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Factors Influencing Teacher Turnover in Public Secondary Schools in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties, Homa Bay County, Kenya

By

Kagot Judith Luna, Fredrick N. Mvumbi, and Lucy Achieng

Abstract

This study sought to establish the factors that influence teacher turnover in secondary schools in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties, Homa Bay County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following objective: To establish the influence of remuneration on teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties, Homa Bay County. The study adopted Herzberg's Two-factor theory and employed descriptive survey design. The sample for the study, was obtained through stratified random sampling technique. And targeted all 514 teachers in all the 79 public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties. The sample size consisted of 287 teachers from public secondary schools. Instrument for data collection included questionnaires. Content construct and face validity of the instruments was ascertained by two experts from Catholic University of East Africa. Split half method was also used to establish the reliability of the instruments. Data collected was quantitative, and descriptive statistics was used to analyze quantitative data. Descriptive statistics include frequency counts, percentages, means, standard deviation and variance. The findings of the study indicated that teacher remuneration had greater influence on teacher turnover in Rachuonyo South and East sub Counties. The study recommended TSC should review and improve teacher remuneration so as to narrow the gap between teachers and other civil servants. This is because the study established that teacher remuneration had a greater influence on teacher turn over and that majority of the teachers are dissatisfied with TSC remuneration.

Key words: Kenya; Teacher Turnover; Public Secondary Schools; Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties; Homa Bay County

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1.1 Introduction and Background of the Study

Staff turnover is the movement of personnel in and out of an entity. Chemwei and Koech (2015) states that teacher turnover is the movement of teachers in and out of a learning institution and anytime a vacancy falls, new personnel must be hired and inducted. The replacement cycle is known as turnover (Armstrong, 2009). Teacher turnover could be as a result of institutional or personal factors.

Ingersoll (2001) asserts that teacher turnover is an international problem and an extremely complex fact influenced by several factors like organizational factors; personal factors and community factors. Herbert and Ramsay, (2004) reported that teacher turnover was on the rise in the USA. George (2010) cited that the yearly teacher turnover/attrition rate worldwide vary from 2 percent -14 percent. USA had an annual turnover rate of 8.4 percent in public schools and 13.6 percent in private schools with more female teachers exit mainly to take care of their children and family responsibilities. The other fraction retired while others switching careers and join the private sector. Others leave citing dissatisfaction with the salaries offered as core reason for quitting teaching. In countries like Britain, Sweden, Germany and New Zealand it has been reported that workforce shortages in the schools due to turnover is a major problem (Mackenzie and Santiago, 2005).

In the developing countries, teacher turnover is a common phenomenon with countries like, Zambia, New Guinea, Nigeria and Malawi reporting high rates of voluntary teacher turnover. Xaba (2003), states that in Gambia there is enormous exodus of teachers from the profession due to factors as lack of adequate salaries, allowances, housing and promotion.

In Kenya, teacher turnover is on the rise; Mutune and Orodho (2014) cited Teachers Service Commission's (TSC) report on Teacher's Image vol.13, pg.7 (2007), which states that a significant number of teachers have left teaching service to join other government ministries, the county governments and others gone to private sectors. Mutune and Orodho (2014) further give reports from the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) as cited by Oyaro (2008), indicating that there is a high rate of teacher turnover in the country that is, between January and June 2008, six hundred teachers had left classrooms in Kenyan schools for better paying jobs elsewhere, an estimated number of three teachers leaving the service every day. This movement of teachers out of the teaching profession has aggravated teacher shortage despite the efforts of the government to recruit teachers, the teacher shortage still persists (Orodho, 2013). The national teacher shortage as at 2012 stood at 61,235 for both primary and secondary schools (Republic of Kenya/UNESCO, 2012).

To control the problem of high turnover and shortage of teachers it would be significant to determine the motivational needs and job satisfaction among the teachers (Mbugua, 1998). In

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the studies on job satisfaction of teachers, Mbugua (1998) found that whereas some teachers quit teaching due to the increase for work that they are expected to do compared to the low salary they receive, others however stay on.

Most studies have highlighted the causes of teacher turnover and only a few studies have covered the larger Homa bay County where the number of public secondary schools by far surpasses that of private schools. Therefore, this study sought to establish the extent to which institutional and personal factors influence teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties, Homa Bay County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Turnover in any organization or system can be positive and helpful to introduce new ideas that can move the organization to greater levels of success. However, turnover among highly-productive, key employees is costly for it causes disruptions in operations and creates costs for the organization which includes leaving costs, recruitment costs of replacements, training costs of replacements, and indirect cost of downtime needed for new employees to gain proficiency. In Kenya, Teacher service Commission (TSC), a body that recruits and employs teachers in Kenya has in the recent past, experienced high rate of teacher turnover in most of the learning institutions from primary to tertiary level. A report from TSC in 2007 indicated that teachers in Kenya consistently left teaching service to join other professions in both government and the private sectors.

There is a problem of labour turnover among the teachers in public secondary schools in Kenya, especially those working in the rural areas. For instance, the report given by the TSC Rachuonyo South Sub-County, Homa Bay County, indicated that, teachers' shortage in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties as at May 2016 stood at 518 whereas the total population of teachers was 618 (409 males and 209 females). The number of teachers who had transferred out of the two Sub Counties in the years 2014 and 2015 was 74 while the number of those who transferred into the Sub Counties in 2016 was 37. Eighty one transfers of teachers were also affected within Rachuonyo South and East Sub- Counties. Most schools did not get replacements. Teacher recruitment was also conducted and only 36 teachers were employed in the years 2014 and 2015. While extensive research literature has documented the phenomenon of teacher turnover in many parts of the world, there is scarcity of research on teacher turnover and on what factors influence high rate of teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Kenya, more so in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties. The study therefore has endeavored to fill the gap by investigating factors that influence teacher turnover in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties, Homa Bay County, Kenya.

1.3. Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Herzberg's Motivation-Two factor theory, to determine motivators and hygiene factors that specifically influence teacher turnover based on assumption that dissatisfaction that induces the avoidance of work and satisfaction that promotes attraction to work do not represent the end points of a single continuum, (Okumbe, 1998).

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Herzberg's theory is the most useful model to study job satisfaction that will lead to retention and job dissatisfaction that may lead to teacher turnover, (Kim 2004). For instance, researchers have found that it helps in understanding the job satisfaction in the 'educational set up' (Karimi 2007). Herzberg's Theory can be applied by school managers to motivate teachers in educational institutions. By identifying the hygiene factors such as company policies, supervision, interpersonal relations, job security, working conditions, salary and remuneration, and improving on them. Teachers basic needs can be met and element of dissatisfaction removed. When teachers have no dissatisfaction arising from the job environment, they are in a better mode to be motivated (Yew and Manap 2012).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory thrives because it is easy to understand and seems to be based on real life rather than academic abstractions (Armstrong 2009). Armstrong further explains that the theory convincingly emphasizes on the positive values of the intrinsic motivation factors which is also in accord with a fundamental belief in the dignity of the labor and the Protestant ethics; that work is good in itself.

Weaknesses have been cited concerning Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. For example, Saif, Nawaz, Jan and Khan (2012) in their *Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, observed that the theory ignores individual differences and wrongfully assumes that all employees react in a similar manner to the changes in motivators and hygiene factors (Wikipedia, 2009).

Lukwago, Basheka and Odubukure (2014) opine that Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory is overstated. As a result, they recommended that other approaches to job enrichment be investigated along with Herzberg's approach before implementing any job enrichment program. There is inconsistency arising from the different methods of validation of the theory used (Malik & Naeem 2012).

2.0 Literature Review

Liza, Michelle and Slate (2008) conducted a study in USA to establish the causes of teacher attrition in public schools in Texas State. The study adopted qualitative design and was done by interviewing teachers who left the teaching profession within the first to three years of their entrance. The study results indicate that almost all the respondent answered that low salary is among the factors that led to their attrition, the researchers reported that many of the teachers expressed that the salary they received is low compared to their hours put in, and they at times spent extra hours which they are not paid for, so this affected them and causes their leaving. However, the reviewed study was purely qualitative and did not show the statistical numbers of teacher turnover as in the present study that adapted descriptive survey design to fill the gap. In addition, the reviewed study focused on teachers who had left teaching unlike the present that focused on teacher in service.

Osei (2006) in Ghana conducted a study in which a total of 50 teachers were randomly sampled and interviewed. He reported that, almost all the teachers interviewed indicated that their salary and welfare are not properly taken care of by the government and many of those interviewed are into petty business outside the teaching so as to sustain themselves. The researcher concluded that, Teacher salaries are still low, which is one of the main reasons that the field does not attract or keep the best candidates, and due to inadequate salaries, many of the

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most experienced and qualified teachers today leave the schools to find better employment elsewhere. However, in the reviewed study the researcher used a sample of 50 participants, which was too small hence very prone to great error margins but the present study used a larger sample of 287 secondary school teachers hence it had a very low error margins.

In their research on Teacher attrition in Nigerian Schools, Egu, Nwuju and Chionye (2011) discovered that, improve in the payment of salary is often mention by a lot of teachers in regards to their decision to remain in teaching. The Researchers concluded that, paying reasonable salary will help in retaining teachers in schools. Although, apart from poor salary there are other factors discovered by the research which is hindering teachers in their profession, such as; lack of additional incentives and late payment of salary.

A study in Tanzania by Lymo (2014) sought to analyze teacher salary. The collection of data was based mostly on the questionnaires and semi – structured interviews. The targeted population was teachers from five public secondary schools and the total respondents of questionnaires and interview questions were thirty teachers. The study revealed that insufficient teachers' salary and delays in payment of teachers' allowances lead to teachers being accorded a low status. A number of teachers have dropped from the teaching profession and opted for other good paying professional jobs. In the reviewed study the researcher used a sample of 40 participants, which was too small hence very prone to great error margins but the present study used a larger sample of secondary school teachers hence it had very low error margins.

Chepkemboi, Kiriago and Iravo (2013) study in West Pokot sought to find out factors that influence teacher turnover in the Sub County. The study adopted descriptive survey design and targeted 268 secondary school teachers from a total of 30 schools. Stratified, simple random and systematic random sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample of 80 respondents. Data collection was done using self-administered questionnaires. Data was analyzed using mainly descriptive statistics. Findings of the study indicated a majority felt their organization did not give them adequate and fair pay for the work they did as reported by 57%, a fact that led to TSC employees' turnover in West Pokot. The employees said they would leave TSC given an alternative employment. Whereas the study by Chepkemboi, Kiriago and Iravo (2013) was carried out in West Pokot, Kenya, there is scarcity of information on the same in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties, Kenya and therefore the current study filled the gaps in literature by studying a sample of 287 secondary school teachers in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties.

3.0 Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design to establish the institutional and personal factors that influence high teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo Sub-County, Homa Bay County, Kenya. Descriptive design is concerned with finding out who, what, where and how of a phenomenon that exists which is the concern of this study. The target population of this study included all teachers from public secondary schools. Stratified random sampling was used to categorize the schools into two strata: county schools and sub county schools. The researcher selected the sample size using Krejcie and Morgan table. According to Krejcie and Morgan's table, if 514 the target population is the sample will be 287.

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The researcher used questionnaires to collect data from 514 teachers in public secondary schools. Both open ended and closed ended questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. The researcher used questionnaires due to their characteristics that they capture large amounts of data which is quantitative in nature.

A pilot study was conducted in a public secondary school which was not included in the main study to measure the clarity and relevance of the instrument items. The researcher used split-half method of testing instrument reliability. The researcher considered a correlation coefficient between 0.7 and 0.8 to be reliable. Quantitative data was collected analyzed, presented, and interpreted using descriptive statistics. The computer program SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) Version 20 was used to analyze the data.

4.0 Findings on the Influence of Remuneration of Teachers on Turnover in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties.

The objective investigated the extent to which remuneration of teachers influence teacher turnover in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties. The respondents' views were sought through the use of a Likert scaled questionnaire whose items explored the constructs of remuneration. The concept of the remuneration included compensation, allowances and bonuses received in exchange of work or services performed by teachers. From the views expressed by the teachers who took part in the survey it was clearly shown that majority of the teachers are not satisfied with remuneration given to them by TSC, as shown in Figure 4.3.

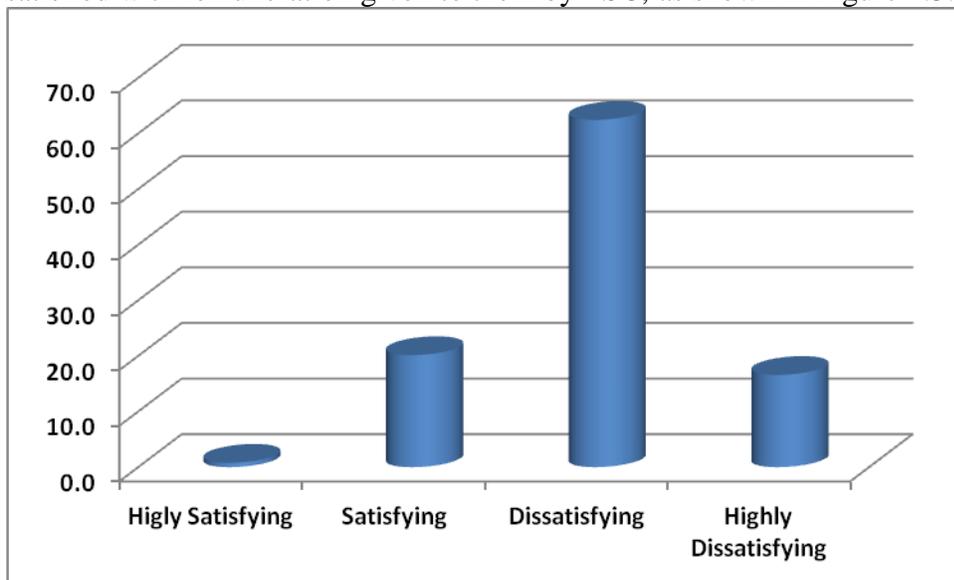


Figure 4.3: Teachers' Ratings of Salary Paid by TSC

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It is evident that only less than a fifth of the teachers indicated that they were satisfied with salary paid to them by TSC. In fact, when the teachers were asked whether they would consider quitting teaching on the basis of the salary, more than a half of teachers who participated in the survey confirmed that they would easily quit on the basis of salary, as shown in Figure 4.3.

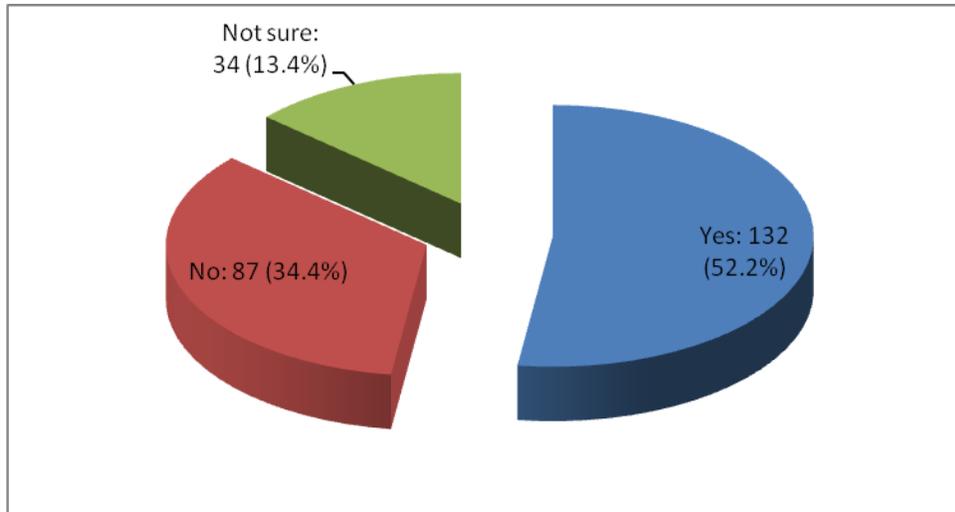


Figure 4.4: Quitting Teaching on the Basis of Low Salary

From Figure 4.4, it is evident that although about a third of the teachers indicated that they would not quit teaching on the basis of the salary, most of the teachers insisted that they could easily leave teaching for a better pay employment. This finding implies that salary has great influence on turnover among the secondary school teachers in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties. However, some 13.4% of the teachers whose views were sought were not sure whether or not they would quit teaching on the basis of salary. Table 4.5 summarizes in frequency percentages the views of the teachers on remuneration as an influence on Turnover.

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Table 4.5

Percentage Response on Remuneration on Turnover in Public Secondary Schools (n=253)

ITEM	SD	D	U	A	SA
I am satisfied with timely payments of my salary	30.8	27.3	5.1	17.8	19.0
My salary is adequate to cater for my needs and aspirations	27.3	26.9	8.7	24.1	13.0
Salary I earn is appropriate for my qualifications	28.9	28.1	5.5	16.6	20.9
I am also happy with other payments (allowances)	42.3	22.9	5.9	19.8	9.1
My wage guideline is good	44.3	23.3	7.9	15.8	8.7
I do receive salary increment	26.1	22.9	6.7	23.3	20.9
I would change my job if I get better salary	24.5	19.8	4.3	36.8	14.6
I wouldn't mind the nature of job as long as I get good pay	50.6	26.5	2.0	12.3	8.7
I feel satisfied with teaching because I am adequately remunerated.	24.5	22.1	4.0	31.6	17.8
My salary is unable to sustain my family needs.	19.0	17.8	5.1	27.3	30.8

Source: Survey data (2018)

On the remuneration of teachers, the findings of the study show that a significant proportion (58.1%) of the teachers in secondary schools are generally not satisfied with payments of their salary, which they argue are sometimes never timely. In fact, it emerged from the findings of the study that nearly two-thirds (65.2%) of the teachers interviewed were not happy with the amount of salary they receive and 54.2% of the teachers who took part in the survey rejected the assertion that the salary teachers receive is adequate to cater for their needs and aspirations. The teachers observed that their remuneration cannot be able to make them satisfactorily acquire the basic needs and to adequately provide for their families. In fact, 58.1% of the teachers who took part in survey insisted that their salary is inadequate to sustain their family needs. This accounts for the fact that the Teachers Service Commission does not attract or keep the best professionals due to inadequate salaries, leading to high staff turnover because many of the most experienced and qualified teachers leave the profession to look for better remunerated employment elsewhere.

On whether the remuneration the teachers receive is appropriate for their qualifications, more than a half (57.0%) of the teachers who participated in the study said that what they are paid as salary is never matched with their qualifications, experience and the nature of work they do. This was observed to constitute the reasons for teachers opting out of teaching profession, thereby making teachers to look for alternative jobs elsewhere. This finding is supported by the study done by Osunde and Omoruyi (2005) on the status of teachers and the teaching profession

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in Nigeria, where the results of the study showed that post primary school teachers are not well remunerated and that they are looked down upon because of sometimes delay in payment of salaries and allowances. Similarly, closer home, this finding is corroborated by Chepkemboi, Kiriago and Iravo (2013) study in West Pokot who had sought to find out factors that influence teacher turnover in the Sub County. The results of the study indicated that a majority of the teachers felt that TSC do not give them adequate and fair pay for the work they do, a fact they believed leads to high TSC employees' turnover in West Pokot. Suffice, the results of the current study indicate that majority of teachers would leave TSC given an alternative employment.

On the part of allowances such as house allowance, leave allowance and medical allowance, majority (65.2%) of the respondents were in strong disagreement that they are happy with payments (allowances). They alluded that the allowances paid by TSC is far less than other professionals with similar qualification receive. In support to this finding, Davidson (2007) who conducted a study on understanding and improving Quality of education in Tanzania primary schools reported that teachers are not contented with their remuneration and concluded that, low remuneration is strongly associated to teacher attrition in Tanzania schools. On the same note, Lymo (2014) who had sought to analyze teachers' remuneration in Tanzania revealed that insufficient teachers' salary and delays in payment of teachers' allowances lead to teachers being accorded a low status consequently making teachers to drop the teaching profession and opt for other good paying professions.

Equally, it emerged from the findings of the study that majority (67.6%) of the respondents are generally not satisfied with their wage guidelines, especially in regard to their implementations. This finding was supported with the fact that close to a half (49.0%) of the teachers who took part in the survey were of the general feeling that they hardly receive regular salary increment as expected. Although, the results of the study show that 44.2% of the teacher respondents agreed that they are usually given annual salary increment, more than a half (51.4%) of them had strong feeling that they would change their job if they get better salary. On the other hand, more than one out of every five (21.0%) of the teachers who took part in the survey said they wouldn't mind being secondary school teachers as long as they get good pay. This was an indication that remuneration was one of the driving factors among the teachers in secondary schools that contributes to high turnover.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The study findings concluded that remuneration had a greater influence on teacher turnover in Rachuonyo South and East Sub-Counties. A significant proportion of the teachers in secondary schools are not satisfied with payments of their salary and that most of the teachers were of the opinion that they would easily leave teaching for a better employment. This study therefore recommends that TSC should review and improve teacher remuneration so as to narrow the gap between teachers and other civil servants. This is because the study established that teacher remuneration has a greater influence on teacher turn over and that majority of the teachers are dissatisfied with TSC remuneration.

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