

EFFECT OF AVAILABILITY OF TEACHING RESOURCES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN NYANDARUA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction among special education teachers can largely be determined by provision of teaching resources. Where the teaching resources are adequate, teachers provide the exceptional learners with the special attention they need. This study sought to investigate the effects of teaching resources on special education teacher's job satisfaction in Nyandarua County. The study utilized the survey method as the primary research design where special education teachers' views, perceptions and opinions about job satisfaction were gathered. The tool for collecting data was a questionnaire that comprised of twelve items on the respondents' personal data and thirty close ended questions on the respondents' level of job satisfaction. The sampling method used was purposive and was conducted to select the sample from the population of special education teachers in 16 special schools: (18 males and 24 females were selected). Data gathered from this study was analyzed using percentages with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17 a computer programme. Results revealed that adequate teaching resources had an effect on special education teachers' job satisfaction. From the study findings, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education should provide adequate teaching resources in the special schools.

KEY WORDS: Job Satisfaction, Handicap, Exceptional Children, Teaching Resources, Special School

Introduction

One of the marks of an advanced education system is the care it takes over those children who are less fortunate. Efforts to take care of these children must take into consideration the social and psychological stigma attached to various types of handicaps. Gachathi Report, found out that parents tend to regard a handicap as a reflection on themselves (RoK, 1976). As a result there is often an unwillingness to report handicapped children or to seek help for them.

Kamunge report recommended provision of counseling in schools as a measure to remove physical, social, mental and spiritual barriers the handicapped children face as they strive to achieve full potential. In an ideal setting, the disabled should be fully provided for in public life thus the school

ought to adopt its physical environment to suit the needs of this population, provide appropriate facilities and trained personnel (RoK, 1988).

Ominde Commission recommended that there was need for special education and training for the disabled children. The effects of these recommendations determined the direction of special education in Kenya. Exceptional children became categorized as the deaf, the deaf-blind, the mentally retarded, the multiple- handicapped, the emotionally disturbed, the learning disabled, the visually impaired, the gifted, creative and talented (RoK, 1965).

In enabling handicapped children to realize their potential and achieve a gratifying measure of participation in community life, the first preference is for them to be cared for, educated and trained (RoK, 1976). Ideally this should be based in their home environment and in normal conditions. Many of these children require some of the amenities provided under special education even in normal Centres of learning.

The quality of service for children with special needs in Kenya is affected by acute shortage of specialized aids and equipment, specialized personnel and inappropriate curriculum, insufficient institutions, unity of purpose between teachers and service providers, inadequate support staff, an absence of clear policy guidelines and lack of legal status on special education provisions (RoK, 1999). These children continue to be subjected to the same curriculum as the normal peers and that they are not treated exceptionally in the compilation and analysis of examination results (Odhiambo, 2002).

Ndurumo (1990) assessed the teacher training curriculum to establish whether teachers are adequately prepared to meet the needs of disabled learners and found out that the training prepared teachers with basic knowledge on exceptional children. The same curriculum imparts skills on behaviour modification intended to aid teachers to correct inappropriate behavior in the process of instruction. Despite the efforts by the Ministry of Education to provide counseling, media evidence indicates that dealing with the needs of exceptional children is still a challenge to regular teachers, most of whom lack specialized and appropriate teaching resources. Kamunge report (1988) recommended that the training of teachers should include counseling techniques to equip them to meet special education needs.

Special education rapidly developed as a discipline since World War II and as a result students with moderate, mild and severe disabilities have been identified, categorized and placed in resource rooms, special classes and special schools. However, they are still significant number of students with educational exceptionalities who remain unclassified in general education classrooms (Haring, McComick and Haring, 1994). This has made the work of educating exceptional children difficult for the teachers. It is also a characteristic of those who have exceptionalities to want to conceal them. A particularly unfortunate condition is where multiple- handicaps are centered in one person. This calls for both specialized staff and related amenities albeit expensive (RoK, 1976).

It has been observed in the Koech report that not every County is able to construct special education facilities for all types of exceptionalities under its jurisdiction (RoK, 1999). This has resulted to these children failing to get special attention that they need for identification, assessment and placement. Again, the tools used in most local education resource Centres do not facilitate proper diagnostic evaluation to determine the level and nature of the problem of persons with disabilities (Oriodo, 2000). Teachers in special schools do not receive effective professional guidance on

regular basis to ensure quality of service. This is because there are few special education inspectors. This coupled with lack of trained manpower and incentives to do research have led to inattention in special education (RoK, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

Effects of teaching resources on special education teachers job satisfaction was studied in order to identify the special units that had inadequate facilities or those that were in bad shape and advise the Ministry of Education on the need to provide the resources needed.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to investigate the influence of availability of teaching resources on special education teachers' job satisfaction in Nyandarua County, Kenya

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study to investigate whether availability of teaching resources influenced job satisfaction among special education teachers in Nyandarua County, Kenya

Hypothesis

The study was guided by the hypothesis that availability of teaching resources has no statistical effect on special education teachers' job satisfaction in Nyandarua County, Kenya

Review of Related Literature

Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from appraisal of one's job or job experience (Okumbe, 1998). It refers to a set of favourable feelings from which employees view their work. Job satisfaction refers to an individual's general attitude towards the job. It is an individual's mental set with regard to the job. It is also an effective response to work, a job or component of a job (Reyes, 1990). Job satisfaction is the willingness to remain in a current school organization despite inducement to leave. For the teacher, the satisfaction is the willingness to choose teaching as one's occupation a second time.

Spector (1997) defines job satisfaction as the degree to which people like their jobs. According to Hoppock (1935), job satisfaction is any combination of psychological and environment circumstances that cause a person truly to say "I am satisfied with my job". Employees may be satisfied with some aspects of their jobs while being dissatisfied with others.

Education has turned out to be one of the most important institutions in the modern society. There are social systems within societies, which require the fulfillment of some universal functions if they are to continue to exist. Education is a process concerned with these universal functions. Therefore education has the function of transmitting skills, knowledge, norms and values from generation to generation. Education aims at socializing individuals to fit into society to function adequately within it when they become adults (Eshiwani, 1993).

Most schools and institutions lack the necessary infrastructure that would make them successful for all children. The amenities that are often lacking include toilet facilities, ramps, rails, desks, chalkboards and playground. The land allocated to special schools is in marginal areas where it is steep and thus it is difficult for these exceptional learners especially those with visual and physical disabilities (RoK, 1999 & RoK, 1976).

A study carried by Kirui (2003) reveals that special education teachers lack vital resources necessary to facilitate effectiveness in counseling which includes insufficient time due to heavy workload and role conflict. Also the teacher pupil ratio in special schools is generally higher than in ordinary schools. This reduces teacher pupil interaction (Muola. 2000).

Misplacement of skills during teachers' posting from training institutions is another key issue (Adoyo. 2002). It is quite common to find trained teachers who are deaf for example, posted to schools for the physically or mentally handicapped against their will. This is unfair to the teacher who may feel misplaced and also the child who cannot be taught due to lack of professionally qualified personnel. The financial allocation for special education implementation is wanting. In the education sector, special education is allocated too little money that is not enough to provide the facilities to run the special units (Kenya Education Sector Support Programme. 2005). In order for special education teachers to perform their tasks effectively, there is need for the Ministry of Education to consider them when making policies. This will make them feel part of the teaching fraternity and be a predictor of their commitment (Spector, 1997).

Special education teachers should also be provided with an opportunity for personal development in terms of exercising creativity and responsibility. This will foster job satisfaction as they will have freedom to make decisions about their work (Turner and Lawrence, 1965). Job Satisfaction leads to higher performance (Spector. 1997). Teachers who are happy with their job might be more motivated, work harder and therefore perform better. If special education teachers have high job satisfaction the rate of turnover to other schools or other professions will be less. However, in Nyandarua County, special education is experiencing challenges that are impacting negatively on teachers' job satisfaction. These range from inadequate placement opportunities to few teachers. The existing facilities are not enough to support special education in the County.

Conceptual Framework

In any given working situation, workers' job satisfaction is influenced by working conditions (independent variable). The study however held the assumption that the extent to which this variables influence job satisfaction is a function of workers' age, gender, marital status, length of service and professional training. The aforesaid interrelationship between variables is expounded in the figure 1

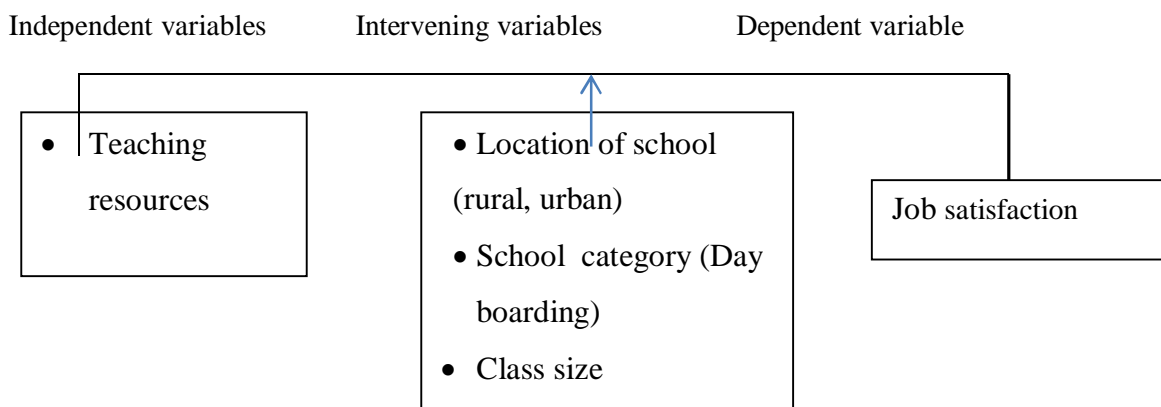


Fig1: Factors that Affect Job Satisfaction among Special Education Teachers

The conceptual framework indicates that teachers' job satisfaction (dependent variable) is a function teaching resources (independent variables). Job satisfaction is also a function of age, gender, marital status, experience and professional qualification. However, the interplay between job satisfaction (dependent variable) and

teaching resources (independent variable) can also be influenced by three intervening variables namely: location of the school, school category and class size.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was a survey type of research where the respondents were asked questions about their feelings on job satisfaction. Survey research is a self-report study, which requires the collection of quantifiable information from the sample subjects (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The survey design was used to collect views, perceptions and opinions on job satisfaction from special education teachers. This design was considered suitable to the study given that no prior or post treatment was applied to the subjects of the study. The design was suitable in determining the variables of the study as they were at the time of data collection.

Population of Study

The target population comprised of all teachers in special education units in Nyandarua County. Nyandarua County was chosen because there was a problem with respect to job satisfaction. The County is young and the study has not been carried out in the area. The County had not been subdivided by the time the research was conducted. According to the 2006 records in Nyandarua County Education Office, there were 44 special education teachers in special units who were distributed in 16 schools. However, by the time of data collection two teachers had been transferred. Therefore, 42 teachers; 18 males and 24 females were investigated.

Sample size and Sampling Procedure

The sample comprised of all special education teachers in special schools who were directly involved in instruction of exceptional learners. In this research, purposive sampling was applied in which all the 42 special education teachers (18 males and 24 females) in 16 special units in Nyandarua County constituted the sample for this study.

Instrumentation

In this study, questionnaires were used to gather the desired information. The questionnaire was divided into three sections; A, B and C. Section A consisted of 12 questions on the respondents' personal data. Section B, on the other hand comprised of 15 close ended items on how special education teachers felt about their job, while section C consisted of 15 items on how special education teachers described their job. The items were rated on 5 point Likert scale.

Reliability of the Instrument

The use of a reliable instrument meant that accurate data was obtained. A pilot study was conducted where two special schools:-Kimaru school for physically disabled and Kwanjora special school for cerebral palsy comprised the pilot sample. The purpose of pilot study was to establish the clarity and comprehensibility of each item in the questionnaire. A reliability coefficient of 0.7 was used where a test and post-test were administered to the respondents. The scores for both tests were obtained and correlated to get reliability coefficient. The results of the pilot study indicated that the reliability was about 70%. Therefore the questionnaire was clear and was completed in good time.

Validity of the Instrument

In order to test the validity of the questionnaire, it was piloted. Similarly, the questionnaire was given to three experts in the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations. On the basis of the responses from the pilot group and comments from the three experts, items that appeared to be unclear were rephrased. This ensured that the instrument was valid when collecting the main data.

Data Collection Procedure

Authority to collect data was obtained from the Ministry of Education. This is a requirement for conducting research in Kenya. A courtesy call was made at the Nyandarua County Education office before proceeding to collect data. The researcher then went personally to the 16 schools and administered the questionnaire to the special education teachers in special units. The respondents were given one week after which the filled questionnaires were collected by the researcher

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed in line with the stipulated research objective using a computer based Statistical Package for Social Science Programme (SPSS) version 17. The statistical analysis entailed the computation of percentages in respect of obtained data from responses to the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This research was carried out to find out the effect of the availability of teaching resources on special education teachers job satisfaction in Nyandarua County. The findings of the study were discussed under the two sub section namely; characteristics of the respondents and the relationship between job satisfaction and teaching resources.

Characteristics of the Respondents

Teachers' Age

The teachers' age were found to be as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of Teachers by Age

Age	N	%
20-40	16	38
41-60	26	62
Total	42	100

Table 1 indicates that majority of the teachers respondent (62%) were in the 41-60 age category. Thirty eight percent of the teachers were in the age category between 20-40 years.

Teachers' Gender

The teachers' gender was as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2**Distribution of teachers by Gender**

Gender	N	%
Male	18	43
Females	24	57
Total	42	100

A closer examination of the data displayed in Table 2 shows that most of the teachers in the study sample (57%) were females compared to males who comprised of about 43% of the sample.

Teachers Marital Status

Table 3 presents the distribution of teachers by their marital status

Table 3**Distribution of Teachers by Marital Status**

Marital status	N	%
Married	34	81
Single	4	10
Separated	3	7
Divorced	1	2
Total	42	100

As the data in Table 3 indicates, majority of the teachers (81%) were married. Only one teacher (2%) was divorced .The rest of the teachers (17%) were single, separated or divorced.

Teachers' Length of Service

Table 4 presents the distribution of teachers by their length of service.

Table 4**Distribution of Teachers by Length of Service**

Length of service in years	N	%
0-20	39	67
21-40	14	33
Total	42	100

As the data in Table 4 indicate majority of teachers (67%) had worked in years ranging from 0-20 while 33% had worked between 21-40 years .As the length of service increased, the number of teachers decreased.

Teachers' Professional Qualification

Table 5 presents the distribution of teachers by their professional qualification

Table 5
Distribution of Teachers by Professional Qualification

Professional qualification	N	%
S.I	2	5
PI	8	19
ATS	8	19
DIP ED	19	45
BED	5	12
TOTAL	42	100

A closer analysis of the data in Table 5 shows that majority of the teachers (45%) had a Diploma in education certificate while the lowest proportion of the teachers (5%) had an SI teaching certificate. Certificate trained teachers (PI and ATS) had the same representation at 19%. This implies that Diploma in Education teachers had the highest representation while SI teachers had the lowest representation.

Job Satisfaction and Teaching Resources

Table 6 presents the effects of teaching resources on special teachers' job satisfaction.

Table 6
Job Satisfaction and Teaching Resources

Advancement	N	Satisfied	Undecided	Dissatisfied
Very good	11	25%	50%	25%
Good	14	29%	42%	29%
Fair	18	-	42%	58%
Poor	5	-	40%	60%
Total	42			

Table 6 presents the effects of teaching resources on job satisfaction among special education teachers. The data shows that 25% of teachers in 'Very Good' category indicated that they were satisfied while 25% were dissatisfied. With good teaching resources 29% of teachers were satisfied while 29% were dissatisfied. Again, with poor teaching resources 60% indicated they were dissatisfied. Teaching resources in special units include brailles, rumps, rails, desks, chalkboards and play ground that are designed for the handicapped. These resources are very vital for any effective learning to take place. Their absence means job dissatisfaction as illustrated by teachers in 'Poor' category appearing more dissatisfied.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the availability of teaching resources had a statistic effect on special education teachers' job satisfaction. Poor teaching resources meant teachers' dissatisfaction.

Where the teaching resources were lacking or were inadequate, the special education teachers were handling exceptional learners with a lot of difficulties and thus were dissatisfied.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study makes the following recommendations

- i. The Ministry of Education should provide adequate teaching resources in the special schools.
- ii. The Ministry should also consider training more special education teachers to replace those who are about to retire.
- iii. More male teachers should be trained in special education so that they can take care of boys in special schools.

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