

Family Influence on Principals Job Satisfaction Following Secondary School Principal Delocalization Policy in Wanjoh Subcounty Nyandarua County, Kenya

Dr. Nelisa Kagendo Mbaka (PhD)

Ministry of Education, Kenya

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51583/IJLTEMAS.2025.1408000158>

Received: 20 July 2025; Accepted: 29 July 2025; Published: 18 September

Abstract: The policy regarding the relocation of secondary school principals has encountered a variety of challenges and hurdles that have complicated its implementation. Therefore, this study sought to assess the impact of secondary school principals delocalization policy on job performance in Wanjohi Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya. The specific objective was to investigate the influence of principal attachment to family and the effect of job performance. The study applied mixed methods approach. Population for this study was 18 public secondary schools in Wanjohi Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya. This study applied purposive sampling techniques which involved the selection of all 18 respondents. The research employed a questionnaire (for quantitative approach) and interviews (qualitative). Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 24.0 which was displayed using tables and figures. Qualitative data was analyzed, thematically and the findings were presented in a narrative format, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the themes that emerge from the data. The study found that principal attachment to family had an influence on job satisfaction following principal delocalization. The study concludes that principal attachment to family has significant influence on their job satisfaction when delocalized since strong family ties provide emotional support, stability, and a sense of belonging. The study recommends that schools and the education department need to provide counseling services to help principals manage their emotional and psychological needs during the transition.

Key words: Job performance, delocalization policy, attachment to the family, students' academic performance.

I. Background

Improving employee job performance is crucial because it directly impacts the overall productivity of an organization, leading to higher output and efficiency and also when employees perform better, they contribute more effectively to team goals and organizational objectives, which can result in increased profitability and growth for the company (Lazarus, 2021). According to Ojo (2023), Chepkonga (2021) observe that the relationship between delocalization and job performance is significant, as it highlights how the dispersion of work across different geographical locations can impact employee productivity and effectiveness. In Australia, programs that allow teachers to relocate temporarily to rural areas have not only addressed staffing shortages but also improved the overall quality of education by bringing fresh perspectives and innovative teaching methods to underserved communities (Blackmore, 2021). Poole (2024) opines that the movement of school administrators among various educational institutions in Australia has become a notable trend whereby the reassignment of administrative staff between schools within the same district has led to the sharing of best practices and improved collaboration. For instance, a principal who successfully implemented a new curriculum in one school may be moved to another institution to replicate that success, thereby enhancing the overall quality of education across the board.

Namukasa and Buye (2021) observe that relocating secondary school administrators in Uganda involves transferring school leaders to improve management and address staffing needs. For example, a principal from Kampala may be reassigned to a struggling rural school in the north to provide leadership. According to Baryamureeba (2023), the Ministry of Education in Uganda facilitate delocalization strategy by ensuring that qualified administrators are available in various regions. For instance, the ministry may transfer a deputy head teacher from a successful school in Jinja to a new secondary school in a less developed district to enhance education quality. Therefore, these relocations aim to balance educational leadership nationwide, ensuring all students receive quality education regardless of location.

Observations by Chepkonga (2021) indicate that the Ministry of Education in Kenya has initiated a process to relocate secondary school principals, aiming to enhance the management and leadership within educational institutions. This strategic move is designed to ensure that experienced leaders are placed in schools where their skills can be most effectively utilized, consequently, improving the quality of education and hence greater academic outcomes. Despite of these efforts by the Kenyan Government, studies have shown some degree of dissatisfaction of some stakeholder's. Munyiri, Kinyua and Ogembo (2025) research who focused on determining the relationship between delocalization process and the psychosocial wellbeing of public secondary school principals in selected Counties in Eastern Region, Kenya and that study found that implementation of delocalization policy negatively and significantly influences the public secondary Principals' psychosocial wellbeing.

Objective of The Study

The objective of the study was to examine the influence of principal attachment to family on job satisfaction following principal delocalization in Nyandarua County

II. Literature Review

Yang, Qi, Zeng, Han, and Pan (2021) examined the association between work-family conflict and the work engagement of primary and secondary school leaders through a moderated mediation framework. The findings indicated a notable negative correlation between work-family conflict and the work engagement of primary and secondary school leaders, with this relationship being partially mediated by job satisfaction. Specifically, the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement was significant for primary and secondary school leaders exhibiting both high and low levels of affective commitment.

Sikuku, Barasa, and Likoko (2022) examined the connection between family attachment and the job satisfaction of relocated head teachers in Bumula Sub County, Kenya. A descriptive survey research design was implemented. The research encompassed all relocated head teachers in public primary schools located in Bumula Sub County. Census sampling was utilized to select the 41 relocated head teachers who constituted the primary respondents. It was found that family attachment had a significant correlation with the job satisfaction of the relocated head teachers.

Gitonga, Kibaara, and Gichohi (2022) investigated the impact of work-life equilibrium as a moderator between teaching competence benchmarks and educators' performance in Public Primary Schools within Igembe North Sub-County, Meru County. The majority of teachers undertook multiple roles with conflicting interests; thus, achieving a balance among work, family, personal, and community obligations proved to be a significant challenge.

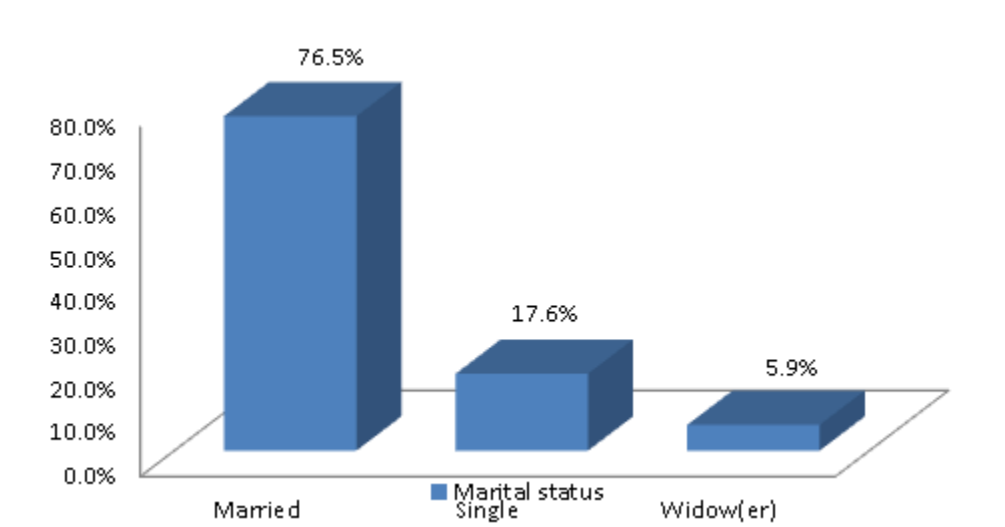
III. Research Methodology

The research study applied mixed methods approach. A survey design was applied for quantitative approach while phenomenology for qualitative approach. The target population

for this study was 18 public secondary schools in Wanjohi Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya. The study applied purposive sampling technique, which entailed the selection of all 18 respondents secondary schools in Wanjohi sub-county were 18, thus censuring of the whole population of principals were made. The research employed a questionnaire (for quantitative approach) and interviews (qualitative). The questionnaire had open-ended questions to collect qualitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 24.0 which was displayed using tables and figures. Qualitative data was analyzed, thematically and the findings were presented in a narrative format, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the themes that emerge from the data and thereafter triangulating both quantitative and qualitative information.

IV. Findings and Discussions

The study established that majority (76.5%) of the respondents were married, 17.6% single and 5.9% widow(er) as shown in Figure 1



1: Principal attachment to family and job satisfaction

78.5% of the Respondents were married, 17.6% single and 5.9% widow(er) as shown in Figure 1.

These statistics suggest important insights into the participants' primary attachments to their families, which may significantly influence their levels of job satisfaction following the main delocalization process. The finding agree with Chepkonga (2021)

research observation that factors such as emotional support, stability, and family responsibilities may play a crucial role in shaping their performance in a new environment.

Qualitatively, the respondents were asked to indicate how emotional attachment as the principal to their family had an influence their job satisfaction after relocation. The responses given were;

‘The family attachment could provide essential support and stability during the transition, helping the principal to adapt to their new environment and responsibilities. A strong family relationship serves as a source of encouragement, reducing stress and enhancing the principal's ability to engage positively with their new school community. If the emotional ties with family are strained or if the relocation disrupts these relationships, it leads to feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction in their professional role’.

A female Principal had this to say;

‘I Am telling you it is a terrible experience. One can lose a family. At first, I felt so much isolated and at some point I felt like quitting the job. You know whenever I called my son, he kept on crying asking me why I left them alone with the dad .On the other hand my husband did not buy in the idea of me moving away from home while we had just constructed a lovely home’

The study suggests that job relocation can be potentially harmful to families, leading to feelings of being adrift and a desire to return to one's home area to be near what is important in life. The research indicated that delocalization contributes to stress, affecting principals' psychological well-being and, consequently, their work performance. This is in agreement with Riemer (2000), who opines that individuals who relocate for work often experience two types of stress: operational stress from the new job and setting up in the new community, and emotional stress related to family activities.

The study sought to find out the coping mechanisms the school principal used to balance their family life and professional responsibilities post-relocation. The respondents indicated that;

The strategies included ‘effective time management, setting clear boundaries between work and home life, and seeking support from family and colleagues. Additionally, the principal adopted flexible scheduling and prioritized family activities to ensure a harmonious integration of both aspects of their life.’

The respondents were asked to indicate how their family relationships could affect their connection to the school community. They responded by indicating that;

‘Their personal ties play a significant role in shaping their interactions and engagement with students, parents, and staff. These familial relationships often influence their perspectives and decision-making processes within the school environment. Such relationships often provide them with unique insights and perspectives that enhance their engagement with the community’.

The study sought to find out from the school principal the obstacles they faced in adapting their family roles to their new workplace after relocation. They indicated that;

‘The principals had to juggle multiple roles, often leading to stress and difficulty in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

The principal were asked to indicate the long-term impact of relocation on a principal's family attachment and overall job satisfaction. They indicated that;

‘When a principal moves to a new location, their family may experience feelings of loss and disconnection from their previous community, which can affect their emotional well-being and sense of belonging. This detachment can lead to challenges in forming new relationships and integrating into the new environment, potentially straining family dynamics. The school principals might feel torn between professional responsibilities and family wellbeing. The community disconnections which affect both personal happiness and professional confidence and career dissatisfaction’

Summary

The study sought to determine the influence of principal attachment to family on job satisfaction following principal delocalization in Nyandarua County. The study found that a larger number of the respondents were married represented by 76.5%. The family attachment could provide essential support and stability during the transition, helping the principal to adapt to their new environment and responsibilities. The coping mechanisms established were; effective time management, setting clear boundaries between work and home life, and seeking support from family and colleagues. The family relationships could shape the school principals’ interactions and engagement with students, parents, and staff. The obstacles encountered were that the school principal could juggle multiple roles, often leading to stress and difficulty in maintaining a healthy work-life balance

V. Conclusions

The study concluded that;

Principal attachment to family has significant influence on their job satisfaction when delocalized since strong family ties provide emotional support, stability, and a sense of belonging. The school principals who feel disconnected from their families may experience decreased motivation, leading to lower job satisfaction. They might also struggle to build relationships with their new staff or students, which can impact the school culture.

VI. Recommendations

The study recommends that schools and the education department may provide counseling services to help principals manage their emotional and psychological needs during the transition. Networking opportunities with other relocated principals can also create a sense of community. Additionally, promoting regular family communication, even from a distance, can improve their overall well-being.

Reference

1. Ayala, G. X., & Elder, J. P. (2011). Qualitative methods to ensure acceptability of behavioral and social interventions to the target population. *Journal of public health dentistry*, 71, S69-S79
2. Bandura, A. (2014). Social-cognitive theory. In *An introduction to theories of personality* (pp. 341-360). Psychology Press.
3. Barone, D. A. C., Zaro, M. A., & de Musacchio, C. (2022). Delocalization and spatialization of the classroom: Deterritorialization in education. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 3(11), 1417-1428.
4. Baryamureeba, V. (2023). ICT-enabled services: a critical analysis of the opportunities and challenges in Uganda. *Strengthening the Role of ICT in Development*, 4(1), 215 – 221
5. Blackmore, J. (2021). Restructuring educational leadership in changing contexts: A local/global account of restructuring in Australia. *Journal of educational change*, 5, 267-288
6. Chepkonga, S. (2021). Influence of Teacher Delocalization Policy on Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Public Secondary Schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. Hillary Shikokoti Professor Ursulla Okoth. *Journal of Humanities And Social Science*, 26(5), 38-46.
7. Locke, E. A. (1978). The ubiquity of the technique of goal setting in theories of and approaches to employee motivation. *Academy of Management Review*, 3(3), 594-601.
8. Lucy, V., & Chirchir, K. M. (2023). Teacher delocalization as a means of improving school performance and integration in Kenyan Base Education Institution. *International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 6(07), 17-22.
9. Sikuku, P., Barasa, J., & Likoko, S. (2022). Family Attachment and the Job Satisfaction of Delocalized Head Teachers in Bumula Sub County, Kenya. *European Journal of Theoretical and Applied Sciences*, 1(5), 654 – 659
10. Yang, Z., Qi, S., Zeng, L., Han, X., & Pan, Y. (2021). Work-family conflict and primary and secondary school principals' work engagement: a moderated mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 596385.