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Analysis of Relationship between School Workload Management and Teacher Transfer Intention in Public Secondary Schools in Mbita and Suba Sub-Counties, Kenya

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Abstract

In Kenya since 2001, Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) has school-based teacher recruitment system that assumes that teachers apply for employment in schools of choice intended to mitigate teacher Transfer Intention which impedes professionalism and destabilizes staff if realized. Teacher transfer requests in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties {formally one district named Suba by 2012} were at a high average, fluctuating from 29(29.5%) in 2009, 21(20%) in 2010, 27(22.7%) in 2011, 43(17%) in 2012, and 62(29%) in 2013. This was above the highest Homabay County average of 12.2% in the said period. The foregoing data reveals that despite such government effort, Mbita and Suba Sub-counties still face many teacher transfer requests, indicating a high level of teacher Transfer Intention. According to literature, chief among the determinants of teacher perception of their work environment, that may both influence them to interact negatively to their learners' disadvantage and to inspire teacher intention to transfer, is School Workload Management. Hence there was need to investigate the relationship between School Workload Management and teacher Transfer Intention. The study was anchored on Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) which stipulates that intentions are precursors of actual behaviour. Transfer intention was determined based on Mobley's Employee Turnover Intention Model (Mobley, 1977) to identify actual relevant teachers for the study population in a baseline survey. Saturated sampling technique was then used to select the 252 teacher with transfer intention respondents and 29 teachers without transfer intention; Purposive Sampling technique for 28 headteachers and one County Staffing Officer (CSO). Questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. Piloting was done ascertain reliability of instruments. Regression analysis was used for quantitative inferential data while qualitative information was considered according to themes in an on-going process. Study response rate was 222(97%) teachers with

transfer intention, 23(88%) teachers without transfer intention, 23(82%) headteachers and 1(100%) County Staffing Officer. The study concluded that at 0.4% proportion, there was no significant relationship between School Workload Management and teacher Transfer Intention in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties. It recommended that to address teacher Transfer Intention, school administrators should consider lesson distribution by employing more teachers. However, other factors besides School Workload Management as revealed by reasons for Transfer Intention may include: school facilities, and poor headteacher leadership; or factors outside school work environment such as lack of proper housing for teachers in school surrounding, insecurity, putting up better schools for teachers' children, and improving on electrification.
Keywords: Transfer Intention, Work Environment, Workload Management, Mbita and Suba

Background

Teacher Transfer Intention impedes professional motivation to exert optimum work effort towards school goals (Krishna & Singh, 2010). This is because employees intending to move to perceived more favourable areas, display a drop in excitement with regular work activities (Quick & Nelson, 2011). Besides increased incidence of absenteeism, those intending to relocate to another job or to another work locale are often in conflict with workplace management, sometimes facing disciplinary action (Jong & Gutteling, 2006). As reported in World Bank (2005), there is a concern about teacher Transfer Intention due to its consequences. These include: socio-academic disadvantage for learners in their care hence depressed opportunities for self-optimization; and staff instability in both in the destination and the source schools(Heitin, 2012). According to World Bank (2005), nations have come up with strategies used to minimize teacher desire to transfer from hard-to-staff zones including the following: free accommodation in remote sparsely populated areas in Denmark; annual stipend of EUR 1, 321 to teachers in remote schools in Ireland; high priority teacher supply allowance (HPTSA) of NZD 2,500 in New Zealand; consideration of teaching in a remote province as a perquisite for promotion in China and Korea; provision of hardship allowance of 30% of annual salary to cater for isolation in Chile.

Teacher turnover presents in two forms; transfer which refers to migration to other schools, and attrition, leaving the teaching job altogether (Boe, Cook & Sunderland, 2008). According to Ingersoll and Merill (2012), either matters little to a school since the systemic impact is the same. For instance, there would be instructional costs due to pedagogical disturbance because of the replacement of an already ineffective teacher with an inexperienced teacher (SECTQ, 2009). There would also be costs incurred in recruitment, professional development and separation costs such as insurance and pension; in addition, costs incurred in staff cohesion activities (Boe, Cook & Sunderland, 2008). This study focused on teacher turnover intention from the perspective of teacher Transfer Intention.

Teacher turnover follows a U-shaped distribution (Ingersoll and Merill, 2012). There is high attrition among the newly recruited, under 30s, tapering in mid-career years and shooting sharply probably due to attainment of retirement age, death, dismissal, and resignation among teachers over 40 years old (Brown& Wynn,2009). Most 'stayers' are male teachers and those from minority communities. In the USA, teacher preparation programmes churn out an estimated 150,000 graduates annually. However, as reported by AEE (2008) survey, between 2000-2001, only 456,000 of them replaced the 534,861 who left teaching. USA public

employee annual attrition rate was 11% of the total workforce, out of which 84.7% were teachers. Therefore teacher supply is not at pace with attrition.

Schools in hard-to-staff areas are 10% less likely to recruit a headteacher at first attempt and six times less likely to recruit a willing teacher than in towns (Reininger, 2012). In such schools, headteachers work half-heartedly (Paton, 2010), hence fewer of their candidates progress for training for professions (CCSRI, 2007; Ladd, 2011). They have few homegrown candidates to choose from exposing them to external candidates who take up teaching positions for temporary convenience (Heitin, 2012). These soon seek to relocate to schools in towns (Arriaran-Buono, 2011). To mitigate shortfall, schools in high-poverty high-need areas employ many untrained teachers. For trained teachers in Sierra Leone, this makes teaching 'an ordinary job' lowering their self-esteem hence their transfer intention (Boe, et al., 2008).

Boyd, Grossman, Long, Lankford and Wyckoff (2009), in a study of the influence of school administrations on teacher retention decisions in Outer London schools, found that, teachers choose to leave schools with large concentrations of children from poor communities and the low performing. If work environment were favourable, self-initiated voluntary teacher transfer requests reduced by over 77% due to less work related stress. To mitigate the need for transfer, it was the duty of school principals to facilitate curriculum implementation, well enough for schools to realize improved academic results. On the contrary, measures such as clock-in-clock-out, regular Continuous Assessment Tests, and enhancing remedial rigour for slow learners made teaching job burdensome. This threatened teacher staffing in schools in low income London. Whereas Boyd, et al.(2009) associated aspects of workload management that led to teacher desire for transfer in an urban, low income dwelling, this study sought to determine the relationship between school workload management and teacher Transfer Intention in a rural set up of this study.

According to Lagat (2010), Rono (2012) and Chacha (2011) school administrators resolved some conflicts such as those arising out of non-lesson attendance, late submission of Continuous Assessment Test results and poor performance in internal and external school examinations by transferring certain teachers; worsening the school teacher transfer scenario. However, Lagat (2010), Rono (2012) and Chacha (2011) were descriptive studies unlike this study which was both a descriptive and correlational study, though similarly, in a rural setting. They only identified workload management as one of the causes of conflicts in schools that leads to teacher transfer unlike this study which sought to determine the relationship between School Workload Management and teacher Transfer Intention in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties public secondary schools.
*For this study, School Workload Management refers to delegation and distribution of duties, and scheduling of teacher duties.

Results And Discussion

To source overview information as regards how teachers in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties public secondary schools perceive their school workload management as it might be related to teacher Transfer Intention, respondents were asked to indicate 2 main reasons which would make teachers to seek transfer from their school. A total of 444 responses were generated from 222 teacher respondents. These were classified into two; those which by

policy constitute school workload management 22(9.9%) responses and those outside School Workload Management 422(91.1%) responses as presented in Table 1.

	Reasons for teachers Transfer Intention	Frequency N=222	% Respondents
Reasons within School Workload Management		**22**	**9.9**
1	Too many lessons; burdensome teaching load	22	9.9
Reasons outside School Workload Management		**422**	**91.1**
1	Use of pit-latrines and old, inadequate staffroom	14	6.3
2	Poor headteacher leadership	14	6.3
3	Taking too long to be promoted	11	4.9
4	Poor staff relations	9	4.1
5	Discrimination in appointments and favours	8	3.6
6	Poor staff housing	7	3.2
7	Student indiscipline	4	1.8
8	Lack of proper housing in the surrounding	140	63.1
9	Distance to town; recreation/ hospitals/ schools	53	23.9
10	To join family	37	16.7
11	To seek marriage partners	28	12.6
12	Too many funerals; too much disease/ illness	25	11.3
13	Lack of electricity	32	14.4
14	Fear of night runners	22	9.9
15	Thuggery/ theft/ robbery	16	7.2
	Total	**444**	**100%**

The responses in Table 1 were categorized into 16(100%) areas out of which 1(6.25%) were under School Workload Management as indicated by 22(9.9%) of the 222(100%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents. When asked to suggest ways in which the reasons inspiring the desire for transfer may be overcome, the study revealed that according to 7(31.8%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents, TSC to post more teachers to schools; according to 6(27.3%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents, headteachers to implore TSC to employ more teachers; according to 4(18.2%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents, school managements to employ more teachers in their private capacities; according to 3(13.6%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents, headteachers to stop over-enrollment , and according to 2(9.1%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents, school management to consider cash token for teachers in compensation for extra burden in large classes and or extra hours of teaching. Only 7(31.8%) responses, which targeted TSC directly, did not consider headteacher responsibility in addressing the issue of too many lessons. The other responses 15(68.2%) suggested that headteachers impress upon TSC and the BoM to address the problem, or just to address it by themselves, by stopping over-enrolment.

In this regard, the County Staffing Officer (CSO) argued that teachers would prefer to be given just enough workload for their convenience and insisted that TSC has recommended number of lessons per teacher. As regards the need to be paid for extra hours of work, CSO was in agreement with 12(52%) headteachers and 4(19%) teacher with Transfer Intention interviewees that teaching is a job that involves a lot of self-sacrifice, besides it would not be possible to quantify all non-classwork teacher duties. Such may not be limited to counselling, role modelling, pseudo-parenting, conflict management, coaching, and mentoring. However,

CSO observed that school teacher understaffing is a phenomenon the day, hence school managements were to employ the most practicable means to manage teacher workload without undue disadvantage to their clients, the learners. In addition, 2(26%) headteachers posited that TSC should take cognizance of the fact that student enrollment kept increasing yearly and plan to employ more teachers in their schools. It was also noteworthy that out of the 23(100%) teachers without transfer intention questionnaire who gave 46(100%) responses, the 2 reasons each for their position was; still on TSC bond according to 11(23.9%) responses, and being near their homes of origin according to 14(30.4%) responses. These had nothing to do with School Workload Management. Of the 46(100%) responses, the other 17(36%) responses were also not connected to the School Workload Management. These were: seeming ease with which to get promoted 11(23.9%) responses, not yet having a good reason for transfer 5(11.9%) responses; and good staff relations 2(4.3%) responses.

Data derived by used of School Workload Management was subjected to correlation; one sample test, paired sample test, and regression analysis. This was meant to determine relationships as may be necessary to meet the purpose of this study. The findings were reported in Table 2, Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5 as follows:

Table 2.
One Sample Tests Results

School Workload Management Rating Score	N	TI Score Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	% Respondents
Very Low 1.00-1.49	59	3.4223	.42217	.04691	72.958	58	.000	3.42235	38.91
Low 1.5-2.49	127	3.3045	.42497	.04089	77.631	126	.000	3.30454	53.20
High 2.5-3.49	36	3.1031	.20745	.05186	55.591	35	.000	3.1031	7.88
Very High 3.5-4.0	00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	00
TOTAL	203	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.00

KEY: TI- Transfer Intention

The results in Table 2 imply that the lower the School Workload Management rating score, the higher the Transfer Intention mean, indicative of a negative linear association. The highest Transfer Intention mean was registered by those who with Very Low rating at 3.42 who scored 0.12 points above those who with Low rating at 3.30. These in turn scored more than those who were categorized as High at 3.10, by 0.20 points. Therefore the Very Low rating in respect of School Workload Management scored less than the High rating by 0.32 points. However, 0(0%) respondents with Very High rating as regards School Workload Management. This finding is in agreement with arguments of Boyd, et al. (2009) that if work environment was made pleasant, voluntary teacher transfer requests reduced by over 77% due to reduction in work related stress. However, the difference in mean scores between the highest (rating high) and lowest (rating very low) was very minimal.

It was also necessary to find out how School Workload Management rating scores related with corresponding teacher Transfer Intention scores. This was achieved by subjecting the scores to Paired Sample Test. The outcome was as in Table

Table 3.
Paired Samples Test Scores based on Teacher Workload Management Rating versus Corresponding Teacher Transfer Intention Score

School Workload Management versus Transfer Intention		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	School Work load: Very Low vs. TI score1	59	-2.20707	.43428	.04796	-2.30249	-2.11165	-46.021	58	.000
Pair 2	School Workload: Low vs. - TI score 2	127	-1.41769	.49089	.04814	-1.51316	-1.32223	-29.452	126	.000
Pair 3	School Workload: High vs. TI score 3	36	-.32647	.29002	.07034	-.47559	-.17736	-4.641	35	.000

Table 3. reveals that that with regard to School Workload Management, the relationship between the scores based on rating level were as follows:

i. Very Low rating respondents had a mean score of 2.21 with a Standard Deviation of 0.43, a t-score of -46.0 with a df of 58 and significance level of .000 at 0.05 alpha.
ii. Low rating respondents had a mean score of 1.42 with a Standard Deviation of 0.49, a t-score of -29.5 with a df of 126 and significance level of .000 at 0.05 alpha.
iii. High rating respondents had a mean score of 2.19 with a Standard Deviation of 0.47, a t-score of -4.61 with a df of 35 and significance level of .000 at 0.05 alpha.

Just like in the case of Paired Samples Test between overall School Workload Management rating score and teacher Transfer Intention score, the outcome is directionally negative for all pairs. This implies that increase in School Workload Management score results in decrease in teacher Transfer Intention. It could be noted that the category of Very Low rating ranking was inversely related to the category of High ranking. This implied that those with Very Low rating had high Transfer Intention Scores as opposed to those with High scores, who had low Transfer Intention scores. However, these results were inconclusive with regard to revealing the relationship between School Workload Management and teacher Transfer Intention.

The study sought to determine the extent to which School Workload Management influenced teacher Transfer Intention. This was done by subjecting the scores to regression analysis. The findings are as displayed in Table 4.

Table 4.
Regression Analysis Results for Teacher School Workload Management vs. Transfer Intention Scores

	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	Std Error Est.	Mn Sq	F	Sig.[A]	B	Std Error	β	t	Sig.
Con.								3.249				
Work load	.032[a]	.001	-.004	.439	.039 .193	.204	.652[b]	-.001	.031 .002	-.032	103.422 -.451	.000 .652

KEY	
B- Unstandardized coefficients	Sig.[A] - ANOVA statistics significance
β- Standardized coefficients	Std Ɛ- Standard error of estimate
R- Multiple correlation coefficient	F_o – Observed ANOVA statistic
R^{2-} Proportion of total variance	t_o- Observed t statistic
Adj. R^2- Improved approximation of R^2	ά- 0.05 alpha
	Con.- Constant

Table 4. reveals that as regards School Workload Management in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties Public Secondary Schools, Adj. R^2 indicates that it accounts for 0.4% of variance in teacher Transfer Intention. This leaves 99.6% to other factors, including errors of measurements. Hence, if you manipulate School Workload Management independently, you may alter teacher Transfer Intention by only 0.4%.
Model of prediction: $P^{TI} = 3.249 + -0.001$ SWM
* P^{TI} refers to Predicted Transfer Intention
* SWM refers to School Workload Management
The fact of the relationship being insignificant was similarly the impression created when 23(100%) teachers without Transfer Intention respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on an 'agreement' scale as regards whether School Workload Management rated 'high' in their schools. The outcome was as displayed in Table 5.

Table 5.
Perception of Teachers Without Transfer Intention on Rating of "High" as Regards School Workload Management in their Schools

" My school rates high in…" the following elements of School Workload Management	**1 SD**	**2 D**	**3 A**	**4 SA**	**T**	**Mean**
Delegation and distribution of teacher duties						
Fair and equitable distribution of teacher workload	21	2	0	0	25	**1.1**
Setting reasonable objective work deadlines	16	5	2	0	28	**1.2**
Appointing people based on interests and skills	11	5	8	0	45	**2.0**
Listening to complaints regarding the teaching of lessons	11	9	3	0	38	**1.7**
Sub-total Average	-	-	-	-	-	**1.5**
Scheduling of teacher duties						
Ensuring reasonable number of teacher work hours	15	8	0	0	31	**1.3**

Appreciating the concept of 'personal time' for teachers	11	11	1	0	34	**1.5**
Time tabling evident of rapport between authorities and teachers	21	2	0	0	25	**1.1**
Balancing instructional and non-instructional teacher duties	10	3	10	0	46	**2.0**
Sub-total Average	-	-	-	-	-	**1.5**
Total Mean	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**1.5**

KEY: 1=0.1-1.0 Strongly Disagree (SD); 2=1.1- 2.0 Disagree (D); 3=2.1-3.0 Agree (A); 4=3.1-4.0 Strongly Agree (SA); T= Sum Total

The outcome of an average mean score of 1.5 interpreted as 'Disagree' as shown in Table 5 implies that even though these 23(100%) teacher without Transfer Intention respondents did not consider School Workload Management in public secondary schools in Mbita and Suba Sub-county to rate 'high', they still did not intend to transfer from their school. This means that their position as regards Transfer Intention had little to do with School Workload Management, thereby confirming the non-significance as displayed in Table 4 based on data derived from 222(100%) teachers with Transfer Intention.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study set out to establish whether there was a relationship between School Workload Management and teacher Transfer Intention in public secondary schools in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties in Kenya. It found out that based on data from teachers with Transfer Intention scores regarding School Workload Management and teacher Transfer Intention rating scales, there was no significant relationship; only at 0.4% proportion leaving 99.6% to other factors, including errors of measurement. This means that regardless of how much School Workload Management is manipulated, teacher Transfer Intention may only minimally either get worse or better. Despite this finding that School Workload Management only accounts for 0.4%, it is still important to delegate and distribute duties, besides scheduling of teacher duties in a more reasonable manner. This non-significance was further confirmed by the fact that when asked to give reasons which may inspire their transfer, only 22(9.9%) teacher respondents indicated reasons within School Workload Management domain. On the same note, 23(100%) teachers without Transfer Intention do not rate School Workload Management to be high, yet they do not intend to transfer from their schools. It is therefore, mainly, these other reasons outside School Workload Management that need to be addressed to control teacher Transfer Intention. Major ones identified among them were: lack of proper housing in the surrounding by 140(63.1%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents; distance to town for recreation, hospitals and schools by 53(23.9%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents; lack of electricity by 32(14.4%) teacher with Transfer Intention; fear of night runners by 22(9.9%) teacher with Transfer Intention; thuggery by 16(7.2%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents; inadequate facilities by 14(6.3%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents; and poor headteacher leadership by 14(6.3%) teacher with Transfer Intention respondents.

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