



Influence of teachers' work load on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Nandi north sub county, Nandi county, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to find out the influence of teachers' work load on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Nandi north sub county, Nandi County, Kenya. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 172 head teachers and 1302 teachers. The sample size was 17 Head teachers and 93 teachers. The consistency of the study instruments was measured using test- retest reliability whereby the same groups of respondents were used repeatedly to test whether the same results could be obtained. The content validity was ascertained by the researcher in consultation with the supervisors and expert opinion from three lecturers of the School of Education, Kisii University. To select the individual teachers, the researcher used simple random sampling method. Data was collected by use of questionnaire and interview schedules. The questionnaire allowed measurement for or against a particular view point. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage tables) with the help of SPSS. There was high teaching workload which led to tiresome preparation of teachers in discharging their teaching duties hence lowering performance in national examinations. The study indicated that teachers had no enough time for professional development and workload conditions were not favourable hence the academic performance of pupils was affected.

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1. Introduction

There is a link between work load and teacher performance. Teacher workload describes the amount of time spent teaching and interacting with pupils in and outside the classroom, the time left for preparation and time spent in other co-curricular and the management activities. A number of studies conducted have shown that there is a relation between workload and performance. At that level of workload, performance will decrease perhaps at some point or after some extended period catastrophically. Performance may remain at an acceptable level over a considerable range of workload variation. In general, however, workload extremes are related to poor performance.

According to Benbow, Mizrahi, Oliver and Moshiri (2007), an ideal pupil-teacher ratio should be 40:1. A study by Zhang and Grisay (2008) covering 11 of 19 countries in the World Economic Indicator (WEI) program, for example, Paraguay and Uruguay had pupil-teacher ratio in the range of 20:1 to 30:1 respectively. India had the highest number of 59 pupils per teacher especially in villages. Malaysia had the lowest number with an overall pupil-teacher ratio of 18:1 in urban areas and 15:1 in rural areas. In the study of schools, the mean pupil-teacher ratio range from 32 in school owned by private individuals to 47 in government schools. According to the education sector report (2008) the pupil-teacher ratio in Kenya in public schools was 43:1 in 2005 and 50:1 in 2007, an indication that the number of teachers is either declining or the number of pupils is growing at a much faster rate than that of

the teachers. The recommended pupil-teacher ratio for public primary schools in Kenya is 40:1. A difference in pupil-teacher ratio across school ownership and location is another reflection of inequality in access to quality education.

Statement of the Problem

Kenya being a developing country must strategize on ways aimed at achieving goals of education from the grassroots in order to foster development. This is because education acts as a vehicle towards realizing the dream of achieving Kenya vision 2030. This will be done by raising the standards of education in all parts of our country. Poor performance of primary schools in the sub-County undermines learner's chances of joining quality secondary schools and jeopardizes opportunity for job placement, and in most cases reduces an individual's active participation in national development. Considering that teachers play a major role in the teaching and learning process, there is need to examine the influence of teachers' work load on pupils' academic performance

2 Literature Review

2.1 Teachers' Work Load as a Determinant of Pupils' Academic Performance

A new measure of perceived manageability of workload was developed for this study. While actual workload measured as the number of hours worked the previous week has some uses, it is not necessarily related to dissatisfaction or detrimental effects on teaching or health. Our measure of perceived manageability was designed to provide a measure of

the latter. There was a strong association between perceived manageability of work and satisfaction with work. Middle managers were less satisfied than either senior managers or teachers with their perceived workload and the balance of this work with private life (Jackson, 2007).

Senior and middle managers, on average, perceived their workload to be significantly less manageable than teachers. The following findings, however, give reason for concern about the extent, to which both middle managers and teachers perceive their workload as manageable overall, and the extent to which workload is having detrimental effects, particularly on the quality of their teaching, the support they can give to colleagues, and their health (Kadzamira, & Bjorkman, 2004). Average work load is very important for each teacher as it makes it easy to monitor and assess how the pupils' progress in their studies and this in the long run will boost the performance of the pupils due to the coaching given to them by the teachers. Thus we see that when a teacher has a lot of workload he/she may not be able to deliver well to the pupils thus compromising the performance of the pupils in the long run, thus the schools should ensure that a teacher has a workload that is manageable.

2.2 Factors Related to Perceived Workload Manageability

This study was designed to enable analysis of the relative influence of a range of school factors on teachers' workload, as set out in the conceptual framework for the study. These included a set of designated stressors, level of school support, teacher autonomy, school innovativeness, staff collaboration, strength of school guiding values, and school leadership. This study found that the main factors related to perceived manageability of workload were a set of potential stressors identified in the questionnaire, such as paperwork, student behaviour and class size. Perceived workload manageability was not, however, related to number of hours worked per week (Lutharns, 2009).

The most significant stressors for middle managers, the group who perceived their work as least manageable, were the numbers of hours they spent at school, the amount of non-contact time, the amount of paperwork required, the level of resources, relations with other teachers and relations with parents (Quick, 2008 & Nelson, 2009). For senior managers the profile of stressors was slightly different. Numbers of hours spent at the school, the amount of non-contact time, and the amount of paperwork were still the most important stressors, but developing new assessment procedures was also a significant stressor. For teachers, once more the numbers of hours spent at the school was still a significant stressor, though less so than for managers. However, the amount of paperwork was equally significant as a stressor for teachers, as was the amount of non-contact time. The number of support staff in the school and performance appraisal were also significant stressors for teachers, though less so. It is equally interesting to note the stressors that did not relate to workload manageability for the teachers and managers in this survey. These included class size, introduction of new curricula, developing new assessment procedures, accountability reviews, reporting requirements and collating and processing of assessment data (Kadzamira, & Bjorkman, 2004).

The next most significant factors associated with manageability, for teachers and middle teachers, were the level of support teachers thought they received from their school and the degree of autonomy they felt they had in their work.. No associations were found between school innovativeness, school leadership, collaborative teaching,

clarity of school values and workload manageability for teachers or middle managers (Erlandson, 2004).

2.3 Improving Workload Manageability in Schools

Principals were asked about which factors would make workloads more manageable for: (1) themselves, (2) middle managers, (3) teachers. Managers were asked about which factors would make workloads more manageable for themselves and for teachers. Teachers were asked what would make the workload more manageable for teachers in schools (Kadzamira, & Bjorkman, 2004). Principals indicated that simplified compliance requirements, more teachers and greater ability to attract good teachers, and guaranteed planning time would assist in making their workload more manageable in schools (Gordon, 2001 & Scharlach, 2008). Principals indicated that additional staff and guaranteed planning time along with reduced compliance requirements would assist in making the workload of managers more manageable in schools.

Principals felt that, on average, additional staff, guaranteed planning time, more support and more specialists were among the highest rated supports that would assist in making teachers' workload more manageable. Managers saw additional staff, guaranteed planning time, reduced compliance requirements and the capacity to attract good teachers as most likely to assist in improving their workload. They also believed that these factors would be most likely assist the workload of teachers in schools (White, 2007). Teachers saw additional staff, smaller classes, guaranteed planning time and more specialists as among the most important factors for assisting with their workload. Typically, principals, managers and teachers saw increased support to reduce workload coming from the provision of additional staffing and additional provision for time to do professional work outside of the classroom (Sylvia, & Hutchinson, 2005).

3 Materials and Research Methodology

According to Christensen (2004), research design refers to the overall strategy that was chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring that it will effectively address the research problem. The study employed a descriptive survey research design where the researcher sought to collect information from a number of respondents in schools. The target population consists of 172 public primary schools 1302 teachers and 172 head teachers in Nandi North sub-county. The study sampled 93 teachers from 1302 teachers using Nassiuma, (2000) formula

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Where n is the sample size is the population

C is the Coefficient of variation (0.5)

e is the level of precision (0.05)

(Nassiuma, 2000)

In addition the study used 10% of the target 172 headteachers to get a sample 17 headteachers. To get individual teachers simple random sampling technique was used. A fully structured questionnaire was prepared for this study to collect data from teachers. The questionnaire comprised two sections, namely: Section A: which has Demographical information such as Age Gender, academic qualification, category of school, duration of being a teacher in this school and Section B:-which has specific study objectives. A 5 point likert scale was used where individuals responded to a series of statements by picking one of the given choices.

Unstructured interviews were used in this study. This is because they are means of collecting data.

The content validity was ascertained the researcher in consultation with the supervisors and expert opinion from three lecturers in research of the School of Education, Kisii University. The consistency of the study results was measured using test- retest reliability whereby the same group of respondents was used repeatedly to test whether the same results could be obtained. . Responses to the survey was catalogued by the number of responses to each question and entered in SPSS program for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages were used for the purpose of presentations and description in form of frequency distribution tables. Data obtained through interviews were transcribed in verbatim form, analyzed and merged with descriptive statistics in the report.

4 Results

4.1 Influence of Teachers Workload on Academic Performance

The study sought to establish the influence Teachers Workload on Academic Performance. The results are presented in table 4.1

Table 4.1, shows that 47(51%) teachers agreed that teachers in Nandi north sub-county have a lot of work load thus they do not have time for professional development which in the end deteriorates pupils performance, 14(15%) strongly agreed while on the other hand 20(22%) disagreed. The results also showed that 64(69%) agreed that teachers in Nandi North sub-county are dissatisfied because they not justly compensated for their efforts and accomplishments on the workload they have and this hinders pupils academic performance, 25(27%) disagreed. It was also noted that 42(45%) teachers agreed that teachers work is varied and challenging and this will go a long way in improving pupil's performance, 31(33%) disagreed. Further findings from table 4.8 above, it is also indicated that, out of the 93 teachers, 33(35%) agreed that teachers workload in the school are favorable and this improves the teachers productivity in terms of academic performance of pupils, 44(47%) disagreed, 11(12%) were undecided while the rest 5(5%) strongly disagreed.

5. Discussions

On teachers' perception on the role of influence of teachers' workload on academic performance indicated that they have a lot of work within a short period of time usually 3 months per term as stipulated by the Kenya primary curriculum. This has taken a lot of their time and therefore they do not have time for professional development like in-service training to improve their skills and knowledge hence improved academic performance of pupils. The results also showed that teachers in Nandi North sub-county are not compensated according to merits and the amount of work they do, therefore they are dissatisfied with their work and hence are not committed to

teaching. When they are not committed they do go an extra mile in teaching, they only do what they are expected without that strong desire. This has reduced pupils' academic performance. The result also shows that workloads at the school are not favorable which has reduced their productivity in terms of academic performance of pupils. Teachers' workload had a significant effect on academic achievement. Similarly the headteachers' views on teacher workload indicated that when the workload is high there is poor syllabus coverage and lack of commitment hence poor academic performance of pupils in KCPE

The above finding on teacher response supports the conclusions drawn in the study conducted in schools in Nairobi slums by Ngware, Oketch and Ezech (2008), whose findings revealed that teachers in public schools had huge workload which affected effective pupil-teacher interaction. Similarly the findings of Nwikina and Nwanekezi cited in Osagie and Okafor (2012) concluded that teachers' workload was one of the factors that inhibited pupils' academic achievement. The findings point to the negative impact of increased workload for teachers on the teaching and learning process.

6. Conclusions

There is high teaching workload which has led to ill preparation of teachers hence lowering performance in national examinations. The study determined that teachers had no enough time for professional development, dissatisfied and that workload conditions were not favorable hence has reduced pupils' academic performance in Nandi North.

7. Recommendations

There is also need to establish systems to monitor pupil teacher ratio as well as workload continually and closely, providing feedback to administrators, policy makers, and parents about the success of the program, special INSETs for newly employed teachers should be organized yearly so as to ensure teachers are updated with new and learners-centered methods of teaching.

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Table 4.1. Influence of Teachers' Workload on Academic Performance.

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
Teachers in Nandi north sub-county have a lot of work load thus they do not have time for professional development which in the end deteriorates pupils performance	14(15%)	47(51%)	1(13%)	20(22%)	0(0%)
Teachers in Nandi North sub-county are dissatisfied because they not justly compensated for their efforts and accomplishments on the workload they have and this has hinders pupils academic performance	4(4%)	64(69%)	0(0%)	25(27%)	0(0%)
Teachers work is varied and challenging and this will go a long way in improving pupils performance	3(3%)	42(45%)	0(0%)	31(33%)	17(18%)
Teachers workload in the school are favorable and this improves the teachers productivity in terms of academic performance of pupils	5(5%)	33(35%)	11(12%)	44(47%)	0(0%)

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