

Satisfaction level of the working environment among teachers on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Kakamega County

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Abstract: Teachers' satisfaction level in education is key to service delivery. The focus of this study was to assess the satisfaction level of the working environment among teachers on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. Education Production Function Theory (EPFT), Theory of Constraint (TOC) and Social Exchange Theory (SET) were found to be relevant for the study. The target population was 268 public secondary Schools, 1500 teachers, 268 principals and one (1) County staffing officer. The sample size of 30% of the population was deemed to be adequate for the study. The sampling techniques used were; simple random sampling, stratified sampling and systematic sampling. Data collection procedures were done with the help of administering questionnaires to respondents, document analysis and interview schedules were the major principal instruments used. Validity of research instruments was done with the help of two university research supervisors from Kisii University. Reliability of index 0.7 for teachers and 0.89 for principals was obtained using test retest approach. Data presentation was done with the help of tables, graphs and pie charts. Mixed research method was used. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used for data analysis. Findings showed that all teacher respondents (100%) were in agreement that teachers' working environment was critical in determining the level of effort put in by the teachers in their duties.. It was concluded that majority of teachers (over 79%) were satisfied with the working environment. The study recommended that since majority of teachers were satisfied with the working environment, there was a with need to ensure that teacher stability is not interfered through uncalled for transfers as such move are likely to interfere with their level of commitment of teachers towards students' academic achievement. The study was undertaken by ensuring that ethical considerations for research were put in perspective such as informed consent of participants and non-usage of unethical language as a means to obtain data from respondents.

Keywords: Satisfaction, level, teachers, achievement, secondary, Kenya.

1. INTRODUCTION

In schools where teachers are not adequate, syllabus coverage would be affected which negatively impact on students' academic achievement. Similarly if the teachers are not satisfied with working environment, the level of commitment on curriculum implementation would be reduced which negatively impact on learners academic achievement. The teachers

who would not be satisfied with the working conditions would seek for transfers to move to other schools of their preference. However, not all requests of transfers would be affected. Similarly some transfers would be undertaken against unwilling teachers. This situation create three categories of teachers in any particular institution; teachers who are comfortably working because they are satisfied with the working environment, teachers who are unsatisfied with the working environment and even after asking for transfers had their requests turned down and lastly the group of teachers who would have been transferred involuntarily to such institutions against their wish. The latter two groups would tend to be less committed to curriculum delivery as reflected by their effort which is likely to affect students' academic achievement (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). While the work of Whip and Geronime (2017) used Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to collect data, the current study administered questionnaires to collect data to fill this research gap.

Both Acheampong and Gyasi (2019), defined transfer as a two pronged type of job mobility; mobility of one within the same organization or movement of one from one to assume position in another profession. As such, mobility could be termed as professional mobility (transfer) or geographical mobility. According to Grobler et al. (2002), the term teacher transfer is defined as the movement of teachers outside and within the school system. The transfer could take different forms depending on who has initiated it. The transfer may be initiated by the employer, the teacher (self) or the principal of the school in which the teacher could be teaching or could even be politically influenced. The transfers can therefore be classified as voluntary or forced transfers. Voluntary transfers are those transfers initiated by the teachers themselves while forced transfers are transfers that are done against the will of the affected teachers.

Various studies attest that teachers' transfers are a global phenomenon. For instance, Huang et al (2015), observed that China shut down remote village schools from 2001 and late 2000s by undertaking rural primary school merger program as a way of addressing the educational disparities between urban and rural areas. This program involved movement of teachers. According to Borman and Dowling (2008), teachers' transfers in America were more than two times as that of registered nurses and five times that of lawyers. The United Kingdom and Portugal also experienced high rate of teachers' transfers and turnover (Maior, Dobrean & Păsărelu 2020). More so, according to Beck, Lunsmann and Garza (2020), over the previous three decades teachers' transfers have increased more substantially world over in public secondary schools

Contributing towards teachers' transfers, Sichilima and Chipindi (2020), observed that transfers are to be undertaken as a way of ensuring equity in distribution of teachers among educational institutions. While Sichilima and Chipindi (2020), observed that teachers' transfers have to be undertaken to ensure equity in distribution of teachers among educational institutions, the current study tended to research on the effects of these transfers on academic achievement on students to fill the gap. Various studies have attested that transfers can be of different types, vertical, horizontal or demotion. The transfers are meant to serve different purposes; address the needs of the teacher, achieve equitable distribution to enhance equity among schools as well as serve as a punishment. Regardless of the type of transfers and the motive of the transfers, the overall effect is that they have implications on teachers performance on curriculum delivery which would either positively or negatively impact on students overall education achievement. According to Farzan, Muhammad, Memon and Lodhi (2012), frequent change of teachers during the session was harmful to academia, a situation that is more propounded if a longer time is taken to replace teachers who may have left. Regardless of the motive of transfer, Job transfer signifies a common, costly and a possibly disturbing human resource issue. This has made most employees to increasingly become reluctant to accept job transfers due to its potential disruptive effects on family set up or general quality of life. It has become extremely difficult for an employee to agree to a transfer at a time when his or her family wishes to be together more so if education of the transferee's children, health issues of family members or of themselves may not provide conducive environment for a transfer to a new working abode. Schools that are less endowed with resources such as housing and other incentives are likely to be less attractive to teachers and are more likely to lose more experienced teachers and attract less experienced ones. Research done by Farzan et al, (2001), dealt with observation schedule to collect data, however the current study used interview to collect data hence filled the research gap.

A number of studies attest to the fact that experienced schools that are less endowed with resources experience less teacher stability. A study done by Borman and Dowling (2008), attributed to high rates of transfers in USA to the so called hard-to-staff schools which made it difficult for schools to attract and develop effective teachers. These schools ended up being staffed with routinely least experienced and least effective teachers. Least experienced teachers are likely to have their performance reflected in poor attainment as revealed in students' academic achievement. Interestingly many teachers tend to run away from schools that record low achievement. According to the report of Katz (2018), attrition rates are higher in

low-performing schools and among those leaving those schools are more effective teachers who tend to transfer to higher achieving schools, while those that are less effective move to other lower-performing schools which are likely to worsen the differences in the educational opportunities of students. Therefore different countries have employed different approaches aimed at creating supporting environment to promote teacher satisfaction to minimize the incidences of teacher transfers.

In Africa, According to Mehmood and Bhatti (2020), teachers' roles in the learning process are identified as facilitation, guidance and provision of quality of instructions. Ghana, established that teacher factors that impacted negatively on learners' academic attainments were lateness to lesson attendance and incidences of irregularity in school all which negatively impacted on syllabi coverage which was a great determinant to the performance of students in examination. Reports from countries such as South Africa (Maingard, 2019), Zambia and Malawi (Bennell, Akyeand & Akyeampong, 2007), showed that the cases of teachers' transfers had almost reached a disastrous stage. In Malawi the problem of transfers were profound and overwhelming by any Sub-Saharan standards. According to Kadzamira (2006), during the period of January 2005, out of the Ministry's 2,253 trained secondary school teachers, 1,121 left the Ministry or moved to non-teaching posts with 2,189 primary school teachers leaving in June of 2005 alone through resignation or to a non-teaching posts for various reasons. The country of Uganda stood at 3.3 percent on average between December 2010 and November 2011. However, the rate increased to 39.6 percent for the period of 2011-2012 for all primary and secondary school in Mityama (Republic of Uganda, 2012). In Uganda, availability of housing and electricity in schools had an inspiration on teachers' transfer applications. Absence of accommodation next to the schools forced teachers to live far away from their schools. It then meant that they had to spend more time and money travelling daily to schools a situation that was compounded by poor accessibility. Similarly, lack of electricity debilitated several aspects of a teacher's life and that promoted teachers' dissatisfaction. Modern effective communication and information gadgets, entertainment and learning resources require electricity. Therefore, lack of electricity disables means of communication, compromises information channels and limit ways of entertainment leading to teacher dissatisfaction hence desire to seek for transfers. Mozambique uses a scheme of monetary bonuses to motivate teachers who move to rural areas and those teachers who teach in shifts while Lesotho has a uniform bonuses paid monthly to teachers who operate in the hilly hardship regions. African states have also adopted varied approaches as incentives to promoting teacher retention; such as posting of qualified teachers in pairs and this is aimed at helping female teachers to feel safe and have a greater sense of control over their deployment. According to Acheampong and Gyasi (2019), a hardship allowance above the basic salary for teachers working in hard-to-reach areas like in Uganda was given to teachers (Mulkeen, 2005). Studies done by Acheampong and Gyasi (2019), used a population of 1100 participants to gather information on teachers' transfers, the current study used 1769 as target population to fill the research gap.

In Kenya there is huge budgetary allocation on education anchored on the premise that education is an investment with expected social and private returns and as such provision of the same can reduce both illiteracy and chances of exclusion on the labour market. According to Onyara (2013), education is an indispensable component for the growth of any nation and is regarded as a way to raising political, communal cognizance as well as safeguarding the level of human capital. However, for education to attain its intended purpose, it has to meet both qualitative and quantitative objectives. Quantitative objective of education is reflected in the number of students who have successfully gone through education system while qualitative objective is reflected in the quality of education provided that is pegged on relevancy of curriculum and the process of its implementation (Wekesa, Okemwa & Kipkoech, 2021). Poor education attainments hinder ability of education to drive the country's social-economic agenda. At the centre of education attainment, teachers are seen to be critical components in determining quality of education provision. The current research intends to establish the missing link especially when the teachers are missing, transferred or not enough in schools on the academic performance of students to fill the gap. This realization is what has informed the country to invest in school facilities and human resource (teachers) that aimed at boosting academic performance of the students (Musyoka, 2018).

A study undertaken by Kering, Rop and Ogola (2019), on Influence of teacher characteristics on academic performance of learners with hearing impairment in KCPE in special primary schools in selected counties, Kenya, affirmed the same fact while Kering et al (2019), in their research revealed that the teachers availability contributed a great deal to learners achievement, the current study wanted to establish the effects of transfer of teachers to learners' academic achievement to fill the gap.

According to Murunga, Indosh and Okwach (2019), teachers played critical roles by standing in the gap for learners under their tutelage in promotion of transmission of skills, knowledge and values with values passed determined by effectiveness of the teachers in charge. For instance in a situation where the teachers were ineffective, low quality values would be passed to learners and such inefficiency would always be manifested on learners' inadequate academic progression. Learners' attainment in national examinations in Kenya has led to condemnation and celebration of teachers in equal measures on the basis of results posted. When poor results are registered the anger is directed to teachers as the stakeholders feel that teachers should have put in more enough effort to ensure that learners registered high quality grades. In Kenya teachers are celebrated and their effort appreciated through rewards when their schools are highly ranked for posting impressive results in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE).

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has introduced performance appraisal for teachers in which learners' attainment is a key component of evaluation (Odhiambo, 2005). The appraisal report forms the basis of teachers' assessment for suitability for promotions within various grades and ranks within the teaching profession. A task report of 2012 charged with responsibility of how to re-align education sector with the demands of the new constitution in Kenya observed that given that the new constitution advocated for provision of quality education to its citizen at all levels, the issue of provision of quality education had to be addressed, Social Pillar on Vision 2030 (RoK, 2007). It also demanded for provision of quality education in order to enable the country develop quality manpower to enable the country realize her dream towards industrial status. This was what informed recent aggressiveness of TSC to seriously enforce performance appraisal with aim of holding teachers accountable in their duties. A number of studies have affirmed the importance of performance appraisal as a tool of enforcing accountability and quality (Odhiambo, 2005; Gichuhi, Abaja & Ochieng, 2013; Perteson, 2002).

Notwithstanding the efforts to increase teacher retention, teacher mobility is still dominant in many parts of Kenya particularly in the rural areas. Transfer demands by teachers principally in the Western part of the country still persist way beyond the countrywide average of 5% (Ariko & Simatwa, 2011). It is perceived that at the policy level from where these motivations are planned it is difficult to envisage micro management of schools as policies are more disposed to tackle general and local issues. As at 2013, there was a shortage of 80,000 teachers in both primary and secondary schools in Kenya (Paulaa & Gr̄infelde, 2018 citing TSC, 2013). In secondary schools alone the shortage stood at 20,000 teachers which made Board of Management of various schools to resort to hiring of teachers on board while at the same time TSC embarked on rationalization program that was aimed at movement of teachers from overstaffed schools to schools that were seen to have huge deficits. Similarly, a bonding policy has been put in place since 2001 aimed at restricting teachers' transfers before serving for a prescribed period in a particular institution (Republic of Kenya, 2003). However, though teachers' transfers may be well intended, some transfers may be maliciously initiated by the principals. This comes as a result of the principals having personal differences with the teachers and as such recommend the transfers of some teachers to even hardship areas as a punishment. According to Ariko and Simatwa (2011), the number of transfers (movement frequency), years of service (comparative stability) and the feeling towards transfers are mixed subject on stage of career. An employee in a very initial career phase, whose main objective is to exploit information on the institute and the job in specific, can be likely be forced to react differently to an involuntary transfer compared to one with numerous years of experience.

The mandate to hire, fire, promote and transfer teachers are among the core functions of TSC. Therefore TSC has been implementing teachers' transfers as a way of achieving equitable distribution, meeting demands of teachers as well as punishment. However, the undertaking of transfers has been varied from school to school and region to region with some requests for transfers effected, others denied while others done against the wish of teachers. All in all, the overall objective of transfers' acceptance or denied have been to ensure effectiveness of students' performance by ensuring equitable distribution of teachers as well as maintenance of teacher stability. From the literature review done on influence on transfers on academic achievement in Kakamega County, there are glaring gaps which this study has undertaken to research upon, the gaps are revealed when the following questions are asked that requires answers. It is important to note that previous literature reviews have not adequately tried to answer these questions. The questions that needed to be addressed were; what are the extents of teachers' transfers in public secondary schools in Kakamega County? What are the natures of these transfers? Are they solicited, promotion or forced? Are there cases of denied transfers? What factors motivate the teachers to ask for transfers? To what extent have transfers influenced academic achievement of learners? Addressing these questions are deemed important in providing insights on issues of teachers' transfers and students' academic achievement in Kakamega County and the effect of teachers' transfers on students' academic achievement generally in Kenya and

Kakamega County in particular and this is the gap the current research intends to fill. Table 1. shows KCSE performance by gender for consecutive three years in Kenya from 2017 to 2019.

Table 1. KCSE performances by gender of the period 2017 to 2019 Kenya

KCSE GRADE	2017			2018			2019		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
A	61	81	142	114	201	315	271	360	631
A-	901	1806	2707	1239	2181	3420	2172	3625	5797
B+	2748	4487	7235	3119	5181	8300	5144	8223	13367
B	4879	7517	12396	6400	10105	16505	9805	14689	24494
B-	7713	11459	19172	10690	15682	26372	14978	20402	35380
C+	11973	15755	27728	15780	20326	36106	21439	24732	46171
C+ AND ABOVE	28275	41105	69380	37342	53676	91018	53809	72031	125840
C	18868	21454	40322	24161	25943	50104	32119	31042	63161
C-	29767	31162	60929	35763	35751	71514	43113	40330	83443
D+	42865	45474	88339	48296	48696	96992	51864	49937	101801
D	66958	68513	135471	75519	73004	148523	69845	67979	137824
D-	91344	88017	179361	84205	81387	165592	16229	76181	152410
E	17191	18353	35544	14088	16833	30921	12944	16393	29337

Source: Kenya National Examination Council 2020

Generally over the last three years, the number of candidates achieving a mean grade of C+ and above, the minimum entry into a university course, has been decreasing, more so, in 2017 and 2018 in the whole country. In 2018 only 14 percent of the candidates scored C+ and above and the trend in performance by gender are similar. For instance, only 16 percent and 12 percent of boys and girls, respectively scored C+ and above in 2018. However more boys than girls attained mean grade E. There are several factors that contributed towards the achievement of the results. According to Allen (2005), grades are valid measures of academic achievement of classroom learning, while Onyara (2013) on school based factors influencing students academics performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Teso South District and Yambo and Tutoek (2015), on contributions of school based socio-economic factors on students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Eldoret West Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County do bring out the influence of teachers’ transfers on students’ academic achievement. Probably the transfer of teachers left, right and center could be a key factor in this low number of candidates achieving mean grades C+ and above and many candidates scoring mean grade E and this is what the current study undertook to establish to fill the gap.

Table 2: KCSE Performance in a sample of the Sub counties of Kakamega

Sub-County	KCSE Entry	C+ and Above Mean Grade	Mean Score 2018	Mean Score 2019	Deviation
Kakamega Central	50603	108	5.431	4.701	+0.73
Kakamega South	40721	190	4.604	4.300	-0.304
Kakamega North	61720	186	4.961	4.836	-0.125
Lugari	7301	215	6.001	4.93	-1.081
Likuyani	6722	304	6.351	5.801	-0.55
Mumias	6243	370	5.771	5.403	-0.368

Source: Staffing office Kakamega County (2020)

The table 2 shows a sample of six sub-counties of Kakamega in KCSE performances 2018 – 2019. A look at the deviation column indicates a trend of consistent negative deviation. This shows that not many students make it to the university. Several factors could be attributed to the above declining KCSE performance in the County. While Rockoff, (2014), believes that a teacher has great impact on individual’s student academic achievement, but does not delve deep to show the

impact of teachers transfers on the same students whenever they happen to the academic achievement of the students in schools and this is the gap exactly this current study endeavored to undertake to fill the gap. That for students to realize good academic achievement be it in KCSE examination, then stability of the teachers in schools is paramount and cases of transfer should be minimally low. This is not the case currently in Kakamega County. The table 1.3 shows transfer of teachers in Kakamega County for from 2013 – 2018.

Table 3: Transfer of teachers 2013 – 2018 Kakamega County

Year	No of Transfers	%
2013	113	7.5
2014	150	10
2015	140	9.3
2016	110	7.3
2017	90	6
2018	145	9.6

Source: Staffing office Kakamega County

The transfer rates in this County are way above the national recommendation of below 5% annually. This high rate of transfers definitely has a high influence on academic performance among students.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers' satisfaction and enabling environment plus their level of experience and commitment teachers bring out expected quality academic achievement if not hampered by transfer of teachers. Personnel transfer, intra-system transfer and promotion, frequent transfer as well as transfers without replacement causes understaffing in any educational institution. Transfers within schools in Kenya have been intensified of late more so with the freeze in teacher employment. These transfers among the schools have led to mixed outcomes, both favorable and unfavorable. Performance of schools in KCSE examination in Kakamega County has been quite varied but generally ranging in performance from 2.025 to 8.25 in terms of mean scores in which majority of the schools register a mean score of less than 5.00 in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). This performance has been generally low on a 12 scale perception index used to grade KCSE. Though there may be many causes for the low performance, one of the issues that has emerged has been frequent transfer of teachers. Records at Kakamega County education office indicate that between 2013 to 2015, a total of 403 teachers had been moved on transfer in Kakamega County. Kakamega County contributed to the state of students' poor academic achievement in the country as reflected in Tables 2 and 3 respectively. Though a number of studies have been done on effects of teachers' transfers on students' academic performance gaps have been identified as the studies were mainly the one sided, as they only concentrated on teacher transfers. However this study is different as it simultaneously examined the influence of teachers' transfers on students' academic achievement on the basis of transfers effected, transfers denied and involuntary transfers on students' academic performance. Similarly, among the studies that had been carried out, none had been undertaken in Kakamega County and this was the gap that this study intended to fill.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Levels of satisfaction of working environment among teachers on students' academic achievement.

Teachers make up the core of schooling system and their position on students' performance has been widely recognized (UNESCO 2016); Wamukuru, 2016). The teachers are critical determinant of students' academic achievement. This is evidenced where students' academic achievements have been drawing criticism and festivity of teachers in equivalent measures world over on the basis of results realized. Academic achievement at any point is a cumulative function of current and prior family, community, and school experiences. A study by Hanushek., Kain, O'Brien and Rivkin (2005), National Bureau of Economic Research, postulated that the entire process would require complete family, community, and school histories and such data is rare if ever available. While Hannshek et al, claimed the entire academic success process required complete family, community and school histories, the current study concentrate on the levels of satisfaction of the working environment among teachers on students' academic achievement to fill the gap. Comparatively, in Pakistan, a research done by Gershenson (2021), found that responses from male and female head teachers explained that many problems ensued in

every respect as a result of teachers' transfers on the overall school performance. The schools efficiency fell low as schools faced high dropout rates; they suffered poor results and this caused the decrease in the quality of education. Consequently this made some students to migrate to other schools in pursuit of quality education and this was as attributed to the poor working conditions among the teachers.

According to Kim and Cho (2020), job satisfaction is a function of two variables; the level of teachers' mental state concerning their work which entailed the employees' general feelings about their jobs and the second being job surface satisfaction, which has the feelings concerning definite job features, such as salary, benefits, work pyramid, growth prospects, work atmosphere and the excellence of relationships with one's co-workers. This implies that in the event that the working environment leads to dissatisfaction of an employee, the level of one's output decreases

However, a number of studies done by Grissom (2011) and Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017), attested to the correlations between students' accomplishment and demographics and other operational surrounding variables. This situation could make it difficult to establish whether teachers' level of productivity could have increased or decreased on transfers. For instance a teacher from a school with huge populations of deprived, low-achieving students to a school with fewer students even through involuntarily transfer is likely to be better off with respect to working conditions of the post-transfer. Unless these gains are offset against unobservable harms, like stigma from being branded as a low-performing teacher, these more favorable working conditions are likely to lead to greater job attachment and lower probability of turnover as well as increased productivity.

Work satisfaction according to Kaliski (2017) suggests energy and satisfaction with ones' work job and environment. It is the key fixing that prompts acknowledgment, pay, advancement and the accomplishment of different objectives that lead to a sensation of satisfaction. Work satisfaction additionally implies an assortment of sentiments and convictions that individuals have about their present place of employment. Peoples' level or level of occupational satisfaction can go from outrageous satisfaction to outrageous disappointment. As well as having perspectives about their occupations overall, individuals additionally have mentalities about different parts of their occupations, for example, the sort of work they do, their colleagues, administrators or subordinates and their compensation (George & Jones, 2018).

The shortfall of such working conditions in addition to other things can affect ineffectively on working mental actual prosperity, (Robbins, 2010). Robbins goes further to advocate that functioning conditions will impact work satisfaction as representatives are worried about an agreeable actual workplace which impacts work satisfaction. He goes further to say that decency is an equivalent treatment getting similar administrations and advantages as equipped leaders are crucial for the achievement of the school. VSO Ethiopia (2010), remarked on how absence of essential conveniences like workspace, seats and tables made the working more troublesome. Assuming there are no adequate number of work space, seats and tables the teacher will endure difficulty working conditions and this shows the system is not effective. The day to day environments of teachers are affected by absence of satisfying convenience to live in and significant distance which here and there, cause non-appearance, delay and turnover. The actual conditions of the schools are not appealing. Babyegeya (2002), clarified that in different schools absence of houses bring about in effectual instructions and learning processes.

The sign of disappointment at work place incorporate low results and usefulness, dissatisfaction and turmoil in the workplace, freak and fierce conduct at or outside the work place, continuous showdowns or contention among bosses and administrators, non-participation, strikes and brutal exhibitions. Lastly, Increasing of non-attendance among teachers and exorbitant turnover (Halder, 2010) and so Mwamwenda (2005), observed that there was an absence of occupation satisfaction brought about incessant educator non-attendance from school, forceful conduct towards partners and students, early exits from the show calling and mental pull out from the work. Also Mwamwenda(2005), likewise featured the expense suggestions that came about because of truancy, for the business, yet additionally for society in general and Ngimbudzi (2009), saw that the sign of occupational satisfaction had been the suggestion for the teachers just as for the instructive framework wherein the person is utilized. The various mentalities of the teacher, their actual prosperity, truancy and turnover, just as accomplishment in calling, are on the whole subject to level of occupation satisfaction experienced by the teachers.

Segment profile of teachers and occupation satisfaction also play a significant role towards working environment of the teachers. Individual foundation or segment factors are the elements which allude to such viewpoints as: a singular's sex, age, instructive foundation and educating subjects. What's more professional training among others (Bolin, 2007). Ali and

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Ahmed (2009), clarified that the inquiry whether or not sex contrasts in work satisfaction exist has been addressed both certifiably and contrarily in the writing. The exploration directed among Canadian teachers observed that work satisfaction levels vary fundamentally among male and female teachers (Mama & MacMillan, 2001). Also, the consequences of exploration that was directed in the US uncovered that there were huge contrasts in the degrees of occupation satisfaction among male and female teachers (Bishay, 2016). They said that female teachers were more happy with their occupation than male teachers. Though, Zhongshan (2007), observed that grade school male teachers in Shanghai, China were more happy with their compensations than their female partners. Alternatively, Crossman and Harris (2006), led a review on work satisfaction among optional teachers in joined realm and their discoveries showed that their satisfaction levels didn't vary essentially by sex.

In many emerging nations and especially in Africa, business strategy overall and explicitly the training work strategy have since a long time ago considered the need to fulfill teachers' requirements and to satisfy the specialists (Werner & Desimone, 2006). Onu, Madukwe and Agwu (2005), analyzed variables influencing position satisfaction of field augmentation laborers in Enugu State Farming Office. The Program in Nigeria utilized an example of 43 expansion staff arbitrarily chosen across three farming zones. The field expansion labourers demonstrated low degree of satisfaction with their work content, state of administration and workplace, which were hence distinguished as key factors that could improve work satisfaction among representatives.

In a research done by Mwamwenda (2005), referred to in Nyagaya (2015), on the elements impacting position satisfaction among optional schools among white teachers in South Africa, the factors that arose out of these examinations were dealing and relating to working conditions, relationships with directors, partners and students, proficient turn of events, the executives styles and local area inclusion. Factors influencing position satisfaction among white teachers covered an expansive range and included extraneous variables.

In Namibia, a review by George, Louw and Badenhorst (2000), on work satisfaction among metropolitan auxiliary teachers utilized study plan and elucidating insights (mean and standard deviations). The discoveries showed that Namibian teachers encountered a lower level of occupation satisfaction contrasted with an American standard gathering. The study likewise demonstrated that, roughly 66% of the Namibian teachers experienced significant degrees of disappointment with characteristic variables, while almost 90% encountered a demeanor towards extraneous elements that changed from nonpartisan to satisfaction.

Under the Kenyan circumstance, work satisfaction and great quality work from the business and the representatives separately directed the presentation of associations (Chen & Li, 2002). Staff development of one or the other joining or leaving an association is one of the numerous markers or pointers of the workers' satisfaction or disappointment which may likewise mean high or low staff inspiration. The work of Nyagaya (2015) on level of Job satisfaction opined that variables impacting on educator's level of occupation satisfaction in open grade schools in Kayole division, Embakasi Sub Region, Kenya, on 20 public elementary schools with 220 respondents utilizing clear examination plan. The review uncovered that compensation affected decidedly teachers' level of occupation satisfaction. Concerning working conditions, the review inferred that the deficiency of school offices prompted teachers' disappointment with their work. The quantity of examples educated each week (responsibility) likewise impacted teachers' level of occupation satisfaction and Leshao (2008), discovered that in Kenya Free Essential Instruction was presented without earlier planning and teachers had an inclination that the absence of arrangement was a reason for low inspiration.

According to Wanyama (2013), Students' academic achievement is affected by the transfer of teachers from schools without replacements promoting shortage of teachers and hence high students to teacher ratio. Productivity of any employee is function of job satisfaction. However any contrary view may lead to decrease in teachers' effort. Therefore as applied in this study, teachers' transfers may promote teachers' productivity as reflected in students' academic achievement depending on how teachers' transfers are effected. Are the transfers' solicited? Are the transfer solicited and denied? At what level are the transfers being effected (horizontal or vertical)? If the transfers undertaken are negatively viewed by the teachers, then the level of productivity is likely to go down.

According to Murunga, Indoshi and Okwach (2019), teachers are celebrated and their effort prized through rewards when their schools are highly ranked for posting remarkable results in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) on 1-

12 scale index. Grade E which is scored as 1 was the lowest Grade while grade A which was rated as 12 was the best grade in KCSE examination which was a terminal examination marking the end of Kenya’s secondary education cycle.

A number of studies have affirmed the importance of performance appraisal as a tool of enforcing accountability and quality (Odhiambo, 2005; Binta, Muhammad, Ahmed, Bazza & Magaji, 2019) and therefore the teachers remain critical determinant of the ability of the student(s) to register good and high achievement in any examination. Education is highly valued by the household and other stakeholders due to its ability to generate both private and social returns (Wekesa, Okemwa & Kipkoech, 2021). As such, Students’ academic achievement in national examinations in Kenya has been an issue of major concern for all education stakeholders. Academic achievement of students is anchored on the premise that high academic achievement is a bridge to higher education opportunities in lucrative fields such as engineering and medicine where one is assured of drawing high returns in future. The cut off points for joining more competitive professions are normally higher compared to other fields that could be less competitive. Therefore low academic achievement of students achieved in standardized examination such as KCSE is likely to lock students who may have achieved low scores from joining more competitive high paying professions in future. According to Mwangi, Nyagah, and Mugambi (2021), the performance of students in the National Examination is a determinant of students’ future. As such, global apprehension in countries was citizen’s future, making education to be a major center of investment. This is possible when the working environment of the teachers is conducive enough such that it encourages teachers to stay long in their stations of work. Glaring gaps in the literature can be detected concerning the conducive working environment of the teachers and these are the gaps the current study intends to fill.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design employed in this study is descriptive survey. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), descriptive survey method involved asking a large group of people questions about a particular issue. The information is obtained from a sample rather than from the entire population at one point in time which could range from one day to a few weeks. According to Best and Khan (2002), descriptive research design is advantageous as it enables collection of large information of data within a relatively short time in an economic way.

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. The County is composed of twelve sub-counties. Kakamega County is neighbored by counties of Vihiga to the South East, Siaya to the South, Busia to the South West, Bungoma to the West, Trans-Nzoia to the North and Nandi to the East. The main economic activity is sugar cane farming. The County is crossed by two main rivers Yala and Nzoia among other rivers. According to Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) choice list of 2015, the County had 268 public secondary schools. The County had a population of 1,660,651 people according to the 2009 population census and has an area of 3244.9 square kilometers. Nationally the County had 515 people per square kilometers with 48% being female and 53% male of the population.

According to Ministry of Education (2014), the County had 268 public secondary schools spread in 12 Sub-counties with the number of teachers employed by TSC standing at more than 1500 teachers. Therefore the target population was 268 public secondary schools, 1500 teachers, 268 principals and one (1) County staffing officer, making the total target population of respondents to be 1769. The researcher targeted principals of secondary schools, teachers and TSC County staffing officer as the main target population.

Sampling procedures and sample size

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), a sample size of 30% of the population is adequate for the study and the bigger the sample the better.

Table 4. Sample size distribution

Respondents	Target Population	Sample	Percentage
Principals	268	80	30
Teachers	1500	450	30
County Staffing Officer	1	1	100
Total	1769	531	

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According to Amin (2004) a large sample should be a function of the variation in the population parameters under study and the precision needed by the researcher. The schools were first stratified into national, County and sub-County. There was one (1) national school, 22 County schools and 245 sub-County schools. Eighty (80) schools that is 30% of the were involved in the study. According to Cohen-Vogel and Osborne (2007), a sample of 10 percent can be used in the study when dealing with a large target population. The schools involved in the sample were selected proportionately. The sample was therefore 1 national school, 9 County schools and 70 Sub County Schools. Proportionate sampling was meant to give schools of each category equal representation. All the principals of the sampled schools and the County staffing officer were purposively and proportionately involved in the study. Purposive sampling was meant to enable the researcher to use cases that could have relevant information to answer research questions in order to enable the researcher meet objectives of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The principals and regional staffing officer were in administrative position and as such they were found to have relevant information on the issues relating to teachers' transfers and therefore were purposively sampled. According to this study the sample for teacher's respondents was determined using 30% size of the population as advised by Bloomberg and Volpe (2008).

Instruments for data collection

In this study, the instruments included: administering questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis guides.

Validity of research instruments

The instruments were given to research specialists who are the supervisors in the department of educational administration who gauged their appropriateness and representativeness of questions on the study objectives.

Reliability of research instruments

The work of Best and Khan (2002) postulated that reliability in research was critical issue for two main reasons; it helped to promote replication of findings and was used to give necessary pre requisite for validity. The correlation test re-test was calculated where values of -1 and 1 indicated perfect correlation while correlation of values closer to '0' showed there was no relationships between the variables. According to Saunders, Philip and Acran (2003), any correlated reliability that was less than 0.7 invalidated the instrument for use in the study as it implied that the instrument was unreliable to make accurate predictions. Correlation showed that there was no relationship between the variables was 0.72 for teachers. Since the value of correlation coefficient obtained was 0.89 for principals, the instruments were considered reliable for use in this study.

Data collection procedures

The researcher first sought from the Kisii University, department of Educational Administration, Planning and Economics a letter of introduction. The researcher then proceeded to apply online for a permit to undertake research from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NaCoSTI), an institution charged with the responsibility of granting research permits in Kenya. Copy of the research permit was given to County director of education of Kakamega County from whom further permission was obtained. The researcher collected data with the help of two research assistants. The research assistants were taken through the instruments with the aim of familiarizing them on how the research was to be under taken. The researcher and research assistants then moved to various sampled stations for acquaintance tour aimed at briefing management of the proposed research and setting of dates for undertaking the study.

4. FINDINGS

Levels of satisfaction of the working environment among teachers on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Kakamega County

The study sought to establish level of satisfaction of teachers with working environment for teachers working in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. The level of satisfaction with working environment was revealed by frequency of transfer requests. The study sought to established; duration of stay of teachers at their current station; whether they were at their current station on first posting or transfer; nature of transfer for those that had been transferred and the teachers who asked for transfers but had transfers denied.

1 Duration of stay by teachers’ respondents on study institutions

The study sought to establish how long teacher respondents had stayed in their current stations. This was aimed at establishing whether the teachers who had completed bondage period of five years, the minimum period teachers were supposed to be in one station before seeking for any transfer. The findings were given in Table 5

Table 5: Duration of stay by teachers’ respondents on study institutions

Duration	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative. Frequency
Less than 5 years	70	17.19	17.19
5-9 years	144	35.44	52.63
10-14 years	124	30.53	83.16
15-19 years	46	11.23	94.39
20 years and Over	26	5.61	100.00
Total	406	100	

Table 5 showed that over 80 percent of teachers had stayed in their current stations for the period of over 5years. As such, one would have expected uncomfortable teachers to have sought transfer as they had completed the bondage period. Also Mahapatra (2010), observed that voluntary transfer are initiated by an employee for personal reasons such as non-satisfaction with the working environment or domestic pressure more so if an employee may be working far away from own family.

At this point, it was necessary to establish how the teachers reported at their current stations, whether first posting or transfer. The findings were given in figure 1.

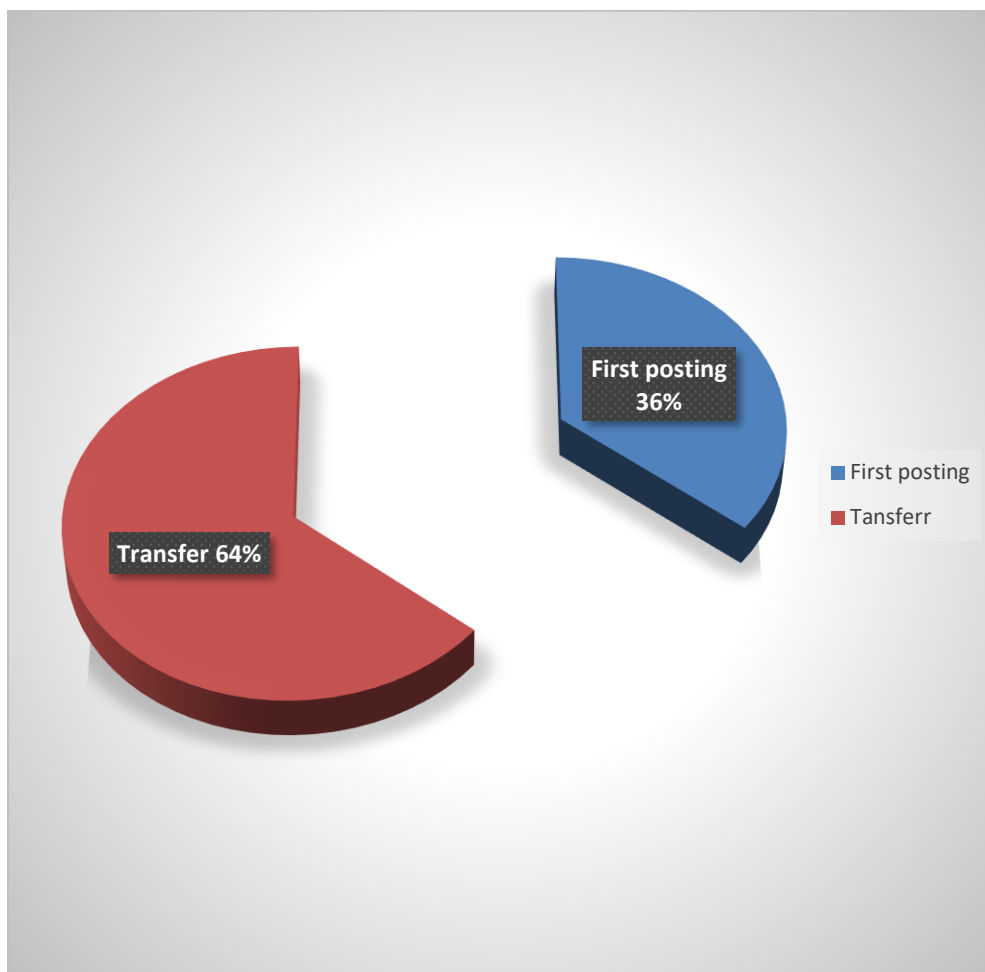


Figure 1: teachers’ responses on whether study institutions were stations of their first posting or transfer

Figure 1 shows that majority of teachers as represented by 64 percent were serving in their stations on transfer. This represented 260 out of 406 respondents. This position confirmed the assertion that teachers' transfers had been historical occurrence in education (Aura, Hassan & Hamari, 2021).

The study sought teachers' views on the effect of overstay of teachers on their productivity and hence students' academic achievement. A statement that started that teacher's level of commitment on their duties reduced with passage of time was put to teacher respondents. Majority (78%) of the teachers disagreed with the statement. One teacher observed. Performance and productivity of the teacher goes with established school culture and the nature of administration. If the school has a culture of good performance, everyone within the institution will always be striving to ensure that the same is maintained. In fact for a school where one feels the environment is supportive, one will always work hard to ensure that no reason whatsoever is found for initiation of transfer on the basis of non-performance. This statement is in agreement with Odhiambo (2005); Gichui (2008) and Peterson (2000), who observed that teachers' stability as determined by length of stay remained critical determinant of the ability of the students to register good and high achievement in any examination.

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