, which, only come with a level of education. In 1963 when Kenya attained her political independence, the private schools that existed were only meant for the European children. However, there were some few private schools for Africans. At that time, high demand for secondary education and expansion of the existing secondary schools was recommended by the Kenya education commission (1968) and this led to the formation of private schools. The education Act (1968) provided for the opening of privately owned schools which were going to be instrumental in complementing the government's effort in accessing secondary education. The Act also emphasized that it did not imply that private schools would be operating in a vacuum but would operate as a result of having been certified by the Ministry of Education. The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (1976) likewise emphasized on the need for private schools. The report noted that private schools were on demand because the government and harambee schools were not enough to provide secondary education compared to those who sat for Certificate of Primary education every year. It's after these commissions' recommendations that so many privately owned schools were started.

By the 1980s private school mushroomed and people became worried whether these private schools were geared towards achieving the National objectives. In response, the government published criteria to be used by the Inspectorate Department in the Ministry of Education to determine whether existing private schools were operating in line with National objectives. Findings of the Inspectorate Department revealed that many of the teachers in these schools were not registered with the Teachers Service Commission while some of the private schools existed without being registered; as a result many schools were closed. Similarly in the mid 1980s, public schools underwent fundamental changes with the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education. Public opposition to vocational education advanced by 8-4-4 provided a good opportunity for educationists and entrepreneurs to set up what has now become a huge sector in the education

field.

Entrepreneurs also took advantage of the prevailing working conditions for teachers. The Kenya Education Commission (1964) had drawn attention to the need to have teachers salary scales adjusted in relation to other kinds of government employment in relevant cases. The commission had also noted the low morale of teachers due to poor salaries and lack of promotion opportunities. Private stakeholders in the education sector picked up this observation on the plight of teachers, due to poor working conditions.

The Daily Nation (1984) highlights the value of the teacher as a facilitator and agent of change in the society but at a price. It states that for teachers to mould pupils into good future leaders, their working and living condition must be good. It is evident that teachers in several privately owned schools were performing far much better than their counterparts in public schools. In a related article Munene (2003) notes that private school teachers had better terms and were well remunerated. He lamented that teachers could not dedicate themselves to duty if they were poorly paid. In relation to the exodus of teachers from public school, Munene (2003) observes that poor school facilities, insufficient operational funds and lack of morale among teachers created an exodus to private schools.

Ngini (2005), states, 'Private schools insist on recruiting the best of the trained staff. Owners of these institutions are also keen on investing a lot into their work. Since they get the best teachers, they also pay them better than the public service can afford to, which translates into highly motivated staff who value their work.' However, another issue was also cropping up in private schools in spite of assumed better pay: the high turn over of teachers. When asked to respond to the opinion that jobs in private are unstable and that staff are fired at will, Ngini (2005) remarks that expectations in these institutions were high especially from parents and other stakeholders. This therefore, meant continuous monitoring of performance and it is the prerogative of the owners of private school to terminate their services. Ngini (2005) also confirmed that staff turn over was high in most private schools especially after examinations particularly when results were poor.

Ngamau et al (2006) in a special report on private schools asserts that many parents take their children to private school because they have better, well trained and enough teachers among other reasons. However, in the same article Muthima, (Director of Nyahururu Highway school) states that recruitment of teachers is becoming a problem in many private secondary schools. He says that retaining teachers has become a major challenge unlike the 1990s when teachers would easily be lured from public service. He notes that the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) remuneration has become competitive especially since the 150 – 200 per cent deal, which is being implemented. Other allowances like house; medical and hardship have raised the teachers' pay cheques in public schools.

Contrary to the common perception, teachers have now become a problem in private schools. Mundanyi in Ngamau et al (2006) notes that, there are more nomad teachers, who jump from one school to another, and are therefore, a destabilizing factor. Recently, the private secondary schools have witnessed rapid growth in the recruitment of teachers in large numbers. Nevertheless, the greatest challenge is retaining these teachers in the same private school for a long time. Most of the teachers as Mudanyi in Ngamau et al (2006) observes, have become nomads as they move from one school to the other. This is a clear indication that there are certain issues that need to be addressed in the private schools – specifically those that relate to job satisfaction.

2. Conceptualizing Satisfaction Habits

This paper is founded on Cognitive theories of motivation which are usually divided into two contrasting approaches: Content theories and Process theories. The content theories – under which Herzberg's two factor theory falls- are concerned with identifying what is within an individual or the work environment that energizes and sustains behaviour. According to Mc Graw- Hill (1970) the underlying question is what specific things motivate people? Process theories- under which Expectancy Theory falls, attempts to define the major variables necessary for explaining choice.

2.1 Hertzberg's Two - Factor Theory

Hertzberg's Two-Factor Theory is sometimes called the Motivator – Hygiene Theory. The Theory is based on a study of need satisfactions and on the reported motivational effects of these satisfactions. The theory states that some conditions of a job operate primarily to dissatisfy employees when they are not present. However, the presences of these conditions do not build strong motivation. Herzberg called these hygiene factors (dissatisfiers), since they are necessary to maintain a reasonable level of satisfaction. He also noted that many of these have often been perceived as factors that can motivate but that they are in fact, more potent as dissatisfiers when they are absent.

3. Job satisfaction: A Conceptualization

The activities of an organization can only be achieved through the combined efforts of its members. The relationship between the organization and its members is governed by what motivates them to work and the satisfaction they derive from it. It is in view of this that various people have defined job satisfaction differently.

Okumbe (1998) defines satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or experience. Locke (1976) defines it as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the perceptions of one's job as fulfilling or as allowing the fulfillment of ones important job values, provided these are compatible with ones needs."

Herzberg et al (1959) observed that work is one of the most absorbing things man can think of and talk about the future; "it is a source of great satisfaction for many ; others it is the cause of grief." Smith and Hulin (1967), define job satisfaction as the feelings a worker has about his job. On the other hand, Vroom and Deci (1970) defined it as a person's "affective reaction to his total work rule."

The above definitions share key elements such as, positive emotional state, fulfillment, excitement and a certain positive feeling about the job. We can therefore deduce and say that job satisfaction is that gratification or fulfillment that one gets from the job that he is undertaking.

4. Theorizing Motivation

The study of motivation is concerned basically with why people behave in a certain way. In general motivation can be described as the direction and persistence of action. Mullins (1985) asserts that understanding the concept of motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goals in order to satisfy some need or expectation. Mitchell (1980) defines motivation as "the degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain specified behaviors." He believes that people's behavior is determined by what motivates them. Their performance is a product of both ability and motivation.

Sartain and Baker (1978) have defined motivation as "a state of mind that induces subordinates to want to do what superiors want them to do." It is important to know that motivation is not commanding. It is a way of inducing teachers and students so as to release their maximum potential. If subordinates cannot be induced to aspire to perform tasks designed to them on their own volition, then out of fear, they will only perform their duties because they have to keep their jobs-rather than suffer the consequences.

5. Job Satisfaction and the Quality of Work Life

Satisfied employees tend to file fewer grievances, live longer, exhibit better mental and physical health, learn new job tasks more quickly and have fewer job accidents. Stears (1984) noted that: job satisfaction brings with it a variety of positive consequences both from an individual and organizational stand point. It influences how an employee feels about the organization and contributes to the desire to maintain membership in it. It spills over to affect an employee's home life and general outlook towards living. Moreover, job satisfaction significantly influences how people approach their jobs, their levels of effort and commitment and their contributions to organizational effectiveness.

Bateman and Zeithaml (1990) observe that if the employee feels equitably treated as he receives outcomes from his work, then he will be satisfied. Such people are more likely to remain with the company while the dissatisfied people more likely to quit. Bateman and Zeithamn (1990) also notes that a dissatisfied work force is more likely to exhibit high turn over; high absenteeism; lower corporate citizenship, more grievances and lawsuits; strikes, stealing, sabotage and vandalism; lower mental and physical health – which can mean higher job stress and more lawsuits – and greater dissatisfaction in general. All of these consequences of dissatisfaction are costly to organizations. This therefore spells out the need to have a satisfied workforce, be it in schools, hospitals, or in the industry.

Odden and Carolyn (1997) address the general issue of teacher motivation and how work conditions as well as salary structures in general and performance incentives are related to teacher motivation. The authors begin with the broader understandings of motivation to teachers in schools and to potential new ways of structuring compensation that reinforce other elements that motivate them. People have needs that energize and motivate them. Employees are motivated to behave in ways that will satisfy these needs. The extent to which and the ways in which their needs can be met in the work environment will therefore affect their behavior on the job. For the organization and its employees to have the incentive to achieve high performance, managers must therefore identify factors that motivate employees and build

on these factors into the work environment.

The theoretical and empirical research on motivation will serve as a framework for considering the work condition, pay and performance awards that can affect teacher motivation in schools. Various theories approach the issue of motivation from different angles, and combined, offer a more comprehensive understanding of how and why workers are motivated to higher performance and contexts in which various compensation programs work. Each theory supports motions of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

6. Motivation, Job satisfaction and Performance

In view of the various theoretical approaches presented and their implication to teachers in schools, it is important to relate motivation, job satisfaction and performance. We need to observe that motivation to work well is usually related to job satisfaction; but the nature of the relationship is not clear. One view is that the motivation for a person to achieve high level of job satisfaction may well affect the strength of motivation; this is not always the case. Satisfaction is not the same as motivation. Job satisfaction is more of an attitude, an internal state. It could for example be associated with a personal feeling of achievement either quantitative or qualitative. Motivation is only a process, which may lead to job satisfaction. We need also to observe that a wide range of variables relating to social, cultural, organizational and environmental factors affects the level of job satisfaction. These different factors all affect job satisfaction of certain individuals in a given set of circumstances but not necessarily in other. The various studies of job satisfaction all therefore have some validity.

6.1 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory cannot be linked to a single individual writer. There are a number of different versions and some of the models are rather complex. More recent approaches to Expectancy theory have been associated with the work of Vroom, Porter and Lawler. But for the purpose of this study, the researcher has used Vroom's Expectancy Theory. The Expectancy theory states that an individual will be motivated to exert effort to achieve higher if he or she expects to be rewarded adequately.

Vroom (1964) views motivation as a process governing choices and suggests that individuals are motivated at work to make choices among different behaviors for example intensities of work effort. A person may choose to work at a moderate rate or an accelerated rate. The individual makes the choice. If a person believes that his or her work effort will be adequately rewarded, there will be motivated effort: a choice will be made to work so that a preferred reward is received. The logic of expectancy motivation is that individuals exert work effort to achieve performance that results in preferred rewards. Three primary variables in the expectancy theory of motivation are expectancy; instrumentality and valence.

The first belief, which is expectancy, is the employee's perceived likelihood or probability that his efforts will enable him to successfully attain his performance goals. Expectancy can be high (almost 100 percent), as when a student is confident that if she studies hard she can score a high grade or, expectancy can be low (a near 0 percent likelihood) as when a student who does not work knows she will fail.

All else equal, high expectancies create higher motivation than low expectancies and can vary among individuals, even in the same situation. Vroom (1964) gives the example of a sales manager who might initiate a competition in which the top sales person wins a free trip. In such cases, the few top people, who have performed well in the past, will often be more motivated by the contest than all the historically average and below average performers. The top people will have higher expectancies – stronger beliefs that their efforts can help them in the top performance.

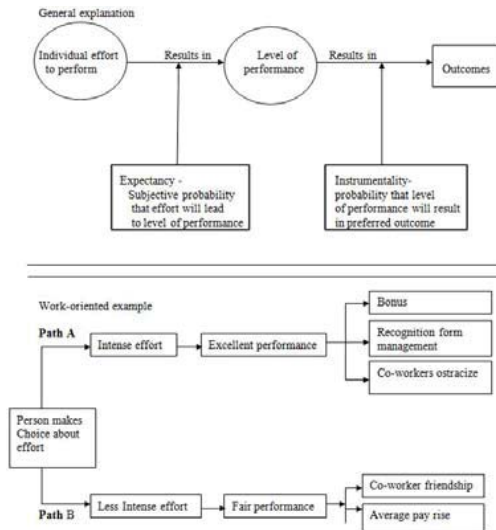
The feeling about specific outcome is termed as valence, which is another key belief addressed in Expectancy Theory. This is the attractiveness of, or preference for a particular outcome to the individual. Positive valence is where the person prefers achieving the outcome to not achieving it. Negative valence is where there is preference for avoiding the outcome. Where the person is indifferent to achieving the outcome, there is zero valence. Alternatively a person may strive to avoid an object but finds subsequently that it provides satisfaction. Valence is therefore the anticipated satisfaction from an outcome.

Vroom (1964), notes that Valence of certain outcomes may be desired in their own right, but more usually they are desired from the other outcomes to which they are expected to lead. e.g money. Some people may see money as having an intrinsic worth and desire satisfaction from the actual accumulation of wealth. Most people, however, see money in terms of the many satisfying outcomes to which it can lead. Vroom (1964) suggests that many acquire valence as a consequence of their expected relationships to ends. The valence of outcomes derives, therefore, from their

instrumentality. Instrumentality is therefore the perceived likelihood that performance will be followed by a particular outcome.

On the basis of Vroom's expectancy theory it is possible to depict a general model of behavior as shown in Figure 4 in the next page.

Figure 4: Example of the expectancy theory and how the theory works in a job situation Vroom (1964).



Source: Donnelly et al (1992)

Vroom (1964) observes that the combination of valence and expectancy determines the person's motivation for a given form of behavior. This is the motivational force. Motivational force is calculated by multiplying the valence of each outcome by the instrumentality of performance toward achieving the outcome, and then summing those products across all outcomes then, this value are multiplied by the expectancy. Hence,

$$\text{Motivational force} = \text{Expectancy} \times \text{Sum of (Instrumentalities} \times \text{valences)}$$

For motivation to be high, expectancy, instrumentalities, and the valences of outcomes must all be high. If any of them are low, a person will be highly motivated if any of the following conditions exists:

1. He is not confident he can perform well enough to achieve the positive outcomes (for example, a pay rise) that he knows the company provides to good performers (low expectancy, high valence, and high instrumentality).
2. He knows he can do the Job. He is fairly certain what the ultimate outcomes will be (a promotion and transfer). However, he either doesn't want those outcomes or believes the negative outcomes outweigh the positive (high expectancy, high instrumentality, low valence).
3. He knows he can do the job. He wants several important outcomes (a good performance review, a raise, and a promotion). But he believes no matter how well he performs, the outcomes will not be forthcoming (high expectancy, positive valence, low instrumentality).

7. Motivation and School Management

7.1 Expectancy Theory in Management

Managers can influence expectancies by selecting (hiring) individuals with particular skills and abilities, training people to improve their skills and abilities, and providing individuals with the leadership support to achieve a particular level of performance. The manager can also influence instrumentalities by being supportive, realistic and offering advice. The manager can influence preferences by listening to employees needs, as well as guiding employees to help them accomplish desired outcomes, and providing proper resources to achieve the desired performance.

Donnally et al (1992) and Bateman and Zeithmal (1990), state that managers too must understand the vital role of perception in motivation. A person's expectancy, instrumentalities and valences depend on his or her perceptions. The importance of perception differences among workers with similar skills levels is made obvious by the expectancy theory. Donnally et al (1992) and Bateman and Zeithmal (1990) observe that different levels of motivation among people with similar skills could be explained in perceptual differences.

7.2 Expectancy Theory applied to Teachers

McLaughlin and Lee (1990) in Odde and Carolyn (1997) states that two major factors: helping achieve and collaborating with colleagues on teaching and learning issues primarily motivate teachers. Collaboration helps teachers develop a set of effective instructional strategies that when deployed positively affects student achievement. When these connections occur, teachers develop a sense of professional efficiency, or confidence, that students in their classroom will learn; over time, this motivates teachers to higher performance.

Odde and Craolyn (1997) quotes Rosenholtz's (1989) who asserts that the study of effective schools aligns with expectancy theory. Teachers in what he referred to as 'moving schools' had specific, measurable, and attainable goals for student achievement. All resources too were provided to help reach the goals. As a result, teachers in moving schools had and believed they had the capacity to produce student outcomes and actually did so. As the expectancy theory would predict, they were thus motivated to help the school organization succeed in its mission.

7.3 Herzberg's Two Factor Theory applied to teachers

In view of Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene theory (1959), teachers are likely to get job satisfaction as a result of good performance. KCSE results for example are a likely source of job satisfaction for a teacher who has been handling a candidate class and whose performance leads to job satisfaction rather than the reverse. We need also to observe that a given factor may be the cause of job satisfaction for one teacher but dissatisfaction for another teacher or vice versa. A school system that provides for teachers to move from one level of the hierarchy to another is a sure way of strengthening the satisfiers. Similarly, if the employer makes it possible for the teachers to attain professional growth and advancement, then the satisfier will be enhanced. The teacher's advancement will therefore be based on the knowledge that it will be preeminent if there is no proper school policy and the system of administration is poor. Salary can be a major dissatisfier for another teacher particularly when he feels that he is worth a certain level of compensation for his input and qualification. If the expected salary is lacking then naturally the teacher may feel as if he is not adequately compensated and is not getting value for his worth and salary now becomes a dissatisfier.

It is worth noting that whatever the validity of Herzberg's theory, his work has drawn attention to the importance of job design in order to bring about job enrichment something that most teachers are looking for. Herzberg (1959) has emphasized the importance of the quality of work life. Mullins (1985) advocates the recruiting of jobs to give greater emphasis to motivating factors at work, to make jobs more interesting and to satisfy higher levels. His belief is that job enrichment should give people the opportunity to use their talents and abilities, and to exercise more self-control of the job.

7.4 Factors leading to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction among teachers

Rosenholtz's (1989) study of effective school in Tennessee identified effective schools (moving school's) as those that had clear specific and measurable goals for student achievement. Teachers shared these school goals and were committed to accomplishing them. These schools were also characterised by a high degree of teacher collaboration. The teachers too believed that their own professional learning was an ongoing never ending process. Success in producing student achievement not only was an ongoing motivator for teachers in these schools but also helped them develop sense of professional efficacy; they were confident of succeeding when they entered their classroom. In 'moving schools', the entire organization worked together to enhance student welfare and learning. Superintendent, principals and teachers all saw their work as interdependent.

In 'stuck' schools or ineffective schools there were no clear goals; teachers did not receive support from superintendent and principals for their professional development efforts. Teachers felt isolated from each other and found little time for collaboration. Teachers in such schools were uncomfortable with others watching over and evaluating their

work. Rosenholts (1989) found that the goals for teachers in 'stuck schools' often had little to do with students learning; teachers simply wanted to get through each day's work.

McLaughlin and Lee (1990) in Odden and Carolyn (1997) interviewed 85 teachers from 5 District and the findings were that all teachers reported a desire to remain in teaching rather than to move into administrative position; advancement for these teachers meant the chance to continue to grow in professional skills particularly through collegial interaction. Shedd and Bacharah (1991) reported that teachers who worked in coordinated and cooperative teams were more motivated at work and were more successful in achieving education outcomes i.e. higher students' achievement. He observes that teachers want to work in and are more highly motivated by an atmosphere that promotes professional collaboration.

Halliday (1989) notes that it is only when adequate and prompt remuneration for teachers is made; provision of opportunities for professional development and career progression as well as access to administrators with the power and the ability to handle urgent personal problem and frustrations are attended to that one can avoid such problems as teachers absenteeism, poor lesson preparation, apathy and general frustration. Participant in a conference in Harare Zimbabwe under the commonwealth secretariat and UNESCO in 1995 identified various factors as affecting teachers' morale and motivation. These included:

- The organization of the administration.
- The quality of school facilities and the working environment.
- Levels of teacher's management and support.
- The head teachers' role and leadership style.
- Pupil management

7.5 Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction among teachers in private secondary schools in Kenya

Ndung'u (2003) in an unpublished thesis; a study on factors that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in public schools recommends that every attempt should be made to eliminate job dissatisfaction since teachers impact greatly in the study of the education system. She suggested that similar studies should be concluded among teachers in other parts of Kenya where none have been conducted before as well as among teachers in private schools. Results obtained would be compared and used to help improve on the various factors that impact on satisfaction among teachers.

Most studies conducted on job satisfaction and dissatisfaction among teachers in Kenya have been based on public schools. Macharia (1984) for instance has done a study of job satisfaction among school teachers in Nairobi. Kamau (1999) on the other hand has done a study based on Teacher Training Institutes. Mureithi's (2007) study is on motivation of head teachers in public secondary schools in Embu District. The findings of the different researchers bear a lot of similarities with the most commonly cited factors being salaries, promotion prospects, and conditions at the work place and professional image. Naomy (2003) recommended that research be conducted in private schools to find out whether the factors that cause job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are the same for teachers in public and private schools.

The theoretical and empirical research on motivation can serve as a framework for considering the work conditions, pay and performance award that can affect teacher motivation in school. Theories of motivation identify several variables including compensation structure that motivate workers to high or improved performance. Employees rely on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to maintain job satisfaction. Mullins (1985) observes that effective intrinsic motivators include clear goals and expectations opportunities for professional development, job enlargement and involvement, and achieving efficiency through attainment of reasonable performance targets. Extrinsic variables, including salary structure and performance incentives, can also motivate higher work performance e.g. reward programmes, dinners, trips can make employees feel more valued by the organization. Lawler (1973) on the other hand states that these awards can have the advantage of immediately linking performance to an award.

8. Conclusion

From the literature reviewed in this paper, it is apparent that the extent of achieving motivation varies between individuals. Some people think about achievement a lot more than others and rate very high in achievement motivation. As such they are challenged by opportunities and work hard to achieve a goal. For such people with a high achievement motivation, money may serve as a means of giving feedback on performance. They seem unlikely to remain long with an organization that does not pay them well for good performance. If the high rate of turn over of teachers in private secondary schools has to be curbed, then the managers of these schools have to deal with the factors affecting job

satisfaction. It is important that teachers are highly motivated and the major motivators which are apparently salary and staff benefits be addressed. Teachers' efforts need to be rewarded; as a matter of fact some teachers are highly qualified while yet more continue to further their education. There is need therefore to match their salaries with their qualifications and experiences. Of importance too is the issue of job security. There is need therefore to stipulate this in the appointment letters as they become the basis of their contract. Finally, job satisfaction brings with it a variety of positive consequences both from an individual and organizational standpoint. It influences how an employee feels about the organization and contributes the desire to maintain membership in it.

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