

Influence of Principals' Involvement of Teachers in Decision Making on Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Public Secondary Schools in Kakamega County, Kenya

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Abstract

Involvement of teachers in decision making is key in the determination of the school success since teachers feel part and parcel of running the school motivating them to provide quality services to their students. This study investigated influence of principals' involving teachers' in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The objective was: To determine the influence of principals' involving teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction. The study was based on the Path Goal theory. The study targeted 324 public secondary schools which comprised of 324 principals and 1500 teachers and 12 TSC officials across 12 sub-counties in Kakamega County. Purposive sampling to select five sub counties that included Lurambi, Ikolomani, Shinyalu, Navakholo and Malava. A sample of 64 schools were selected using stratified sampling, purposive sampling for 64 principals and 5 TSC officials while Proportional simple random sampling was done to select 300 teachers. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data. The Pearson Chi-square test ($\chi^2=79.826$, $p=0.005$) was highly significant showing that principals' involved teachers in decision making that led to teachers' job satisfaction. This showed that there was significant relationship between principals' involvement of teachers in decision making and teachers' job satisfaction. It was then concluded that principals involving teachers in decision making influenced teacher job satisfaction. It was evident from the results that school administration involved the staff in decision making, team work was encouraged, teacher contribution was taken seriously and teacher taking instructions discussed seriously. It is then recommended that principals should divide and delegate tasks to teachers, train and involve them in all areas of decisions that affect them. To carry out these tasks effectively and efficiently, there is need to equip school principals with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitude.

Keywords: Principals, teacher involvement, decision making, job satisfaction, secondary schools

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1.0 Introduction

A study by the United State Education Department in 2007 found out that teachers' job satisfaction is strongly associated with their participation in decision making and influence over school policy (Ingersoll and May 2012). Strongest predictors of retention with US data were teacher participation in school decision making, supervision, interpersonal relationship of teachers, and found that job satisfaction was the most important influence on retention decisions, while workplace conditions were strongly but indirectly related to retention via job satisfaction (Ingersoll and May, 2012). Involving teachers in decision-making is fundamental to the practice of any school administration, according to the majority of experts in the UK (Agasisti & Bowers, 2017).

In New Zealand, Scott-Ladd and Chan (2014) explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and participation in decision-making among secondary level teachers and found that the success of teachers in influencing decisions and the substance of these decisions may be crucial for having teachers actually become leaders in schools by influencing the decision-making process, encouraging the shifting of their active participation in the direction of teacher leadership. The study further argued that teachers experiencing a truly meaningful shared decision-making process that encourages them, not just in participation but to lead, can enhance teacher leadership opportunities and its benefits. Because other administrative duties can be best understood in terms of the decision-making process, decision-making is even more crucial than other administrative functions. Employees often regard participation in decision making as a way to believe that their efforts are being recognised (Giri & Kumar, 2013). When employees have the ability to participate in decision making, they perceive it as an organizational support that may facilitate group commitment (Kukenberger *et al.*,

2015).

Ofoegbu (2014) studied teacher motivation as a factor for classroom effectiveness and school improvement in Nigeria and showed that participative decision-making has a positive impact on teacher job motivation, teacher commitment, teacher performance and school effectiveness. Furthermore, when all the teachers in the school take part in the decision-making process, communication within the school is much more effective and all the teachers produces more efficient results. Kok, Lebusa and Joubert (2014) assessed teacher involvement in decision-making with reference to the University of Technology in South Africa and found that the decision-making of school staffing, curriculum, or resource allocation had been conventionally made by school principals or members of administrative managerial teams. According to Moshet (2013) who conducted a research about teacher participation in school decision-making and job satisfaction as correlates of organizational commitment in senior schools in Botswana and found that allowing teacher participation in decision-making results into a more satisfied teacher with greater commitment to organizational goals as well as job satisfaction.

In Kenya Participation in decision making is very important for effective school management. But teachers, in most cases, have been excluded in the process of decision making therefore lose of sense of responsibility as they feel neglected in important part of school leadership. Saha and Kumar (2017), conducted a study on "influence of participation in decision making on job satisfaction, group learning, and group commitment" and found that job satisfaction had a tremendous and enormous courting with participation in decision making. Further, participation in decision making caused a significant effect on group learning but had no effect on group commitment. Job satisfaction had a positive and significant impact on group commitment. The group learning was undoubtedly and significantly associated with job satisfaction and group commitment. The results propose that employee participation within the selection-making method is pretty desirable because it elevates employee identification with their respective organization. In participative leadership practice, the school head teacher recognizes teachers' ability and talents in leadership by involving them in the school administrative process (Wachira, 2017). The ultimate idea behind participative leadership practice, is to achieve school effectiveness through collaborative effort and joint decision-making involving the head teachers and teachers. Wambane (2015) found that participative leadership improved school processes. Leaders who build and set instructions, tend to develop their staff, design school facilities, and manage the learning program are the most successful leaders (Leithwood, *et al.*, 2019). School leaders who involve their teachers in decision making are more effective. Therefore, their leadership style is related to decision-making style. Teachers' participation helps to boost teachers' confidence, ensure effective implementation of curriculum, and reduce teachers' turnover (Owusu, *et al.*, 2014). Kakamega County public schools are currently experiencing a declining trend in performance for five consecutive years and high rate of teachers' turnover, whereas studies have been carried out to determine factors that influence teachers Job satisfaction in public schools, researchers have not given much attention on involving teachers in decision making on teachers job satisfaction in public secondary schools, a gap which this study sought to fill. Therefore, this study's objective was to investigate the influence of principals' involving teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya

1.1 Statement of the problem

Participation in decision-making gives teachers the opportunity to voice their opinions, and to share their knowledge with both school administrators and fellow teachers. The Basic Education Act of 2013 tasks the school leadership, particularly the principal with a central role in setting the tone of the school in involving teachers in decision making which should embrace teacher participation in decision making to augment their job satisfaction by being part and parcel to that decision hence doing what it takes to enable the achievement of the very decisions. This should be done in collaboration and regular consultation with the Board of Management (BoM) and school management committees consisting of members from the community, teachers and students (MoE, 2013). Teachers more so in Kakamega County are the custodians of instruction and curriculum implementers and therefore, their participation in decision making ability is necessary to motivate their endless efforts to achieve them. From the foregoing background, it is evident that lack of teachers' involvement in decision-making at the school level could be dangerous to the implementation and execution of curriculum and policies of the school. The Kenyan published empirical literature however, in view of the enhanced teacher participation as per the provision by the Basic Education Act of 2013, remains scanty on how participation in decision-making influences teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. This study sought to investigate the influence of principals' involving teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.2 Objective of the Study

To determine the influence of principals' involving teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between principals involving teachers in decision making and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.4 Literature Review

1.4.1 Concept of job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a concept that became popular in the 1930's (Locke, 1976) and thousands of studies have been conducted on this topic. Hoppock (1935) introduced the concept of job satisfaction as a set of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that make a person feel satisfied with their job. According to Memon *et al.*, (2021) the definition of job satisfaction is a welfare assessment carried out because an employee is experienced in various aspects of work. According to Bharadwaj *et al.*, (2021), job satisfaction is the satisfied attitude and behaviour of employees. Meanwhile, according to Sesen and Ertan (2021) the notion of job satisfaction is the reactions and perceptions that employees have about the characteristics of their work at the company. Nanjundeswaraswamy (2021) states that the meaning of job satisfaction is the assessment of an employee to enjoy his/her work. Based on Hilton researchers (2021), job satisfaction is a cognitive and emotional reaction of employees working in the company. Bharadwaj *et al.*, (2021) defines job satisfaction as a cognitive and affective response from within employees when working in a company. Job Satisfaction is an employee's feelings originating from several situations such as: being supervised, feeling close to one another, feeling happy working in this organization, feeling safe at work, and feeling happy with the tasks given (Aseantyet *et al.*, 2022). Nanjundeswaraswamy (2021) found that the meaning of job satisfaction is the productivity and effectiveness of the performance results of employees. Bharadwaj *et al.*, (2021) state that the purpose of job satisfaction is to evaluate all job characteristics of an employee by creating a positive attitude towards the employee's work.

1.4.2 Principals' involvement of teachers in decision making and job satisfaction

School leaders who involve their teachers in decision making are more effective. Therefore, their leadership style is related to decision-making style. The most leadership styles related to involving teachers are the transactional, the transformational, and the laissez-faire styles. Finding such an interaction between leadership and participative decision-making is important for the institutional plan's growth (Hariri, *et al.*, 2014). Joda and Olowoselu (2016) views principal position as a position of dominance and prestige accompanied by the ability to direct, motivate and to assist teachers and students in achieving specified purpose. However, school principal has onerous task and decision to make on daily basis for effective management of school resources and students. A Principal ensures satisfactory standards of the school climate and culture. As an administrator of a school, a principal plays leading role in improving the quality of teaching and learning, constantly keeps in view the educational goals of the school and ensures the whole school activities are geared towards achievement of the educational goals. Certainly, principals do make many decisions which have effect on teachers in schools. These decision making styles might be rational, intuitive and avoidance that postured as challenge to teachers' performance. Ofojebe (2017), and other scholars, observed that truancy, vandalism, violent protests, and incessant strike actions are some of the evils that have plagued most Nigerian secondary schools, as a result of inadequate participation of teachers in decisions that directly or indirectly affect them (Jonah, 2016; Ofojebe, 2017; and Tijani, 2019). Udoh&Akpa (2017), and other scholars, asserted that where teachers are adequately involved in decision making process, there would be commitment and adequate support with the principal; and the realization of school goal will be easy, apathy and opposition within the school will be minimized (Udoh&Akpa, 2017; and Tijani&Obiweluzor, 2019).

1.4.3 Theoretical framework

Path-Goal is based on Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory in which an individual will act in a certain way based on the expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome and on the attractiveness of that outcome to the individual. Path-goal theory states that leaders have to adjust their leadership style based on the characteristics of followers and type of tasks that need to be completed. Path-goal theory attempts to increase the motivation and happiness of the followers in each situation (Northouse, 2016). A leader will increase the motivation and job satisfaction of followers by adding value to follower needs, while also making the goal clear to all followers. According to path-goal theory, a leader also needs to provide rewards to increase motivation and satisfaction. It is the responsibility of the leader in line with path-goal theory, to guide followers to completion of task using proper behaviours to increase motivation (Northouse 2016). Path-goal theory focuses on leadership behaviour, which is seen as source of influence that can change the attitude, motivation, and behaviour of subordinate (Malik *et al.*, 2014). Path-goal leadership theory requires educational leaders, who are interested in spreading learning culture to adopt any of directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented leadership behaviour. The path-goal theory suggests that principals should involve teachers in decision making in schools through taking teachers contribution seriously, encouraging teamwork, and ensuring the school administration involves teachers in all activities done.

2.0 Materials and Methods

Survey research design was used in this study as it allows one to describe characteristics of an individual or group as they really are (Kothari, 2019). The study targeted 324 public secondary schools that had 324 principals and 1500 teachers and 12 TSC officials across 12 sub-counties in Kakamega County. Purposive sampling was used to select five sub-counties which included Lurambi, Ikolomani, Shinyalu, Navakholo and Malava in Kakamega County for their proximity to Kakamega town. A sample of 20% was used as it was considered the best sample size according to Best & Kahn, 2011, where 64 schools were selected for inclusion in the study. The 64 principals of the selected schools were interviewed. While in each school, a proportional allocation in stratified sampling was used to select 300 teachers for interview as the selected schools were not of the same size in number of teachers. Five (5) Teachers Service Commission officials were randomly selected for inclusion in the interview. Taylor-made questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers, principals and TSC officials. To enhance the content validity of the instruments a pre-test of the instruments was carried out. Piloting aimed at testing the clarity of test items, suitability of language used and the feasibility of the study. The reliability of the instruments was determined using test-retest technique. Pearson product moment correlation was used to compute the reliability coefficient (Best and Khan, 2011). Descriptive statistics were used in the analyses of the collected data.

3.0 Results and Discussions

Table 1 shows the distribution of principals by involvement of teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction on the Likert scale (SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=Neutral, A=agree and SA=strongly agree).

Table 1: Distribution of principals by involvement of teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction

Statement	SD		D		N		A		SA		Mean	Sd
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
School Administration involving staff in decision making	74	24.7	40	13.3	52	17.3	79	26.3	55	18.3	3.00	1.46
Teacher contribution taken seriously	45	15.0	50	16.7	55	18.3	100	33.3	50	16.7	3.20	1.32
Teamwork is Encouraged	63	21.0	22	7.3	41	13.7	93	31.0	81	27.0	3.36	1.48
Teacher take instruction discussed seriously	38	12.7	63	21.0	71	23.7	82	27.3	46	15.3	3.12	1.26
Average Mean											3.17	1.33

From Table 1, 26.3% and 18.3% of the teachers agreed and strongly agreed that the school administration involved staff in decision making while 24.7% and 13.3% strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively. This means majority (44.6%) agreed that school administrations involved staff in decision making while minority (38.0%) disagreed. This was supported by Moradi and Shabbaz, (2016) who found that involving teachers in decision-making led to new ideas, enhanced performance, increase efficiency, commitment, and reduced conflicts. Employees are able to identify more with the organization when they have an active role in making policies and decisions of their organization (Ojasalo and Tähtinen, 2016). This is because participation gives certain amount of satisfaction to the employees. The work of an educational leader is defined by decision making. While principals are expected to involve others in decisions, the ultimate responsibility for success or failure of the decision rests firmly with the principal. School administrators need to ensure teachers are involved in planning and other school matters to enhance accountability and voluntary participation in the implementation to improve work performance in public secondary schools. (Tchapchet, Iwu, and Ille, 2014)

On Teacher contribution being taken seriously 33.3% agreed while 16.7% strongly agreed while a minority of 31.7% disagreed and strongly disagreed. This is in contrast with Mbope (2015) who found out that some education administrators do not value the contribution of teachers in school to make programs effective. School principals should be trained on the importance of group participation to enhance work performance as well as to make effective implementation of school programs..

On Teamwork, 31.0% and 27.0% agreed and strongly agreed for being encouraged to work in teams by the administration. This implies that majority of the respondents (58.0%) agree that Teamwork is encouraged. On Teamwork, Nazir & Islam, (2017) concur that team resources based on critical social resources at work that help individuals to grow and develop were positively related to work-family enrichment and project satisfaction. They feel happy that their work and experience is valued by their colleagues and managers which create a trustworthy work environment. The employees develop positive feelings for their organization by exhibiting affective commitment. Teamwork is an important driver of group commitment as the seed of trust grows and strengthens the social interactions among employees. Uncertainty among them is reduced. Difficulties and issues related to

work are solved easily when there is cooperation among the employees. Hence, success at work is easily achieved by the employees. Organizations may choose to consider group performance important for their growth. Hence, employees give more importance to generate effective group results.

On Teacher take instruction discussed seriously, 27.3% and 13.3% agreed that the administration had them involved. Kukenberger, Mathieu and Ruddy (2015) said that participation in decision making can cause many disadvantages in a work group. There can be pressures arising from social systems to dominance by some members of the group due to unequal distribution of power. An influential member may cause other members to follow the decisions taken by him/her, which may be disliked by other members as stated in leader-member exchange theory. Hence, indecisiveness, lack of consensus, and group conflicts might arise. In such situations, the employee might feel neglected by his/her work group. Kukenberger, Mathieu & Ruddy (2015) found out that affective commitment is determined by the extent of participation of employees in day-to-day work-related decisions allowed to them by their supervisors. The more the participation, the better will be the relationship between participation in decision making and job satisfaction. On the overall it was established that majority of principals involved teachers in decision making, commitment and job satisfaction.

The Chi square test was used to test for any relationship between Principals involving teachers in decision making and teachers' job satisfaction. The hypothesis stated that *there is no significant relationship between principals involving teachers in decision making and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.*

Table 2 shows Chi square test results on testing this hypothesis.

Table 2: Chi Square Test between principals involving teachers in decision making and teachers job satisfaction

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	79.826 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	74.419	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	44.041	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	300		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.20.

The Chi square (χ^2) test of 79.826 (P=0.005) showed that there was significant relationship between principals involving teachers in decision making and teachers' job satisfaction. This implies that when principals' involve teachers in decision making effectively it leads to teachers' job satisfaction. These results were in line with the studies carried out by Murtiningsih and Lian (2017) which reported that principal's decision-making process was influential in improving teacher performance. According to Murtiningsih and Lian (2017), principals' decision-making encourages the realization of the school's vision and mission through performance produced by teachers and school staff. Systematic decision-making by the principal will result in quality decisions that can be accepted by all school members, including teachers.

Further, thirty principals' were interviewed on extent of teacher involvement in decision making and teachers' job satisfaction so as to get in-depth information on this issue (Table 3).

Table 3: Principals' response on what extent teacher involvement in decision making influenced job satisfaction

Principals response	Frequency	Percentage
To a large extent	26	86.7
To a small extent	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

The results in Table 3 show that majority (86.7%) of the principals said that teacher involvement in decision making influenced job satisfaction to a large extent.

The principals were how teacher participation in decision making affected job satisfaction (Table 4).

Table 4: Effect of teacher participation in decision making on job satisfaction

Effect of teacher participation in decision making	Frequency	Percentage
Feel part of the decisions	14	46.7
Boosts morale	10	33.3
Encourages teamwork	6	20.0
Total	30	100.0

The results show that 46.7% of the principals said that when teachers feel part of decision making process, it had effect of teacher participation in decision making while 33.3% said it boosts their morale. The results show that teachers want to feel as though they are part and parcel of the institution and this is supported by Hammad (2017), who asserts that the perception of teachers regarding decision-making in school is affected by teachers whereby the decision-making process is left to the key administrators in school and hence implementation became difficult. Therefore, there is a need to train school principals as well as teachers to strengthen their

knowledge on the importance of collective decisions making to improve work performance in schools.

Four principals were interviewed on their involving teachers in decision making and job satisfaction coded as P1-P4. Their responses were as follows:

P1;

“When teachers are involved in decision making in school they are motivated and enables them feel part of the system thus feels ownership of the school”

P2;

“The teachers feel valued and appreciated as stakeholders of the school when involved in decision making in schools”

P3;

“When teachers are involved in decisions in schools they are able to embrace team work and make them have an ownership of decisions made”

P4;

“Teachers perform their duties with great determination and vigour since what they are implementing is what they proposed so they want it to work effectively.”

With the responses obtained from the four principals, it is evident that when teachers are involved in decision making they do feel appreciated and part and parcel of the institution since they feel some sense of belonging.

Four Teachers Service Commission officials were interviewed (coded TSC1-TSC4) on principals involving teachers in decision making and how it influences teachers' job satisfaction. Their responses were as follows:

Ruth TSC 1:

“When principals involve teachers in decision making the teachers feel that they do own the school and implementation of major activities becomes effective and makes them feel satisfied”

John TSC 2:

“Majority of principals are involving teachers in decision making and that is why we are seeing low turnover rates since they feel satisfied”

Rose TSC 3:

“We have encouraged principals to cooperate teachers in terms of decision making in the school so that they can be committed to their jobs and satisfied”

Kevin TSC 4:

“When principals do not involve teachers in decision making in school the teacher feels he/she is being detected and does not fully commit to the work rather does it for the sake of being employed”

With the responses above it is evident that majority of TSC officials strongly agreed that principals involvement of teachers in decision making affected their job satisfaction. The findings concurred with (Haryanto, 2020) in Nigeria who found that there is a significant relationship between teachers' involvement in academic planning and job performance in secondary schools. Thus, school heads should plan effective strategies to ensure teachers are involved fully in various education and school related matters to boost their work performance. Msomi, Van der Westhuizen, and Steenekamp (2014) highlighted the importance of giving employees more "voice" to express their opinions and participate in decision-making in their organization.

4.0 CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

From the findings, the study concluded that principals involving teachers in decision making influenced teacher job satisfaction. It was evident by school administration involving the staff in decision making, team work encouraged, teacher contribution taken seriously and teacher taking instructions discussed seriously. Implying that the more teachers are involved in staff decision making the more they are likely to be satisfied with their jobs.

4.2 Recommendations

1. Principals' should empower teachers by allowing them to have some degree of autonomy over their teaching practices which may include giving the teachers the freedom to choose their own instructional materials and design their lesson plans making the teachers feel satisfied with their jobs.
2. Principals should encourage a collaboration and teamwork among teachers in school fostering a positive and supportive work environment thus influencing their job satisfaction.
3. School leaders' should divide and delegate tasks to teachers, train and involve them in all areas of decisions that affect them. To carry out these tasks effectively and efficiently, there is need to equip school principals with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitude.
4. There is need to sensitize the school principal to allow the teachers participate in making decision that pertains to; finance, community relation and student affairs. This can be done alongside providing proper orientation on the right duties and responsibilities of individual teachers in each area of decision-

making and involve them to bring a change in teaching learning process and other related issues of school activities.

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