

## **Effect of Head Teachers' Turnover on Teacher Performance in Public Primary Schools in Turbo Division, Kenya**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Despite the existence of head teacher's turnover in primary schools, many studies have concentrated on instructor turnover and ignored the effects of school leadership change on school performance. This study investigated the effect of head teacher's turnover on teacher performance in public primary schools in Turbo Division. The study was guided by the Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory of job satisfaction. This study adopted descriptive survey design and targeted 684 teachers and 85 head teachers. The sample size for this study is based on Krejcie and Morgan formula where 246 teachers and 26 Head teachers was used. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Research instruments were availed to supervisors to test validity while test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the instruments. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of frequencies and percentages while qualitative data was analysed thematically. Pearson Correlation analysis was computed to establish relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Results of the study were presented in form of tables, charts and graphs. The study found out that there was a statistically significant relationship between head teacher's turnover and teacher performance. The policy makers at the Ministry of Education will get useful insight on issue of Head teachers' turnover and perhaps get data on other ways of motivating and retaining Head teachers.

***Key Words: Effect; Head Teachers; Turnover; Teacher Performance***

### **1.0 Introduction**

Currently, retention of valuable employees is a global challenge. Managers and top level authorities are constantly met with the issue of retaining employees, and there is a wealth of evidence that worldwide, retention of skilled employees has been of serious concern to managers in the face of ever increasing high rate of employee turnover (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2007; Samuel & Chipunza, 2009). In recent years, the focus of research on HRM has shifted from study and relationship of individual HRM practices on business performance to entire HRM system and its influence on labour turnover (Khan, 2010).

Employee retention is an increasingly important challenge for organisations as the age of the knowledge worker unfolds (Lumley et al, 2011). Presently the labour market belongs to employees, because talented candidates in the global job skills market have the luxury of choice (Harris, 2007). Cascio (2006) also affirms that the costs associated with recruiting, selecting, and training new

employees often exceed 100% of the annual salary for the position being filled. Thus, every turnover of skilful employees come at a cost and the combined direct and indirect costs associated with one employee leaving ranges from a minimum of one year's pay and benefits to something more substantial. Also, when knowledgeable employees leave an organisation, the consequences go far beyond the substantial costs of recruiting and integrating replacements. Consequently, most employers are seeking better ways to manage turnover in order to retain valued human resources as well as sustain competition and high performance.

In most African countries, the phenomenon of teacher turnover is associated mainly with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, especially in sub-Saharan nations like Zambia, Kenya, Nigeria, the Central African Republic and South Africa (Coombe, 2002). The Gambian Teachers' Union President reports a great exit of teachers from the profession due to, amongst other reasons, a lack of sufficient salaries, allowances, housing and advancement (Kamara, 2002). Mukumbira (2001) reported that Zimbabwe lost about 2 000 newly-qualified teachers who may have left for greener fields in 2000.

In South Africa, matters about teacher deficits are beginning to be articulated strongly. In a speech before Legislature to support World Teachers' Day on October 5, Professor Kader Asmal the minister of education passionately urged students to study to become teachers. He assured them not to fear retrenchments and further instability in respect of promotions following the end of the negotiation on rationalization and redeployment (City Varsity, 2002). The official repeated this pleading in his speech on releasing Senior Certificate returns for 2002 (Asmal, 2002). He, in particular, urged the students to take up careers in the teaching profession. In particular, he urged those learners who have also done well in Mathematics and Physical Science to concentrate on their studies and take appropriate courses that promote instructor populations.

However, the circumstances regarding headteacher turnover and attrition in South

According to Armstrong (2006), the motivation is concerned with the factors that influence people to behave in certain ways. Armstrong further points out that improvement in people's perceptions are about getting them to move in the direction you want them to go to achieve a result. Motivation is defined as a goal directed practice. Cole (2002) argues that motivation is an essential aspect of administration that requires human action manipulated to tune individuals' goals with those of the system. Cole says it is an important tool for management in practice.

The relevance of job motivation and satisfaction are very crucial to the long term growth of any institutional system around the globe. They probably support professional knowledge and skills,

center competences educational sources and plans as the veritable determinants of instructional success and performance. Head teachers' knowledge, competencies and center competencies occur when one feels effective in one's behavior. In essence, professional knowledge, skills and competencies can be seen when one is taking on and mastering challenging tasks directed at educational success and performance (Filak & Sheldon, 2003)

The status of teachers in countries such as the UK and the US has declined greatly during the last fifty years due to the limited incentives provided to them to improve their practice and develop as professionals as well as involvement in decision making and little teacher compensation. A workshop held in Paris noted that teacher motivation was a "colossal problem" which was seriously compounded by political interferences in the appointment of instructional and school officials and corruption (Hallak & Poisson, 2001).

Teacher's motivation in the developing nations has not been addressed significantly. According to Fry and Tweedie (2003), in his research in association with the Voluntary Service Organization (VSO), educators in Zambia, New Guinea, Malawi, Papua were poorly paid; this did not get sufficient professional assistance and were shown less respect by the wider society. This affected their morale resulting in low academic achievement of pupils. A study in Zimbabwe, by Nhundu (1994) found that self-appraisals and role clarity factors emerged as the significant predictors of overall job satisfaction among teachers in Zimbabwe. An important finding was that self-appraisals were a better predictor of overall job satisfaction than the appraisals by the teachers' supervisors. This could indicate that directors are not well informed about the inner feelings, experiences and perceptions of an employee as they assume (Pii, 2003). In his study established that circumstances such as compensation, acknowledgment, institutional policies and practices, operating conditions, supervision and human relations were significantly associated with job dissatisfaction.

Cole (2002) noted that an annual turnover of 25 percent can be considered normal in any organization but a turnover rate of 100 percent will be a clear indication of existence of internal problems therefore it is the role of the organization's management to ensure that best practices are employed to minimize on turnover. The knowledge and skills a worker has which comes from education and training, including that acquired through experience generates a stock of productive human capital which organizations should maintain at all costs.

Matheka's (2005) study on motivation and job content among teachers in state secondary, institutions in Machakos District indicates that the main issues of concern for teachers as; head teachers' administrative styles, workload, status and acceptance in society, available promotional

possibilities and relationship with the employer. The teacher being an instrument of success requires the physical, psychological, economical and social comfort. Okemwa (2003), shows that every system if it has to succeed, must have satisfied workers.

Olando (2003), further points that one of the indications of deteriorating circumstances in an organization are weak job motivation and job satisfaction. It leads to strikes slowdowns, absenteeism and high employees turn over. It may result in low productivity, disciplinary and organizational difficulties. The working conditions and environment in which the teacher works may be a source of dissatisfaction. According to Okemwa (2003), teachers working in rural centers are more disadvantaged compared to their urban counterparts due to the underdevelopment in schools.

According to Okemwa (2011), observations of the District Education Officers (DEOs) in various areas showed that the signs of stress, absenteeism from work, addiction, and truancy affect teacher motivation. This study therefore sought to determine the effect of head teachers' turnover on teacher performance in Public primary schools in Turbo, Division, Kenya.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Schools are open and thankfully there is now no talk of an impending strike. The government and the teachers' unions have come to some truce and everything appears to be back to normal. This, however, is a misleading impression because in reality, the Kenya public primary schools system is in a fairly bad state and the heavy investment is not yielding commensurate returns. A rethinking of the delivery of public education is of urgent concern and demands the attention of highest level of leadership. Teacher attrition is costly, both for a nation's budget, and for the social and academic outcomes of its citizens. The impact of teacher turnover is one of the teacher-quality topics that's been hard for researchers to get their arms around. The phenomenon of high rates of teacher turnover has certainly been proven to occur in high-poverty schools more than low-poverty ones. The eminently logical assumption has been that such turnover harms student achievement. Public primary schools in Turbo Division, Uasin Gishu county have continued to perform poorly as compared to their private counter parts for quite a long time. Heateacher turnover has not been considered and perhaps how it relates to teacher performance and as a whole how the two combine to determine the final Performance in National Examinations. The gap in knowledge regarding the causes that contribute to teacher attrition is particularly concerning in light of recent social and educational concerns about teacher attrition and teacher shortages. It is therefore based on this facts

that the study determined the effect of head teachers' turnover on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Turbo Division.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

The consequences of teacher turnover and attrition are too ghastly to contemplate. Institute of Management (1999) posits that the impact of turnover is by way of increased costs to the organization, broadly categorized as separation, replacement, recruitment, selection, induction and training costs as well as loss of productivity while the newly hired teacher comes up to speed. Ingersoll (2001) postulates that staffing problems are created when employees leave the organization and have to be replaced, especially since teacher turnover is highest among new teachers mostly within the first five years.

Teacher attrition disrupts schooling. This is especially so when teachers leave the profession during the academic year or whilst engaged in critical projects in school. Often there is no continuity when they leave (Borsuk, 2001). According to Ingersoll (2001) turnover influences the performance and effectiveness of the school since the school as an organization has production processes requiring extensive interaction among educators and is therefore prone to suffer when subjected to high rates of turnover. Consequently, turnover disrupts the quality of school cohesion and performance.

The shortage of educators is perhaps the most significant effect of educator turnover. Duffrin (1999) points out that it is difficult to fill the vacancies created by educators who leave the profession. Ingersoll (2001) attributes the shortage of teachers directly to turnover and posits that about 90% of newly hired teachers are simply replacements for recent departures. To address this situation, the temptation is reportedly the lowering of standards and compromising entry requirements into teaching (Chaika, 2000).

The effects of teacher turnover necessitate the management thereof. A number of measures have been taken to address teacher turnover in various countries. Among others, aggressive recruitment drives, lowering standards for entry into teaching, provision of allowances as incentives have been employed. However, these measures seem largely to address attracting people in to teaching. Therefore, a holistic approach is needed to manage teacher turnover effectively. This has to address critical sources of turnover, namely, organizational characteristics in the light of the reasons thereof.

## **3.0 Methodology**

The study was undertaken in Turbo Division of Uasin-Gishu County using descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design enables the researcher to describe the state of affairs as they are and report the findings (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). Moreover, descriptive survey allows rapid

collection of data from a large sample within the shortest time possible by use of questionnaires, focus group discussions and interview schedules.

The study targeted all primary school teachers in the sub-county. The region is made up of 85 public primary schools and therefore the target population of this study included 684 teachers and 85 head teachers as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Target Population**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Number of schools</b>	<b>Number of Head teachers</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>
Kapyemit	26	26	216
Sugoi	22	22	178
Kiplombe	19	19	154
Turbo	18	18	144
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>684</b>

The sample size for this study was based on a sample size determination formula by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

$$n = \frac{X^2 * N * P(1 - P)}{(ME^2 * (N - 1)) + (X^2 * P * (1 - P))}$$

Where:

n= Sample size

$X^2$  = Chi-square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom

N= population size

P = population proportion

ME = Desired Margin of Error (expressed as a proportion)

For Teachers the Sample size was;

$$= 3.841 \times 684 \times 0.5 (1-0.5) / 0.05 \times 0.05 (684-1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)$$

$$= 81.62125 / 1.17025$$

$$= 246$$

However, 30% of the Head teachers were selected to participate in the study giving a sample of 26 Head teachers.

This study employed stratified and simple random sampling techniques so as to come up with a representative population that enhanced generalization of the research findings since it is not possible to seek the views of everyone for generalization of results. In selecting schools to participate in the study, stratified sampling technique was used to place schools in their quotas. Stratified sampling technique ensured that each stratum is assigned the proportionate number of schools as per the population. Thereafter simple random sampling was used to obtain the proportion of teachers in each cluster. Schools in each stratum were randomly selected by use of codes to identify them. The researcher assigned a unique code to each school for identity. Further stratified simple random sampling was used to select schools to participate in the study. This ensured that each school in each stratum had an equal chance to be included in the sample.

This study used both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The following methods were employed during data collection:

To test the validity of the instruments used in the study, the questionnaire was availed to supervisors together with a panel of experienced researchers of Kisii University to review the instruments. The results from the piloting together with the comments from the experts were incorporated in the final instrument revisions to improve its validity.

To determine the reliability of the instruments, teachers' questionnaire was piloted using 20 public primary school teachers in the nearby Soy Sub-County. The test-retest method was employed to test the reliability of questionnaires. The first test was administered to the respondents and after two weeks a second test was given to the same respondents. The two tests were analyzed separately. Corrections and adjustments on areas of weakness were made to the instruments. The Pearson's Product moment Correlation ( $r$ ) was used to calculate the reliability coefficient between the first and second scores. A correlation coefficient of ( $r$ ) 0.75 or more was considered appropriate to ascertain the reliability of the instruments as indicated by Orodho (2009). In this study a correlation coefficient of 0.78 was obtained indicating that the instruments were reliable and therefore adopted for data collection.

Data obtained was organized, coded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential techniques. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of frequencies and percentages while qualitative data was presented thematically. Open-ended questions were analyzed through coding themes and quotas that emerged. The themes emerging from secondary data were identified to augment primary data. Quantitative data was transcribed and organized into themes in order to check on their frequencies based on the research objectives.

Pearson Correlation analysis was computed to establish relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The level of significance was set at a p-value of 0.05. Results of the study were presented in form of tables, charts and graphs.

#### 4.0 Results and Discussions

The purpose of objective of this study was to investigate the effect of head teachers' turnover on teacher performance. To achieve this objective, teachers were asked to rate their level of agreement on a five point Likert scale items in the questionnaire on effect of head teachers' turnover on teacher performance. Their responses were tabulated and the results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2 Responses on Effect of Head Teachers' Turnover on Teacher Performance**

Statement	SD		D		UD		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Head teachers' turnover leads to absenteeism amongst teachers due to lack of supervision	52	21.8	16	6.7	17	7.1	74	31.1	79	33.2
Head teachers' turnover affects curriculum implementation leading to non-coverage of syllabus	18	7.6	43	18.1	15	6.3	77	32.4	85	35.7



High head teachers' turnover frustrates teachers leading to non-performance	19	8.0	63	26.5	15	6.3	72	30.3	69	29.0
Head teachers' turnover leads to inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials affecting learning process negatively	15	6.3	26	10.9	18	7.6	116	48.7	63	26.5

Table 2 shows that 79(33.2%) teachers strongly agreed with the statement that head teachers' turnover leads to absenteeism amongst teachers due to lack of supervision, 74(31.1%) teachers agreed with the statement, 52(21.8%) teachers strongly disagreed with the statement and 17(7.1%) teachers were undecided on the statement while 16(6.7%) teachers disagreed with the statement. The study findings showed that majority (64.3%) teachers believed that head teachers' turnover leads to absenteeism among teachers due to lack of supervision. This concurs with Bennett and Hess (2007) who noted that high teacher commitment as a result of job satisfaction leads to less absenteeism and high performance. Effective leadership in schools is expected to share decision making with subordinates and creates opportunities for them to work towards a collective mission. Further, 85(35.7%) teachers strongly agreed with the statement that head teachers' turnover affects curriculum implementation leading to non-coverage of syllabus, 77(32.4%) teachers agreed with the statement, 43(18.1%) teachers disagreed with the statement and 18(7.6%) teachers strongly disagreed with the statement while 15(6.3%) teachers were undecided on the statement. From the responses, it emerged that majority (68.1%) of the teachers in public primary schools in Turbo Division were of the view that head teachers' turnover affects curriculum implementation leading to non-coverage of syllabus. From the current study findings, head teachers' turnover could affect curriculum implementation due to teacher absenteeism.

In addition, 72(30.3%) teachers agreed with the statement that high head teachers' turnover frustrates teachers leading to non-performance, 69(29.0%) teachers strongly agreed with the statement, 63(26.5%) teachers disagreed with the statement and 19(8.0%) teachers strongly disagreed with the statement while 15(6.3%) teachers were undecided. From the responses, it emerged that majority (59.3%) of the teachers in public primary schools in Turbo Division believed that high head teachers' turnover frustrates teachers leading to non-performance. Frustration could in turn lead to non-performance in terms of teaching and completion of syllabus. Lambert, O'Donnell, Kusherman and McCarthy (2006) pointed out that teaching is characterized as a profession that is emotionally taxing and potentially frustrating. Frustration could in turn lead to non-performance in terms of teaching and completion of syllabus.



Similarly, 116(48.7%) teachers agreed with the statement that head teachers' turnover leads to inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials affecting learning process negatively, 63(26.5%) teachers strongly agreed with the statement, 26(10.9%) primary school teachers disagreed with the statement while 15(6.3%) teachers strongly disagreed with the statement. The study findings suggested that majority (65.2%) of the primary school teachers in Turbo Division believed that head teachers' turnover leads to inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials affecting learning process negatively. The head teachers are mandated to provide adequate teaching and learning resources and therefore with their absence, there will be inadequate teaching and learning resources in public primary schools. This in turn affects the teaching and learning process. An influential factor on student achievement could be the availability and the use of resources by teachers in teaching and learning activities. Crosne and Elder (2004) reported that provision of facilities and availability of resources in school is an important structural component of the school in terms of academic performance.

On interviewing the head teachers, it emerged that among the mandates of head teachers is provision of teaching and learning resources and curriculum implementation supervision amongst others and therefore lack of a head teacher in a public primary school as a result of attrition could result in lack of these important materials.

Teaching effectiveness may be influenced by various factors among them the availability and use of educational resources. These play an integral role in the teaching and learning process. Loecheed et al (1991) observed that:

Instructional materials are critical ingredients in learning and the intended curriculum cannot easily be implemented without them. Instructional materials provide information, organize the scope and sequence of information presented and provide opportunities for students to use what they have learned.

From the above, it can be shown that head teachers' absence or attrition in school could affect the provision of teaching and learning facilities hindering curriculum implementation.

The hypothesis of this study stated that:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant statistical relationship between headteacher turnover and teacher performance in primary schools in Turbo Division .

This hypothesis was tested using Pearson Correlation Coefficient at  $p \leq 0.01$  significance level. Table 4.3 on interpretation of the strength of the correlation coefficient is based on Amin's (2005) approach. This approach emphasizes that at 0 there is no relationship, above 0 to .2 it is a very weak relationship, above .2 to .4 it is a weak relationship, above .4 to .6 it is a moderate relationship, above .6 to .8 it is a strong relationship, and above .8 to 1 it is a very strong relationship. Similarly,

the negative values imply negative relationship as enumerated above. Table 3 shows that relationship between head teachers' turnover and teacher performance.

**Table 3 Relationship between Head Teacher Turnover and Teacher Performance**

	Teacher Performance
Head teacher Turnover	r = -.483** p =.000

Table 3 shows that head teacher turnover had a negative correlation with teacher performance. This implies that there was a statistically significant but negative relationship between head teacher's turnover and teacher performance in public primary schools in Turbo Division ( $r = -.483$ ;  $p = .000$ ). This implies that an increase in head teachers' turnover in primary schools could lead to a reduced teacher performance leading to low pupil performance in examinations.

### 5.0 Conclusion

There was a statistically significant but negative relationship between head teacher's turnover and teacher performance in public primary schools in Turbo Division showing that an increase in head teachers' turnover could result in reduced teacher performance leading to low pupil performance in examinations.

### 6.0 Recommendations of the Study

An increase in head teachers' turnover could result in reduced teacher performance; therefore the Ministry of Education need to enhance smooth transition of head teachers.

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