

Influence of Teachers' Job Security on Teacher Retention in Public Primary Schools in Machakos County, Kenya.

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-----ABSTRACT-----

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of teachers' job security practices on teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County. The study objectives sought to find out the influence to which financial security matters, performance mentorship, health support and professional ethics inducted to teachers in time has on their retention. The study based its findings on Fredrick Herzbergs' Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. Mixed method research approach was applied targeting 898 headteachers, 8768 teachers, One TSC Director and nine TSC Sub county Directors. The study adopted stratified simple random sampling where 90 headteachers and 382 teachers were sampled and for the directors, census method to the 8 TSC Sub county directors was used. Questionnaires for headteachers and teachers were used and interview schedule for the directors were adopted. Descriptive and the inferential data was analyzed with the aid of SPSS. The quantitative data was analyzed quantitatively by use of inferential techniques. The study used Correlation analysis technique, the Pearsons' Correlation Coefficient (r) and Pearsons' Chi Test (p) to test the strength and significance between the study variables. For qualitative data the researcher organized the data into themes based on the study objectives and presented in narrative form. The study identified a relationship between teachers' job security and their retention; alpha level of 0.05, $F=5.097$; $0.001 < 0.5$. From the study findings it was recommended that a unit in curriculum be introduced in collages to enhance teachers' length of stay in stations aiming at teacher retention for quality performance.

Key Words: Determinants, Influence, job security, teacher retention, Public Primary Schools.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The institutions of learning wholly and holistically rely upon teachers for their contribution towards the implementation of the set goals. Teacher retention though a challenge is an important aspect of workforce management in these institutions. Simons and Haykin (2001), observed that teacher retention as a continuous and planned efforts that a school takes to retain the few gifted, skilled and competent teachers. Teacher retention in schools is the right weapon for the survival and success of any developing or even third world Nation. Teachers form very important human capital and for such need to be protected against internal and any external threats. Halinger (2003), reminds that act of retaining teachers in schools is not only beneficial to the teachers but of great advantage to the schools' development and reputation. The school's good performance and learner character is from teachers who are free and have been retained in a school for a length of time. This too contributes largely in maintaining the stability of the school. The study disclosed that all this depends largely on the schools' character in strategizing possible protective and attractive teachers' job security measures. Teacher retention is greatly influenced by the leadership styles. Mancuso (2010), emphasizes on leadership training programs to school heads on job security. Secured teachers love their leaders, their job and always portray sense of ownership in their place of work. Scott (2015), noted that those schools that do not protect their teachers by continuous inductions, risk opening great chances of poor performance. The teachers' greatest fear in the profession is to underperform which is the outcome of failure to induct and mentor tutors.

Susskind (2000), asserts that teachers' job security remains the main significant factor and which make many teachers seek for change of stations. It was revealed that most of the learning institutions have lost some of their senior-most and experienced teachers due to insecurity challenges. Many heads of institutions have knowingly or unknowingly exposed their teachers to predators. Performance is all about competition and a school that excels may become a rival to none performing neighboring. This therefore calls for not only teachers' job security but also social-economic protection from the school leadership. Good performing teachers are nurtured for the betterment and future of the school. Teachers like other workers, will in one way or other need either financial, social and even health security attention. Teacher retention is a global challenge that is

depriving the institutions the quality performance targeted. The majority of the transferring teachers only sought to transfer to the neighboring schools an indication of unsupportive school leadership on job security. Ingersoll (2014), in the US revealed that teacher mobility and attrition was influenced by teacher insecurity in schools. To align the challenge, the study recommended that leaders' undergo thorough training programmes to sensitize on teachers' job security matters. Keeling (2010), in Asia declared that the best method of an institution to attract and retain teachers would be by according them job protection for job satisfaction.

Perrachione (2008), in Namibia investigated on why some teachers would stay or leave stations before or after five years of posting. The study got to understand of some respondents who reported of having worked in same school for over 30 years and who declared they were neither willing to seek for change. The reason for the comfort was that their headteachers practiced fatherly love, protection, very supportive in terms of their security issues and were always ready to go out of their way to an extent of risking their job. Clement (2016) in his study defined this act as self-sacrificial leadership. This is a leadership that provides extra job security. The interviewed teachers also revealed on how they were being recognized whole heartedly as members of the institutions and supported during times of need. It is during such moments when teachers' job protection factor matter a lot. The practice enhances teacher-leadership relationship and so improving teacher job satisfaction which positively lifts performance and teacher retention.

Nyanjom (2013), in Uganda revealed the importance of retaining the best performing teachers in public schools for some good time. The study recommended for teachers' job security, where security would embrace on financial challenges, socio-economic, performance and health. These are very essential professional related issues for teacher retention. Fear of loss of job due to underperformance, underpayments as compared to other well paying firms formed part of job insecurity in the education sector. The survey recommended for leadership training on job security. This was to sensitize on the importance of retaining the best few talented and experienced teachers in schools. The study underscored the importance of programs like management of teachers' and learners' discipline in the school as part of security. Indiscipline of pupils makes teachers' work difficult an act likely to influence or attract teachers' intention to transfer.

Kimeu (2010), KESI (2011) in Kenya confirmed from the field managers the importance of teacher job security. The study noted that security issues on teachers' job security can easily be managed by institutional leadership. Lagat (2015) in Mbita County concurs that wrong management practices applied in schools by leadership contributed to job insecurity. The study called for a series of conflict management programmes to the head teachers. This would empower the leadership on conflict resolution management methods that when practiced would make teachers feel secure, happy and motivated. From the study findings reviewed it was revealed that some administrators' practices were very demoralizing to teachers, a move that could easily trigger conflicts due to failure to show integrity at the place of work.

Majority of the studies reviewed so far seem to have concentrated much on the secondary school's data. This therefore unveils unearthed urgent professional gap in public primary schools that need to be addressed. The current study takes the opportunity to address this left professional gap. In such situations where teachers' job security or protection is rare, quality performance is wanting due to mobility of teachers while looking for safety of their job and precious lives.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kenya is among the African Nations that value quality education of its people. This makes the Kenyan government attach its precious priorities to education sector during revenue allocation. It is for this reason it expects in return the best education results. To work towards the realization of this goal therefore, the leadership in the learning institutions expedite administrative tasks by managing both human and financial capital keenly. It remains the duty of the headteachers to plan and blend all these roles wisely avoiding conflict of interests amongst the teachers. This is because if not well coordinated, leadership can easily affect the job security of the teaching staff thus disrupting learning and other institutional operations. Retaining teachers for a length of time is not easy though very important. Quality learner character and quality teaching and learning is the achievement from secured teachers, working free from neither fear nor threats. All this requires experienced teachers who have a good learner background due to the length of stay in one school. The frequent teacher transfers in public primary schools in Machakos County is depriving learners of the good learning contact periods with their gifted teachers. Due to insecurity in the schools many teachers keep changing stations looking for secure workplaces. The findings have revealed that teachers keep requesting for transfers. This happens to be a major challenge to the leadership who may not have the authentic powers to halt the teacher transfers. Transfer of teachers is an exercise or a policy controlled by the employer, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). The balancing exercise of the transferring teachers is assumed that any trained primary teacher can teach anywhere and any subject. This being the case, the policy somehow opens a sort of a leeway to the teachers who wish and seek for change of work stations. The policy has resulted to frequent teacher mobility where the experienced teachers can request for a change if not satisfied with their current leadership. This is a common trend and a

serious challenge that is affecting retention of teachers. When the sought transfers are successful, the few teachers left behind do experience serious work overload before the replacement (if any). It is during this period where the learners remain for long hours unattended. This is a challenge where time and resources for the parent and the learner is wasted.

Teachers' job security, if well inducted and in the right time sets a firm foundation to secure newly and even the experience teachers. Unplanned teacher transfer brings a lot of negative impact to quality education and learner character. High teacher mobility also translates to poor implementation of government policies like the Country's new Competency Based Curriculum programme (CBC). Experienced teachers are key in the implementation of such new government school programmes. Although the TSC in Kenya has often reviewed the teachers' salaries and allowances upwards, streamlined teacher's promotions, leaves and other Teacher Professional Development Programmes (TPD), the problem of teacher mobility persist despite all the smartly well framed strategies. The transfer request index rate still rates high. For instance, in Machakos County, TSC reported that 1360 cases of teacher transfer requests were recorded between 2018 and 2020. From this number, 855 cases succeeded and 95 exited the profession. This left the burden of the workload to the few teachers left behind. This is an indication of unsolved problem by the employer. This probably could be occasioned by the institutional failure to realize and practice job security issues to their teachers which would probably reduce their job dissatisfaction.

From the foregoing report, more study was deemed necessary in bringing forth a lasting solution that could provide teachers with enough job security to keep them in current stations. By implication, there is a discrepancy between the teachers' job security and their retention. This therefore necessitated the need to examine teachers' job security practices that could be influencing their stay in public primary schools in Machakos County, Kenya.

III. Study objective

The objective of the study investigated the influence of teachers' job security practices on teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County, Kenya.

IV. Hypotheses of the study

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between teachers' job security and their retention in public primary schools in Machakos County.

V. Literature review

Adebayo and Lucy (2012) conducted a study in the US to establish on the workers' organizational job security. The study defines job insecurity as that possibility or probability of an individual not keeping to his job due to feeling of uncertainty, lack of confidence or that anxiety about oneself. The study noted that in most of workplaces, teachers do experience some professional fears which the leadership can professionally manage. Scott (2015), in the US noted that a change can work for ones vision. He revealed of insecurity in schools which was as a result of laxity within the leadership. The study noted the importance of internal job security and that leadership has a core business on security of their teachers. Head teachers should stand firm with their juniors to nurture and tap their hidden talents as they mentor them as part of their jobs security. A key factor to teacher intention to stay, serve positively and perform willingly is to offer security. Martindale (2011), observed that when leadership fails on teacher job security, the impact is professionally felt.

5.1. Teacher job security practices and teacher retention.

Teaching profession in Kenya is one of the occupations that harbor a big percentage of country's workers. This factor probably make teachers' salary to remain low compared to most of other firms. In the society teachers are classified as some of the elite, class of high status quo and which their contributions is always expected. Ushioda (2011) in the US defines job security as the employees' job continuity protection due to general economic conditions and expectations from the society. This definition clearly indicates that teachers not only need financial protection but also socio-economic awareness. This is because teachers may not confidently deliver fully to the societal expectations due to their low income. Failure for the teachers to meet such social activities as expected in the areas of work; to many it creates some psycho-social discomfort resulting to fear. This is when they cannot afford to occasionally and economically participate in that community as expected. Adebayo and Lucy (2012), noted that many teachers due to not being fully involved in the community participation and especially where money is expected, felt uncomfortable and socio-misfit. The study noted importance of financial education given in the right time.

The current study reveals that in every society there exist norms, values or generally the societal culture. All this involves feeding habits, language and symbols, believes, customs and even marital lifestyles. People's habits translate to their life style. Bell (2003), noted the importance of the teachers' knowledge on life styles and symbols to different communities. Newly employed teachers and even the experienced once posted to new communities away from their community would very much need social kind of orientation and in time. In Nyamira County (2012), for instance it was reports of mass teachers' transfer requests of 1183 and of which 363 were approved. Majority of them cited social discomfort as some of the striking reasons. Among the reasons given for transfers were incidences of teacher-leadership conflicts, teacher-learner relationships an indication of where the juniors could have lacked timely social guidance or induction. Failure to get socialization skills and in time in the work place, may result to fear and this affects teachers' stay due to insecurity. Teachers should receive the required job protection and especially newly posted ones.

Brown and Wynn (2007), on the impact of motivational awards and recognition to teachers on job security, observed that different teachers have unique interests in their achievements. Some teachers are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated which forms job security when good performance is realized. He advised headteachers to do intensive curriculum implementation mentorship to teachers posted to their schools and in the right time. He noted that many schools are known for their exemplarily achievements and any slight drop of a kind may cost one of his job thus threatening his stay in that school. On agreement Bannel (2003), emphasizes the importance of leadership-teacher job security induction. To be part of school core business of offering teacher induction in the station on school's performance culture. Teachers would feel insecure when their subjects are underperformed. Performance security mentorship is enough job security to teachers and an unseen method to curb indiscipline in schools, Martindale,(2011).

Kenya values the quality education of its citizens and for such the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) recruits, trains and employs teachers to teach in all learning institutions. In the teaching profession, code of conduct and Core values guides the teachers. Every registered teacher is supposed to follow to the latter these rules and guidelines. Daniel et.al (2007), noted of some incidences of personnel violence an act that violets the code of professional ethics. The study too discloses of unsuitable noted dressings, language abuse, teacher-learner affairs and other unprofessional misconduct. Bannel (2003), on advice to the headteachers was that they be supportive to teachers by convening continuous induction sessions on professional issues. Many in the teaching sector have faced disciplinary action, others exited in fear after witnessing of their fellow's face dismissals.

The current study recommends that induction and mentorship by seniors be part of their job to enhance teacher job security which would see some gifted teachers advance to develop others, Bennell (2005).

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed method design to investigate the influence of teachers' job security practices on teacher retention. The study objective was to establish the influence caused by institutional teachers' job security practices on their retention in Machakos County, Kenya. The mixed method design selected suits the study for it allows computation of large figures where the study targeted 898 headteachers, 8768 teachers and 10 directors (Thabane 2010). Stratified proportionate simple random sampling technique was used where 90 head teachers, 382 teachers were selected and 9 TSC directors censured. For data collection, questionnaires and interview schedules were used. The research tools went a piloting stage in 7 schools and 2 TSC directors to validate and to have surety and reliability of the tools employed (Gary2002). The 7 schools and the 2 directors exposed in the piloting exercise were excluded in the main data collection and so slightly affecting the already sampled data. The quantitative data collected was analyzed quantitatively as well as use of inferential statistics. The results were reported by use of frequency distribution tables. Qualitative data was analyzed by organizing the data into themes based on study objectives and presented in narrative form. The study applied Pearsons' Correlation(r) analysis to determine the strength and significant level of relationship between dependent and independent variables. The outcome of the study indicated that there was a strong statistical relationship between the variables; $t(320)=2.56, p<0.05; \square=0.243$. From results in Table 3 there is a clear indication that there was statistical relationship between the variables thus: $p= 0.001<0.05$. This is an implication that teachers' job security practices could significantly predict teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County, Kenya.

VII. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The study sought to investigate the influence of teachers' job security practices and teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County. For the study to achieve the study objective, teachers were requested to state their statistical significant relationship between teachers' job security and their retention in public primary schools in Machakos County. Their response is recorded in the tables below;

Table 1. Regression Model for teachers' job security and their retention.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.126 ^a	.016	.013	.284

a. Predictor :(Constant), Practice Teachers' job security

From the Regression results, Table 1 indicates that the relationship between the influence of teachers' job security and their retention was positive but moderate ($R=0.016$) because R^2 was not equal to 0 ($R^2 \neq 0$) but within 0 and 1. From the analysis, an adjusted R^2 gives more accurate prediction and therefore, an adjusted $R^2 = 0.013$ indicating 1.3% of the variation in teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County. This could be explained by the institutions establishing and practicing teachers' job security in the linear model.

In order to test whether this model was significant in the establishing prediction between teachers' job security and their retention, a model significance was established and analyzed in the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as in Table 2.

Table 2: ANOVA Model for teachers' job security and teacher retention

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	.412	1	.412	5.097	.025 ^b
	Residual	25.698	318	.081		
	Total	26.110	319			

a Dependant Variable: Teacher retention

b Predictor: Practice Teachers' job security

The relationship was significant when "F column" value yielded to a beta which was equal to zero ($\beta=0$) and not significant when the "F column" value yielded to a beta whose significant value was not equal to zero ($\beta \neq 0$). The model identified in Table 2. was indeed significant in making prediction that providing teachers' security could predict teacher retention, at alpha level of 0.05, $F=5.097$; $p < 0.05$). This is because beta was equal to zero ($\beta=0$). This is an implication that practice of determinants that influence teachers' job security could significantly predict teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County. Again the analysis of regression coefficients shown in Table 3 was done in order to establish the relative strength of prediction of the study of independent variables upon the dependent variables.

Table 3: Coefficients for teachers' job security and teacher retention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Hypothesis testing Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	.634	.186		3.402	.001
	Trs'job security	.243	.108	.910	2.258

a Dependent Variable: Teacher retention

Table 2 shows the regression coefficient of the independent variables (teachers' job security) based on standardized and unstandardized coefficients (β). From the analysis, it is observed that teachers' job security had a significant prediction strength on teacher retention $t(320) = 2.56$; $p < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.243$. This is an implication of teacher retention increment of 0.243 per every increased unit of teachers' job security. This therefore indicates that teacher retention greatly depends on practices on determinants that influence teachers' job security. To accept or uphold the hypothesis, the acceptance level of significance was 0.05. The levels of significance of the coefficient model found to be greater than 0.05 would imply that the independent variable (teachers' job security practices) did not influence the dependent variable (teacher retention). Contrary to this, if the level of significance rated less than 0.05, then practice of teachers' job security was found to influence teacher retention.

From table 3, it is noted that there was statistical relationship ($0.001 < 0.05$) between teachers' job security and teacher retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that "there is no statistically significant relationship between teachers' job security and their retention in public primary schools in Machakos County" was rejected at 0.05 level of significance and the alternative hypothesis which stated that "there is statistically significant relationship between teachers' job security and their retention in public primary schools in Machakos County" was upheld. A conclusion was drawn based on the findings. It states that; practices of teachers' job security and their retention are statistically dependent.

In Table 4, Directors were also requested to state their level of agreement on influence of teachers' job security practices on teachers' retention by use of the linker scale:1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Disagree, 4-Strongly Disagree and 5-Very Strongly Disagree.

Table 4: TSC Directors' level of agreement on Teachers' Job security practices and influence to teacher's retention

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	50.0
Agree	3	37.5
Disagree	1	12.5
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
Very Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
Total	8	100

From Table 4, the findings indicate that majority of the TSC directors 4(50%) strongly agree with the statement that teachers' job security influence teacher retention, 3(37.5%) agreed, and only 1(12.5%) disagreed with the statement that teachers' job security practices influence teachers' retention.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study findings noted that teachers' job security practices and teacher retention have a strong influence on teacher retention in public primary schools in Machakos County. This was based on the study objectives. Teachers' job protection can be achieved in the learning institutions through induction and mentorship of the newly employed teachers and even the experienced ones. Job security issues would involve areas such as financial protection, social-economic protection, institutional performance mentorship, health and professional ethics protection among other related professional areas.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended the following interventions:

- (i) The institutions practice teachers' job security measures to teachers inform of induction programmes.
- (ii) The study also recommended the introduction of a unit on induction and mentorship by the Ministry of Education as one of the core professional and examinable subject.
- (iii) The unit be taught and examined in Teacher Training Colleges and Universities across the country.

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