

Full Length Research Paper

Perceived factors influencing public secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Busia district, Kenya

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Job satisfaction is essential to continuing growth of education system around the world. Teachers are a crucial element of educational opportunity structures. In Kenya, the recent efforts by the government to introduce Free Primary Education and Subsidized Secondary Education programmes which led to an influx in enrolments, has raised concerns about student-teacher ratio in schools. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing public secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Busia district, Kenya. The objectives of the study were; to establish perceived factors that influenced teachers to join the teaching profession and establish the strategies used by school management to motivate teachers. The study was based on the Herzberg's theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Purposive sampling was used to select head teachers while simple random sampling was used to pick teachers from the sampled schools. A sample of 129 respondents was selected from a target population of 335 teachers and education officers. A pilot study was carried out to establish the reliability and validity of data collection instruments. A likert scale questionnaire and in depth interview guide were used to collect data from respondents. Data analysis was facilitated by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The findings of the study were that teachers may be more satisfied in schools with good working environment if their terms and conditions are improved. The study recommended that; in-service courses for teachers to get equipped with current knowledge; and that the Government of Kenya should allocate more funds to the Ministry of Education for it to be able to employ more teachers to cater for the deficit and improve the methods of promotion in the teaching service so that many teachers grow faster.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Public Secondary School teacher, perception.

INTRODUCTION

The most ambitious education-related Millennium Development Goal is the attainment of basic education for all by 2015, which is now a decade away. This poses a major challenge for national governments, civil society organizations, and the international community. Without teachers there can be no education, and without education, sustained economic, political and social development is not possible. The key question therefore, is 'will there be sufficient numbers of teachers with the necessary competence and commitment to provide good quality basic education to all children?'

The relevance of job satisfaction is crucial to the long-term growth of any work industry all over the world. This has to do with needs' satisfaction which is essential in the

lives of workers because it forms the fundamental reason for working (Olulobe, 2005). For example, people work because they expect returns which will help meet their needs in life. According to Kim and Loadman (1994), teachers' job satisfaction is an effective response to one's situation at work. Thus, teacher job satisfaction refers to a teacher's effective relation to his or her teaching role.

More often than ever before, teachers are under tremendous pressure from politicians, parents, and local communities to deliver quality education to all children. But, how likely is it that they will respond to this challenge, given their current work environment. Teachers have a critical role to play in the schools along with supporting development activities in the wider community. They are central to the realization of national and international educational goals. Most governments and other key stakeholders recognize the crucial importance of improving the living and working conditions

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of teachers in order to achieve the desired improvements in quality and access to basic education. The necessity of adequately remunerating teachers has been a constant refrain of education commissions and other reviews over the last forty years.

Since Kenya's independence in 1963, job satisfaction has remained a major concern in the organizations. Commissions such as the Ominde Commission (RoK, 1964), were formed to survey the existing education resources of Kenya and advise the government on the formation and implementation of the requisite national policies for education (Eshiwani, 1993). The Ominde commission specifically emphasized the need to have an education system that would provide manpower for national development and one that is adaptable at all levels. It is also important to note that the Mackay Commission (RoK, 1981) was set to look into ways of improving the education system in the country. Consequently, there was a marked change in the subjects and workload for teachers, placing more responsibilities on them and therefore affecting their job satisfaction. For example, the implementation of the 8-4-4 system of education in 1985, called for a lot of sacrifice and commitment on the part of teachers.

Along with the teaching demands, teachers are charged with other duties such as; guiding and counseling, disciplining students, managing classes and participating in curriculum development panels. Coupled with this, the freezing of the hiring of teachers to public schools by the Kenyan government in 1998 created a teacher shortage in many secondary schools leading to increased workload. During the 35th Kenya Secondary School Heads Association (KSSHA) national conference, the shortage of teachers in public schools was declared a national disaster. The KSSHA national chairman put the current shortfall at 66,000 teachers (The Nation, 22nd June, 2010).

According to RoK (2007), numerous official documents over the last decade have increasingly drawn attention to the fragility of perceived teacher job satisfaction. Notably is the recent policy which demands that newly employed teachers stay in the same station for a mandatory five-year service before asking for transfer to a new station of work. Further, there is a demand that teachers must sign performance contracts. This directive by the Ministry of Education has drawn criticisms from Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) and the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET). The unions have contested for fear that performance contracts could interfere with the permanent and pensionable status of teachers' jobs (*ibid*).

Kenya is an interesting case of a developing country in which enrolment at secondary level has been considerably been expanding since the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2003 and now Subsidized Secondary Education since 2008 (Ayodo, 2009). Teacher job satisfaction has been the focus of research agenda in

various developing countries for a long time. Teachers are the key factor in school organization and the development of any country depends on their work; every country needs educated citizens. It is against this background that the study sought to establish how the aforementioned perceived factors influence public secondary school teachers' job satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. A survey, according to Kothari (2003), is a method of securing information concerning an existing phenomenon from all or a selected number of respondents of the concerned universe. The study was descriptive because it looked at the various aspects of a phenomenon that already existed namely, the perceived teacher's job satisfaction. The study sample was drawn from a total population of 49 Public Secondary Schools, 329 teachers, 3 Area Education Officers and 1 District Personnel Officer. Stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure appropriate representation; therefore it was used select public secondary schools from the three divisions. In addition, simple random sampling was used to select teachers while purposive sampling was used to pick the District Personnel Officer (DPO), Area Education Officers (AEOs) and the Head Teachers from the sampled schools as key informants. The sample size thus, encompassed 110(33%) teachers and 15 Head teachers, 3 Area Education Officers and 1 District Personnel Officer making a total of 129 respondents. Out of the 15 public secondary schools used, 4 were boys schools, 5 girls schools and 6 were mixed day and boarding schools.

This study employed the techniques of questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules to seek information from various samples of groups and the data obtained were subjected to descriptive techniques. The research instruments titled: Teachers' Job Satisfaction questionnaire and Head Teachers' questionnaire were used to gather data for this study. Interviews were scheduled for the District Personnel officer and Area Education Officers to get qualitative data. According to Nsubuga (2000), qualitative data gives the researcher much information and helps them identify the significant factors to measure. Observation schedule was used to verify and clarify some information generated utilizing questionnaires and interviews.

A pilot study was carried out in 1 girl's and 1 boy's schools to establish reliability of research instruments through the split-half method. To validate the research instruments, the researcher used the technique of face validity which is the degree to which the sample of the test items represents the content that the test is designed to measure (Nachimias and Nachimias 2003). They further point out that in face validity:

The relevance of an instrument to the characteristics of the variable it is meant to measure is assessed by *face validity* ---- the researcher's subjective assessment of the instruments appropriateness ---- and *sampling validity* ---- the degree to which the statements, questions, or indicators constituting the instrument adequately represent the qualities measured (P: 170).

In this case face validity was used whereby formulated questions and interview schedules were given to three experts in the department of Educational Planning and Management of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology to assess their validity and ensure their accurate measurement of what they were supposed to measure. The experts verified and independently validated the research instruments. They made corrections and offered suggestions which were used to make modifications in the questionnaires. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data. Results from quantitative data were presented by

use of frequency distributions in form of percentages, means, and standard deviations, while responses from qualitative data were recorded, grouped in themes and the findings reported. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 for easy interpretation.

RESULTS

This section presents findings from a research survey conducted on perceived factors influencing public secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Busia district, Kenya. The data was analyzed thematically based on objectives of the study regarding establishment of perceived factors that influence teachers to join the teaching profession; establishment of the strategies used by school management to motivate teachers' and its implications. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used to collect data.

Perceived Factors that influenced Public Secondary School Teachers to Join the Teaching Profession

One of the objectives of the study was to establish Perceived Factors that influenced Public Secondary School Teachers to Join the Teaching Profession. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, arithmetic means, and standard deviations were computed for the various dimensions of the questionnaire. Results are presented in tables 1 and 2.

In order to establish this first objective, the respondents were provided with a list of possible factors that might have influenced them to join the teaching profession. They were then asked to indicate by ticking factors that influenced their joining of the teaching profession.

According to results as shown in table 1, 51% and 15.4% of the teachers and head teachers respectively strongly agreed/agreed that they joined the teaching profession because they always wanted to be teachers while 35.4% and 77.9% of the teachers and head teachers respectively did not agree with the statement. Joining the teaching profession due to pressure from parents was supported by 57.3% and 61.5% of the teachers and head teachers respectively. However, 25% and 30.8% of the teachers and head teachers respectively disagreed with the statement. 51% and 69.2% of the teachers and head teachers respectively agreed that they were influenced to join the teaching profession due to parental occupation; however, 28% and 23.1% respectively disagreed with this statement. Surprisingly, only 14.6% and 38.5% of the teachers and head teachers respectively were in agreement with the statement that they joined the teaching profession because of available market while 66.7% and 46.2% disagreed with the same statement respectively. In addition, 38.5% and 46.2% of the teachers and head teachers respectively agreed that they joined the teaching profession due to their academic grade while

46.9% and 23.1% respectively disagreed with the statement.

Available holiday was supported by 55.2% and 61.6% of the teachers and head teachers respectively. However, 26% and 23.1% of the teachers and head teachers respectively disagreed with the statement. 66.7% and 61.5% of the teachers and head teachers respectively responded that they joined the teaching profession because of flexible teaching programme whereas 22.9% and 23.1% respectively tended to disagree with the statement. 56.3% and 76.9% of the teachers and head teachers were in agreement that they were influenced by an assumption of getting good pay. In addition, only 23.9% of the teachers disagreed with the statement that they joined the teaching profession due to good pay while none of the Head teachers disagreed with the statement. Self desire was supported by 43.7 % and 69.3% of the teachers and head teachers respectively. However, 42.7% and 23.1% of the teachers and head teachers respectively were in disagreement with the statement. Respondents who were in agreement with the state of joining the teaching profession because of study leave formed 40.6% and 76.9% of the teachers and head teachers respectively. However, 47.9% and 7.7% of the teachers and head teachers respectively were in disagreement with the statement.

Descriptive statistics in the form of arithmetic means and standard deviations were computed for the various dimensions assessed for the reasons for joining the teaching profession. The results are presented in 2.

The results in Table 2 indicate that the total mean and standard deviation for the reasons of joining the teaching profession for the teachers and head teachers is (mean=3.22, SD=1.285) and (mean=3.66, SD=1.271) respectively giving an average mean of 3.44. Since a mean score of approximately 3 is indicative of an average level of perception of a given point of view, a mean score below 3 showed unfavourable perception and a mean score above 3 suggested a favourable perception, it may be concluded that the sample of teachers from Public Secondary Schools evidence average levels of job satisfaction.

Based on this findings, teachers ranked the factors that influenced them to join the teaching profession as; good salary (mean=3.85, SD=1.322), Flexible teaching programme (mean=3.55, SD=1.178), pressure from parents (mean=3.55, SD=1.213), sufficient school holidays (mean=3.52, SD=1.248), parental occupation (mean=3.34, SD=1.263), wanted to be a teacher (mean=3.16, SD=1.292), self desire (mean=3.08, SD=1.382), academic grade (mean=2.96, SD=1.368), opportunities for further study (mean=2.89, SD=1.398), and available market of the job (mean=2.31, SD=1.190).

The result further revealed that, the most important factor that influenced public secondary school teachers to the teaching profession is good pay which has a mean rating of 3.85, pressure from parents and flexible

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Scores for Factors that Influenced Teachers to Join the Teaching Profession

Statement	Respondents	Strongly agree/agree		Neutral		Strongly disagree/disagree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
		Always wanted to be a teacher	Teachers	49	51.0	13	13.5	34	35.4
	Head teachers	2	15.4	1	7.7	10	76.9	13	100
Pressure from parents	Teachers	55	57.3	17	17.7	24	25.0	96	100
	Head teachers	8	61.5	1	7.7	4	30.8	13	100
Parental occupation	Teachers	49	51.0	20	20.8	27	28.0	96	100
	Head teachers	9	69.2	1	7.7	3	23.1	13	100
Available market	Teachers	14	14.6	18	18.8	64	66.7	96	100
	Head teachers	5	38.5	2	15.4	6	46.2	13	100
Academic grade	Teachers	37	38.5	14	14.6	45	46.9	96	100
	Head teachers	6	46.2	4	30.8	3	23.1	13	100
Available holiday	Teachers	53	55.2	18	18.8	25	26.0	96	100
	Head teachers	8	61.5	2	15.4	3	23.1	13	100
Flexible teaching programme	Teachers	64	66.7	10	10.4	22	22.9	96	100
	Head teachers	8	61.5	2	15.4	3	23.1	13	100
Good pay	Teachers	54	56.3	19	19.8	23	23.9	96	100
	Head teachers	10	76.9	3	23.1	0	0	13	100
Self desire	Teachers	42	43.7	13	13.5	41	42.7	96	100
	Head teachers	9	69.3	1	7.7	3	23.1	13	100
Study leave	Teachers	39	40.6	11	11.5	46	47.9	96	100
	Head teachers	10	76.9	2	15.4	1	7.7	13	100

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Perceived Factors that influenced Public Secondary School Teachers to Join the Teaching Profession

Reasons for joining the teaching profession	Teachers			Head teachers		
	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Good pay	1	3.85	1.322	2	4.23	.832
Pressure from parents	2	3.55	1.213	8	3.54	1.561
Flexible teaching programme	2	3.55	1.178	5	3.85	1.281
Available holiday	4	3.52	1.248	4	3.85	1.281
Parental occupation	5	3.34	1.263	6	3.69	1.316
Always wanted to be a teacher	6	3.16	1.292	10	2.23	1.363
Self desire	7	3.08	1.382	1	4.38	1.261
Academic grade	8	2.96	1.368	6	3.69	1.316
Study leave	9	2.89	1.398	3	4.15	1.214
Available market of job	10	2.31	1.190	9	2.92	1.382
Total		3.22	1.285		3.66	1.271

teaching programme with a mean rating of 3.55 each, while sufficient school holidays scored a mean of 3.52. The teachers expressed lower satisfaction with available job market by scoring a mean of 2.31. Whereas results of the sampled head teachers indicated that good pay, pressure from peers (mean=4.38, SD=1.26), pressure

from parents (mean=3.54, SD=1.56), parental occupation (mean=3.69, SD=1.316), environmental factors (mean=3.69, SD=1.316) are some of the major reasons that made the principals join the teaching profession. Always wanted to be a teacher was seen as insignificant in influencing them to join the teaching profession as it

Table 3. Strategies used by School Management to Motivate Teachers

Motivation factors	Respondents	Strongly agree/agree		Neutral		Strongly disagree/disagree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Rewarded for good performance	Teachers	45	46.9	13	13.5	38	39.6	96	100
	Head teachers	4	30.8	1	7.7	8	61.5	13	100
Well remunerated	Teachers	25	26.0	13	13.5	58	60.4	96	100
	Head teachers	5	38.5	2	15.4	6	46.2	13	100
Monetary motivation	Teachers	25	26.0	14	14.6	57	59.4	96	100
	Head teachers	3	23.1	3	23.1	7	53.8	13	100
Promotion opportunities	Teachers	33	34.4	21	21.9	42	43.8	96	100
	Head teachers	3	23.1	3	23.1	7	53.8	13	100
Letters of recommendations	Teachers	27	28.2	14	14.6	55	57.3	96	100
	Head teachers	2	15.4	3	23.1	8	61.5	13	100
Awarded certificate of merit	Teachers	20	20.8	11	11.5	65	67.7	96	100
	Head teachers	1	7.7	1	7.7	11	84.6	13	100
Support from trade unions	Teachers	41	42.7	16	16.7	39	40.6	96	100
	Head teachers	9	69.2	1	7.7	3	23.1	13	100
Attend seminars	Teachers	27	28.2	19	19.8	50	52.1	96	100
	Head teachers	1	7.7	3	23.1	9	69.2	13	100
Sponsored for in-service courses	Teachers	48	50.0	10	10.4	38	39.6	96	100
	Head teachers	3	23.1	3	23.1	7	53.8	13	100
Other forms of incentives	Teachers	42	43.8	16	16.7	38	39.6	96	100
	Head teachers	5	38.5	2	15.4	6	46.2	13	100

scored the least mean of 2.23. This implies that most teachers joined the profession with a hope of earning “good pay” however, with time they realized that it is not adequate as they compared their standards of living with their counterparts in other professions with the same qualifications.

Strategies used by School Management to Motivate Teachers

In order to achieve this objective, the respondents were provided with a list of various possible factors that contribute to teacher’s motivation in public secondary schools. The responses were summarized and presented in Table 3 and 4.

According to the results, 46.9% and 30.8% of the teachers and head teachers respectively agreed that being rewarded for good performance motivates them to work better. However, 39.6% and 61.5% of them expressed disagreement with the statement respectively. Surprisingly, only 26% and 38.5% of the teachers and head teachers respectively agreed that they get motivated by good remuneration. The statement was not supported by 60.4% and 46.2% of the teachers and head teachers respectively. Additionally, monetary motivation is a statement that was only supported by 26% and 23.1% of the teachers and head teachers respectively while 59.4% and 53.9% of the teachers respectively

disagreed with the statement. An available promotion opportunity was supported by 34.4% and 23.1% of the teachers and head teachers respectively whereas the majority 43.8% and 53.8% of the teachers respectively were not in support of the statement. Being given letters of recommendation was only supported by 28.2% and 15.4 % of the teachers and head teachers respectively while the majority 57.3% and 61.5% disagreed with the statement.

Respondents who expressed agreement with the statement of being awarded certificates of merit formed 20.8% and 7.7% of the teachers and head teachers respectively. However, a majority 67.7% and 84.6% disagreed with the statement. Getting support from trade unions was supported by 42.8% and 69.3% of the teachers and head teachers respectively, while 40.6% and 42% of them respectively disagreed with the statement. In addition, only 28.2% and 7.7% of the teachers and head teachers respectively agreed with the statement that they attend seminars whereas 52.1% and 69.2% of them respectively disagreed with the statement. Respondents forming 50% and 23.1% of the teachers and head teachers respectively expressed agreement of being sponsored for in service courses as a way of motivating them. However, 39.6% and 53.8% of them expressed disagreement with the statement. Further, 43.8% and 38.5% of the teachers and head teachers respectively agreed that they were motivated by being given other forms of incentives. However, disagreement

Table 4. Respondents' Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Strategies used to Motivate Teacher

Motivational factors	Teachers			Head teachers		
	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Rewarded For Good Performance	6	3.11	1.457	6	2.77	1.301
Well Remunerated	1	3.48	1.298	4	3.15	1.463
Monetary Motivation	2	3.43	1.185	2	3.38	1.193
Promotion opportunities	7	2.92	1.279	5	2.85	1.144
Letters of Recommendation	9	2.68	1.244	8	2.62	1.193
Awarded Certificate of Merit	10	2.43	1.093	10	2.23	.927
Support From Trade Unions	5	3.10	1.310	1	3.69	1.109
Attend Seminars	8	2.72	1.246	9	2.38	.961
Sponsored for In-Service Courses	3	3.21	1.436	6	2.77	1.301
Other Forms of Incentives	4	3.17	1.374	3	3.15	1.463
Total		3.03	1.292		2.899	1.2055

of the statement was expressed by 39.6% and 46.2% of the teachers and head teachers respectively.

Descriptive statistics were run to ascertain their mean values, and the result revealed that the most important strategies used in motivation of Public Secondary School teachers is well remunerated which has a mean rating of 3.48, while monetary motivation, scored second with a mean of 3.43. Sponsored for in service courses and other forms of incentives took the 3 and 4 position respectively. Rewarded for good performance, support from trade unions and promotion opportunities had a mean of 3.11, 3.10 and 2.92, respectively. Attend seminars, given letters of recommendation, and awarded certificates of merit are seen as not very significant factors used in their motivation as they scored 2.72, 2.68, and 2.43 respectively (See table 4 for detail).

However, head teachers results showed that they were most motivated through the following ways: when they are supported by trade unions (mean=3.69, SD=1.109), monetary motivation (mean=3.38, SD=1.193), well remunerated and receive other forms of motivation (mean=3.15, SD=1.463). However, they received lower motivation in the areas of; promotion opportunities (mean=2.85, SD=1.279), rewarded for good performance and sponsored for in service courses which scored a mean of 2.77 each, letters of recommendation (mean=2.62, SD=1.193), attend seminars (mean=3.38, SD=.961), and least motivated being awarded certificates of merit.

DISCUSSIONS

Job satisfaction is the extent to which an employee feels about his or her job (Demir, 2002). According to Abassi and Hollman (2000), individuals with high levels of job satisfaction would have healthier physical and psychological records that very likely result in higher

productivity and effectiveness in their job performance and willing staying longer in organization. Teacher job satisfaction has been the focus of research agenda in various developing countries for a long time. Teachers are the key factor in school organization and the development of any country depends on their work; every country needs educated citizens. The main factors that influenced teachers to join the teaching profession in this study were; good salary, Flexible teaching programme, pressure from parents, sufficient school holidays, parental occupation, wanted to be a teacher, self desire, academic grade, opportunities for further study, and available market of the job.

These findings coincide with Luthans (1998), who found out that salaries not only assist people to attain their basic needs, but are also instrumental in satisfying the higher level needs of people. Most teachers were not satisfied with how well they are remunerated. However, the role of money as a motivator is controversial. Many teachers appear to value money highly and some may be highly motivated by money. It can therefore, be deduced from the above findings that those public secondary school teachers that compared their salaries with those of private sector employees with the same qualifications experienced lower levels of job satisfaction.

Providing opportunities for growth and development through training and promotion may be a good motivator as many people like to grow in skills, capability and experience. Dessler, (2001), found out that, many people experience satisfaction when they believe that their future prospects are good. Teachers maintain that if people feel they have limited opportunities for career advancement, their job satisfaction may decrease. Bull (2005) also found out that, most teachers were less satisfied with advancement opportunities and pay. Promotional opportunities therefore, have differential effects on job satisfaction, and it is essential that this be taken into account in cases where promotion policies are designed

to enhance teachers' job satisfaction. The advancement indirectly will change individual's needs. In consequential, it will help individuals to put extra effort to continuously achieve their needs and satisfaction. This can be done through allowing teachers to proceed on study leave and attend seminars to be equipped with new skills other than blocking their way.

The motivation strategies though present in schools, the findings indicate that it seems only a few schools use them. To increase teachers' job satisfaction, all these factors need to be incorporated in the teaching process. They need to be developed and concentrated on to enrich teaching duties so as to provide teachers with professional growth and job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

In relation to the findings of the study, it can finally be concluded teachers' job satisfaction is still a challenge to the education sector. The main perceived factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction were; work place conditions, education policies, delayed promotion opportunities, too much work, inadequate in-service courses and poor inter-personal relationships. On the basis of the evidence presented in this study, the unavoidable conclusion is that most schooling systems in Busia district are faced with what amounts to a teacher motivation crisis, which has far reaching implications for the education Millennium Development Goals for basic education and for development as a whole. Thus, the Ministry of Education need to forecast and plan to enroll and train teacher students at the tertiary level according to the skills demanded in the labour market. The Government of Kenya could use these findings to enhance refresher courses so as to equip the teachers with skills relevant to their changing environments. The government of Kenya can further lift the ban on teacher recruitment so as to encourage more students to enroll in teacher training institutions. The Government of Kenya should allocate more funds to the Ministry of Education for it to be able to employ more teachers to cater for the deficit. The Government of Kenya should harmonize teachers' salary with that of other civil servants so to attract and retain experienced teachers in the teaching profession. Teacher's promotion should be based on academic merit and be done regularly to enable them to move from one job group to the other. If these recommendations are met, then teachers' job satisfaction is likely to improve which would eventually lead to improved performance.

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