



Original Research Article

The interplay of school welfare provision and teacher performance: The case of Ugandan secondary schools

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This is an account of a cross-sectional study of how school welfare provision influences teacher performance in six government aided secondary schools in Uganda. The study was largely a mixed method involving semi-structured questionnaires and interviews with a convenience sample of 221 participants in the categories of teachers, head teachers, deputy head teachers and directors of studies. The findings are that school administrators provide only those welfare programmes that have a direct bearing on task accomplishment. Second, teachers' performance is high mainly on examination management, punctuality, and co-curricular activities. Third, school welfare provision is however too insignificant to cause a remarkable teacher performance ($r^2=0.0376$). We concluded that school welfare provision will positively influence teacher performance if teachers are reciprocally committed to work and administrators meet teachers varied needs. This argument is in consonance with the Expectancy Theory where fulfillment of people's needs and motivations (instrumentality) influences their performance (valence) as they exert effort to arouse commitment.

Key words: School welfare, teacher performance, teacher motivation, teacher commitment, expectancy theory

INTRODUCTION

The theme about staff welfare is an important milestone in human resource management in education institutions. Schools are supposed to focus their attention of improved performance in order to highlight their quality and relevance. However many factors influencing performance of schools exist but in this paper the authors focus attention on welfare of teachers. Welfare provision is vital in determining the success of any school because it is one of the bases of motivation of staff. In order for head teachers to manage the performance of teachers, it is critical to provide a research study to highlight how welfare issues could better be placed within school progress as drivers of performance.

Globally, teachers play a crucial role in promoting the development of society (Nkata, 2003). In South Africa and Nigeria, teachers are seen as creating sustainable learning environments (Mahlomaholo, 2011; Onwu and Chika, 2015), and as advocates of social justice and citizenship (Francis and le Roux, 2011). In schools, the teacher is solely responsible for training the child to become a good and

'active' world citizen (Chapin, 2003). Teachers determine the quality of a country's education system, especially the extent to which the products of education meet the requirements of societal development (Linda, 2008; Türkkahraman, 2012). Therefore teachers must perform in ways that enhance positive schooling (UNESCO, 2008). However, for teachers to ensure that they take the lead in improving education, their performance in terms of how they educate learners has to prove commendable (Onwu and Mogari, 2004).

Literature review shows that the concept of welfare is concerned with the total wellbeing of employees both at school and at home (Armstrong, 2006). The term 'school welfare' is interpreted to mean the provision of a minimal level of well-being and social support (Bamusananire, 2007). Dale (2006) specifically defines school welfare as referring to teachers' health status and happiness, as well as their safety, although he does not provide what constitutes teachers' happiness. According to Jepkemoi (2014), the provision of well-being to teachers is a source

of earning and satisfaction which is likely to increase their productivity because they are motivated and happy. Dessler (2008) supports the same view when he comments that organizations provide welfare facilities to their employees to keep their motivation levels high. When teachers are motivated and satisfied their performance increases to improve their productivity. Cole (2006) theoretically concludes that people join organizations in order to meet and satisfy their needs through statutory and non-statutory welfare programmes. This analysis leads us to pose the question. What sort of welfare programmes do schools provide their teachers to satisfy their ego or even to enable them meet their social needs?

The concept of performance, on the other hand, is an activity in which an individual is able to accomplish successfully the task assigned to him or her. It refers to adjusting behaviours, results, and actions of work to achieve results or outcomes (Nsubuga, 2008). However in schools, teachers are ready to adjust their behaviours and actions to enable improved performance if their needs are met. This brings in happiness which consequently motivates their actions (Priti, 2009; Shaun and York, 2000). Teacher performance, thus, is an essential requirement if a school is to maintain its efforts towards the realization of the school goals. The role of school managers is to attain school goals (Cole, 2006; Park et al., 2003) while the role of teachers is to maximize return for the school through achieving the objectives, goals and mission of the school (Priti, 2009; Shaun and York, 2000). School managers' presence is crucial because they provide welfare support programmes and meet teachers' needs in order to facilitate performance. Teachers' performance is also crucial because it sets the pace for the accomplishment of school goals (Maicibi, 2005).

Study problem

The problem of this study is that many scholars have researched the factors influencing teacher performance with the intention of finding out how to make teachers capable of improving learning and education as a whole. For example researchers such as (Nsubuga, 2008; Mugagga et al., 2013) point out school leadership, Rossouw (2013) focuses attention on learner discipline, and finally (OECD, 2003; Hanushek and Rivkin, 2009) look at teacher quality as some of the determinants of teacher performance. Although important work has been done, the literature on teacher performance is still limited and fragmentary. The first shortcoming is that previous studies do not explore how school welfare could also influence teacher performance. School welfare is taking centre-stage in modern school administration since it is one of the staff motivation elements (Maicibi, 2005).

In Uganda teaching, nonetheless, is facing a second shortcoming of losing many of its credible and intelligent teachers who have quit the profession on grounds of meager pay (Bamusananire, 2010; Okwenje, 2014). Young people today do not even want to pursue teaching as a

career because it is considered a profession of poverty stricken folks (Ayayi and Oguntoye, 2003). Teaching, which was at one time, in Uganda, a profession that gave pride to whoever joined it eventually became publicly detested and ridiculed (Sekiwu, 2003). People join a professional calling not only to pursue a career but also to earn a living and expect high achievements from such a career in order to improve their personal, family, community wellbeing as well as their social status (UNESCO, 2004; Ogunsaju, 2002).

Research questions

In this paper we attempt to find solution to the problem of teacher welfare by addressing the following research questions. What school welfare programmes are provided by administrators to influence teacher performance? What is the level of teachers' performance in the sampled schools? How does school welfare provision influence teachers' performance? The difference of this study from any other is that it tries to critically examine how school welfare programmes influence institutional performance. It comes up with a school welfare package for schools which tries to advocate for a balance between the fulfillment of teachers' needs and the school goals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research methods we used were suited to collect and analyze data on the research questions. We then adopted a mixed research paradigm to collect numerical and in-depth data about the study problem. Creswell (2009) writes that mixed research methods integrate a qualitative method for exploratory purposes and a quantitative method with large samples for the researcher to generalize results to a population. We used the interview data to validate the numerical findings.

We also collected data from a cross section of head teachers, deputy head teachers, director of studies, and teachers from six government-aided schools in Mukono district. From a population of 550 subjects in the study schools, a convenient sample of 221 was generated using Morgan and Krejcie's table of random numbers (Amin, 2005; Mugenda, 2007). The random numbers in this table are created using the following formula: $\text{Sample size} = N / N + (1 + e^{0.05})$ where N (population), e (standard error) and 0.05 (level of significance). From the 221 sample, head teachers were six (6), deputies were twelve (12), directors of studies were eight (8), and teachers were one hundred and ninety five (195).

We used semi-structured questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary analysis to collect primary data. We also analyzed teacher attendance records, minutes of staff meeting, learners' assessment records, and student registers for documentary information.

Variables and instrument development

School Welfare Provision: This is an independent variable

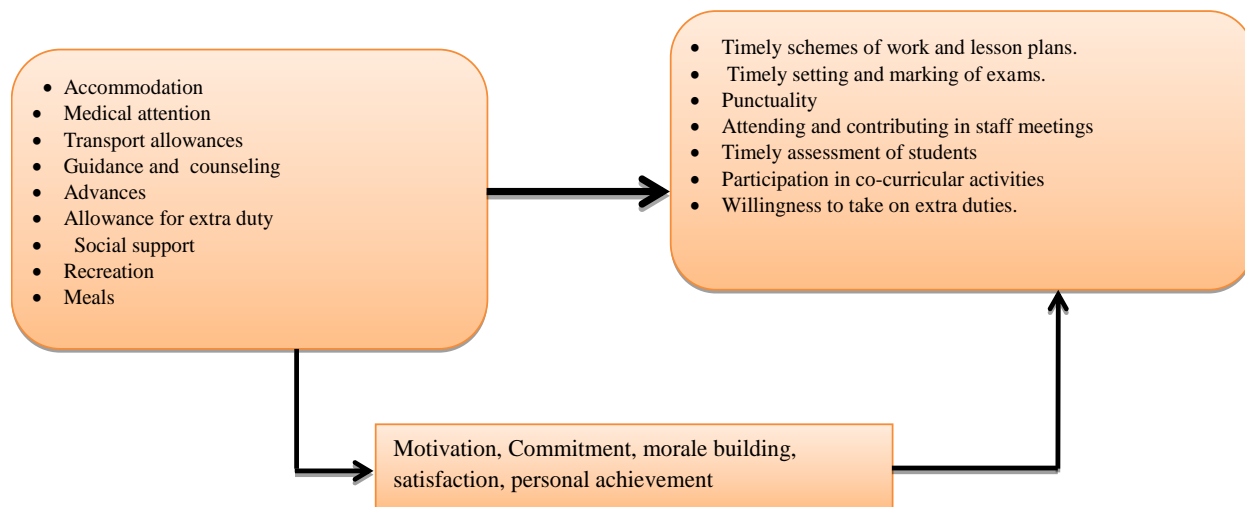


Figure 1: Conceptual Design School Welfare Teacher Performance

operationalized as the delivery of those things or programmes that boost the wellbeing of employees or teachers in particular (Bamusananire, 2007; Jepkemoi, 2014). School Welfare Provision, as an independent variable, is measured by assumptions such as:

a) Non-statutory benefits like Health status and safety, happiness, social status, earning (such as allowances) (Jepkemoi, 2014; Bamusananire, 2007; Dale, 2006).

b) Statutory benefits like Salary, Social Security Fund, gratuity

c) Tokenism

d) Bare minimum given to meet their human needs like transport, housing, provision of social and recreation facilities (Atkinson et al., 2003)

e) Promotion of Career and access life necessities like provision of accommodation, food and promotion at the job (Watson, 2002)

f) Fair treatment of employees, recognition to increase commitment and reduce demoralization Cascio, 2006)

g) Lunch, breakfast, meals, improved self-esteem (Bowen, 2008).

h) Recreation facilities, extra duty allowances, soft loans, condolences, safety, financial support in organizing social events such as marriage ceremonies and funerals, guidance and counseling (Boddy, 2008).

Level of teacher performance: This is a dependent variable operationalized the rate of student achievement on standardized tests and the labour market return on education provision (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2009). In a school setting, the indicators of the level of teacher performance could be:

a) In terms of test scores, examination results and test scores (The New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007),

b) Students' ability to apply what is learnt, and the rate at which students move up the learning ladder, and the

achievements of the school in equipping skills for survival (Decenzo and Robbins, 2002).

c) Results an organization produces, goal attainment (Nsubuga, 2008).

d) Students' outcomes (Kruger, 2009)

e) Teaching, continuous assessment of students, marking, making schemes and lesson plans participating in co-curricular activities (Redder, 2010).

f) Timely scheming and lesson planning, timely setting, student testing, and marking of exams, punctuality, attending and contributing in staff meetings, timely assessment of learners, participation in co-curriculum activities, and willingness to take on extra duties, and teaching with dedication and regularity (Nalweyiso, 2012).

Linking School Welfare provision and teacher performance necessitates building morale and commitment of teachers (Armstrong, 2001), their motivation (Maicibi, 2005; Lord and Harvey, 2002), being goal-directed and building work-related behaviour (Latham and Pinder, 2005). It also provided self-actualization through personal advancement (Pritchard et al., 2002). The operationalization of 'school welfare provision' and 'teacher performance' is articulated in a conceptual design (Figure 1), which we used to guide us to empirically understand how school welfare influences teachers' performance. In presenting this conceptual design, it is not our intention to bring the different bits and pieces together into a 'grand theory' but rather to provide us with a theoretical lens through which to examine the study questions.

The conceptual design (Figure 1) provided the study variables used to develop the semi-structured questionnaire. The questions from the gaps in the literature were also integrated into the interview guide for in-depth data. We then tested for reliability of the semi-structured questionnaire and results indicated that items that

measured school welfare ($\beta=0.815$) and teacher performance ($\beta=0.702$) were found to be reliable because correlation coefficient results for the two variables were all above 0.50. Using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), guidance and counseling ($\beta=-0.023$), happiness ($\beta=0.012$), and social support ($\beta=0.12$) which were indicators for school welfare indicators, and volunteering which was part of the indicators of teacher performance were removed from the instrument because of their weak Eigen values. We also sought ethical clearance from the schools we visited for data collection. We got official letters of introduction from the head teachers and also sought permission from whoever was to participate in the study before engaging them. However in the course of interview, all those who felt they should quit were allowed to do so. Finally, the names and contacts of the study participants were left anonymous by use of pseudonyms such as School A and School B, etc.

Quantitative data analysis was the main paradigm used and derived from closed-ended items of the questionnaire. But qualitative data was used to merely support the quantitative findings. Quantitative data was edited and later analyzed using frequency tables, means and standard deviation in order to describe emerging phenomena. We also used Pearson Correlation Coefficient to compute the relationship between school welfare provision and teachers' performance (Kothari, 2007). Qualitative data was derived from interviews, open-ended questions from the semi-structured questionnaire, and school documents. Qualitative data provided in-vivo codes— direct quotations from the interview and documentary transcripts (Scott, 2004), directly extracted to support results from the quantitative data findings. We then discussed the qualitative data using the interpretative paradigm in order to develop theory (Thomas, 2006). We also cross-referenced our findings with existing theory and contextual literature (Andrews et al., 2011).

RESULTS

School welfare provision indicators

Participants were asked the following question. What school welfare programmes are provided by administrators to influence teacher performance? Data in table 1 shows that school administrators are highly selective when it comes to school welfare provision. They are only interested to provide those welfare programmes that directly facilitate task accomplishment like money (34.4%), transport allowances (40.7%), meals (45.2%), and extra duty allowances (43.4%) are the only school welfare facilities provided to teachers to enable them smoothly performance their tasks. This is why school welfare provision is generally low ($\mu=2.23$) across all indicators.

Interview data also supports this preceding observation. For example, the Director of Studies of School A has this to say:

“Teachers need money advance because their services must be paid for. Teachers who come from distant areas to the schools where they work need transport allowances to support easy movement. Meals, no doubt, need to be provided at schools for teachers to get the energy and health to concentrate and do an intelligent job. Finally, a normal working day for every teacher is 8 hours a day. Therefore for all duties done outside this working period must automatically be paid an extra allowance” (**Director of Studies, School A**).

Again from results in Table 1, we found that administrators are not interested in provision of welfare programmes that largely promote teachers' self-esteem, recognition and personal status. For example, from the results it is indicated that recreation (39.4%) and accommodation (33.5%) are rarely provided by administrators. This view is reflected further in the school minutes. Whenever the issue of conditions of service was brought to table, head teachers did not support the giving of what they referred to as welfare programmes that are a liability to the school. In the minutes of the staff meeting of School B, this is reported:

“The school, however, shall not invest money in providing teachers with trips, housing and school parties. These are expensive for nothing ventures that do not directly bring positive achievements for the schools. They appease teachers but one cannot realize their benefits in the short run”. The report from the minutes concludes “the meager school funds must be allocated in only those things that bring positive productivity to the school” (**Minute extract, School B**).

Another striking result from Table 1 is that administrators tend to overly disregard the provision of medical facilitation, yet it is one of the strongest statutory welfare obligations in industrial relations. The biggest number of participants, for instance, strongly disagree that medical allowance (61.1%) is provided by schools. Likewise, a teacher from School C had this to say:

“It is improper [hmmm]...indeed for our school not to have a health insurance scheme. When teachers fall sick, how can schools help out? Oohh!!! Administrators fail to realize that sickness is for everyone, just as death! There should be a fund to cater for all these life uncertainties like medical care in order to provide meaning to motivation” (**Teacher, School C**).

In this submission, teachers feel that schools are obligated to provide decent medical care especially where medical issues are life threatening concerns that hit every one irrespective of rank and level. It is also a statutory obligation that medical facilitation is an internal requirement of schools to undertake.

Level of teacher performance

We also asked the second research question. What is the level of teacher performance in the sampled schools? Table 2 provides the summary of the findings.

Findings in Table 2 show that teachers' performance is

Table 1: School welfare Programmes provided

Welfare indicators	Likert scale Responses [f (%)]					Mean (std.)	Interpretation
	S/ Agree	Agree	Disagree	S/Disagree	Missing		
Money advance	60 (27.1)	76 (34.4)	22 (10.0)	62 (28.1)	1 (0.5)	2.26 (0.981)	Low
Transport allowance	32 (14.5)	90 (40.7)	20 (9.0)	79 (35.7)		2.23 (1.038)	Low
Accommodation	37 (16.7)	69 (31.2)	41 (18.6)	74 (33.5)		2.35 (1.13)	Low
Medical attention	50 (22.6)	28 (12.7)	8 (3.6)	135 (61.1)		1.59 (0.85)	Low
Meals	23 (10.4)	100 (45.2)	43 (19.5)	52 (23.5)	3 (1.4)	2.61(1.05)	Low
Extra duty allowance	31 (14.0)	96 (43.4)	29 (13.1)	65 (29.4)		2.40 (1.05)	Low
Recreational activities	45 (20.4)	74 (33.5)	15 (6.8)	87 (39.4)		2.08 (1.00)	Low
Grand mean & std.						2.23 (1.004)	Low

Legend: 1.00 – 1.74 (very low), 1.75 – 2.39 (low), 2.40 – 3.19 (moderate), 3.20 – 4.00 (very high)

Table 2. Teachers' Work Performance

Performance Indicator	Responses rating teacher performance (What is the level of teacher performance?)				
	V/High	High	Low	V/ Low	Missing
Set exams timely	32 (14.5)	83 (37.6)	70 (31.7)	30 (13.6)	6 (2.7)
Mark exams timely	31 (14.0)	112 (50.7)	62 (28.1)	12 (5.4)	4 (1.8)
Attend staff meetings	21 (9.5)	108 (48.9)	68 (30.8)	20 (9.0)	4 (1.8)
Punctual	17 (7.7)	112 (50.7)	77 (34.8)	11 (5.0)	4 (1.8)
Co-curricular	28 (12.7)	119 (53.8)	67 (30.3)	2 (0.9)	5 (2.3)
Scheme in time	32 (14.5)	116 (52.5)	56(25.3)	11 (5.0)	6 (2.7)
Lesson plan in time	28 (12.7)	117 (58.9)	57 (25.8)	13 (5.9)	6 (2.7)
Timely reporting	23 (10.4)	115 (52.0)	58 (26.2)	19 (8.6)	6 (2.7)
Working extra hours	43 (19.5)	97 (43.9)	58 (26.2)	17 (7.7)	6 (2.7)

Source: Field data

Table 3: Relationship between School Welfare and Teachers' Performance

Description	Coefficients
Pearson Correlation(r)	0.194**
P - Value	0.005
Coefficient of Determination (r ²)	0.0376
N = 221	

Source: Field

high on all indicators despite the low provision of teacher welfare (Table 1). Teachers' performance exceeds in the timely marking of exams (50.7%), being punctual (50.7%), supervision of co-curricular activities (53.8%), making timely schemes of work (52.5%), lesson planning (58.9%), and timely reporting to work (52.0%) because the school administration supports attainment of academic goals in the sampled schools by providing task performance welfare systems.

School welfare and teacher performance

The third research question stands as such. Is there a relationship between school welfare provision and teacher performance? A Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) was run (Table 3) and results show that there was a weak

relationship between school welfare and teacher performance ($r = 0.194$, $p = 0.05$).

By way of implication, although administrators provide school welfare purposely to boost teachers' commitment to work (Table 2), the sort of school welfare provided is however too insignificant to cause a remarkable positive change in work-related behaviour ($r^2 = 0.0376$). This is further the reason why participants' percentage responses, in Table 1 and 2, were generally weak ($\leq 62\%$).

DISCUSSION

It can be interpreted that school welfare provision in most schools in Uganda is selective. It is those inter-mural welfare programmes that directly support task

accomplishment that are provided by school management. Jepkemoi (2004) supports the afore-mentioned view that the core logic for providing welfare schemes is to increase the productivity of organizations. It is in the powers of the organization to invest funds in only those welfare programmes that facilitate the efficiency process of teachers for them to maintain high productivity. In a bid to do so however, school administrators neglect the provision of an entire welfare package of teachers creating a motivational imbalance. Shafrits and Russell (2001) argue that employees are an important business resource that must be managed carefully in order to maximize return on investment and achieve business objectives. This means that school administrators have to provide various benefits to ensure employees' welfare is taken care off.

Onwu and Chika (2015) further contemplate that schools should understand that a healthy and stress free teacher is a major asset to the organization and should therefore provide all school welfare services and programmes that enlist a sizeable degree of motivation among these teachers. This is why Dessler (2008) argues that welfare of employees must also include monitoring of working conditions in order to create industrial harmony.

It is also imperative to note that medical facilitation, however important it is, is not provided by schools. This makes it unethical, in industrial relations language, to disregard provision of health and safety to employees. Manju and Mishra (2007), for example, write that the International Labour Organization (ILO) broadly classifies health service provision among occupational safety and protective measures critically vital to welfare advancement of workers. Because of its highly significant role in human relations building in schools, there is thus dire need for administrators to rethink the school welfare package to include medical access either as allowances or an institution of a health insurance scheme. In this way, administrators of schools will be able to easily motivate, build morale and commitment for their teachers and also satisfaction.

Results also paint the bigger picture that high teacher performance is largely reflected in items that facilitate teaching, examination management, and co-curricular activities which are the core technical support mechanisms for student achievement in schools. This is in line with Huczynski and Buchanan (2007) who argue that task performance includes behaviours associated with core technical activities of the organization. In the final analysis, much as school administrations provide school welfare to facilitate teachers' work commitment, the school welfare provided is however too little to cause a remarkable positive change in teacher performance. Priti (2009) critically says that low welfare provision suffocates performance standards of employees because their motivation and morale are constrained. People join organizations purposely to service their needs. When schools in turn cannot provide satisfactory achievement of needs, morale declines tremendously.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that school welfare provision will positively influence teacher performance if teachers are reciprocally committed to work while at the same time administrators meet teachers varied needs. This argument is in support of Vroom's Expectancy Theory as the theoretical lens for the study. The theory emphasizes that people join organizations with expectations about fulfillment of their needs and motivations. In the process, they also have to satisfy the organization's goals (Lunenburg, 2011). The needs and motivations represent people's social welfare (Greenberg, 2011). As a result, fulfillment of people's needs and motivations (instrumentality) influences their performance (valence) as they exert effort (Hellriegel and Slocum, 2011; McShane and Von Glinow, 2011). Borrowing from the philosophy of the Expectancy theory, we recommend that:

a) School administrators and policy makers construct a minimum social welfare package for teachers. It should consist of a set of welfare programmes that satisfy teachers' varied needs as well as providing the capacity to fulfill school goals. This welfare package should be implemented with the aim of arousing teacher behaviours that promote commitment to work and personal advancement. For example, they can implement the minimum welfare package with the mandatory conviction that the beneficiary teacher is one prepared to work hard, and devise ways, to increase performance.

b) The teaching profession provides useful avenues to enable teachers to meet their welfare needs and motivations with little hardships. There should be a process where teachers' needs and motivations intrinsically and extrinsically influence their behaviours to always look to high performance and positive change experiences in the schools. Through professional training and development programmes in the form of workshops, seminars and retreats, administrators can motivate teachers into high performers, creative and innovative workers.

c) School administrators always reward teacher performance in order to optimize teachers' commitment, creativity and achievement. This is because the value of the reward should be highly productive. This could be done either through financial remuneration or improvement in the terms and conditions of service.

For further research, there is need to replicate the same study on all other education institutions because the issue of welfare improvement is universally demanded in organizational growth and development. Secondly, there is need to investigate the factors influencing school welfare provision because these factors account for the level of welfare access in schools.

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