

Influence of daily life experiences on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Bungoma County, Kenya

Andanje Margaret Ochango¹

Poipoi W. Moses²

Ogutu J. P. Joel³

¹margaretandanje9@gmail.com

²wpoipoi@mmust.ac.ke

³jogutu@mmust.ac.ke

^{1,2,3} Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This paper has explored how experiences in everyday life affect job satisfaction in secondary schools teachers in Bungoma County Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish the extent to which the regular professional experiences of teachers had any meaningful impact on the degree of job satisfaction. Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory guided the findings of the study. The research design used was quantitative survey with qualitative information through interviews. A sample size of 400 questionnaires was distributed among the secondary school teachers with 376 questionnaires being returned successfully, that is, the response rate of 94% from a target of 2000 teachers drawn from stratified sampling. The data was analyzed through descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and the relationship between daily life experience and job satisfaction was tested using regression analysis; the results showed that the general mean of the daily life experience was 4.00 (SD = 1.00). There was a great deal of agreement between teachers about how everyday experiences like student engagement and lesson planning and counseling helped their teaching to be effective. Nonetheless, regression analysis showed that the daily life experiences did not statistically affect job satisfaction ($b = -0.017$, $t = -1.638$, $p = 0.102$). This implies that as much as daily activities of the teacher influence the routine of teachers, it is not always the case that these activities influence the overall job satisfaction. The research was done on secondary school teachers in Bungoma County only and therefore, it may have lesser generalizability in other places or level of education. The study concluded that, teacher satisfaction should be promoted through the strengthening of institutional support systems like administrative support, professional recognition, and career advancement opportunities carried out by the educational stakeholders. The working conditions and professional well-being of teachers can be improved to achieve higher educational achievement and student performance. The study recommends that the research adds to the existing knowledge about teacher job satisfaction because it establishes that routine professional experiences alone do not have significant impacts on job satisfaction highlighting the role of other institutional and motivational elements.

Keywords: Daily Life Experience, Educational Work Environment, Secondary School Teachers, Teacher Job Satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

The job satisfaction of teachers in education has over time emerged to be one of the greatest concerns in the education systems in many countries of the world as it has been associated with a great impact on teacher retention, teacher performance, and student performance. Research has always shown that the professional well-being of teachers directly influences the quality of teaching provided at schools and the effectiveness of learning institutions in general (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Day, 2019). In cases where the teachers feel satisfied with their work, they are more likely to be more committed, motivated, and productive in their professional duties, which eventually lead to a better student learning outcome (Ingersoll and Perda, 2008). On the other hand, low job satisfaction levels in teachers are usually linked with burnout, poor performance, and teacher turnover (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

The level of job satisfaction of teachers depends on numerous factors, such as the working conditions, management, professional growth opportunities, the relationships with the coworkers, and personal experiences in the workplace (Herzberg, 2003; Kraft & Papay, 2014). Of these determinants, the daily life experiences of teachers are significant in influencing the perceptions that they hold about the teaching career and their general work attitudes. The latter include everyday professional work like lesson planning, working with students in the classroom, administration and cooperation with peers and school leaders (Zhao et al., 2023). These daily life experiences constitute the immediate

work environment that the teachers work and thus affect the way they define their professional roles and functions. Past research has indicated that in their daily work setting, teachers are often faced with a variety of issues, such as workload, large classes, insufficient teaching materials, and growing administrative pressures (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Such everyday experiences can either boost the satisfaction of teachers in the job or reduce it. The teachers can have increased professional motivation and commitment through positive experiences, including the supportive school leadership, positive relationships with colleagues, and meaningful interaction with students (Leithwood & Azah, 2019). Conversely, ongoing problems at work might cause emotional fatigue, occupational burnout, and diminished job satisfaction (Bianchi & Schonfeld, 2025).

These experiences are however significant, but empirical evidence is inconclusive in terms of how the everyday professional experiences impact the general job satisfaction. According to some researchers, everyday experiences of workplace play an important role in influencing the attitude of teachers and their psychological health (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Nevertheless, other literature indicates that even larger institutional aspects, including professional recognition, career promotion opportunities, compensation, and supportive leadership frameworks, have a more considerable effect on job satisfaction (Kraft & Papay, 2014; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This discrepancy of the results indicates that the linkage of the daily experiences of teachers with the satisfaction level of their work is yet to undergo more empirical research. The teaching profession in the Kenyan context is still struggling with several systemic problems that comprise of high workload, regular changes in policies, and shortage of teaching materials. These issues can produce a great impact on the everyday professional life of the teachers and their attitudes to job satisfaction. Both the Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission say that in most cases, teachers are under pressure caused by curriculum requirements, administration issues, and classroom management (MOE, 2023). This leaves the study of the influences of the daily professional experience on teacher satisfaction as the key to higher teacher retention and the quality of education.

The Bungoma County is among most of the other parts of Kenya that have a heterogeneous secondary school teaching staff with different environment of work, institutions and socio-economic factors. Such differences allow one to give a proper background of studying how teachers' everyday experiences in schools affect their professional satisfaction and motivation. Studies of such dynamics are potentially very useful to the educational stakeholders who would like to enhance the well-being of teachers and educational performance. As such, the aim of this study was to study how life experiences in the daily lives of secondary school teachers can affect their job satisfaction in the Bungoma County. In particular, the hypothesis examined in the study was that there is no statistically significant impact of daily life experiences on the level of job satisfaction of teachers.

1.1 Research Objective

To determine the influence of daily life experiences on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Bungoma County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory

This study was anchored on Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory, originally developed by Herzberg et al., (1959) and later refined by Herzberg (2003). The theory explains that employee job satisfaction is influenced by two categories of factors: hygiene factors and motivator factors. Hygiene factors include salary, working conditions, supervision, interpersonal relationships, institutional policies, and job security. Although these factors help prevent dissatisfaction, they do not necessarily create job satisfaction. Conversely, motivator factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, professional growth, and opportunities for advancement generate genuine job satisfaction and motivation (Herzberg, 2003).

The theory is relevant to this study because teachers encounter numerous daily professional experiences that shape their perceptions of teaching as a profession. Activities such as lesson preparation, classroom instruction, learner engagement, assessment, counseling, collaboration with colleagues, and interactions with school administrators constitute the routine work environment of teachers (Zhao et al., 2023). While these experiences influence teachers' effectiveness and professional performance, Herzberg's theory argues that routine work activities alone may not lead to job satisfaction unless they are accompanied by intrinsic motivators such as recognition, career progression, autonomy, and meaningful achievement (Herzberg, 2003).

The findings of this study support Herzberg's proposition. Although teachers reported generally positive daily life experiences, these experiences did not significantly predict job satisfaction. This suggests that educational institutions should complement positive work experiences with supportive leadership, opportunities for professional

development, recognition, and favourable working conditions in order to enhance teachers' job satisfaction (Kraft & Papay, 2014).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Daily Life Experiences and Job Satisfaction among Teachers

Daily life experiences refer to the routine professional activities and interactions that teachers encounter during the course of their work. These experiences include lesson planning, classroom instruction, learner engagement, classroom management, assessment, counselling, collaboration with colleagues, administrative responsibilities, and interactions with school leadership (Zhao et al., 2023). Such experiences shape teachers' professional identity and influence their perceptions of the teaching profession.

Several empirical studies have examined the relationship between teachers' daily work experiences and job satisfaction. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2018) established that positive workplace experiences, supportive school environments, and productive relationships with learners significantly improve teachers' motivation, commitment, and psychological well-being. Similarly, Zhao et al., (2023) found that supportive school environments and positive interpersonal relationships enhance teachers' resilience and professional commitment. Conversely, Worth and Van den Brande (2020) observed that excessive workload, inadequate instructional resources, and increasing administrative responsibilities negatively influence teachers' morale and professional well-being. Likewise, Bakker and Demerouti (2017), through the Job Demands-Resources Theory, argued that excessive job demands without adequate institutional support contribute to occupational stress, burnout, and reduced professional well-being among teachers.

Other scholars have suggested that routine professional experiences alone may not adequately explain differences in teacher job satisfaction. Kraft and Papay (2014) established that supportive professional environments, effective instructional leadership, and opportunities for career growth exert a stronger influence on teachers' job satisfaction than routine teaching activities. Similarly, Ingersoll and Perda (2008) reported that teacher retention and satisfaction are largely determined by organizational support, professional recognition, and career advancement opportunities. Although these studies provide valuable insights, empirical findings remain inconsistent regarding the direct influence of daily life experiences on teachers' job satisfaction. Moreover, limited empirical evidence exists within the Kenyan context, particularly among secondary school teachers in Bungoma County. This study therefore sought to bridge this knowledge gap by determining whether daily life experiences significantly influence job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Bungoma County, Kenya.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a quantitative survey research design complemented by qualitative interviews. According to Babbie (2020), survey research is appropriate when collecting standardized information from a large population and examining relationships among variables. The design enabled the researcher to investigate the relationship between daily life experiences and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers while qualitative interviews provided in-depth explanations that complemented the quantitative findings.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Bungoma County, Kenya. The county has numerous public secondary schools distributed across rural and urban settings, providing an appropriate context for examining teachers' daily professional experiences and their influence on job satisfaction. The county also presents diverse educational, institutional, and socio-economic characteristics suitable for investigating teacher well-being.

3.3 Target Population

The target population comprised secondary school teachers in Bungoma County, totaling to 2000 teachers. In addition, key educational stakeholders, namely the County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer, the Chairperson of the Kenya Secondary School Heads Association (KESSHA), and the Secretary General of the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET), participated in qualitative interviews because of their extensive knowledge of teacher welfare and educational management.

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

A sample of 400 secondary school teachers was selected for the study using survey procedures. Of these, 376 questionnaires were successfully completed and returned, representing a response rate of 94%, which is considered excellent for survey research and enhances the representativeness and reliability of study findings (Babbie, 2020). Key

education stakeholders were purposively selected to provide expert opinions on teachers' daily professional experiences and job satisfaction.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The study utilized a structured questionnaire as the primary instrument for quantitative data collection. The questionnaire contained Likert-scale items measuring teachers' daily life experiences and job satisfaction. Semi-structured interview guides were used to collect qualitative information from selected educational stakeholders. Before data collection, permission was obtained from the relevant educational authorities and school administrators. Questionnaires were administered to teachers and collected after completion, while interviews were conducted at mutually agreed venues and times.

3.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Means and standard deviations were computed to summarize teachers' responses regarding their daily life experiences. Simple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether daily life experiences significantly influenced job satisfaction at the 0.05 significance level. Qualitative data obtained from interviews were analyzed thematically by organizing participants' responses into emerging themes that complemented the quantitative findings and enhanced interpretation of the study results (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the research process. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the relevant educational authorities before commencement of data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained before administering questionnaires and conducting interviews. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by ensuring that participants' identities were not appear in the questionnaires, interview transcripts, or research report. The information collected was used strictly for academic purposes and stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences, consistent with established ethical principles for educational research (Babbie, 2020).

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Findings

The descriptive statistical findings revealed that teachers, in general, said that they had positive perceptions about their daily life experiences. The total average of daily life experiences was 4.00 and the standard deviation of 1.00 indicating that majority of the teachers were in agreement that daily professional experiences affected their work. The data is presented as shown in table 1.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of Daily Life Experiences and Job Satisfaction

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
C1	I engage in remedial teaching to attain my objectives of teaching	4.23	1.06	High
C2	I plan for my lessons before teaching	4.32	.81	High
C3	I receive maximum co-operation from school administration to do my work	3.92	1.06	Moderate
C4	I receive cooperation from parents during teaching of students	3.54	1.10	Low
C5	I often give feedback of performance to my students in time.	4.30	.85	High
C6	My teaching work is overwhelming	3.36	1.35	Low
C7	My students give me a lot of cooperation during my work.	4.20	.90	Moderate
C8	Lack of professional training limits me in teaching	4.34	.95	high
C9	I experience role conflict between my teaching and other duties	3.25	1.40	Low
C10	My interaction with students helps me develop a good attitude towards them	4.48	.64	High
C11	My daily experiences equip me to be a better teacher	4.49	.60	High
C12	I feel like quitting my job as a teacher due to the challenges I face on a daily basis	2.50	1.38	Low
C13	My work experience helps me solve conflicts with other departments in school	4.11	.99	Moderate
C14	I engage in counseling of my students to make my work easier.	4.36	.71	High

C 15	I actively engage learners in the lesson to achieve my goal in teaching	4.50	.59	High
	Average	4.00	1.00	High

The high mean scores were registered in several areas in the daily experiences of teachers. As an illustration, the teachers had a high agreement that they were proactive in involving students during lesson to meet instruction goals ($M = 4.50$). In the same way, teachers demonstrated that their day-to-day experience made them better teachers ($M = 4.49$). Another high mean score of ($M = 4.32$) was also obtained in lesson planning meaning that teachers always prepared lessons in advance before they started teaching. Other experiences that were found to be positive were remedial teaching ($M = 4.23$), using timely feedback to students ($M = 4.30$) and counseling students to help them develop academically ($M = 4.36$). These results imply that teachers are actively involved in undertaking different professional roles that are related to effective teaching. Nevertheless, moderate or low mean scores were obtained on some parts of the daily experiences of teachers. The example given is that the cooperation of parents in the teaching process registered a mean of 3.54 which represents moderate level of agreement by the respondents. Equally, the aspect that teaching work was overwhelming was also found to have a mean score of 3.36.

One of the most interesting results was that very few teachers reported the intention to leave the profession because of the challenges they have to face day-to-day ($M = 2.50$). Table 2, provides summary as show:

Table 2: A table showing a summary of daily life experiences and Job satisfaction

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Daily Life Experiences	370	4.00	1.00

This indicates that although facing professional challenges, majority of teachers had stuck to their work. The regression analysis was done to assess the significance of the everyday experiences in life in job satisfaction. The findings showed that daily life experience did not affect job satisfaction in teachers in a statistically significant way in Bungoma County. The regression coefficient of daily life experiences was $b = -0.017$ having t -value = -1.638 and significance level of $p = 0.102$, as shown in the table 3:

Table 3

Simple Linear Regression Analysis for Daily Life Experiences on Job Satisfaction

Hypothesis	Regression weight	beta	T-value	Sig	Hypothesis test
H2	JS-Dalie	-0.017	-1.638	0.102	Yes
R	0.99				
F (7,363)	129992.65				

$P > 0.005$, JS- Job Satisfaction, Dalie-daily life experience,

The null hypothesis was accepted because the p -value was more than the significance level of 0.05. This finding suggests that the experiences in life as a daily practice did not have a lot of influence in predicting job satisfaction among teachers in secondary schools located within the county of Bungoma.

4.2 Discussion

The study findings showed that despite teachers indicating rather positive daily professional experiences, the latter did not have a significant effect on their job satisfaction. This observation indicates that though day to day teaching activities inform the professional practices of teachers, they might not be the main factors that influence their long time satisfaction in the field. The findings are consistent with the hypotheses of Resilience Theory, which implies that people acquire coping strategies, with the help of which they can cope with demanding workplace environments without the need to feel more satisfied (Masten et al., 2021). Largely workloads, student discipline problems, and administrative duties are typical stressful experiences that teachers are faced with. Professional resilience enables them to change and integrate into their work despite all these challenges.

Nonetheless, resilience, in itself, might not be a source of job satisfaction. The teachers can still perform well and at the same time experience dissatisfaction because of the expectations placed on the profession like restricted chances of becoming Godfather, recognition or lack of support by the school leadership. The results also confirm the Motivator-Hygiene Theory, which is one of the theories proposed by Herzberg, where extrinsic hygiene factors are differentiated with intrinsic motivators (Herzberg, 2003). Hygiene factors include daily work experiences at the workplace like workload and routine teaching activities. Such factors can eliminate dissatisfaction in their favour, but do not always lead to satisfaction of their own.

Rather, intrinsic factors of job satisfaction like recognition, career growth, professional autonomy, and meaningful accomplishment are more important determinants of job satisfaction. Earlier literature has also indicated that retention and teacher satisfaction rates are highly dependent on professional growth and administrative backup

instead of the mundane job experiences. These findings were backed with the qualitative interview responses. Other teachers reported that they were now accustomed to such routine challenges as long commuting time, work in administration, and low resources as part of their professional life. The teachers mentioned that recognition, supportive leadership, and professional growth opportunities were the most significant issues defining job satisfaction. The results indicate that expanding the range of institutional variables is of significance to the professional well-being of the teachers.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This research paper has investigated how life experiences in day to day life affects job satisfaction among the teaching children in the secondary schools in Bungoma County. The results showed that teachers were finding positive daily professional experiences mostly in the fields like lesson planning, student engagement, and counseling. Nonetheless, the regression analysis indicated that daily life experience was not significant in determining job satisfaction of teachers. This implies that even regular work experiences in the profession are not sufficient to explain job satisfaction differences in teachers.

5.2 Recommendations

The research adds to the existing body of information by proving that institutional and motivational factors, as well as broader ones, are more significant in influencing teacher job satisfaction in comparison to routine professional experiences. These results highlight educators to devote more attention to the enhancement of professional recognition, leadership support, career development opportunities, and working conditions among teachers. The research suggestions include policies that strengthen the professional support systems, enhance teacher recognition, as well as offering career advancement opportunities by the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission. These steps will certainly lead to a rise in teacher satisfaction, teacher retention and eventually to improved educational outcomes.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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