



HEAD TEACHERS' PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE AND TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BARINGO SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

This study investigated the effects of head teachers' participative leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. To this far, lots of research conducted in this area have not been exhausted on the participative leadership style, rather most of the studies have focused on leadership in general. The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey design, in which both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were applied. The study respondents included 1250 teachers randomly selected from 127 public primary schools, 127 head teachers, and 127 School chairpersons (B.O.M representative) in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. An interview schedule was used to analyse qualitative data using thematic analysis. The study used Pearson's correlational analysis and established that there was a positive relationship between participative leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. Regression analysis established that job establishment and position had a control effect on job satisfaction. The study concluded that top positions in schools enjoyed more benefits in their positions and there is a need to streamline leadership aspects in most primary schools. The positive influence contributes to teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. This shows that Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya should consider applying head teachers' participative leadership style in school. The study recommends that the head teacher needs to play the role of a coach and mentor at the same time to his/her subordinate.

Keywords: participative leadership styles, job satisfaction, team building

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1. Introduction

In modern competitive school environment, service delivery is gaining increasingly more important in the competitive formula of education institutions (Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010). To achieve that goal, every institution of education needs to have an effective leader as it is the heart of every organization that could lead to high service delivery (Chebonye, et al., 2021). Educational institutions are critical places where the next generation is educated, and school leaders bear a heavy burden of responsibility for their institutions. Leaders in educational institutions are the same as leaders in other organizations, and inevitably face the challenge of maintaining the goals of institutions (Northouse, 2010). Leadership in educational institutions is a vigorous procedure where a person is responsible for teamwork and dynamically seeks the group effort, moreover channel the dedication of all team members to achieve specific purposes in a particular situation (Pazey and Cole, 2013). Leadership in this context pursues better performance in educational institutions due to the fact that it not only identifies the goals to be achieved and the person responsible to implement them but it seeks to incorporate better characteristics of reinforcement such as identification, service atmosphere, confidence building, compulsion and payment (Balunywa, 2000). In this unstable environment to guarantee the accomplishment of the educational institution, it is critical to implement the proper leadership style that can make sure the implementation of needed procedures in teaching (Torlak and Kuzey, 2019). However, McInerney, Korpershoek, Wang, and Morin (2018) examined the components of well-being, and job satisfaction of teachers and analyzed the reasons for job quitting. In addition to a school leader's leadership style, teacher job satisfaction is another critical factor affecting school effectiveness. Northouse (2010) believed that *"a teachers' job satisfaction may serve to influence their morale, motivation and general willingness to maximize their teaching potential"*.

To this end, good school leadership is essential to turning around the nation's failing schools. Schools' leaders (heads of schools, principals, managers) are supposed to possess the ability to influence their staff, parents and other stakeholders of education to make sure their schools successfully attain their pre-intended objectives by making sure that teachers perform well their responsibilities and learners perform well in their academic as anticipated. In Nandi County, Kipkemboi and Sirma (2014) note that leadership styles have a great impact on the working atmosphere in a school and consequently on teachers' job satisfaction. Yet most primary schools in Kenya, particularly government-owned primary schools, are facing problems of leadership due to limited professional development opportunities, and inadequate teachers' professional support and supervision (Bennell and Mukyanuzi, 2005).

2. Statement of the Problem

Studies have found that effective leadership and employee job satisfaction are two factors that have been regarded as fundamental for organizational success. Therefore, an

organization without effective leadership is not able to transform input resources into a competitive advantage. Effective school leadership provides a synergy through which teachers' aspirations and job satisfaction are enhanced (Gitaka, 2014). Studies from around the globe have continually reaffirmed the fact that quality education delivery is synonymous with quality and satisfied teaching staff. In Kenya, teachers' job satisfaction has been called to question through recent task force reports and sessional papers Nos. 12 of 2012 and 14 of 2014. These policy documents have expressed concern over the evident lack of job interest, low morale and motivation leading to high teacher attrition rates and lack of commitment among the teachers. It is however conspicuous that there are no studies which indicate the extent to which head teachers' participative leadership practices have influenced teacher job satisfaction levels as identified by the policy documents. Studies by Mainga (2012), equally established disturbing job attrition levels of 30 to 40% annually in Kasarani division, Nairobi. Teachers cited job satisfaction as the prime factor leading to job attrition. Other studies and annual reports from Catholic private schools have likewise indicated troublesome teacher job satisfaction levels and turn-over rates of between 15% and 25% annually. Head teachers in public primary schools are solely responsible for teachers' well-being, with little interference from the school management. There is a need to investigate the extent to which head teachers' participative leadership practices have influenced the manifested teacher job satisfaction levels. This study, therefore, set out to establish the influence of head teachers' participative leadership practices on teachers' job satisfaction in the public primary in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of head teachers' participative leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya.

3.1 Null Hypothesis

Participative leadership styles do not influence teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya.

4. Literature Review

Effective school leadership provides a synergy through which teachers' aspirations and job satisfaction are enhanced (Gitaka, 2014). Poipoi and Sirma (2010) conducted a study in Busia, Kenya, the objectives of the study were to find out factors that influenced teachers to join the teaching profession, and the strategies used by school leadership to motivate them. The study established that teachers were more satisfied in schools with good working environments. However, appropriate leadership styles that influence teachers' job satisfaction and performance should be employed if we attain academic

excellence in most of our schools. In this regard, therefore, Edwards and Gill (2012) have strongly argued that more research is needed to understand the effects of leadership styles on teachers' job satisfaction in school settings. Determining the kind of leadership style that goes with teachers' job satisfaction in an educational setting (institutions) has remained a problem in many countries the world over, including Africa. They also expressed satisfaction with schools with improved terms and conditions of service. In addition, the study found that providing opportunities for growth and development through training and promotion are effective and efficient job satisfiers. Initially, the institutions offered in-service courses to primary school head teachers (Gitaka, 2014), indicating the dire need for effective school leadership at the primary school level. In participative leadership practice, the school head teacher recognizes teachers' abilities 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.

In his study, Wambane (2015) found that participative leadership improved school processes. The scholars concluded that participative leadership increases organizational and team effectiveness. Lumbasi, K'Aol and Ouma (2016) studied the effect of participative leadership on the performance of COYA senior managers in Kenya. The findings indicated that the application of participative leadership positively affects the performance of employees. Sinani (2016) also established that the participative leadership style has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction. Wachira, Gitumu and Mbugua (2017) established that when the head teachers remained accommodative of other teachers' opinions, through participative leadership, they also encouraged interpersonal relationships, urged the group to beat its past target, and the teachers were satisfied with their work. It is evident that most research on teacher job satisfaction found school factors including working conditions, teacher-student relationships, and school leadership exerted a lot of influence on the whole school fraternity.

5. Material and Methods

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted because it provides a systematic description that is factual and accurate, as stated by Amin (2005). The target population was comprised of teachers, head teachers and School chairpersons (B.O.M representative). The study respondents included 1250 teachers randomly selected from 127 public primary schools, 127 head teachers, and 127 School chairpersons (B.O.M representative) in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) concluded that a 20-30% sample size was suitable for the descriptive survey. Orodho (2012) during sample determination, used 30% of the head teachers and school chairpersons and used 20% of the teachers derived from simple random sampling. A sample of 375 participants was established. The quantitative data of the descriptive analysis was presented in tables indicating frequencies, mean and

percentages. Inferential statistics using correlation and regression analyses were used to test the degree, strength and direction of the effects of head teachers' participative leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction. The tests of significance were performed at the probability level of $p < .05$. An interview guide was developed, piloted, refined and updated throughout the course of the empirical work as part of the deductive process (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative data was analyzed using both thematic analysis and content analysis.

7. Results and Discussion

The study sought the views of respondents on head teachers' participative leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction and their responses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on head teachers' participative leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction

Statement	SA		A		UD		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
My head teacher provides opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision-making.	178	54	65	20	10	3	32	10	42	13
My head teacher is comfortable working with groups to seek their input in making decisions.	156	48	79	24	15	5	41	13	36	11
My head teacher discusses issues with all the staff while considering which incentives and disincentives for the quality of work.	217	66	68	21	9	3	11	3	22	7
Communication channels are provided in school by my head teacher.	198	61	52	16	17	5	31	9	29	8.8
Sense of belonging is promoted among staff by my head teacher.	145	44	100	31	21	6	41	13	20	6
The planning process of school is collectively done by all staff in my school.	189	58	72	22	5	1.5	41	12.5	20	6
My head teacher welcomes questions and opinions from the staff in matters related to school affairs.	176	54	59	18	9	3	28	9	55	17
My talent is effectively utilized by my head teacher.	61	19	184	56	24	7	18	6	40	12
Delegation of duties is always given to me by my head teacher.	122	37	114	35	18	6	27	8	46	14
My head teacher takes responsibility for decisions made by teachers.	76	23	167	51	8	2	39	12	37	11
Valid N (listwise)	327									

Source: Field Data (2022).

The results in Table 1 reveal that 243(74%) of the respondents strongly agreed that head teacher's provided opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision-making, in the same vain 235(72%) of the respondents strongly agreed that head teacher was

comfortable working with groups to seek their inputs in making decisions; 285(87%) of the respondents strongly agreed that head teacher discusses issues with all the staff while considering which incentives and disincentives for the quality of work; 250(77%) of the respondents strongly agreed that communication channels were provided in school by my head teacher; 245(75%) of the respondents agreed that sense of belonging was promoted among staff by the head teacher; 261(80%) of the respondents agreed that the planning process of school was collectively done by all staff in school; 235(72%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their head teacher welcomes questions and opinions from the staff in matters related to school affairs; 245(75%) of the respondents agreed that talent was effectively utilized by the head teacher; 236(72%) of the respondents agreed that delegation of duties was always given to staff by the head teacher and lastly 243(74%) of the respondents agreed that the head teacher took responsibility for decisions made by teachers. The findings reveal that head teachers' participative leadership style had an influence on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Central Sub-county, Kenya. The findings were in agreement with Omeke and Onah (2011) who established that the democratic leadership style exerts a positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction. The findings were further in agreement with Kirega (2006) who stated that this style of leadership focuses on using the skills, experience, and ideas of others. This finding points to the fact that most employees valued their professional work environments despite of the possible poor physical resources and leadership styles employed by the directors.

During the interviews, the teachers concurred with the view that this leadership style improves the performance of workers in both the short term and long term and can be used for any type of work project. Teacher, Tr.1, remarked;

"Our head teacher tries to discuss issues with all the staff in the event of emergency and work-related activities. He also communicates through the appropriate channels provided in school. The teachers feel a sense of belonging to the school and this has enabled planning process to be conducted collectively by all staff in the school" (Tr.1, Female, BED, April, 2022).

The interpretation was that head teachers' participative leadership style influences teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Central Sub-county, Kenya. The findings are in line with a study conducted by Mosadeghrad and Ferdosi (2013) indicated that employees' job satisfaction and commitment depend upon the leadership style of managers. However, the study revealed that most of the employees were moderately satisfied with their jobs on average but were satisfied with their professional work environment. The findings further concur with Cranton (2011) that for any head teacher to satisfy the teachers' and pupils' individual needs he/she must first establish a cordial relationship with both of them, which makes them feel free to seek any assistance from the head teacher since they have a high level of trust. This can be achieved by the

head teacher, when he begins arriving in the staffroom early and staying with the teachers during tea and lunch breaks just enjoying the meals together.

Like quantitative findings, these views further attest to the fact that understanding the staff members and learners on individual levels enables the head teacher to be aware of each individual and be able to help in cupping these needs and hence achieve their personal goals. On further probing, BOM, remarked;

“Teachers are highly satisfied when these leadership styles are used for purposes of managing schools. This was an indication that head teachers’ democratic leadership styles highly influence job satisfaction” (BOM, April, 2022).

The views further concur with the facts that as a leader the head teacher should be able to recognize the special characteristics of each individual and create trust among them. To be able to exploit maximally the potential of a teacher, the head teacher needs to treat each individual differently and acknowledge the little efforts made with that in mind the teacher is likely to really commit him/her to the course.

To establish the influence of involvement, acceptance/open suggestion, team building and empowerment on teachers’ job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county Kenya, a multi-regression was conducted to test the null hypothesis:

Table 2: Regression summary model on participative leadership styles and teachers’ job satisfaction

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.524 ^a	.64	.205	0.51237	.524	8.715	28	348	.001 ^a

a. Predictors: (Constant), Participative leadership styles

Source: Field Data (2022).

Table 2 provides the R and R2 value. The R-value is 0.524, which represents the simple correlation and, therefore, indicates a moderate degree of correlation. The R2 value indicates how much of the dependent variable, teachers’ job satisfaction, can be explained by the independent variable, participative leadership styles. The standard error of the estimate is 0.51237 and the adjusted R square value is 0.205. The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant because the p-value of 0.001 for both dimensions of Participative leadership styles was less than the significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the adjusted square value of 0.205 implies that participative leadership styles predict the teachers’ job satisfaction; in other words, the teachers’ job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya is dependent on the participative leadership styles by 20.5%. This finding is in agreement with Kuloba (2010) who discovered that teacher performance is enhanced by head teachers’ communication with their teaching staff and head teachers’ delegation of duties to teachers enhances teacher performance. The

finding is in agreement with Kingori (2013) who showed that different leadership style factors will have different impacts on employee job satisfaction components.

From the study findings, all the measures of head teachers' participative leadership style influenced teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. This variable was found to have a positive effect on the influence of teachers' job satisfaction in Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. This means that holding all other factors constant, an increase in the application of head teachers' participative leadership style facilitated the increase in teachers' job satisfaction in Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. The findings, therefore, showed that the participative leadership style influences teachers' job satisfaction in Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya.

8. Conclusion

The study conclude that head teachers' participative leadership style had a significant influence on teachers' job satisfaction in Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. The findings that head teachers' participative leadership style had a positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction in Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya was a good indication that head teachers' participative leadership style would improve job satisfaction of teachers in Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya. This shows that Public Primary Schools in Baringo Sub-county, Kenya should consider applying head teachers' participative leadership style in school. Further, head teachers' democratic leadership style positively influenced primary school teachers' job satisfaction.

9. Recommendation

The study recommends that the head teacher needs to play the role of a coach and a mentor at the same time to his/her subordinate. Adoption of leadership strategies by the schools' heads such as a participative style of leadership that creates a conducive environment which will help in improving primary school teachers' job satisfaction.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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