

FACTORS RELATED TO TEACHERS TRANSFER IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings from a larger study that investigated factors related to teachers transfer in public secondary schools in Kajiado County. The study was guided by the following research question: What are the factors related to teachers transfer in public secondary schools in Kajiado County? The research applied Herzberg's theory of motivation. The study adopted a convergent research design with a mixed-method approach with a parallel database variant. The target population comprised of 6 sub-counties, 95 public secondary schools, 1615 TSC teachers in secondary schools, 95 principals of secondary schools, and 6 TSC sub-county education officials. The sampling techniques used were probability and non-probability to obtain a sample size of 29 schools, 320 teachers, 9 principals, and 3 TSC officials. Data were collected through a semi-structured questionnaire, a semi-structured interview guide, and a document analysis guide. Validity of quantitative instruments was ascertained through content and face validity, while reliability was determined by use of Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the teachers' questionnaire was 0.706. Trustworthiness of qualitative research was determined through credibility and dependability where prolonged engagement, triangulation, and member checking were applied. Quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS version 26, and descriptive statistics comprising of means, standard deviations, and percentages were obtained. Testing of study hypotheses was determined using the Pearson Moment correlation coefficient. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically and presented in the form of narratives and direct quotes. Data were merged at the interpretation stage. Ethical considerations were taken into account before and during the research process. Key findings indicated that teachers transfer in Kajiado County is caused by students' indiscipline, lack of involvement in school decision-making, poor housing and location of the school, lack of social amenities, lack of teaching-learning resources, career growth, and lack of supportive environment, family ties, and poor school performance. The study concluded that teacher transfer in public secondary schools is caused by pull and push factors within Kajiado County. The study recommended TSC, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, the Kajiado County government, and school principals' to put measures within their respective jurisdictions to address the teachers transfer for effective teaching and learning in schools. The findings can be used by the stakeholders to take necessary measures and strengthen the existing policies on teacher transfers to minimize the transfers in schools.

Key words: Teachers, Transfers, Public Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Teachers transfer is experienced globally and is on the rise despite the presence of transfer policies governing teachers' mobility. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2022), there is a need for proper systems for deploying teachers, assigning teachers to schools, as well as the criteria for transferring to different schools. It is noted that retention of teachers and deployment practices have significant effects on equity and quality of teaching and learning. In addition, involuntary transfers to other schools and inadequate deployment systems in a country are the major causes of teachers' instability in schools. Even though most countries have implemented policies governing teachers' deployment and transfer, teacher transfer is still prevalent. The transfer is an agile change in the assignment within the district, province, or from one school to another (Abumere, Tolorunloju & Sadoh, 2018). Teachers transfer may either be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary transfer is initiated by teachers due to varied reasons such as the desire to work closer to home, personality conflict with administrators, promotion, and avoidance of involuntary transfer (Noor, Ishaque, Memon & Lodhi, 2012). Voluntary transfer is initiated by teachers due to varied reasons such as the desire to work closer to home, personality conflict with administrators, promotion, and avoidance of involuntary transfer (Noor, Ishaque, Memon & Lodhi, 2012). Involuntary transfer occurs whenever a teacher is reassigned by the school or district authorities (Riordan, 2014).

Teachers transfer is experienced in the United States of America (USA), as indicated by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019), where turnover at the national level alone stands at 8 percent, comprising of teachers shifting schools annually either voluntarily or involuntarily. In 2020 and 2021 in Washington, teachers' mobility between schools increased from 6.9 to 7.8 percent (Goldhaber & Theobald, 2022). In Florida, 8 percent of beginning teachers transfer schools even before completing 5 years in the initial schools posted (Feng & Sass, 2017). Moreover, in Colorado, Missouri, and South Dakota between 2015/16 and 2016/17, teachers moved schools at a rate of 8 percent (Espel, Meyer, & Weston-Sementelli, 2019). Hence, teacher transfer is a common phenomenon experienced in several states across the USA. To minimize teacher transfers, several countries have put measures and policies that govern teacher management and deployment, such as transfer policies. For instance, teachers and principals in China are required by the rotation policy to transfer from high-performing schools to challenging or underperforming schools for a designated period at some point during their careers. This duration can range from months to years (Wei, Zhou, & Liu, 2020).

In Sri Lanka, there is a centralized deployment policy where teachers are recruited by the central government Public Service Commission (PSC). After deployment, a teacher must first serve a 'difficult' or 'very difficult' school for 3 years before transferring to a school of a different category. In addition, teachers who have served continuously for more than 10 years in a particular school are affected by the overstay transfer policy (Wijayatunga, 2018). However, despite the presence of these policies, teachers may opt to transfer even before the mandatory years are over, thus affecting overall school performance. In Turkey, the Ministry of National Education (MONE) centrally deploys teachers and ensures that they complete a minimum of 3 years at one school before being transferred to another. The transfer in Turkey is based on seniority scores, where the teacher must serve in a hard-to-staff school to gain more seniority scores and years of experience. The higher the seniority score, the greater the chance of transferring to a school of choice where a vacancy exists (Özoğlu, 2015). The teachers transfer policy established in 2016 in Haryana state in India requires a teacher who has served in one zone for 5 years to be transferred involuntarily to another zone (Aggarwal, Dasgupta & Mukhopadhyay, 2022). There are 7 zones in Haryana, and teachers are rotated from one zone to another. The policy is aimed at improving the quality of education by equitably distributing teachers in schools through a fair process.

However, despite the presence of transfer policies, teachers transfer before the bonding years are over due to various reasons. For instance, in the United States, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019) found that schools serving students of color, those from low-income backgrounds, and teachers of color experience higher teacher mobility. The study identified key factors influencing this turnover, including insufficient administrative support, inadequate salaries, and issues related to alternative certification. In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a study by Carrasqueira and Koslinski (2019) found that school traits have a stronger correlation with mobility compared to teacher traits. Additionally, schools serving students facing higher social and educational challenges are most affected by teacher shortages and frequent turnover. Schools in vulnerable regions are the most affected, with diverse students ranging from disadvantaged groups to racial minorities.

In the past twenty years, concerns about the quality of teachers and teaching have been rising across the African continent, especially in rural schools (UNESCO, 2011). Teacher transfer is still high in Africa despite the presence of policies on teacher transfer. The Ministry of Education in Zambia is accountable for teacher management and has established clear guidelines for teacher transfers. Nevertheless, teachers in Zambia frequently transfer from rural schools to urban schools, and in many instances, they barely fulfill a 2-year bonding period (Republic of Zambia, 2014). This has led to the destabilization of schools and created a shortage of teachers in rural schools. Phiri and Mulenga (2020) found that transfers are caused by family ties, conflicts with school administrators, poor deployment procedures, insufficient social amenities, school isolation, fears of witchcraft, and the pursuit of further qualifications.

In Zimbabwe, Nyakudzuka and Mapuranga (2014) indicated that teachers' mobility is influenced by the need for closeness to spouses, poor social amenities, lack of accessibility to current information, poor socio-economics of the region, and lack of facilities for further studies. Further, social factors influence teachers' performance in school, hence affecting students' academic achievements. Similar challenges were identified in Ghana by Salifu (2020) revealed that transfer is caused by insufficient housing, the need for professional growth, lack of understanding about rural communities and their circumstances, aspiration to reside in urban areas, and the recruitment procedures of the Ministry of Education, among other factors. These issues impact educational performance, leading to teaching multiple grades, burdening teachers with heavy workloads, employing unqualified teachers, and preventing teachers from covering the curriculum.

Uganda has a regulation called the Uganda Public Service Standing Orders (UPSSO), which dictates that public servants, including teachers, must be moved to a new posting after spending at least 3 years at their current station (Ibwongo & Komakech, 2021). Therefore, teachers are transferred after a minimum of 3 years. Also, the transfer is done in the public interest and not as a punitive measure. Ibwongo & Komakech (2021) cited reasons for voluntary transfers as lack of accommodation, distance from families, promotion, and illness, while involuntary transfers were due to poor performance of teachers, misconduct, conflict with management, and drunkenness.

In Kenya, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has guiding policies on the recruitment and deployment of teachers in schools. The TSC code of regulation stipulates the entire process of hiring teachers as outlined in the recruitment and selection policy (TSC, 2015). The policy aims at recruiting teachers by identifying and advertising available vacancies depending on the demand and supply of teachers (TSC, 2021). The process is decentralized at county and sub-county levels and is open to all qualified teachers countrywide, and upon employment, they can serve in any part of the country based on the teaching requirements and need (TSC, 2015). After recruitment teachers are bonded for 5 years through the TSC bonding policy in one workstation, after which they can seek transfer based on the availability of a vacancy (Ariko & Simatwa, 2011). In Turkana County, Chumba (2014) identified that a change in leadership in schools helps boost

teachers' morale and encourage teamwork. According to the study findings, when a school principal changes, teachers are more willing to cooperate and offer support to foster a positive working relationship with the new principal. Teachers' job performance and student academic achievement both improved as a result of the association's creation, which also helped teachers feel more motivated and collaborate better. The study used an ex-post facto design across 35 schools, with data collected from a sample of 242 participants through questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis.

Teacher transfer has been on the rise in Kajiado County; for example, in 2023, TSC released statistics on teacher transfer, and between November 2022 and January 2023, Kajiado County had 528 teachers requesting to be transferred out of the county against 723 teachers who were requesting to be transferred in Kajiado County (Muchunguh, 2023), a figure that could compromise teachers and students' performance. Statistics obtained from the Kajiado TSC office show that teacher transfer is on upward mobility in the County, as shown in Table 1. The high rate of teacher transfers may be attributed to dissatisfaction in their current schools.

Table 1: Summary Table Showing Trend of Teachers Transfer in Kajiado County from 2018 to 2023

Year	No of Teachers Transfers
2018	219
2019	200
2020	250
2021	318
2022	325
2023	364
Total	1676

Source: Kajiado TSC Office (2023)

Statement of the Problem

Table 1 shows the teacher transfer pattern from 2018 to 2023 in Kajiado County. Kajiado County has 1615 TSC teachers teaching in public secondary schools (Kajiado TSC office, 2024). Nevertheless, there has been a tremendous rise in teacher transfer in the county, and stakeholders in Kajiado County have raised concerns about the teacher transfer and low performance of students in the final examinations. In this regard, the low performance of students in KCSE could be attributed partly to teachers' transfers, which could affect the job performance of teachers in schools. The low performance and high rate of teacher transfers in Kajiado County instigated the need for the current study to find out the reasons causing teachers to transfer. In case the issue of teacher transfers is not dealt with promptly, the situation will continue to deteriorate, especially in rural schools. Therefore, investigating the factors causing teachers to transfer could help in putting up measures and strengthening the existing ones to mitigate transfers in Kajiado County.

Research Question

What are the challenges causing teachers to transfer in public secondary schools in Kajiado County?

Theoretical Framework

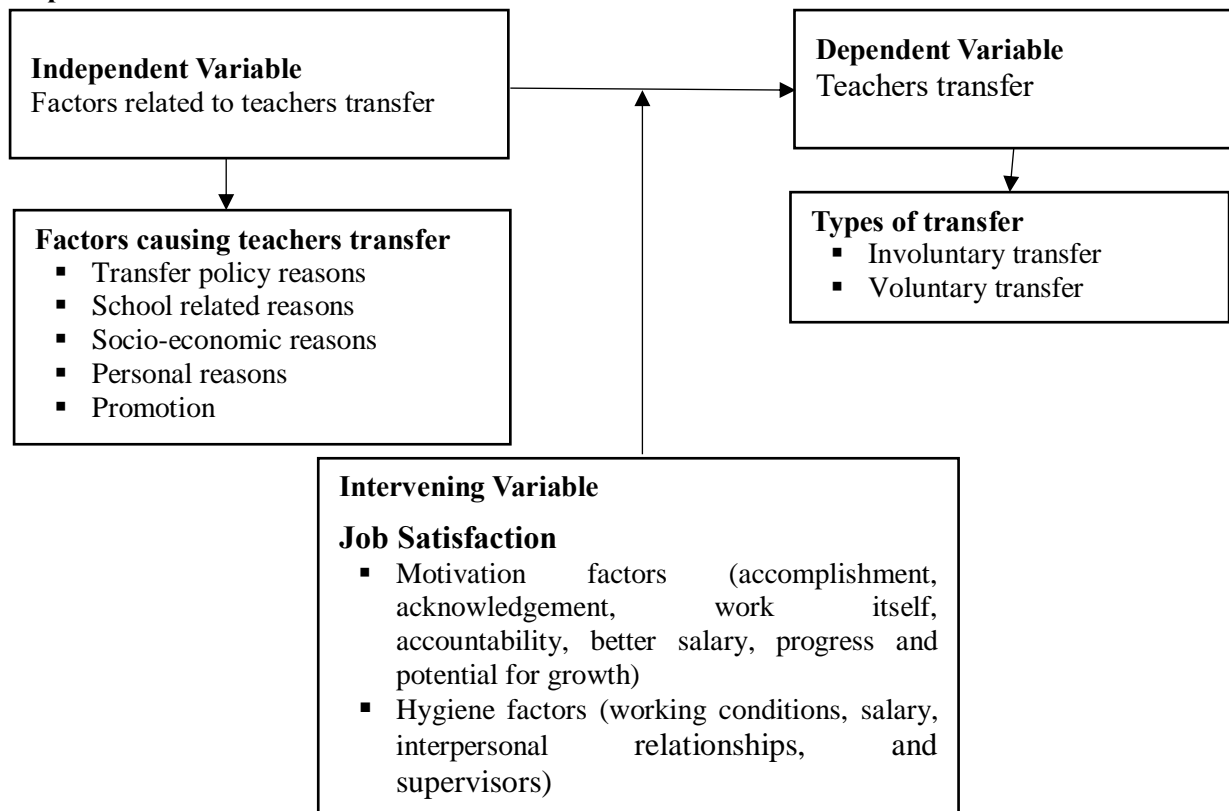
This research was guided by Herzberg's two-factor theory, developed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959 and also referred to as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory or Herzberg's dual-factor theory (Alshmemri, Shahwan-Akl, & Maude, 2017). This theory suggests that job satisfaction is affected by two categories of factors: hygiene factors and motivation factors. The core idea of this theory is that job satisfaction arises from motivational factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Conversely, inadequate hygiene factors can lead to job dissatisfaction, while improving hygiene factors does not create job satisfaction but merely alleviates dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg (1966), the lack of job satisfaction is not the same as job dissatisfaction; rather, they are distinct opposites. Hygiene factors lead to decreased job satisfaction while

motivation factors directly influence employees' motivation and job satisfaction. Job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction were ranked on different continuums by Herzberg, who also pointed out that factors influencing job dissatisfaction are not the same as those enhancing job satisfaction. Employees' dissatisfaction can result from deficiencies in hygiene standards, external to the work itself (Wietrak, Rousseau, & Barends, 2021). Herzberg (1966) listed policies and administration, supervisors, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, and salary as hygiene factors. According to Wietrak, Rousseau, and Barends (2021), intrinsic motivational factors are predicted by a person's need for personal development. These factors include accomplishment, acknowledgement, the work itself, accountability, progress, and growth potential (Herzberg, 1966).

According to the theory, motivational factors bring about satisfaction and their absence does not bring about dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors, on the other hand, are assumed to bring about satisfaction and their absence to bring about dissatisfaction (Yousaf, 2020). Herzberg observed that while hygiene factors are the conditions in which one works, motivation factors are what results in a positive work attitude. According to Vallabhaneni (2015), the theory is predicted on employee satisfaction, wherein a contented worker experiences internal motivation to exert more effort, while an unsatisfied worker lacks self-motivation. Additionally, the theory presumes a link between job satisfaction and productivity (Ditey-Baah & Amoaka, 2011). However, Herzberg primarily concentrated on job satisfaction and did not extensively address productivity. Another assumption of the theory is that all employees want the same outcomes (Locke, 1976 cited in Telsang, 2018). This assumption discounted individual differences and goals. The theory being based on employee satisfaction will increase motivation to a satisfied worker who will work harder and hence improve performance (Vallabhaneni, 2015). However, the theory has come under criticism such as; it focuses on white-collar jobs and ignores unskilled jobs or jobs that are uninteresting, repetitive, and monotonous (Ditey-Baah & Amoaka, 2011).

The current study utilized Herzberg's theory, focusing on hygiene factors such as company policies, administrative practices, working conditions, salary, supervision, and interpersonal relationships to investigate the reasons behind teacher transfer. Meanwhile, motivation factors, such as advancement, recognition, responsibility, and career growth, are thought to impact employees' job satisfaction. These factors have been cited by some scholars as contributing factors toward teachers turnover in the Western context (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Ingersoll, May & Collins, 2019; Paulo, Wanpeng & Judicael, 2018), and in the local context (Ayall, Wambura & Simatwa, 2021; Ekabu, Kalai & Nyagah, 2018). Teacher performance is impacted by both the presence and absence of hygiene and motivational factors, which can influence their decision to transfer. Shaikh, and Shaikh (2019) found that Herzberg's theory is effective in demonstrating the connection between job satisfaction and job performance. It showed that factors contributing to job satisfaction improve employee morale and enhance performance, while factors leading to job dissatisfaction have a negative impact. Thompson (2020) applied Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and found that factors such as commuting stress, financial stress, and overall job satisfaction collectively influence teachers' decisions to leave their positions. Clayton (2018) underscores the relevance of applying Herzberg's two-factor theory to examine teacher transfer by evaluating the hygiene and motivational factors that affect teachers' job performance.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher, 2024

Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework Showing Relationships between Variables

In this framework, teachers transfer is the dependent variable, while factors causing teachers transfer are the independent variable. Further, the conceptual framework shows that teachers transfer arise from transfer policy, school factors, promotion, socio-economic factors and personal factors. Job satisfaction acts as the intervening variables. From the framework, teacher transfer may either be voluntary or involuntary. The researcher anticipated intervening variables of job satisfaction in form of satisfiers and dissatisfiers to teachers. Hygiene factors lead to decreased job satisfaction while motivation factors directly influence employee performance. Inadequate hygiene factors result in job dissatisfaction, while effective hygiene factors can alleviate dissatisfaction but do not necessarily lead to job satisfaction. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, as well as hygienic considerations, are forms of satisfaction that can affect teachers' performance. Job satisfaction is the main intervening variable of teachers transfer.

Review of Empirical and Conceptual Literature

Teacher transfer is influenced by various factors, such as school conditions, socio-economic issues, and the broader environment, all of which impact job performance. Working conditions are crucial in determining employee productivity and success (Wea, Wolomasi & Werang, 2022). Further, better working conditions can enhance productivity and reduce costs related to absenteeism, turnover, working hours, safety, health, and medical claims. Besides, working conditions are significant predictors of job satisfaction and retention among teachers (Sims, 2020). Teachers have cited several reasons that cause them to move from one school to another. Hancock (2016) study in the USA found that music teachers often transferred due to dissatisfaction with administrators and working conditions, among other factors. The study revealed that those who moved to schools with improved working conditions were more satisfied with their new positions. Therefore, working

conditions influenced teachers' decisions to move schools. Data for the study were drawn from the National Center for Educational Statistics and included a follow-up survey.

A study was done by Qin (2019) titled "Factors relating to teachers intention to change school: A multilevel perspective." Qin examined how organizational characteristics affect teachers' intentions to transfer schools in the USA. Utilizing data from the 2013 US TALIS (Teaching and Learning International Survey), the research found that teachers in schools with greater staff cooperation and positive teacher-student relationships were less likely to seek transfers. Conversely, issues with classroom discipline were significantly associated with increased turnover intentions, with teachers facing more discipline problems being more likely to leave their schools. Additionally, younger and less experienced teachers were more inclined to consider transferring from low-income schools compared to high-income ones. The study indicated that teachers preferred working in environments characterized by cooperation and support, which enhanced their job performance. Self-efficacy also played a role in influencing teachers' decisions to switch schools.

The distance from place of residence to schools determines teachers' intention to transfer, as shown by an investigation done by Santelli and Grissom (2022) in Tennessee, USA, titled "Bad commute: Does travel time to work predict teacher and leader turnover and other workplace outcomes?" The research revealed that teachers with commute times exceeding 45 minutes are more likely to transfer from their positions. Additionally, the study found that longer commutes were linked to higher rates of absenteeism among teachers. The findings imply that schools could improve by hiring teachers who live closer to their workplace. Therefore, teachers' commute time to school influences their decision to transfer and be present in school.

Wea, Wolomasi, and Werang (2022) investigated how working conditions affect job performance among remote elementary school teachers in Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. Their research revealed that working conditions have a substantial impact on teachers' job performance. When teachers are equipped with adequate resources, devices, and a supportive environment, they tend to exceed expectations in their contributions. To address these concerns, the study suggests that school leaders and regional policymakers should prioritize creating a more positive work environment to boost teacher motivation. A review of research in the US was done by Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, and Darling-Hammond (2016) on "Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators." The study highlighted the significant role working conditions play in teacher retention. Their analysis, emphasizes that factors like school leadership, collaboration among teachers, shared decision-making, clear accountability systems, and adequate resources all influence the learning environment and ultimately impact a teacher's decision to stay in school. In short, positive working conditions not only retain teachers but also foster a more effective learning environment for students and vice versa.

In the USA, Yan (2021) conducted a study titled "Influence of working conditions on principal turnover in K-12 public schools." The study found that working conditions significantly impact principals' likelihood of leaving their positions. Specifically, principals working in schools with high concentrations of well-disciplined students were less likely to transfer to other schools. Another study in the US by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) explored the reasons behind teacher mobility. Their research indicated that dissatisfaction was a key factor driving voluntary school changes. Teachers reported issues with school administration, limited influence on decision-making, and inadequate school conditions, such as facilities and resources, as significant concerns that trigger teachers' transfers. The study also recognized family and personal reasons as contributing factors for voluntary transfers.

A longitudinal study was done in a Florida district by Feng and Sass (2017) on "Teacher quality and teacher mobility." The study showed that new teachers exhibited a higher degree of mobility, with 60% of teachers leaving their initial schools or transferring to another school within four years of posting. The

mobility of beginning teachers is triggered by the economic conditions of the area, students' composition, racial composition, and poverty rating. From the findings, teachers are likely to transfer due to career advancement such as promotion or to schools with teachers of the same peers. The study further identified the most effective teachers who transfer tend to go to schools whose faculties are in the top quartile of teacher quality. As a result, teacher mobility worsens differences in teacher quality across schools. Although these results are in a Western context, it is paramount to examine the same in the local context.

In Tanzania, a study was done by Boniface (2019) titled "Teachers perceived school-level sources of low retention in remote secondary schools in Dodoma Region." The study revealed that teachers face significant challenges in staying at remote schools due to insufficient housing and social services, conflicts at the school level, subpar teaching and learning environments, minimal participation in decision-making, and limited economic opportunities outside the school. The schools are often situated in isolated areas, requiring teachers to travel long distances through forests and bushes, exposing them to risks from wild animals and criminals. An investigation of the challenges faced by rural schools in South Africa was done by Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) in their study titled "Teachers for rural schools: A Challenge for South Africa." The research highlighted that many rural schools lack essential facilities such as water, sanitation, and electricity, which significantly impacts the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Teachers face challenges related to accommodation, especially in rural areas, as shown by Mohamed (2017) on "Challenges associated with primary school teachers' accommodation in rural areas in Arusha District Council, Tanzania." The study highlighted a severe shortage of teachers' housing, with existing accommodations being either in poor condition or very old and lacking essential facilities. The research utilized a case study design, focusing on heads of community primary schools, teachers, community leaders, and district education officials. A study was done in Turkana County by Wamalwa and Likoko (2022) on the "Influence of working environment on transfer intentions among the non-resident teachers in public schools." The research identified a higher prevalence of transfer requests from these teachers, citing security concerns and difficulty accessing certain schools. The study concluded that the work environment significantly influences transfer decisions for non-resident teachers within Turkana County's public primary schools.

Ekabu, Kalai, and Nyagah (2018) explored the relationship between working conditions and teachers' intentions to leave their positions in secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya. Their study, "Influence of Working Conditions on Turnover Intentions in Secondary Schools," discovered that unfavorable working conditions significantly diminish teacher motivation, which can result in increased dissatisfaction and elevated turnover rates. This can result in a school system staffed with disconnected teachers, impacting overall morale and commitment. The research also highlighted the specific challenges of remote rural areas, with one principal mentioning how the lack of basic amenities like electricity, water, and housing prompted teachers to seek transfers. Teachers often resist working in areas lacking basic amenities and transportation, leading to long commutes to school without motivating incentives.

In Suba district, Kenya, a study was done by Ariko and Simatwa (2011) titled "Factors influencing secondary school teacher transfer requests." The research found that socioeconomic and environmental factors significantly impact teachers' decisions to request transfers. The socioeconomic and environmental factors included accessibility, location of schools, and availability of opportunities for further studies, electricity, and housing. Teachers-related factors included teachers' family ties, teachers' backgrounds, and teachers' age. Factors associated with students included students' rural catchment area, class size, and students' socioeconomic backgrounds. The management factors included the availability of opportunities for teacher promotion due to less professional contact and support, opportunities for teacher recognition, collegial treatment, and the availability of induction or mentoring programs.

In Embu County, Mugo and Guyo (2018) explored “Factors driving labor turnover among public secondary school teachers in Kenya.” The research pinpointed several major contributors to high turnover intentions, such as insufficient recognition and involvement in decision-making, heavy workloads, inadequate salaries, limited opportunities for professional development, a lack of a robust reward system, and a lack of a conducive work environment. The research was conducted by Dawo, Kawasonga, and Gogo (2015) on the “Relationship between workload management and teachers’ intentions to transfer in public secondary schools within Mbita and Suba Sub-counties, Kenya.” The findings indicated that workload had a relatively minor impact, accounting for only 0.4% of the variance in transfer decisions. This implies that other factors are likely more influential in determining teacher mobility. The study identified various reasons outside the school work environment that contribute to transfer intentions. These factors include lack of proper housing, limited access to amenities like recreation facilities, hospitals, and schools, insufficient electricity, security concerns, inadequate school facilities, and the desire for better educational opportunities for teachers’ children. From the analysis, teachers with no intentions to transfer were on TSC bonding policy, and others were close to their homes of origin.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a convergent research design, a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies. To collect quantitative data, a cross-sectional survey was employed, while qualitative data were obtained through a phenomenology research design. The target population was comprised of 6 sub-counties, 95 public secondary schools, 1615 TSC teachers in secondary schools, 95 principals of secondary schools, and 6 TSC sub-county officials. The sampling techniques used were probability and non-probability to obtain a sample size of 29 schools, 320 teachers, 9 principals, and 3 TSC officials. Teachers’ sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula. While non-probability sampling was used to select principals and TSC officials who had met the criteria of being in the position for more than 3 years. Data were collected through a semi-structured questionnaire for teachers, a semi-structured interview guide for principals and TSC officials, and a document analysis guide was used to collect data from the TSC county office and MOEST Kajiado County. Quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS version 26, and descriptive statistics comprising of means, standard deviations, and percentages were obtained. Testing of study hypotheses was determined using the Pearson Moment correlation coefficient. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically and presented in the form of narratives and direct quotes. Data were merged at the interpretation stage. Ethical consideration was maintained throughout the research process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2: Responses from Teachers on Factors Causing Teachers Transfer in Public Secondary Schools in Kajiado County

Statement	5		4		3		2		1		Mean	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Students indiscipline influences the decision of a teacher to transfer	93	35	92	34.6	32	12	26	9.8	23	8.6	3.77	1.26
Lack of involvement in school decision-making influences a teacher to transfer	93	35	101	38	22	8.3	19	7.1	31	11.7	3.77	1.31
Poor housing within the school proximity influences a teacher to transfer	97	37	101	38	25	9.4	14	5.3	29	10.9	3.83	1.27
Location of school influences a teacher to transfer	102	38	113	42.5	24	9	9	3.4	18	6.8	4.02	1.1
Inaccessibility to social amenities influences a teacher to transfer	113	43	98	36.8	24	9	19	7.1	12	4.5	4.05	1.09
Inadequate teaching-learning resources in school influence a teacher to transfer	101	38	91	34.2	30	11	21	7.9	23	8.6	3.84	1.25
Career growth influences a teacher to transfer	103	39	98	36.8	29	11	19	7.1	17	6.4	3.94	1.16
Lack of supportive environment influences a teacher to transfer	101	38	100	37.6	34	13	17	6.4	14	5.3	3.96	1.16
Family ties influence a teacher to transfer	108	41	92	32.6	24	9	16	6	26	9.8	3.9	1.27
Poor school performance influences a teacher to transfer	102	38	96	36.1	31	12	20	7.5	17	6.4	3.92	1.17
Average											3.9	1.2

Source: Field Data (2023)

Key: F = Frequency and % = Percentage

Table 2 presents the responses obtained from teachers on factors causing teachers to transfer in Kajiado County. Teachers were asked how students' indiscipline influences the decision of a teacher to transfer. The results indicated that student indiscipline was a factor that influenced the decision of a teacher to transfer (mean = 3.774 and SD = 1.262). The study findings align with Qin (2019) findings suggest that teachers are more inclined to leave their current school if they face significant discipline issues in their classrooms, indicating that student discipline impacts teachers' decisions to transfer. Similarly, Harrel, Thomson, and Brooks (2019) found that factors such as poverty levels, minority composition, and passing state exams did not significantly influence a teacher's decision to transfer schools after their first year of teaching. Though teachers' chances of transferring increase with the increase in indiscipline of students in schools. Moreover, Yan (2021) identified that schools with high levels of indiscipline students affected teachers' decisions to transfer. Hence, schools experiencing indiscipline of students' influenced the decision of a teacher to transfer in public secondary schools in Kajiado County.

Teachers were asked how a lack of involvement in school decision-making influences a teacher to transfer. The study revealed that lack of involvement in school decision-making influenced a teacher to transfer (mean = 3.774 and SD = 1.312). The study findings are corroborated by Boniface (2019), who highlighted that a significant cause of teacher transfer in Tanzania originates from a lack of involvement of teachers in school decision-making processes. Similarly, Mugo and Guyo (2018) found that high turnover intentions among teachers in Embu County were partly attributed to a lack of recognition and involvement of teachers in the school decision-making process. Therefore, teachers need to be engaged in school decision-making, particularly those decisions affecting them directly, to feel valued and recognized.

The study investigated how poor housing within the school proximity influences a teacher to transfer. The study revealed that poor housing within the school proximity influenced a teacher to transfer (mean = 3.838 and SD = 1.2768). Findings from Principal 6 indicated that "the school does not have enough accommodation for teachers, which forces them to seek accommodation in the nearby towns, which are far from school" (PM6, Interview, September 29, 2023). The findings are consistent with Dlamini, Plessis, and Markham (2023), who found that lack of accommodation contributed to teachers transferring to better urban schools from rural ones in Eswati. The study also discovered that few houses were available in certain rural schools and that these houses lacked basic utilities like electricity and water. Moreover, teachers in these schools were not provided with adequate housing. In Tanzania, a study by Mohamed (2017) revealed that accommodation in rural areas is a major problem, and there is an acute shortage of houses in schools that can accommodate teachers. A study by Boniface (2019) in Tanzania recognized that poor accommodation influences teachers' transfers. Therefore, teachers' accommodation is an integral component of retention of teachers in schools. Hence, providing houses for teachers in schools would minimize their transfers.

The study examined how the location of the school influences a teacher to transfer. According to the results, the location of the school influenced teacher transfer (mean = 4.022 and SD = 1.105). The findings corroborate with Wei and Zhou (2019), who found that school location was the most reliable predictor of teacher mobility in China. Teachers in rural areas are more likely to transfer than the teachers who are teaching in urban areas. Findings from Santelli and Grissom (2022) revealed that teachers who commute more than 45 minutes to work are more likely to transfer to Tennessee and teachers who commute a greater distance are at a higher risk of missing work. Similar findings were obtained in Turkana County by Wamalwa and Likoko (2022) that schools located in places with insecurity are highly affected by teacher transfer. Therefore, school location influenced teachers transfer.

The study investigated how inaccessibility to social amenities influences a teacher to transfer. The study found that inaccessibility to social amenities influenced teacher transfer (mean = 4.0564 and SD = 1.099). Teachers pointed out that schools in remote areas lack social amenities within school proximity, which forces them to seek these services in other areas. Further, lack of essential services within school proximity and poor

roads affect punctuality and class attendance of a teacher. The study findings are supported by Dawo, Kawasonga, and Gogo (2015) in Mbita and Suba Sub County, which contribute that inaccessibility to social amenities contributes greatly to teachers' intentions to transfer schools. Similarly, Ekabu, Kalai, and Nyagah (2018) in Meru County discovered that teachers in isolated rural areas lacking in basic amenities like water, electricity, and school houses actively seek transfers.

The study investigated how inadequate teaching and learning resources in school influence a teacher to transfer. The findings showed that inadequate teaching and learning resources in school influenced teacher transfer (mean = 3.849 and SD = 1.252). The results of this study are supported by Alyaha and Mbogo (2017), who found that teachers were dissatisfied with their jobs in South Sudan due to inadequate school facilities. Job dissatisfaction may affect the performance of teachers, and transfer intentions leading to actual transfer. Findings from Mabeya (2019) revealed that attrition was attributed to a lack of enough teaching and learning resources due to inadequate funds to purchase the resources in Uasin Gishu County. Also, a study by Podolsky et al. (2016), noted that the type of teaching and learning that takes place in schools and the retention rates of teachers are positively impacted by having enough instructional materials, clean and safe facilities, a reasonable student-teacher ratio, and enough support staff. Therefore, the presence of teaching and learning materials in schools affects teachers' performance and consequently transfer.

The study investigated how career growth influences a teacher to transfer. The study revealed that career growth influenced teachers' transfer (mean = 3.943 and SD = 1.165). Findings from an interview with principals 2 indicated that “promotion to an administrative position is the greatest reason that teachers move from one school to another. Although some teachers move after completing study leave to other schools” (PM2 Interview, September 22, 2023). The results agree with Wei and Zhou (2019) found that in China, teachers with higher professional ranks had high rates of teacher turnover. According to a research by Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, and Wyckoff (2011), teachers who have higher pre-service qualifications such as college competitiveness and certification exam scores are more likely to submit a transfer application. Thus, better professional development contributes to teachers' transfer intentions because higher-quality teachers are preferred by schools in all quality-signaling measures.

The study explored how a lack of supportive environment influences a teacher to transfer. The study found that a lack of supportive environment influences a teacher to transfer (mean = 3.966 and SD = 1.1137). Teachers identified that a poor working environment was found among teachers and administrators in schools. Also, conflicts between teachers and administrators caused some teachers to transfer. Further, poor leadership styles among principals caused conflicts among teachers and administrators, creating a toxic environment. Principal 6 pointed out that:

My school right now is experiencing a shortage of teachers because the previous principal who left transferred 3 teachers due to conflict that existed between them. Since then, the TSC has not replaced those teachers. The remaining teachers are overburdened with work since the school is not able to employ many BOM teachers (PM6, Interview, September 29, 2023).

Similar findings were obtained from TSC Officer 2, that “some schools experience poor working relationships between teachers and principals, which creates a toxic environment, thus affecting performance in school. Also, conflicts exist among teachers in schools which affect teamwork and collaboration” (T2, Interview, January 8, 2024).

The study findings are supported by Phiri and Mulenga (2020) that conflict with school administrators contributed to teacher transfer. According to Wamalwa, Kapkiai, and Ndaita (2018), the absence of administrative support and participation in decision-making by the school administration is a contributing factor in teacher turnover. Hence, the transfer of teachers is caused by the poor working environment in school.

The study explored how family ties influence a teacher to transfer. The study revealed that family ties influenced teacher transfer (mean = 3.902 and SD = 1.270). Findings from principals and TSC officials revealed that the major reasons cited by teachers requesting transfers were family-related, such as joining spouses and closeness to families. The study findings are supported by Ibwongo and Komakech (2021) noted that distance from families was a major reason for voluntary transfers among teachers in Uganda. Also, Dawo, Kawasonga, and Gogo (2015) revealed that a lack of better schools for teacher children caused teachers to transfer to Mbita and Suba Sub-Counties. Hence, family ties contribute to teacher transfer. There is a need to minimize transfers by ensuring they work close to their families.

The study investigated how poor school performance influences a teacher to transfer. The study found that poor school performance influenced teacher transfer (mean = 3.924 and SD = 1.172). Similar findings were obtained from an interview session with principal 3 that “teachers seek to transfer from poor performing schools to higher performing schools since promotion is based on students’ performance in most cases which disadvantage teachers from low performing schools” (PF3, Interview, September 25, 2023). The findings corroborate the findings of Elacqua and Rosa (2023) revealed that teachers are more likely to transfer from schools with poorer academic performance to those with higher test scores. Findings from Nguyen, Pham, Crouch, and Springer (2020) revealed that teachers are more likely to leave schools with low students’ achievement than those with high achievement. Therefore, students’ performance influenced the decision of a teacher to change schools.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The factors relating to teacher transfer were transfer policy reasons, school related reasons, socio-economic reasons, personal reasons, and promotion. The study concluded that teacher transfer in public secondary schools is caused by pull and push factors within Kajiado County.

The study investigated factors relating to teacher transfer in Kajiado County. Teachers transfer have implications for teachers, students, and schools, and thus it is important to investigate the causes of these transfers in Kajiado County. The study made the following recommendations: TSC to find out the cause of teachers transfer in Kajiado County and put appropriate measures to avert a crisis in schools which could affect teachers and students’ performance. The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology to avail funds in schools promptly for provision of teaching and learning resources in schools. The school principals create a conducive working environment that will encourage collegial relationships and support teachers in schools. The government of Kajiado provide social amenities near the schools and improve the roads leading to schools to make them accessible.

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