

Work Environment and Job Satisfaction among Public Primary School Teachers in Narok Central Division, Kenya

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Abstract

Teacher discontent characterized by resignations and switching careers puts at risk the pride that has historically been associated with the teaching profession. It affects the overall quality of the education system. Narok Central Division has recorded increasing cases of teachers seeking transfers and resignations as others seek employment opportunities in areas not related to their careers. Such occurrences point to issues with teachers' job satisfaction which is affected by a range of factors including the work environment. Teachers' workload and teachers' perception of learner discipline are salient features in school work environment which have the potential to influence teachers' job satisfaction in Narok Central Division. This study therefore investigated the effects of teachers' workload and teachers' perception of learner discipline on teachers' job satisfaction in the Division. The target population was 659 teachers in 73 public primary schools in the Division. Twenty nine (29) schools were sampled. In the schools, 199 (30.0%) teachers were sampled. All the principals in the sampled schools were key informants for the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire for the teachers and an interview guide for the headteachers. To achieve validity, the study conducted a comprehensive literature review to align research instruments with established theories and also piloted the instruments. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of reliability for the questionnaire was 0.809. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using tables while qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis. Hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis at $p < .05$. The study found that teacher's workload ($M=2.96$ $SD=1.26$) had a weak positive but statistically significant correlation with teacher job satisfaction ($p=.010$, $r=.183$, $n=199$). The teachers' perception of learner discipline ($M=4.07$ $SD=1.26$) had a moderate, positive and statistically significant correlation with teachers' job satisfaction ($p=.000$, $r=.330$ $n=199$). To enhance teacher job satisfaction, the study recommends strengthening work environment factors, particularly by balancing teaching workload and ensuring learner discipline is managed.

Key words: Teachers, job satisfaction, work environment, teacher workload, learner discipline.

1.0 Background to the Study

Quality education is the cornerstone of national development, fostering economic growth and addressing societal challenges (Melaku & Hunde, 2020). Central to the delivery of quality education are teachers who serve as curriculum interpreters and implementers in order to equip the learner with the desired competencies (Sumanasena et al., 2020). The teacher's roles extend beyond the classroom, encompassing leadership, mentorship, guidance and counseling among other administrative responsibilities. The multiplicity of a teacher's role requires high levels of job satisfaction so that the teacher can ensure that education service on offer meets and even surpasses customer expectations (Melaku & Hunde, 2020). According to Wahyudi et. al. (2018), job satisfaction is a person's positive or negative perceptions about their work. It is the pleasure generated after an employee assesses the work they perform and the work environment. Therefore, it can be argued that job satisfaction is a self-supporting feeling of employees associated with the work they do and the working conditions. For the current study, job satisfaction is

conceptualized as the extent to which teachers' hopes, desires and expectations about the teaching profession are fulfilled in their work environment.

Jumba (2019) asserts that teacher job satisfaction ranks alongside professional competencies and educational resources in determining the achievement of the desired educational outcomes. Teachers who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to be effective because they find meaning in their work. Inversely, when teachers fail to find meaning and satisfaction in their work, they tend to withdraw at the expense of quality education service to the learner (Sumanasena et al., 2020). Teachers who are satisfied with their jobs offer better instructional learning support for their learners. Further, teachers who are contented with their jobs demonstrate stronger commitment to actualizing the educational needs of the learners and are less likely to leave the teaching profession (Toropova et al., 2021). Troeger (2022) reports of widespread teacher discontent in the United States of America [USA], placing at risk the well-being of teachers, students and the entire educational system. The study reported that almost half of the teachers in USA seriously considered leaving the teaching profession due to job dissatisfaction. Zakariya et. al. (2020) study comparing latent means of teacher job satisfaction in the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey found that Austria, Chile, Spain, Canada, and Argentina are the top countries with highly job-satisfied teachers. Bulgaria, England, Portugal, Saudi Arabia and Malta had the least job-satisfied teachers.

Wang et. al. (2022) study in 121 schools in rural China found an alarmingly high prevalence of teacher job dissatisfaction with roughly 21.0% of rural teachers being less than satisfied with their jobs. In the African continent, significant proportions of teachers have low levels of job satisfaction and are poorly motivated. Children are poorly taught and thus don't receive acceptable educational service (Wang, 2022). Although teacher job satisfaction is affected by various factors, the school work environment positively or negatively impacts teacher job satisfaction (Bahtilla & Hui, 2021). According to Orina et. al. (2021), work environment is the totality of employees' conditions. It consists of the physical environment and the behavioral component. The physical component entails the workload, tools and other categories of resources such as finances and facilities at employees' disposal. The behavioral component encompasses aspects relating to collegiality, leader-member relationship, students' attitudes and behavior towards teachers and those relating to parental partnership with teachers. An unfavorable work environment in a school setting is characterized by a heavy workload, lack of collegiality among staff members, weak institutional support, poor teacher-supervisory practices by their seniors, learner indiscipline, disrespect by parents, inadequate teaching-learning resources, insecurity and poor physical environment (Orina et al, 2021).

Hojo (2021), using data collected from OECD countries, found that the learner-teacher ratio was positively correlated with total work hours and workload stress among teachers and was negatively correlated with their job satisfaction. In particular, teachers working in schools with high learner-teacher ratios spent more time on time consuming tasks such as marking/correcting learner assessment and communicating with parents or guardians. O'Shea (2021) study in USA determined that teacher-learner work relationship positively and significantly predicted teacher job satisfaction. After controlling for other predictors, teacher relationships with their learners was the strongest predictor of teacher job satisfaction. Toropova et. al. (2021) study in Sweden observed that teachers' workload and teacher perceptions of student discipline at school were closely related to teacher job satisfaction. However, Buckman and Pittman (2021) study in the USA showed that the relationship between student discipline and teacher job satisfaction was not statistically significant.

Kenya is in the process of replacing the 8.4.4 system of education with the Competency-Based Curriculum [CBC] under the 2-6-3-3 system of Education. The CBC education system pursues the 21st century skills in order to enhance local and global competitiveness of graduates (Hall, 2021; KICD, 2016; Warriio, 2019; KICD, 2017). Currently, the first CBC cohort will be transitioning to Senior Secondary in the year 2026. Successful implementation of the CBC system depends on various factors, including highly satisfied teachers as the agents of the curriculum implementation process. Although no known study has been conducted to examine teacher job satisfaction in the context of CBC implementation, existing studies are inconclusive on the level and the determinants of teacher job satisfaction in Kenya. Sande (2021) study in public secondary schools in Kilifi County found that most teachers had below-average levels of job satisfaction. On a scale of 1 – 5, the teachers' overall job satisfaction level was 2.3. Teachers were concerned with the availability of instructional materials, spacious staff rooms and the provision of teachers' houses within the school compound.

Wachuka (2021) study in Muranga County established that the major factors inhibiting teacher job satisfaction included lack of motivation, little pay, poor working conditions, students' indiscipline, frequent absenteeism and school dropouts. Further, Muga et. al. (2018) study on the levels of teacher jobs in public secondary schools in Siaya, Kisumu, and Kajiado counties found that most (56.7%) teachers were dissatisfied and that most (63.9%) of them would not choose teaching as a profession if they were to start all over again in a new career. The findings convey that dissatisfied teachers are providing educational service and the learners may not reap the full benefits of education. Narok County is one of the marginalized counties in Kenya with over half of the school-age children not going to school and a significant number not completing primary education. Existing empirical evidence conveys low standards of basic education across the County which also affects learner transition to higher levels of learning and careers that guarantee maximum returns to investment in education (Masago et al., 2018; Mwanik & Orodho, 2016; Rutto & Mulwa, 2019).

Mwanik and Orodho (2016) study on institutional variables inhibiting effective participation in education by pupils in rural public primary schools in Narok North Sub-County, including Narok central Division, found that the main school-based factors that negatively influenced pupils' participation and academic achievement in primary schools were low community support and parental involvement in pupils school activities, lack of housing for teachers, fatigued pupils due to traveling long distance from home to school and back, high pupil-teacher ratio, high teacher absenteeism, and high teacher turnover without replacements. Chepngeno (2019) study in Narok West Sub-county also found that schools lacked adequate infrastructure, teachers were not well remunerated, worked under poor conditions, were not rewarded for their efforts, and therefore were not motivated. These factors contributed to poor academic achievement among the learners. Data from the Director of Teachers' Service Commission Narok county reveal that there have been numerous cases of teachers resigning from the teaching profession every year. About 35.0 % of the teachers seek transfers every year translating to low retention rates for teachers in the school. Data from Narok Public Service Board indicates that since the inception of Narok County government in the year 2013, there have been a high number of teachers who have been applying for county jobs and therefore willing to leave the teaching profession. This is a worrying trend which if not decisively managed has the potential of adversely affecting the quality of education in basic education in Narok County including Narok Central Division. Teacher transfers, resignations and teachers seeking careers outside the teaching profession are indicators of teachers' dissatisfaction with the teaching profession. Teachers' work-load and teachers' perception of learner discipline are key work environment factors that were likely to influence teachers' job satisfaction in Narok Central Division. However, the extent to which the factors affected teachers' job satisfaction in Narok Central Division has not been determined.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Narok Central Division has recorded increasing cases teachers in public primary schools seeking transfers and resignations as others pursue employment opportunities in areas not related to their careers in Narok County Government. Such occurrences point to issues with teachers' job satisfaction which is affected by a range of factors including the work environment. Teachers' workload and teachers' perception of learner discipline are salient features in school work environment which have the potential to affect teacher job satisfaction. However, it is not known how teachers' workload and their perceptions of learner discipline affect teacher job satisfaction the Division. This study therefore investigated the effects of teachers' workload and teachers' perception of learner discipline on teacher job satisfaction in Narok Central Division. The ultimate aim of the study was to identify data driven interventions towards improving the work environment and teacher job satisfaction in the Division.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To determine the level of teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Narok Central Division.
- ii. To analyze the extent to which teachers' workload affects teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Narok Central Division
- iii. To investigate the magnitude to which teachers' perception of learner discipline affects teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Narok Central Division.

2.0 Literature Review

The study reviewed literature on the concept of teacher job satisfaction and work environment. Further the study reviewed literature on teachers' workload and teachers' perception of learner discipline in relation to teacher job satisfaction. The theoretical framework for the study is also provided.

2.1 Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to a desirable or undesirable emotion that an employee has about their job (Varshney, 2019). In other words, job satisfaction means an individual's inner perception towards their job and job experiences (Fallatah et al., 2017). In the current study, job satisfaction refers to the extent to which teachers express feelings of contentment, fulfillment, inspiration and pride with the teaching profession. Diverse methodologies have been employed by different scholars to measure job satisfaction. Sinal and Marôco (2020) took a quantitative approach, employing the Index of Job Satisfaction to gauge individual contentment levels in the teaching workplace. Living in Portugal and Brazil, their participants provided an extensive view of job satisfaction, emphasizing a cross-cultural understanding of this crucial aspect. Zakariya and Wardat (2023) introduced a concise yet insightful tool—the Teacher Job Satisfaction with the Profession Scale [TJSPS] comprising of four items on a Likert scale. The scale looked into teachers' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages inherent in their chosen profession. The research shed light on unique insights into the various aspects of job satisfaction.

Yuan et. al. (2022) applied a specialized Teacher Job Satisfaction Scale [TJSS-9] to delve into teacher job satisfaction. The scale unfolded across nine items which covered three dimensions of teacher job satisfaction. The dimensions include teachers' satisfaction with colleague, parent satisfaction and student behavior satisfaction. The exploration was facilitated through a careful crafted five-point Likert scale. Maldrine (2020) study used a comprehensive questionnaire focusing on four pivotal factors—workload, work environment, compensation, and supervision practices. Teachers rated these dimensions using a four-point Likert scale giving a comprehensive perspective on the adaptable nature of job satisfaction. García-Crespo et. al. (2021) explained the emotional fabric of job satisfaction. Their five-statement scale researched on teachers' contentment, meaningfulness, enthusiasm, inspiration and pride in their teaching profession. This approach explained the complex emotions involved in the professional lives of teachers. Zakariya's (2020) innovative proposal of a two-dimensional constructs—JSWE (job satisfaction with work environment) and JSPRO (job satisfaction with profession)—offered a fine distinctive perspective. Each dimension was operationalized through specific items, adding depth to the exploration of job satisfaction.

Wernert (2019) incorporated a dedicated Teacher Job Satisfaction scale into the Teacher Job Satisfaction Scale in his analysis of teacher job satisfaction. The questionnaire had seven statements addressing various aspects of job satisfaction with an aim of generating teachers' perceptions of their profession. Toropova et. al. (2021) researched on teacher job satisfaction using TIMSS 2015 data from Sweden. Their six-item scale looked into teachers' views on continuing teaching and enthusiasm, offering a distinctive approach into the varied dimensions of job satisfaction. In the continuity of these diverse methodologies, this literature review positions itself to contribute to the discourse on teacher job satisfaction, aiming to employ a comprehensive questionnaire approach that captures the complex interplay of factors shaping educators' professional contentment. In the study, teacher job satisfaction was measured by adopting a comprehensive questionnaire approach. Drawing inspiration from the diverse methods employed in the aforementioned studies, the study questionnaire covered multiple facets of job satisfaction, including the level of teachers' job contentment, meaning and purpose, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and continued passion. The survey instrument used a Likert scale format to capture detailed responses, allowing teachers to express their perceptions of their profession. This holistic approach sought to provide a broader understanding of the multifaceted nature of teacher job satisfaction in the context of the current study.

2.2 Work Environment

According to Massoudi and Hamdi (2017), work environment is a very broad concept that encompasses the physical setting such as heat and equipment available at work. It also encompasses the characteristics of the job itself including but not limited to workload and task complexity. It also involves broader organizational features such as organizational culture and history and even aspects of the external organizational setting such as local labor market conditions, industry sector and work-home relationships. Consequently, the work

environment is the sum of the interrelationship between the employees and the employers and the environment in which the employees work including the technical, human and organizational environment. Pawirosumarto et. al. (2017) states that the work environment is the composition of three major sub-environments: the technical environment, the human environment and the organizational environment. According to the authors, technical environment refers to the workplace's tools, equipment, technological infrastructure, and other physical or technical elements. The human environment includes peers, others with whom employees relate, team and work groups, interactional issues, leadership and management.

The human environment can be interpreted as the network of formal and informal interaction among colleagues, teams, and boss-subordinate relationships within the framework of organizations. Such interaction, especially informal interaction, presumably provide an avenue for disseminating information and knowledge and cross-fertilizing ideas among employees. Consequently, it has been established in previous studies that workers' interpersonal relations at the workplace tend to influence their morale (Khasawneh, 2021; Sukawati et al., 2020). The organizational environment encompasses a range of factors, including workload, organizational culture, structures, community relations, school operating procedures, teachers' salaries as well as physical and social infrastructure, such as roads, water, electricity, and hospitals (Shonje, 2016). According to Alyaha and Mbogo (2017), a favorable work environment is characterized by orderliness, adequate tools, materials, and a conducive environment. Consequently, poor equipment and facilities can lead to tension and stress among employees, potentially resulting in dissatisfaction. The study emphasizes that teachers value physical surroundings that are safe, comfortable, close to home, clean, and equipped with adequate tools and well-maintained buildings. In the study, work environment will be limited it refers to teacher workload and teacher perceptions of learner discipline.

A favorable work environment provides teachers with comfort and security, enabling them to effectively fulfill their instructional responsibilities and other duties. Teachers operating in an optimal work environment are more likely to perform their job wholeheartedly, leading to positive outcomes for the learner and the achievement of the desired educational goals. Creating an effective work environment has the potential to reduce attrition, burnout, emotional exhaustion, and teacher turnover, while simultaneously enhancing job satisfaction, well-being, and teacher retention (Ortan et al., 2021). Although the cited studies provide useful insights into the relationship between work environment and teachers' job satisfaction, no known research explores the phenomenon in public primary schools in Narok Central Division, Kenya. This study will seek to fill this gap.

2.2.1 Teachers' Workload and Job Satisfaction

Teachers' workload refers to the work and responsibilities that teachers' must fulfill in their jobs, including lesson planning, grading, meetings, professional development and administrative tasks. A heavy workload can lead to increased stress, fatigue and burnout among teachers, which can affect their job satisfaction (Jomuad et al., 2021). Teachers who feel overwhelmed by their workload may struggle to manage their time effectively and have less time and energy to devote to the learner. This may result to substandard content delivery, decreased academic achievement among the learners and reduced teacher job satisfaction. Additionally, a heavy workload can lead to a lack of work-life balance for teachers as they may need to spend extra time outside their work hours to complete their tasks. This can impact on their personal lives, relationships and may further contribute to feelings of burnout and job dissatisfaction.

Teachers' work is highly complex and has a high range of tasks and this often leads to stress and exhaustion, causing high rates of absenteeism and burnout (Skaalvuk & Skaalvik, 2017). Excessive workload reduces teachers' job satisfaction and morale in managing the classroom. Jendle and Wallnus (2017), in their study in Sweden, found out that teaching is the most stressful profession with 90.0 % of the interviewed teachers complained of burnout and workload stress. Wanjiku's (2018) research at Nanyuki municipality found out that over 70.0 % of the teachers were satisfied and the rest 30.0% complained of work overload. Odisa (2018) reported that teachers complain about the workload they have all along their careers. Kumar and Prakash (2016) attest that in recent years, teachers' workload has been increasing in both the workplace and even beyond the workplace. Marmol (2019) research in the coastal region of Kenya also found out that teachers complained that they spent unnecessarily more time in school on non-academic matters than at home with their families.

Although the cited studies provide useful insights into the relationship between teachers' workload and their job satisfaction, no known research explores the phenomenon in public primary schools in Narok Central

Division, Kenya. This study will seek to fill this gap. It's clear that there are several areas where further investigation could enhance the depth and relevance of my study. Firstly, delving into the unique challenges and characteristics of public primary schools in Narok Central Division, would provide invaluable insights. By focusing more specifically on this geographic context, the research provides a deeper understanding of the factors influencing teacher job satisfaction in this particular area. Secondly, incorporating qualitative research methods like interviews or focus groups with teachers in Narok Central Division would offer a more detailed perspective.

2.2.2 Teachers' Perception of Learner Discipline and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Learner discipline within a school setting refers to the enforcement of rules, expectations and consequences of defiant behaviour in order to ensure a safe and orderly learning environment. It involves promoting positive behavior, teaching students' self-discipline and addressing inappropriate behavior effectively (Muskin & Makhsin, 2021). Learner discipline is essential for creating a conducive learning environment, fostering respect among the stakeholders and creating an inclusive school community. Learner discipline is characterized by attendance and punctuality, compliance with rules and regulations, respect for authority, learning engagement, conflict resolution and responsiveness to instructions. Mollah (2022) argues that punctuality emerges as one of the most significant indicators of learner discipline since effective learning is almost impossible without the coming together of teachers and learners.

According to Du Plessis (2020), teacher perception of learner discipline refers to how teachers perceive and understand the behavior of their learners in the classroom. This includes their observations of how often students are disciplined, how severe the disciplinary actions are, and how effective the disciplinary measures are in shaping learner behavior. Teachers' perceptions of learner discipline may impact on their teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and overall attitudes toward their students. Toropova et. al. (2021) study in Sweden reported that there is a significant relationship between students' discipline and teachers' job satisfaction. The study highlights the significance of student discipline in relation to teachers' job satisfaction. It suggests that positive perceptions of student discipline within the school environment contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers who perceive a favorable student discipline environment are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. The study asserts the importance of maintaining a positive disciplinary climate within schools in order to enhance teachers' satisfaction and well-being.

Buckman and Pittman (2021) study in Georgia, USA, contributed to the existing empirical literature regarding the influence of student discipline on teacher job satisfaction. The research explored the correlation between learners' discipline and teachers' job satisfaction while considering other factors that contribute to job satisfaction. The study employed the Affective Events Theory to interpret the results and concluded that an individual's emotions and behaviors in the workplace can impact on their job satisfaction. Using an Ordinary Least Squares regression analysis, the study found that the correlation between learners' discipline and teachers' job satisfaction was not statistically significant. However, it was observed that the relationship between students' discipline and teachers' job satisfaction had a negative directionality, implying that student discipline has a detrimental effect on teacher job satisfaction. This study provides insights into the important role student discipline plays in influencing teachers' job satisfaction in the educational context. On matters of students' discipline, when students do not comply with the classroom's general expectations, negative students' behavior has a negative impact on teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers' confidence in their ability to candidly deal with indiscipline among the learners may affect their level of job satisfaction. Although the cited studies provide useful insights into the relationship between teacher perception of learner discipline and teacher job satisfaction, no known research explores the relationship between teacher perception of learner discipline and teacher' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Narok Central Division, Kenya. This study sought to fill this gap.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Kenethia, 2023). The theory emerged from Herzberg's study where he conducted an interview with over 200 professional industrial engineers and accountants in Pennsylvania. He asked them to explain events at work that made them feel happy and those events that brought discomfort (Akdemir, 2020). The study identified two sets of distinct factors influencing employee job satisfaction - hygiene and motivation factors.

Hygiene factors refer to the basic elements that must be present in any work environment and are determined by the organization where an employee is serving. Hygiene factors include salary, working conditions, job security, company policies, and interpersonal relationships with supervisors and colleagues. If these factors are met, employees may become satisfied, but their level of job satisfaction will not increase significantly even if these factors are improved (Alrawahi et al., 2020).

On the other hand, motivators are the factors that drive employee motivation and job satisfaction. Examples of motivators include recognition, achievement, challenging work, growth opportunities, and responsibility. These factors are related to the work's intrinsic nature and directly impact employee motivation and job satisfaction (Kenethia, 2023). Teachers' workload and perceptions of learner discipline are elements of Herzberg's hygiene factors in teachers' work environment. Manageable workload and disciplined learners are likely to lead to general satisfaction while at the same time preventing dissatisfaction (Ndirangu & Mungai, 2024). Therefore, the study used Herzberg's theory to establish the influence of teachers' workload and perceptions of learner discipline on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Narok Central Division.

3.1 Research Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design. According to Aggarwal and Ranganathan (2019), a descriptive study is designed to describe the distribution of one or more variables in a population. The design enables the researcher to assess the situation within the study area at the time of the study. The target population for the study was all the 73 public primary schools in Narok Central Division. In the schools, there were 73 head teachers and 658 teachers. The study used 40.0% of the schools as the sample size as per Taherdoost (2016). This translates to 29 schools. All the 29 head teachers in the sampled schools were used as the key informants for the study. The study used 30.0% of teachers, which equated to 199 teachers. Data were collected using a teachers' work environment and job satisfaction questionnaire and an interview guide for the headteachers. The instruments were piloted among a sample of 18 teachers and 3 head teachers. The piloting aimed at assessing the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments before the main study. The computed Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the scaled items in the teachers' questionnaire was 0.809 and above the minimum acceptable index of .700. The reliability of the questionnaire was therefore considered adequate. The data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics used in this study were frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. For inferential statistics, the researcher employed the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) to investigate the relationship between the independent and dependent variable at .05 level of significance.

4.0 Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the study findings in line with the research objectives. Before presenting the results, the adequacy of the response rate for the study was assessed and presented in the following section.

4.1 Response Rate

The study targeted a sample of 199 teachers and 29 headteachers in Narok Central Division. Out of the 199 questionnaires administered to the teachers, 199 (100.0%) were returned and found useful for analysis. In addition, 26 (89.7%) of the targeted 29 headteachers responded to the interview. According to Remler and Van Ryzin (2021), a response rate of 70.0 % or more is adequate for analyzing and generating inferences from a population. The response rate for both the questionnaire and the interview had met set threshold. The study therefore proceeded to data analysis, presenting the results and discussion as per the research objectives.

4.2 Level of Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The first objective of the study was to determine the level of teacher job satisfaction in Narok Central Division. Teacher job satisfaction was the dependent variable for the study. Data on the level of teacher job satisfaction were collected on a five point Likert and Likert type scale where: 1= strongly disagree (SD.), 2 = disagree (D), 3= not sure (NS), 4 = agree (A) and 5 = strongly agree (SA). The frequency and percent of teachers' ratings of each item in the scale were computed. The cumulative frequency and percent of the teachers who disagreed (both SD and D) and agreed (both A and SA) were computed in order to establish

the overall rating patterns on each of the scale items. The composite mean of all the scale items was calculated to in order to determine the level of teacher job satisfaction. The results were as summarized on Table 1.

Table 1: Level of Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Statement	Rating					Cumulative		
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A	Total
I am content with my profession as a teacher	13 6.5%	13 6.5%	7 3.5%	105 52.8%	61 30.7%	26 13.0%	166 83.5%	199 100.0%
I am satisfied with being a teacher at this school.	15 7.5%	25 12.6%	6 3.0%	105 52.8%	48 24.1%	40 20.1%	153 76.9%	199 100.0%
I find my work full of meaning and purpose.	10 5.0%	10 5.0%	8 4.0%	100 50.3%	71 35.7%	20 10.0%	171 86.0%	199 100%
I am enthusiastic about my job.	9 4.5%	12 6%	10 5.0%	101 50.8%	67 33.7%	21 10.5%	168 84.5%	199 100.0%
My work inspires me	11 5.5%	11 5.5%	10 5.0%	89 44.7%	78 39.2%	22 11.0%	167 83.9%	199 100.0%
I am proud of the work I do	13 6.5%	6 3.0%	5 2.5%	101 50.8%	74 37.2%	19 8.5%	175 88.0%	199 100.0%
I am going to continue teaching for as long as I can	39 19.6%	17 8.5%	17 8.5%	83 41.7%	43 21.6%	56 28.1%	126 63.3%	199 100.0%
Mean (M) = 3.90 Std. Deviation (S.D.) = .91								

Source: Field Data (2024)

Results summarized on Table 1 convey that the majority 166 (83.5%) of the teachers were contented with their profession as teachers. The result suggests that a high proportion of the teachers were gratified with their teaching profession which is essential in teaching service delivery. A high proportion 153 (76.9%) of the teachers reported that they were happy with being teachers in their current schools. It was therefore inferred that the majority of the teachers were satisfied with the schools they were posted and therefore likely to support the schools in achieving their mission and vision. A high number 171(86.0%) of teachers found their work full of meaning and purpose. The majority 168(84.5%) of the teachers were enthusiastic about their job. Most 167 (83.9%) of the teachers reported that they found their work inspiring which is key in discouraging teacher turn over. A high proportion 175(88.0%) of the teachers were proud of the work they do. Majority 126 (63.3%) of the teachers agreed that they would stay in the profession for as long as they could. However, it was notable that almost a third (56, 28.1%) of the teachers considered leaving the profession if an opportunity was available. The finding is a pointer of underlying issues in the teaching profession which the employer and other stakeholders should attend to in order to encourage teacher retention.

On a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 is the possible lowest rating and 5 the highest rating on teachers' job satisfaction, the study found that the composite mean for teacher job satisfaction was ($M=3.90$, $SD =.91$). The results point to high levels of teacher job satisfaction in the study location at 78.0%. The finding contradicts Sande (2021) study in public secondary schools in Kilifi County which found that most teachers had below average levels of job satisfaction at 46.0%. Similarly, the finding disagrees with Muga et. al. (2018) study on the levels of teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Siaya, Kisumu, and Kajiado counties which found low levels of teacher job satisfaction. After determining the level of teacher job satisfaction in Narok Central Division, the study proceeded to establish the extent to which teachers' work load and teachers' perception of learner discipline were influencing teacher job satisfaction. The findings are presented and discussed in the following sections.

4.3 Teachers' Workload and Teacher Job Satisfaction

The second objective of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers' workload affected teacher job satisfaction the public primary schools. Before determining the effect, the study analyzed teachers' ratings of their workload at school. The findings are presented in the following section.

4.3.1 Teachers Workload in Public Primary Schools in Narok Central Division

The study results summarized on Table 2 below reveal important insights on teachers' workload. Majority 104 (52.3%) of teachers reported that they did not have adequate time to prepare for their classes. This suggests that most of the teachers struggled with balancing instructional planning with other duties. Further, 148 (74.9%) of teachers concurred that they worked for many hours when they were on duty with an almost similar proportion 156 (78.4%) reporting that they carried office work home as part of their routine. The findings imply that teachers were overwhelmed with work at school which also spilled over to resting time at home. Jomuad et. al. (2021) contends that a heavy workload can lead to a lack of work-life balance for teachers, as they may need to spend extra time outside their work hours to complete their tasks. This can impact on their personal lives and relationships and may further contribute to feelings of burnout and job dissatisfaction. Most 115 (57.8%) of the teachers did not have enough time to prepare teaching and learning resources which probably contributed to poor lesson delivery. Majority 108 (54.2%) of the teachers lacked sufficient time to mark learner assessments and prepare learner assessment rubrics (117, 58.8%) highlighting the pressures teachers face in meeting the instructional and learner assessment demands at school. This was despite majority 135 (67.8%) of the teachers operating within the weekly teaching workload recommended by their employer.

Table 2: Teachers' Rating of Workload at School

Statement	Rating					Cumulative		
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A	Total
I have adequate time to prepare for my classes	63 31.7%	41 20.6%	3 42.7%	85 42.7%	7 3.5%	104 52.3%	92 46.2%	199 100.0%
I work for many hours when I am on duty	8 4.0%	41 20.6%	1 .5%	113 56.8%	36 18.1%	49 24.6%	148 74.9%	199 100.0%
I have adequate time to mark assessment tests.	53 26.6%	62 31.2%	3 1.5%	68 34.2%	13 6.5%	115 57.8%	81 40.7%	199 100.0%
Taking work home is a normal part of your routine	17 8.5%	18 9.0%	8 4.0%	129 64.8%	27 13.6%	35 17.5%	156 78.4%	199 100.0%
I have been assigned administrative tasks	49 24.6%	62 31.2%	5 2.5%	67 33.7%	16 8.0%	111 55.8%	83 41.7%	199 100.0%
I have enough time to prepare my teaching resources	52 26.1%	56 28.1%	2 1.0%	84 42.2%	5 2.5%	108 54.2%	89 44.7%	199 100.0%
I have enough time to prepare learner assessment rubrics	57 28.6%	60 30.2%	3 1.5%	78 39.2%	1 0.5%	117 58.8%	79 39.7%	199 100.0%
The workload is evenly distributed among all departments or grade level teachers	34 17.1%	43 21.6%	50 25.1%	65 32.7%	7 3.5%	77 38.7%	72 42.2%	199 100.0%
I teach the number of	28	28	8	122	13	56	135	199

lessons recommended by TSC in a week	14.1%	14.1%	4.0%	61.3%	6.5%	28.2%	67.8%	100.0%
Mean (M) =2.96 Std. Deviation (SD) = 1.26								

Source: Field Data (2024)

On a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 is the possible lowest rating and 5 the highest rating on teachers’ workload, the study found that composite mean for teacher workload scale was ($M=2.95$; $SD =1.26$). A composite mean score ($M = 2.95$) point above average levels of teaching workload among the teachers at 59.0%. These finding highlights the challenges teachers in the study face in terms of time management and workload, which are key factors that could influence job satisfaction and productivity.

In order to corroborate the results from the teachers’ quantitative data, the study analyzed and discussed the qualitative data on teachers’ workload collected from the headteachers. The headteachers were asked their opinion on teachers’ workload at school. A headteacher observed:

Teachers have a huge workload and work for long hours, especially for those on duty. Besides the requirement of being on duty, some teachers also find the provided time for class preparation as inadequate due to the many lessons, a problem perpetuated by the current status where we are understaffed. As a result, we are witnessing an increase in teacher fatigue which can potentially affect the retention of good teachers (Interview transcript from field data).

Another head teacher ascertained the same as quoted below;

As the head of this institution, I can confirm that the demands placed on our teachers, particularly those assigned weekly duties and administrative responsibilities, often result to long working hours. The school currently does not have enough teachers. The shortage of teachers means that the workload is unevenly distributed, leaving many of them with insufficient time for lesson planning and learner assessment. This has led to increased fatigue among staff, which is a growing concern. If not addressed, it could potentially lead to burnout and make it challenging to retain our most dedicated teachers. We are doing our best to manage this, but without more support or additional staff, it remains a significant issue (Interview transcript from field data).

Evidently, findings from the teachers and comments from the head teacher convey that teachers are overwhelmed by workload at school. Teachers work for long hours and in some cases, they have to take extra lessons because of teacher shortage in schools. Unavailability of teaching staff made teachers handle unmanageable workload which could potentially diminish teachers’ commitment and loyalty to the teaching profession. As the interview transcripts and data from the teachers revealed, teachers lacked sufficient time for lesson preparation which also extends to inadequate learner assessment due to time constraints. Indeed, teachers were experiencing fatigue, burnout and turnover which most likely affected delivery of the desired educational service to the learners. Considering the Kenya is at an advanced stage in implementing the Competency Based Curriculum in basic education institutions, a high workload among teachers is certainly a course for alarm. Teacher workload is cited as a major hindrance in implementing curriculum reforms (OECD, 2019). The finding concurs with Odisha (2018) who found out that teachers complain about the workload they have all along their careers. Kumar and Prakash (2016) also attest that in recent years, teachers’ workload has been increasing in both the workplace and even beyond the workplace. Having determined teaching workload in the schools, the study proceeded to establish the extent to which teaching workload at school correlated with teachers’ job satisfaction.

4.3.2 Effect of Teachers’ Workload on Teacher Job Satisfaction

The effects of teachers’ workload on teachers’ job satisfaction was assessed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis and the results summarized on Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between Teachers’ Workload and Teacher Job Satisfaction

		Teacher Job Satisfaction	Teachers’ workload
Teacher Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.183
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	199	199

Teachers' workload	Pearson Correlation	.183	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	199	199

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data summarized on Table 6 show that teachers' workload and teacher job satisfaction were positively and significantly related [$r = .127, p = .010, n = 199$] since $p < .05$. It was therefore inferred that there was a meaningful connection between teachers' workload and teacher job satisfaction in Narok Central Division. However, the weak correlation suggests that teaching workload is not a primary predictor of teacher job satisfaction. However, it is a necessary condition for teacher job satisfaction provided the workload is not excessive. The finding resonates with Toropova et. al. (2021) study in Sweden which reported that a manageable workload was positively associated with teacher job satisfaction. However, the result contradicts Mukami, et. al. (2022) study in Kenya which found a negative and significant correlation between teachers' workload stress and their job satisfaction scores. The following section presents findings and discussion for the second objective of the study.

4.4 Learner Discipline and Teacher Job Satisfaction

The third objective of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers' perceptions of learner discipline affected teacher job satisfaction in the schools. Before determining the effect, the study analyzed teachers' ratings of learner discipline at school. The findings are presented in the following section.

4.4.1 Teachers' Perception of Learner Discipline

The frequency and percent of teachers' perceptions of learner discipline were computed. The cumulative frequency and percent of the teachers who disagreed (both SD and D) and agreed (both A and SA) was also determined in order to establish the overall pattern of ratings on the items in the scale. The composite mean of all the items in the scale was computed to determine the level of teachers' perception of learner discipline in the schools. The results were as summarized on Table 4 below.

Table 4: Teachers' Rating of Learner Discipline at School

Statement	Rating					Cumulative		
	SD	D	NS	A	SA	D	A	Total
The learners behave in an orderly manner	3 1.5%	14 7.0%	2 1.0%	160 80.4%	20 10.1%	17 8.5%	180 90.5%	199 100.0%
The learners are respectful of the teachers	3 1.5%	5 2.5%	1 0.5%	154 77.4%	36 18.1%	8 4.0%	190 95.5%	199 100.0%
The learners respect school property	2 1.0%	18 9.0%	13 6.5%	143 71.9%	23 11.6%	20 10.0%	166 83.5%	199 100.0%
This school has clear rules about learners conduct	4 2.0%	2 1.0%	2 1.0%	154 77.4%	37 18.6%	6 3.0%	191 96.0%	199 100.0%
These schools rules are enforced fairly and consistently.	2 1.0%	2 1.0%	1 0.5%	157 78.9%	37 18.86%	4 2.0%	194 97.76%	199 100.0%
Issues about learner discipline are resolved promptly	4 2.0%	3 1.5%	3 1.5%	120 60.3%	69 34.7%	7 3.5%	189 95.0%	199 100.0%
Mean (M) =4.07 Std. Deviation (S.D.) = 0.68								

Source: Field Data (2024)

The study results presented on Table 4 show that the majority 180 (90.5%) of the teachers viewed their students as well-behaved, with 190 (95.5%) noting that students were respectful to teachers and 166 (83.5%) acknowledging learner respect for school property. Additionally, most schools in the study location have

clear rules on learner conduct as reported by 191 (96.0%) of teachers. The majority 194 (97.76%) of the teachers indicated that the school rules were fairly and consistently enforced. Furthermore, 189 (95.0%) of teachers concurred that there was quick resolution of any discipline issues that arose in the school environment. On a scale of 1 – 5, the study found that composite mean for teachers’ perception of learner discipline was ($M=4.07$, $SD=0.68$). A composite mean score ($M = 4.07$) point to high levels of teacher perception on learner discipline among the teachers at 81.4%. From the results, it was inferred that the learners in the schools were fairly well disciplined.

In order to triangulate the findings from the teachers on learner discipline in the schools, data collected from the head teachers were analyzed. Asked their opinion on learner discipline at school, one of the head teachers observed:

Most of the learners behave in an orderly manner and have a lot of respect for the teachers. However, there are a few instances of destruction of property. This is attributed to some of the learners being indisciplined or just being careless while handling school property (Interview transcript from field data).

A similar view was also reported by another head teacher:

As the head of this institution, I observe that most of our learners follow set rules and maintain discipline, with a majority showing respect to teachers and school property. Incidents of misbehavior or destruction of property are rare. This can be attributed to the fact that most of our learners are still in their pre-adolescent years, a period when they are generally more receptive to authority and guidelines, making it easier to maintain a well-disciplined school environment (Interview transcript from field data).

Evidently, findings from the teachers and the head teachers convey that teacher perceptions of learner discipline are overwhelmingly positive, with the majority reporting that the learners are well-behaved, respectful to the teachers and took care of school property. Having determined teachers’ perception of learner discipline in the schools, the study proceeded to determine the effect of learner discipline on teachers' job satisfaction.

4.4.2 Effect of Learner Discipline on Teachers’ Job Satisfaction

The effects of learner discipline on teachers’ job satisfaction was assessed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis and the results summarized on Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation between Learner Discipline and Teacher Job Satisfaction

		Teacher Job Satisfaction	Learner Discipline
Teacher Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.330
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	199	199
Learner Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.330	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	199	199

The Pearson's Correlation results summarized on Table 5 revealed a moderate and significant positive effect of learner discipline on teacher job satisfaction ($r=.330$, $p>.000$ $n=199$). This suggests that as teachers perceive student discipline positively, their job satisfaction tends to increase. The finding aligns with Toropova et. al. (2021) study in Sweden which reported a significant relationship between learner discipline and teachers’ job satisfaction. The study asserted that teachers who perceive a positive disciplinary environment experienced higher job satisfaction. Their study emphasized that learner behavior plays a meaningful role in shaping teachers' work environment and well-being. In contrast, Buckman and Pittman’s (2021) study in Georgia, USA, found a negative relationship between student discipline and job satisfaction, indicated that misbehavior negatively impacted teacher morale. Although their findings were not statistically significant, this difference highlights how some factors may influence the relationship between discipline and job satisfaction differently across regions. The study fills a crucial gap by focusing on Narok Central Division, Kenya, and showing how perceptions of learner discipline contribute positively to teachers’ job satisfaction, emphasizing the local context where discipline might serve as a key factor in creating a

conducive work environment for teachers. This further reinforces the idea that maintaining positive student discipline as a critical factor in enhancing teacher's job satisfaction and retention in the study location.

5.0 Conclusions

The study concluded that teachers in Narok Central Division were satisfied with their job. The teachers' hopes, desires and expectation about the teaching profession had been substantially met. However, almost a third of the teachers considered leaving the teaching profession given an opportunity. This portion of teachers were considered unsettled and possible candidates for early exit to the detriment of the teaching profession and provision of basic education service to the learners. The teachers' workload was slightly above average and therefore manageable. The impact of teaching workload on job satisfaction was significant and with a weak positive correlation. Although teaching workload is relevant, its effect on teachers' job satisfaction was relatively weak. The teachers regarded the learners as highly disciplined though there were a few isolated but manageable cases of indiscipline. Learner discipline had a significant and moderate positive correlation with teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers' positive perceptions of learner discipline is a stronger predictor of job satisfaction as compared to teachers' workload.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions from the study, the following recommendations were made;

- i. Teachers workload was slightly above average and having a weak but significant correlation with job satisfaction. It is therefore crucial to address workload management among the teachers in order to avoid job dissatisfaction. The headteachers should assess teachers' workloads and consider strategies to reduce excessive demands such as redistributing tasks and implementing more efficient administrative processes. Offering professional development to teachers on time and stress management may also help teachers handle their workloads more effectively.
- ii. Given that teachers' perception of learner discipline had the strongest positive correlation with teacher job satisfaction, it is essential to focus on improving discipline management strategies. Schools should implement comprehensive discipline policies, train teachers on effective classroom management techniques and establish clear guidelines and support systems for addressing behavioral issues. Creating a positive school culture that promotes respect and good behavior among students may enhance teachers' perceptions of discipline and consequently, their job satisfaction.

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