

# Demographic Factors and Job Satisfaction: A Case of Teachers in Public Primary Schools in Bomet County, Kenya

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## Abstract

The success of any school depends among others on the social capital including teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders who support the business of imparting knowledge. Satisfied and committed teachers impacts both on individual student performance and general academic standards of the school. The study explored job satisfaction among primary school teachers in relation to certain demographic variables. The objective of this study was therefore to examine the influence of demographic factors on job satisfaction of teachers in public primary schools in Bomet County, Kenya. This was done by conducting a survey using a self-administered questionnaire. A total of 848 teachers in 129 primary schools participated in the study. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The overall finding was that teachers were ambivalent on job satisfaction, meaning that they were not sure whether they are satisfied with their jobs. However, teachers were satisfied with their colleague co-teachers and happy when assigned administrative duties. Teachers were more satisfied when authority is delegated to them. It is evident that school leadership need to improve on in ways of supervision, systems of reward, ways of communication and working conditions. It was further established that there was significant differences in the level satisfaction of male and female teachers for satisfaction with administrative duties ( $t = 2.645$ ) and satisfaction with teaching ( $t = 2.448$ ). It was also found that male teachers are more satisfied with administrative duties ( $m=3.2$ ;  $s.d. = 1.05$ ) than female teachers ( $m=2.91$ ;  $s.d.= 1.18$ ). Similarly, male teaches are more satisfied with teaching ( $m= 2.6$ ;  $s.d.= 0.70$ ) than female teachers ( $m= 2.5$ ;  $s.d. = 0.79$ ). This implies that female teachers are not keen on taking up additional administrative duties in the school. Overall, there was no significant difference between the levels of job satisfaction between male and female teachers. On the other hand, it was found that job satisfaction was positively correlated with the 'age of respondent' ( $r= 0.092$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and 'experience in teaching' ( $r= 0.081$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction; demographic characteristics.

## 1. Introduction

Satisfaction is a psychological phenomenon which is highly complex and subjective. Job satisfaction describes how contented a person is with their job or assignment. Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as the 'like or dislike' of one's job, while Locke (1996) defined it as the pleasurable and positive emotion which comes from the general attitude towards one's job. A positive and favorable attitude towards the job indicates satisfaction, while a negative and unfavorable attitude towards a job indicates job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2003). From the education perspective, Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2006) defined job satisfaction as the effective relationship between teacher and their teaching duties. It is worthy to note that job satisfaction does not relate to how well the work is done, or how much effort employees give (Hughes et al., 2006) but how well employees like their job. Job satisfaction could lead employees to be more productive, innovative, and dedicated to maintaining quality services. It may also cause a high turn-over rate (Lim, 2007).

In the context of this study, job satisfaction is taken to mean the positive attitudes and feelings which employees have towards their jobs. Job satisfaction is a multi-dimensional construct which include; pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, working conditions, co-workers, nature of work and communication. In Kenya, teachers are hired by the Teachers Service Commission and the question of pay and promotion are centrally managed by this institution (Teachers Service Commission Act, 2012). This study therefore did not attempt to evaluate the relationship between satisfaction, pay and promotion because the school management has no control or influence on determination of the two variables.

Job satisfaction is related to motivation but they are not the same although they are very similar (Aziri, 2011). Many theories on motivation tend to explain the concepts of job satisfaction. The theories explaining job satisfaction can be categorized in two main groups namely; content theories (or needs-based approach theories) and process theories.

### *Content theories*

Content theories focus on identifying the needs, drives and goals that make an individual get satisfaction (Luthans, 2005). Some of the theories in this category are: Maslow's theory of 'Hierarchy of Needs' (Maslow, 1943); Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory; Achievement Theory (McClelland, 1961) and ERG Theory which regroups Maslow's list of needs into three classes of needs namely: Existence, Relatedness, and Growth (Alderfer, 1969). Many of the content theories premise that unsatisfied needs lead to unstable situations.

### *Maslow theory on Hierarchy of Needs*

Maslow theory is a popular and attractive theory in the contemporary world. According to Maslow (1943), people seek to satisfy five basic needs which exist in a hierarchy whereby a person gradually graduates from one level to the next. The five basic needs are; physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. Maslow theory posits that once the needs at one level are satisfied, it ceases to motivate and the desire shifts to the next level (Dick, 2001). The lower needs are most salient until satisfied, at which point the next higher needs come into play. It is inferred from Maslow's theory that employees' need their lower level needs fulfilled before they are inspired by the higher level needs. Managers and leaders must therefore appreciate that workers have different needs which must be met to enable them perform at the higher level for the organization's success. Unsatisfied needs influence behaviour. Lower needs such as adequate pay and family must be met before focusing on high level needs (Jones and George, 2009).

### *Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory*

Herzberg theory posits that there are two factors which lead people to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their work. Herzberg et al (1959) argued that the factors which cause satisfaction are totally different from those which cause dissatisfaction. Employee satisfaction depends on two sets of issues: "hygiene" issues and motivators. Hygiene factors include company policies, supervision, salary, security, status, interpersonal relations and working conditions. Hygiene issues cannot motivate employees but can cause dissatisfaction. Motivators are issues such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. Motivators create satisfaction by fulfilling individuals' needs for meaning and personal growth. When hygiene areas are addressed, motivators will promote job satisfaction and encourage production. Once hygiene factors are fulfilled, the workers unhappiness and poor job performance is avoided. However, high happiness and high job performance would never be achieved unless motivators are provided. On the other hand, if workers have the motivators they would display high performance and satisfaction with their job even if the hygiene needs were not gratified (Worrell, 2004).

### *Process theories*

Process theories focus on how the process works are sustained over time (Luthans, 2005). Some of the theories in this category are equity theory (Adams, 1963), expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), and goal setting theory (Lock and Latham, 2002) among others.

*Equity Theory* posits that employees weigh what they put into a job against the outcome. Equity is realized when employees feel that compensation for effort is comparable or similar with those of others in similar assignments. Inequity will exist where the employees feels that the efforts-reward ratio is imbalanced. Aspects of rewards include; salary, recognition, promotion and responsibilities among others (Spector, 2007). Some studies have shown that rewards increase employee satisfaction only when they are valued and perceived as equitable by the employees (Perry et al, 2006). Employees respond to inequity by reducing the effort of doing the job, and/or asking for more pay or promotion (Adams, 1963). Based on the premise of equity theory, leadership and management of organizations should endeavor to maintain equity by linking effort to rewards. Employee motivation may be influenced by perception of fairness based effort-reward ratio which may have an indirect/direct effect on satisfaction and performance.

*Expectancy Theory* posits that people are motivated to work and achieve if they believe the anticipated outcomes are worthy (Fang, 2008; Redmond, 2010). The theory identifies three aspects that determine individual motivation as expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (Vroom, 1964). Expectancy relates to a person's perception that there is a positive correlation between efforts and performance. Instrumentality relates to the perception that favorable performance will result in a desirable reward while valence relates to the perception that reward will satisfy an important need. Several authors (Lawler et al, 2009; Wehrich and Koontz, 1999) have asserted that people will adopt certain behaviour if the desire to satisfy the need is strong enough to make the effort worthwhile and help them in achieving their goals. Based on this theory, it was premised that performance is influenced by satisfaction of employees needs by endeavoring to align their desires with the organization goals.

*Goal setting Theory* provides that goals are the most important factors affecting motivation and behaviour of employee especially when faced with specific challenging goals (Locke and Latham, 2002). Goals affect performance through four mechanisms (Locke, 1996). First, goals serve a directive function in that they direct attention and effort toward goal-relevant activities and away from goal-irrelevant activities. Second, goals have an energizing function. High goals lead to greater effort than low goals. Third, goals affect persistence. Fourth, goals affect action indirectly by leading to the arousal, discovery, and/or use of task-relevant knowledge and strategies. The goal-performance relationship is strongest when people are committed to their goals. For goals to be effective, people need summary feedback that reveals progress in relation to their goals (Locke, 1996).

In an organizational setting, both the organization's goal and the individual manager's goal are a times in conflict. When specific goals of the person are aligned with the group's goal, the group's performance is enhanced (Seijts and Latham, 2000). Without such alignment, personal goals have a detrimental effect on a

group's performance. Goal conflict undermines performance if it motivates incompatible action tendencies. Feelings of success in the workplace occur to the extent that employees see that they are able to grow and meet the job challenges (Locke and Latham, 2002). The common factor in all process theories is the emphasis on the cognitive processes determining the employee level of satisfaction and motivation.

### **Antecedents of Job Satisfaction**

Antecedents of are factors that cause job satisfaction. Spector (1997) places these factors in two categories. One category relates to the environment and the other to individual factors. Individual factors include psychological factors such as personality, attitude, behaviour, and/or demographics factors such as age, gender, educational level among others (Rauf, 2012; Ramanaidu, 2011). Other authors have further classified the factors into cognitive and affective categories (Organ and Near, 1985). Cognitive factors consist of personal judgments and beliefs while affective factors are of feelings and emotions about the job.

As mentioned earlier, Herzberg et al (1959) categorized antecedent factors into those which cause satisfaction and those which cause dissatisfaction. The five factors thought to facilitate job satisfaction are achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement, while the five factors thought to be determinants of job dissatisfaction, are policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. Job satisfaction may also be influenced by other employee characteristics or dispositional factors. Job satisfaction is therefore an intricate construct influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic elements (Marzukia et al, 2012).

Further, job satisfaction has been categorized into two main aspects namely; facets satisfaction and overall satisfaction (Suma and Lesha, 2013). Overall satisfaction focuses on the general state of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the person. Facets satisfaction refers to the tendency of an employee to be satisfied with aspects of the job (Parvin and Kabir, 2011; Spector, 2007). Job satisfaction may also decrease when the employees are detracted from their core duties (Wright, 2003). This may arise due to confusion or a feeling of not contributing to the core function. Key antecedent factors of job satisfaction as follows;

*Pay or Salaries:* Pay satisfaction relates to the employees' consideration on compensation for the services rendered and may include all economic benefits received in course of employment. Employees who are adequately compensated tend to feel obliged to reciprocate (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Teachers may feel dissatisfied because of working hours and salaries (Zembylas and Papanastasiou, 2006).

*Promotion:* As teachers gain experience, they expect to be appreciated or given more authority through promotions. Eslami and Gharakhani (2012) reported a positive and significant correlation between job satisfaction (promotions, personal relationships, and favourable conditions at work) and organizational commitment.

*Co-workers:* Employees desire support, respect and recognition among colleagues. Satisfaction with co-workers arises from collegiality and interactions among colleagues. In a school set-up administrative support and networking among teachers in instructional leadership may enhance job satisfaction.

*Supervision:* Supervision and leadership is a very important factor to all employees. Satisfaction with supervision arise where there is better relationship with supervisor. Experienced and older employees desire less supervision than less experience employees.

*Work itself:* Human beings like interesting and challenging assignments. Jobs which are exciting and challenging will therefore cause increase in job satisfaction.

*Working conditions/environment:* Working conditions relates to the environment within which an individual works in an organization. Working conditions like clean classrooms encourage employees to perform their work better and may likely cause a positive correlation on organizational commitment.

### **Objective of the study**

The objective of the study was to determine whether demographic factors hand any influence on job satisfaction of teachers in public primary schools in Bomet County.

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between the level of Job Satisfaction of male and female teachers in public primary schools

H<sub>02</sub> Demographic Factors have no significant influence on job satisfaction

### **Research Methods**

The study focused on the general job satisfaction of employees in the institution. A quantitative research design was adopted where primary data was collected from the respondents through the administration of close-ended questionnaire based on the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) developed by Spector (1997) was adopted. JSS is a nine-facet survey instrument with 36 items designed to assess employee attitudes with respect to their jobs.

However, for purposes of this study, the factors considered were supervision, appreciation, working conditions, relations with co-workers, teaching, administrative duties and communication. Satisfaction was measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The lowest score '1' indicated a "strongly disagree" and the other end of the scale 5 indicated a "strongly agree" rating for the statement. 'Satisfaction' is determined by the higher values while 'dissatisfaction' is determined by the lower values (Spector, 1985). This tool was modified for use in the school environment and captures those factors which in our view may be influenced by the head teachers' leadership style.

## Results

### *Job Satisfaction*

Table 1 presents the findings on teachers' perception on Job Satisfaction. The mean scores on all factors of job satisfaction ranged from 2.2 to 4.1, meaning that teachers were ambivalent to moderately satisfied with their jobs. Teachers were ambivalent on supervision ( $m=2.25$ ), appreciation ( $m=2.7$ ), working conditions ( $m=2.79$ ), communication ( $m=2.61$ ), and teaching ( $m=2.57$ ) meaning they are on the lower borderline of neutral. This implies that teachers do not like the way the head teachers supervise, appreciate, and communicate. Teachers also do not like the working conditions in the schools. Possibly, the poor working conditions has a multiplier effect causing the teachers not to like teaching in the schools.

Satisfaction with administrative duties ( $m=3.15$ ) is on upper side of neutral meaning that the teachers are not sure whether they are satisfied. Satisfaction with relationship with co-workers ( $m=4.15$ ;  $s.d.=0.85$ ), had the highest mean score. This implies that teachers are satisfied with co-teachers. Generally, overall job satisfaction was ambivalent ( $m=2.89$ ).

*Table 4: Teachers perception on Job Satisfaction*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Sd.</i>
Supervision	845	2.2501	1.02306
Appreciation	846	2.7971	1.02663
Working conditions	845	2.7625	0.87375
Co-workers	837	4.1511	0.85535
Communication	836	2.6188	0.70817
Teaching	836	2.5786	0.75156
Admin. Duties	837	3.1589	1.11662
Job Satisfaction	847	2.8969	0.47714

### **Effect of gender on teachers' job satisfaction**

The results of an independent t-test on the comparison of male and female teachers level of job satisfaction is presented in Table 2. The mean score of each of the seven factors of job satisfaction varies from 2.27 to 4.20 in scale of 1 to 5. There were significant differences in the level satisfaction of male and female teachers for satisfaction with administrative duties ( $t=2.645$ ) and satisfaction with teaching ( $t=2.448$ ). It was also found that male teachers are more satisfied with administrative duties ( $m=3.2$ ;  $s.d.=1.05$ ) than female teachers ( $m=2.91$ ;  $s.d.=1.18$ ). Similarly, male teachers are more satisfied with teaching ( $m=2.6$ ;  $s.d.=0.70$ ) than female teachers ( $m=2.5$ ;  $s.d.=0.79$ ). This implies that female teachers do not like taking up additional administrative duties in the school. Overall, there was no significant difference between the levels of job satisfaction between male and female teachers. The finding is in consonance with the results reported by Neelam (2014) in a similar study conducted among primary school teachers in Uttar Pradesh state in India.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Job Satisfaction of Teachers

	Gender	N	Mean	s.d.	t	Sig.
Supervision	Male	466	2.2718	1.018	.685	.494
	Female	375	2.2231	1.034		
Appreciation	Male	467	2.7966	.994	-.011	.992
	Female	375	2.7973	1.071		
Working conditions	Male	467	2.7780	.848	.645	.519
	Female	374	2.7389	.907		
Co-workers	Male	462	4.1050	.853	-1.74	.081
	Female	371	4.2089	.854		
Communication	Male	462	2.6227	.666	.166	.868
	Female	370	2.6144	.760		
Teaching	Male	462	2.6315	.706	2.448	.015
	Female	370	2.5041	.792		
Admin. Duties	Male	463	3.2495	1.050	2.645	.008
	Female	370	3.0446	1.181		
Job Satisfaction	Male	468	2.9197	.449	1.610	.108
	Female	375	2.8664	.510		

### Influence of demographic factors and Job Satisfaction

Table 3 presents the results of correlation analysis between demographic factors and job satisfaction constructs. Appreciation by a head teacher was positively correlated with age of the respondent ( $r = 0.82$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that teachers of higher age group will likely be more motivated to satisfaction by appreciation made by the head teachers.

Communication of the head teachers was significantly correlated with the age of the respondent ( $r = 0.79$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). The older the teachers, the better they tend to communicate or connect well with head teachers. Gender of the respondent was negatively correlated to the teaching duties ( $r = -0.085$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Teaching was also positively correlated to the age of the respondent ( $r = 0.171$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and working experience ( $r = 0.127$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, gender of the respondent is negatively correlated to administrative duties ( $r = -0.101$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). 'Education level' was also negatively correlated with 'assignment of administrative duties' ( $r = -0.098$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

Overall, job satisfaction was positively correlated with the 'age of respondent' ( $r = 0.092$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and 'experience in teaching' ( $r = 0.081$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 3: Correlation between demographic factors and job satisfaction variables

	Supervi- sion	Apprecia- tion	Working conditions	Co-workers	Communica- tion	Teaching	Admin. Duties	Job Satisfac- tion
Gender	-.024	.000	-.022	.060	-.006	-.085*	-.091**	-.055
Marital Status	-.008	.024	-.007	-.023	.025	.012	-.060	-.014
Age of Respondent	.020	.074*	.042	.012	.079*	.171**	-.020	.092**
Education	.026	.042	-.008	.051	.047	.026	-.098**	.011
Experience	.031	.066	.033	.031	.055	.127**	-.019	.081*
Department	-.020	-.029	-.027	-.017	-.022	.024	.004	-.025

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### CONCLUSIONS

The study sought to establish the teachers' level of job satisfaction. The mean scores on job satisfaction were near mid-point level indicating that subordinate teachers in public primary schools are ambivalent on the satisfaction with their jobs. The mean score of overall job satisfaction was  $m = 2.897$  and  $s.d. = 0.477$  in a scale of 1 to 5. These results are consistent with studies by Hamidifar (2010) which found that the non-teaching staff of a university in Tehran was moderately satisfied with their jobs. The low satisfaction scores are attributed to other underlying factors such as poor working environment, lack of facilities among others. Extreme working conditions may override other factors affecting job satisfaction. Institutions should therefore develop good facilities to provide an enabling and supportive work environment. It was further deduced that leadership will only impact on job satisfaction when some basic minimum threshold are met in the teaching environment. Teachers have possibly remained in teaching profession possibly because of limited options. This could be true for the Kenyan situation whereby the job market cannot absorb all the graduates released by the learning institutions.

This notwithstanding, the highest means score were realized from satisfaction with administrative duties

( $m=3.1$ ) and satisfaction with co-workers (4.1). This implies that teachers get along well with their co-teachers and are motivated by additional administrative duties. These results are consistent with the findings reported by Al-Ababneh (2013) where he found that employees in the hotel industry were more satisfied with co-workers and less satisfied with communication within the organization.

Most schools could therefore be benefiting from creation of good social interactions and good interpersonal relationships among teachers. This may have been due to good individualized consideration by head teachers. When teachers are satisfied with their jobs, they will likely to become more committed to working for the school or remain in the teaching profession.

In terms of job satisfaction, the overall finding was that teachers were ambivalent, meaning that they were not sure whether they are satisfied with their jobs or not. However, teachers were satisfied with their co-teachers and also happy when assigned administrative duties. This implies that teachers were happy when power and authority is devolved or delegated. It is evident that school leadership need to improve on in ways of supervision, systems of reward, ways of communication and working conditions. As indicated earlier, the working conditions in some schools are extremely poor. Extreme conditions of one factor like 'poor teaching environment' may adversely affect all the other elements of job satisfaction. The irreducible minimum is that some of this factors need to be defined and provided in order to bring the threshold of satisfaction to acceptable levels.

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## Legislation

Teachers Service Commission Act (2012)