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TEACHERS' WORKLOAD STRESS AS A CORRELATE OF JOB SATISFACTION IN INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: -

There are various aspects that may affect teachers' job satisfaction, subsequently impacting on teaching performance and teachers' overall productivity. These factors may include workplace environment, personal and and psychological factors. The purpose of the study was to investigate if there is any relationship between teachers' workload stress and job satisfaction in international secondary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Adams (1963) Equity theory, and Bandura's (1977) Self-Efficacy theory provided the study's theoretical foundation. The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed methods design. The target population encompassed 2078 secondary school teachers in Nairobi City County, 54 head teachers, and 54 deputy head teachers. Yamane (1967) formula was used to select a sample of 372 participants. Job Satisfaction Survey scale, and Oldenburg Burnout Inventory were adapted as research instruments to collect the study's quantitative data. Open-ended questions from the adapted tools and informants' interview guide were used to collect qualitative data. Quantitative data was analysed in descriptive and inferential statistics through Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, while qualitative data was analysed in thematic form. The findings indicated that teachers who were categorized as having high level of workload stress had the lowest mean score of job satisfaction (M= 62.44, SD = 10.65). The results further indicated that teachers' workload stress had a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction scores (r(366)= -0.19, P< 0.05). It was recommended that school managers ought to look into approaches that could reduce teachers' workload stress and improve their job satisfaction. Such approaches may include benchmarking teachers' working hours for both teaching and non-teaching school responsibilities with the existing international labour standards, and integrating modern technology to promote automation and cut down on repetitive tasks.

Keywords: *Teacher Productivity, Job Satisfaction, Teachers Workload Stress, Teachers Performance, Turnover Rate*

1. INTRODUCTION

The available educational research has explored into various factors associated with teachers' job satisfaction, such as professional development opportunities, motivation, student discipline, social interaction and collaborative structures among others. Although the aforementioned factors can be important in understanding aspects related to teachers' wellbeing and productivity, the available evidence indicates that teachers' job satisfaction may be influenced by factors such as workload stress, burnout and self-efficacy (Skaalvik, et al., 2010).

Job satisfaction entails the feelings of contentment, and positive and favorable attitudes that employees have towards their work, and satisfied teachers are considered to have greater performance, loyalty, and commitment to their work (Mugo & Guyo, 2018). Research however indicates that teaching is highly stressful and demanding profession, and teachers are likely to experience serious unpleasant emotions attached to job demands that may negatively affect productivity (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018).

Occupational stress is among the most challenging issues faced by workers in Europe. Nearly one in every four workers experience a significant level of work related stress, and studies indicate that more than half of lost work days are linked to this kind of stress (Kourmousi et al., 2015). Research done in areas such as Greece indicates that workplace related factors like working conditions may heighten teachers' workload stress, affecting job satisfaction and ultimately teachers' productivity (Kabir et al., 2016).

While a study done in Norway indicated that all sampled teachers reported high job satisfaction, all the teachers equally reported that they experienced high levels of stress and severe emotional and physical exhaustion. This is testament to serious occupational factors impinging on teacher's wellbeing, productivity, and quality of education (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015).

In South Africa, a study indicated that secondary school principals believed that workloads that were not aligned to teachers' salaries, poor work ethics, and lack of proper reward systems were leading factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction (Maforah, 2010).

Research has also shown that teachers' job satisfaction is positively associated with enhanced work environments, work-related characteristics, such as administration control through supervision and teaching competence (Pepe et al., 2017).

According to Mutwiri (2015) in a study carried out in Nairobi county, Kenya, more than one third of secondary school teachers were dissatisfied with their jobs, leading to high staff turnover. The present study therefore sought to find out if there is any relationship between teachers' workload stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Nairobi city county, Kenya.

2. Materials and Methods

The study sought to investigate if there is any relationship between teachers' workload stress and job satisfaction among teachers in international schools in Nairobi county, Kenya. A convergent parallel mixed methods research design was used. The study targeted all the 2078 teachers in international secondary schools in Nairobi county, 54 school heads and 54 deputy heads. Yamane (1967) formula was used to select 372 participants comprising of teachers, school heads and deputy heads.

Three sampling techniques, that is, systematic random, simple random and purposive random were used to various categories of the participants. Systematic random was used to proportionately identify the number of participating schools, while simple random was used for selecting teachers from the identified schools. Purposive sampling was on the other hand utilised in selecting informants from school heads and deputy heads as school administrators.

The study used questions adapted from Teachers' Workload Survey scale by the United Kingdom's Department for Education (2019), Spector's (1997) job satisfaction survey scale, and key informants' interview guide. Piloting of instruments involved 40 teachers from international schools that were not part of the main study. Reliability of instruments was established through Cronbach Alpha (α) coefficient. A value of 0.70 was established, while teachers' workload survey had a reliability of 0.74 as originally determined by its authors. Validity of instruments was determined through consultation and professional guidance by experts and supervisors, and by addressing the weaknesses of the items using the feedback from the pilot study.

3. Results and Discussions

Questionnaires were distributed to all the 372 participants. From those sampled, 368 fully filled questionnaires were retrieved, representing a response rate of 98.92%. Interviews were also administered to all the 27 headteachers and deputy headteachers, thus registering a 100% response rate. According to Fincham (2008), researchers should aim at a response rate of at least 80%. This therefore indicates that the study's response rate was adequate for generalization of the results to the larger population. The results on gender distribution indicated that 58.2% of teachers taking part in the study were female compared to 41.8% male.

The objective of the study was to investigate if there is any relationship between teachers' workload stress and job satisfaction in international secondary schools in Nairobi city county.

Description of Teachers' Workload Stress and Job Satisfaction

Teachers' workload scores were analyzed so as to determine the range of the scores, mean, standard deviation and the level of skewness and the results are presented as shown in Table 1

Table 1

Descriptive Analysis of the Workload Stress Scores

	N	Range	*Min*	*Max*	Mean	*SD*	*SK*
Work Load Stress	368	25.00	19.00	44.00	30.74	3.81	-0.04
Valid N (listwise)	368						

Note: N=368. Min=Minimum; Max= Maximum; SD= Standard Deviation; SK=Skewness.

The results in Table 1 indicate that that participants' minimum workload stress score was 19.00, while the maximum score was 44.00 The results further show that the participants' workload stress mean score was 30.74 (*SD*= 3.81), with a coefficient of negative skewness = -0.04. The negative skew indicates that most of the scores were above the mean score, implying that the participants rated themselves highly on the workload stress rating scale.

Further analysis was conducted on workload stress scores in order to group the participants in different categories. As shown in Table 2, the participants were categorized as having low, moderate or high level of workload stress. The cut off scores were 10-20 for the low category, 21-31 for moderate, and 32-50 for the high category.

Table 2

Participants' Levels of Workload Stress

Level of Work load stress		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Low	2	.5
	Moderate	220	59.8
	High	146	39.7
	Total	368	100.0

Note: N=368.

The results in Table 2 indicate that majority of the participants, 220 (59.8%) reported experiencing moderate workload related stress, compared to 39.7% who reported experiencing high workload related stress. Only a paltry 0.5 percent of the participants reported that they experienced low level of workload related stress.

Further analysis was conducted on the participants' workload stress scores in order to rate the teachers' level of job satisfaction based on the levels of workload stress. The results are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Workload Stress Scores and Mean of Job Satisfaction Scores

	e	*N*	Mean	*SD*
Low	Job Satisfaction Score	2	63.0000	2.82843
	Valid N (listwise)	2		
Moderate	Job Satisfaction Score	220	66.5909	8.43107
	Valid N (listwise)	220		
High	Job Satisfaction Score	146	62.44	10.65
	Valid N (listwise)	146		

Note: N=368; SD = Standard Deviation.

The results in Table 3 indicate that the participants who were categorized as having high level of workload stress were found to have the lowest mean score of job satisfaction (*M*= 62.44, *SD* = 10.65). Interestingly, the results indicate that the participants who were categorized as having moderate level of workload stress had the highest mean score of job satisfaction (*M*= 66.59, *SD* = 8.43), while those categorized as having low level of workload related stress had a job satisfaction mean score of (*M*= 63.00, 2.82).

Hypothesis Testing

The following null hypothesis was advanced for the purpose of assessing the relationship between teachers' workload related stress and job satisfaction.

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between Teacher's workload Stress and Job satisfaction

The data on participants' workload stress and job satisfaction scores were subjected to bivariate correlation using Pearson's r statistical analysis and results were presented as shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Correlation Matrix for Workload Stress and Job Satisfaction scores

		Job Satisfaction Score	Workload Stress
Job Satisfaction Score	Pearson Correlation	1	-.19**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	368	368
Work Load Stress	Pearson Correlation	-.193**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	368	368

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

Note: N=368.

As shown in Table 4, the results indicate that there was a significant negative relationship between teachers' workload stress and job satisfaction scores ($r(366)= -0.19$, $P< 0.05$). Thus, the results imply that participants with high workload stress scores were associated with low job satisfaction scores. It can therefore be inferred that increased levels of workload stress resulted in low job satisfaction. The results further indicate that the participants with high level of job satisfaction scores were associated with low level of workload stress scores, implying that increased job satisfaction lowered teachers' workload stress. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

From the study's descriptive findings, most of the participants reported to have high levels of workload based on the self-rating of work-related stress. The results implied that teachers felt that the number of working hours, which included time spent on teaching and other non-teaching responsibilities resulted in high levels of stress, ultimately impacting on their job satisfaction.

The findings of the present study lend credence to those of an earlier study by Sugden (2010) in east coast of Canada that showed that high workload stress negatively impacted on teachers' job satisfaction. Despite the differing locations of the two studies, the findings attest that teaching is indeed a demanding job, and further affirm the findings of the present study that stress arising from work demands is a major factor impacting on teachers' job satisfaction.

The findings are also in agreement with Kawa (2016), in a Tanzanian based study that sought to establish the influence of workload stress on teachers' job performance. The findings indicated that work-related stress negatively affected teachers' interest in their work, resulting in absenteeism, desertion of work, or leaving the teaching profession altogether.

The findings of the current study are also supportive of those of Mbatha (2018), in a Kenyan based study that was focused on determining the influence of workload stress on teachers productivity. The study established that teachers' workload stress was associated with teachers' disaffection about their job, resulting in low productivity. While the study was targeted on teachers in private primary schools in Nairobi, the sample had a number of similarities with the current study and it is evident that workload stress is associated with teachers' job satisfaction.

However, the findings of the present study do not support those of Klassen and Chiu (2010), in an earlier study carried out in Greece, which found workload stress to have had no effect on teachers' work performance. As shown in the literature, the study reported that increased workload stress did not negatively affect teachers' beliefs in their classroom management abilities. The findings are not only inconsistent but also unusually interesting, given that teachers who experience high levels of work-related stress are likely to approach their tasks with low morale, without motivation, enthusiasm or commitment to their work (Kawa, 2016; Usman & Kabir, 2019).

Additionally, a study by Nwimo (2005) in Nigeria also reported contradicting findings from those of the present study. The study found that there was no significant relationship between teachers' workload stress and job satisfaction. Although the study used relatively a smaller sample, the socio-cultural demographics of teachers had some semblance with those of the current study.

The results are also in line with qualitative findings in school managers admitted that workload stress was a serious issue affecting teachers' job satisfaction in their schools. In response to whether teachers were overworked, majority (62.96%) of the administrators answered in the affirmative, compared to only 37.04% who felt that teachers were not overworked.

The findings imply that teachers' workload stress can be a conduit for diverse problems affecting teachers' wellbeing and professional lives. Inferences can therefore be drawn that increased workload stress impacts negatively on teachers' job satisfaction, affecting their productivity and decision-making abilities, which may result in ill-considered decisions such as desertion or leaving the profession early.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The objective of the study was to find out if there is any relationship between workload stress and job satisfaction. The study found that workload stress had a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. It was established from the findings that high levels of workload stress resulted in low levels of job satisfaction.

The findings implied that teaching is a demanding and stressful job, which does not only involve classroom instruction but other non-teaching responsibilities. Hence, teachers can get overwhelmed by workload, resulting in stress, which can consequently become a conduit for diverse challenges impacting on teachers' wellbeing and professional lives.

When teachers are overwhelmed by workload and the related psychological strain, the quality of their work including instructional delivery, classroom management and overall productivity also suffer.

School managements should therefore be proactive and provide necessary support to reduce work-related stress through approaches such as promoting wellbeing, reducing assessment burden by integrating modern marking practices.

To address teachers' workload stress, school managers should benchmark teachers' working hours for both teaching and non-teaching responsibilities against the existing international labour standards as well as integrating modern technology to promote automation and cut down on repetitive tasks.

Future studies may be conducted in other private secondary schools in other parts of the country apart from Nairobi county.

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