

ABSTRACT

The teaching profession in Kenya has witnessed various manifestations of teacher dissatisfaction more specifically in the last ten years. These include industrial disharmony, teacher turnover and disciplinary cases relating to teacher absenteeism and desertion. Teachers' job satisfaction has a direct impact on students' achievement and their future careers. This implies that, while a satisfied teacher is less likely to desert his/her teaching responsibilities, a dissatisfied one has higher chances of being less committed to his/her students. Thereby minimizing their chances of making positive learning gains. Research has demonstrated that there are three correlates of job satisfaction, namely; job characteristics, organizational constraints and the reward system. However, there is paucity of research in Kenya and in particular Nakuru County on the extent to which the three correlates of job satisfaction influence satisfaction among secondary school teachers. Job satisfaction is not a group phenomenon since it is a function of an individual's needs fulfilment. This has the implication that what satisfies one teacher may not satisfy all teachers. It can therefore be argued that, satisfaction is related to an individual teacher's conception of their ideal selves-at-work within the wider conception of their ideal self-at-work. In this regard, the purpose of the study was to investigate selected personal factors and antecedents of job satisfaction influencing teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study was grounded on the Job Characteristics Theory and Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. The study employed *ex-post facto* research design. Proportionate and simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 341 teachers from a target population of 3,092 teachers in the 346 public secondary schools in the County. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire. Validity of the research instrument was ascertained through seeking expert judgment from the supervisors and by carrying out a pilot study in public secondary schools in the neighbouring Nyandarua County. The internal and external reliability coefficients for the teachers' questionnaire as estimated through Cronbach's alpha coefficient and test-retest technique stood at $R = .945$ and $r = .905$ respectively. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically through frequency counts and percentages. Data from the Likert scale items was analyzed descriptively while hypotheses were tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at an alpha level of .05. The analyses were done with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme version 22.0. The study generated the following major findings; First, nearly two-thirds (61.6%) of the teacher participants were not satisfied with the various aspects of their job. Second, the selected personal characteristics, that is gender, age, marital status, academic qualification and teaching experience had a statistically significant influence ($p < .05$) on teacher satisfaction. Third, according to the study participants, teacher satisfaction can be enhanced through teacher promotion, adequate remuneration, provision of physical facilities in schools, withdrawal of the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) and teacher delocalization programme, recognition for task accomplishment and provision of opportunities for professional development. These findings have important implications and lessons in regard to teachers' job satisfaction. Specifically, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and school administrators should enhance recognition of teachers by rewarding exemplary performance and achievement. The TSC and Ministry of Education (MOE) should organize workshops and INSETS for those categories of teachers who seem to be less satisfied. The schools' Boards of Management (BoMs) and other stakeholders in the education sector should address the identified strategies for enhancing job satisfaction with a view to enhancing job satisfaction among secondary school teachers within and outside Nakuru County.