

Effects of Workload on Teacher Burnout in Public Secondary Schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' ought to work in an environment (context) free from too much stress, anxiety, exhaustion to avoid burnout. However, this is not the case in Tharaka Nithi County. Teachers in the county are faced with numerous stressors that could lead to burnout; limiting their abilities to meet teaching obligations. This study examined the influences of workload on teacher burnout in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The study adopted the descriptive survey design and was founded on the Multidimensional Theory of Burnout and Golembiewski and Munzenrider's model of burnout. It targeted 104 principals and 6862 teachers from 104 schools in addition to 10 Teachers Service Commission (TSC) officials and 10 Quality Assurance and Standards Officials (QASOs) from Tharaka Nithi County. Out of these, 378 teachers and 31 principals from 31 schools in addition to all the 10 TSC officials and 10 QASOs were sampled using two-stage cluster random sampling, purposively and simple random techniques. Data was collected using questionnaires from teachers, interview guides from TSC officials and QASOs, and data collection forms. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed descriptively by use of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations as well as inferentially by use of Pearson Correlation. For qualitative data from open-ended questions in the questionnaires, interviews, and secondary data transcripts, content analysis was employed. The findings show that there were positive and significant correlation between teacher burnout in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya (the dependent variable) and workload ($r=0.275$, $P<0.05$). Based on the findings it can thus be concluded that workload contributed to teacher burnout. This shows that the various contextual factors contributed to teacher burnout. The study recommends that there is a need to employ more teachers to lessen workload challenges among teachers.

Keywords: *Workload; Teacher Burnout; Secondary Schools; Tharaka Nithi County; Kenya*

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a very important role in the implementation of the school curriculum. They ensure learning is taking place in the classroom. A classroom, just like any workplace is not immune to work-related stress. This can affect, teacher performance leading to low productivity, absenteeism, hence leading to burnout. Diaz (2018) defines burnout as extreme work-related stress categorized by emotional, psychological and physical exhaustion. In a survey by the American Federation of Teachers (2017), 61 percent of teachers indicated that their jobs were always or often stressful while 58 percent of them cited poor mental health as a result of that stress.

Burnout is the state of chronic stress among teachers that leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, detachment, feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment (McCormack & Cotter, 2013). Teacher burnout is a global epidemic. In the United States of America, Shen, McCaughtry, Martin, Garn, Kulik, and Fahlman (2015) in their study discovered that burnout played different roles in the transmission from teacher to student. Teachers' status of burnout was found to be an important environmental factor associated with student quality of motivation. McLaughlin (2018) cited that, more than 40 percent of teachers in the US leave the profession within five years, according to the national education association leaving shortages across the country. The study gives reasons why teachers leave as lack of administrative support, low salaries, accountability pressures, working conditions and lack of advancement.

Herman, Prewett, Eddy, Savala, and Reinke (2020) in their study in Missouri discovered that, different aspects of school climate related to the three burnout dimensions, namely: Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of low personal accomplishment. Further, the inverse relationship between school climate and burnout was mediated by teacher satisfaction levels for both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization dimensions. This study

conceptualizes that teachers are faced with numerous challenges such as heavy workload (Hardwick-Franco, 2019), which leads to burnout.

In Australia, teachers in non-urban locations were faced with less workload due to smaller class sizes compared to those in urban areas and were less prone to suffer burnout (Hardwick-Franco, 2019). Due to resource constraints in Kenya and heavy workloads, teachers are often overburdened (Ndung'u, 2017). This emanates from the fact that teachers have to do so much with so little. This current study was focused on Tharaka County in Kenya. Teachers in the Tharaka Nithi County are faced with heavy workloads and poor learning facilities. This challenges their classroom management practices and often leaves them overwhelmed (Gacheri, 2017). As a result, teachers are unable to effectively meet curriculum obligations.

Though there was an abundance of studies which focused on teacher burnout globally (McLaughlin, 2018; Hardwick-Franco, 2019, Shen, McCaughtry, Martin, Garn, Kulik, and Fahlman, 2015; Jensen, Solheim, & Idsoe, 2019; Hardwick-Franco, 2019; Ng'ang'a, 2017; Kiptum, 2018; Muguongo, 2015 etc.), those that focused on Tharaka Nithi on the subject, are scanty or largely unavailable in the public sphere. This study thus set out to examine the effect of workload on teacher burnout in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

1.1 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between workload and teacher burnout in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers are required to remain in school and offer their services irrespective of the conditions of the school. They are often required to offer their services in environments often replete with huge student populations and large class sizes (Sichambo, 2012). This places extra demands on them. In this, some of the most important contextual predictors are heavy workload (Hardwick-Franco, 2019) due to teaching many lessons as well as large class sizes which could lead to burnout.

School administrators also demanded from teachers the high academic performance of their students. This was often a tall order in the context of other challenges facing teachers (Jensen, Solheim, & Idsoe, 2019). Teachers often obligated to work for long working hours to meet these demands. Geographical location was also cited as an important factor placing extra demands on teachers (Muguongo, 2015). If teachers live far from the school in poor conditions, getting to school could be a daunting task (McCaughtry, Martin, & Fahlman, 2015). This task placed on teachers could lead to increased burnout.

Dismal school facilities also placed heavy tolls on teachers (Waithanji, 2014). This means that teachers have to handle students in cramped classrooms and laboratories among others. Teachers are also obligated to ensure discipline among students (Maithya, 2009). Some of the students were unable to meet learning obligations, which led to demand for extra effort from teachers to help them catch up.

In this study, the dependent variable is burnout which according to Maslach (1982) who posits that burnout is a sequential process that emanates from the emotional demands related to dealing with clients. In this study, burnout will be measured by detachment from work, being emotionally drained, feelings of fatigue, treating students as impersonal 'objects', feeling of 'burned out' from work (Golembiewski & Munzenrider, 1988) being easily irritable/Disobedience to authority and feeling of being used up.

Pucella (2011) studied "The Impact of National Board Certification on Burnout Levels in Educators." This study sought to find out the burnout levels among teachers who had achieved certification by "the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)." The findings show that teachers' workload due to certification processes as well as demands to fulfill teaching obligations contributed to increases in burnout. Though not focused on Kenya, the former study relates to this study that sets out to find out the level to which certification demands contributed to burnout among teachers. Pucella's study was also not based on all the variables under investigation in this study which means that it may not holistically relate to this study.

Molero, Ortega, Jiménez, and Valero (2019) studied "The influence of emotional intelligence and burnout syndrome on teachers' well-being." The study was based on a systematic review of extant literature. Data was collected from the Web of Science (WOS) database. In this regard, 36 scientific articles published between 2005 and 2017 were include in the study. The findings show that education professionals are under constant stress due to a large number of social interactions, need for new skills- which necessitates constant learning- and the workload. The

combined effect of these factors led to the Burnout Syndrome (BS) among teachers. The former study differs with this current study in design and focus. It may thus not expressly relate to this current study that is based on primary data sources. This is particularly so since the study by Molero and others was based on secondary data sourced.

Kilonzo (2018) studied “Job burnout and performance of teachers in secondary schools in Machakos County in Kenya.” Data was obtained from 359 secondary school teachers sampled using the stratified random sampling technique from a target population of 5579. Based on the descriptive survey design, the findings show that there was “a positive and significant relationship between Performance of Teachers and Job burnout.” The high levels of burnout in the study area were attributable to physical and emotional exhaustion due to a heavy workload. This agrees with the study by Grayson and Alvarez (2008) focused on Ohio that links emotional exhaustion with burnout. However these studies do not include all the variables under investigation in this study. This creates an apparent empirical literature lacuna that is hard to bridge without studies such as this current one.

Waithanji (2014) in “Impact of teacher burnout in secondary schools in Mathira East District, Kenya,” adopted the descriptive survey design. The study focused on 16 public secondary schools from which 201 teachers categorized into a diploma, bachelor Masters/Doctorate holders were sampled. The study shows that the capacity of teachers to handle high workloads was influenced by their academic qualifications. High indiscipline levels and immense workloads also aggravated burnout among teachers. These findings show a trend observed elsewhere. For example, the study by in the Midwest Metropolitan area of the USA by Shen, McCaughtry, Martin, Garn, Kulik, and Fahlman (2015) also linked indiscipline with burnout among teachers. The study by Waithanji relates to this current study which is also based on the descriptive study design. However, the study does not however attempt to link role expectation regarding students’ academic performance, school facilities and students discipline in the context of workloads and teacher burnout as envisaged by this study.

In line with the study by Waithanji (2014), another research in Kenya by Sichambo (2012) discovered that apart from normal classroom teaching, teachers had many remedial lessons to attend to larger classes to handle, a lot of paperwork and some had to stay in their work stations in order to complete various tasks. All these factors were found to contribute to teacher burnout, hence impacting badly on their performance. The study shows that workload and burnout were major issues in Kenya. The former study is however dated. It may thus show the prevailing situation in Tharaka Nithi County.

2.7 Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study was founded on Golembiewski and Munzenrider’s (1988) model of burnout. Golembiewski and Munzenrider proposed an alternative model of the burnout process (Golembiewski & Munzenrider, 1981, 1984, 1988). The two propose a strongly modified sequence of the burnout processes although they agree with the three-dimension nature of burnout that was put forth by Maslach (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Golembiewski and Munzenrider depersonalization comes first. This then leads to a reduction in personal accomplishment which goes on to bring about emotional exhaustion. The reason for depersonalization coming up first is that it is largely a professional detachment that emanates from dealing with others in an objective way (Lee & Ashforth, 1993).

In the context of this study, it can be argued that detachment takes place when teachers are faced with heavy workloads making them feel their best efforts to deal with work demands is futile. This goes on to cause depersonalization which makes it hard for the teachers to relate well with the students; hence undermining their performance (Lee & Ashforth, 1993). After intense depersonalization, the sense of accomplishment wanes and stress increases. This may go on to surpass one’s ability to cope. Eventually, emotional exhaustion and burnout as envisaged by this current study may set in.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study used the descriptive research design. This design is preferred since it enables the researcher collect immense volumes of data from the study population within a short period of time while ensuring the anonymity of the study respondents. In evaluating the effect of workload on teacher burnout in Tharaka Nithi County, this is deemed an appropriate design.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. The County is located in the former eastern province of Kenya. The area is characterized by a lack of resources, understaffed schools, heavy workloads among other challenges (Muguongo, 2015; Gacheri, 2017). These factors have led to high levels of burnout complaints of teachers in Tharaka Nithi County (Gacheri, 2017). Furthermore, there is scanty literature on the influence burnout on teachers' burnout for Tharaka Nithi County.

3.3 Target Population

A target population is "a group of individuals objects or items from which samples for measurement are taken" (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). This study targets 104 public schools in Tharaka Nithi County with 104 principals and 6862 teachers (Tharaka Nithi County Government, 2019). The study also targets 10 TSC officials and 10 Quality Assurance and Standards Officials (QASOs) from the county. These are targeted because these are directly responsible for issues affecting teachers. These are target population is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Target Population

Category	Population
Principals	104
Teachers	6,862
TSC Officials	10
QASOs	10
Total	6,986

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The unit of observation in this study was individual schools while the unit of analysis in this study was principals, teachers, TSC officials, and QASOs. Two stage cluster random sampling was used to sample the schools to include in this study. In this light each sub-county (Tharaka North, Tharaka South, Meru South and Maara) formed a cluster. As such, 30% of the schools in each cluster were randomly sampled. This made a total of 31 schools from the total population of 104 schools. All the principals from the schools sampled were purposively included in the study. From the 31 schools, simple random techniques were used to obtain a sample of 378 teachers to take part in the study. This was done for purposes of ensuring that everybody targeted has equal chances of being selected. All the 10 TSC officials and 10 QASOs targeted were included in the study.

The sample size was obtained using the formula developed by Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1967). The formula is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$

Where:

n=the sample size;

N= the population size and;

e=the acceptable sampling error (assumed at 0.05).

The total for each stratum was collated, $\sum (n_1 + n_2 + n_3 + n_4)$, to make a total sample size (n) for the study as follows:
 $n \approx 31 + 378 + 10 + 10 = 481$

The sample size was shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Sample Size

Category	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Calculation
Principals	104	31	$n_1 = N * 30\%$
Teachers	6,862	378	$n_2 = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$
TSC Officials	10	10	$n_3 = N$
QASOs Officials	10	10	$n_4 = N$

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires for teachers, interview schedules for Principals, TSC and QASO Officials, and document analysis.

3.6 Pilot Study

Pilot study was carried in Tharaka Nithi County out to ascertain the accuracy, clarity, and suitability of the research instruments. In this regard, a pilot study targeting 38 teachers (378 teachers*10%) and three principals (21 principals*10%) in the county was carried. This was based on the premise of Kothari (2004) who suggests that 10 to 30% of the study sample is enough for pilot studies. The pilot study sampled 10% of teachers and 10% head-teacher. Those who take part in the pilot study were not included in the final study.

3.7 Validity of the Instruments

First and foremost, the face validity of the questionnaire was assessed by examining the ease with which the respondents answer the questions presented to them. In this regard, the researcher observed the respondents as they participate in the pilot study and also ask them if they encountered difficulties in responding to any question. Any ambiguous questions were promptly corrected.

To measure content validity, the questionnaire was presented to the university supervisors and other research experts in the university. Their expert opinion was sought and their review comments used to improve the questionnaire. To measure construct validity, the questions were also evaluated against the desired outcome to see how valid they were to the study. The questions were also formulated based on the research questions and the literature gaps arising to enhance.

3.8 Reliability of the Instruments

Instrument reliability is “the capacity of a research tool to dependably measure features of concern over time” (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). Since the questionnaires contained psychometric scale tests, the Cronbach Alpha (α), a scale-test for related statements in questionnaires was used to test the reliability of the questionnaires. This is a reliability coefficient ranging from 0 to 1 whose cut-off point is 0.7 (which signifies acceptability). It was used in testing the internal consistency of research items. The study was cross-sectional since its data was collected at one point in time. This means that the reliability of the research instruments was assumed at the time of data collection. In this study Cronbach Alpha values of 0.82 and 0.87 were obtained for workload and teacher burnout respectively as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Reliability Testing

Variable	No. of Item	Cronbach Alpha (α)
Workload	8	0.82
Teacher Burnout	8	0.87

Concurrently, the interview schedules were piloted among the principals during the trial study to find out the level to the responses obtained available consistent findings. In this regard, the responses assessed to find out if they establish clear patterns.

3.9 Data Analysis

For qualitative data from open-ended questions, interview and secondary data transcripts, content analysis was employed (White, 2004). In this regard, the findings obtained were described in prose and the meanings arising highlighted. Data from questionnaires was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24.0. Data was analyzed descriptively by use of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. The findings obtained were presented using charts and tables and; inferentially by use of Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. To ensure that there is a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables. All the tests were done at a 5% level of significance. The study adopted the following regression model to examine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables at a 5% level of significance.

V. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographics of the Participants

The researcher issued the questionnaires and interviewed various respondents. Out of the 378 students targeted by the study, 303 (80.2%) responded while 24 out of 31 principals (77.4%) were interviewed. Lastly, 9 out of 10 TSC officials (90%) and 8 out of 10 QASOs (80%) were interviewed. The overall response rate was 80.2% which was considered enough. The low response rate was caused by busy schedules among some of the respondents which made it untenable for them to participate in the study within the stipulated time. However, the response rate was considered sufficient for data analysis since as posited by Draugalis, Coons, and Plaza (2008), response rates of more than 60% should be the goal of researchers. Table 4 presents the response rate.

Table 4
Response Rate

Category	Targeted	Responded	Response Rate
Teachers	378	303	80.2
Principals	31	24	77.4
TSC Officials	10	9	90.0
QASOs	10	8	80.0
Total	429	344	80.2

The study also examined demographic characteristics of the respondents. This is pivotal in gaining a comprehensive knowledge of the respondents that may have influenced the study's findings. The respondents were required to indicate their gender. This was aimed at establishing the gender differences among the study respondents.

Figure 1 displays the findings of an examination of the respondents' distribution by gender and type of school. Figure 2's findings demonstrate that all schools, whether boarding, day, or mixed boarding schools, they all equitably contributed respondents for the survey. As a result, responders from each category of schools in Tharaka Nithi County were fairly evenly represented. However, according to the type of school, the majority of responders (10.9%) in day schools were female, while the percentage of men was 7.9%, indicating that female instructors preferred to work in day schools to be close to their homes while they raise families. Male participation in mixed day and boarding employment was 19.5%, indicating that most men preferred to take the risk of working far from their homes and family. The study found no statistically significant differences between male and female teachers in one gender-specific boarding school. On a sex comparison, the study reveals that the respondents' gender distribution was, overall, fairly balanced.

Gender equality is a very essential attribute, according to Bhengu and Bussin (2012), as it demonstrates the differences in job satisfaction between male and female teachers. According to Bishay (2011), it promotes collaboration, fosters a sense of unity, and shows people cooperating to achieve a common objective. Every male and female contributes in some way to the fulfillment of the overall goals. Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses by gender and type of school.

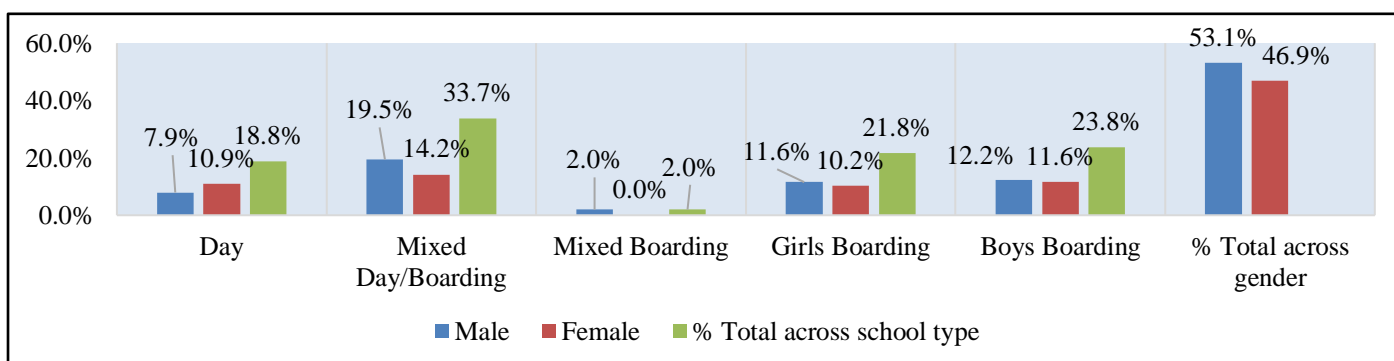


Figure 1
Gender and School Type

The study sought to establish the duration of working as a teacher to gain insight into the level of reliance of their responses. The results show that the teachers had sufficient experience to provide trustworthy information regarding the impact of school working conditions on teachers in Tharaka Nithi. The results also demonstrate that both sexes were fairly represented among newly hired (less than two years) teachers. However, there is a significant gender gap among teachers who have taught for between two and five years, with more men (22.1%) than women (12.9%). The fact that more female instructors (8.9%) than male teachers (4.3%) are evident in the category of 11 to 20 years indicates that female teachers often work in the field for longer. Therefore, teachers who truly continue in the profession for a long time find contentment, self-satisfaction, and fulfillment. Previous studies have found a significant relationship between work experience and teachers' job satisfaction in their line of employment. The management working relationships are what determine the teaching profession and job happiness, indicating that abilities can be learned through experience in various work stations (Babbie, 2013). The findings are presented in Figure 2.

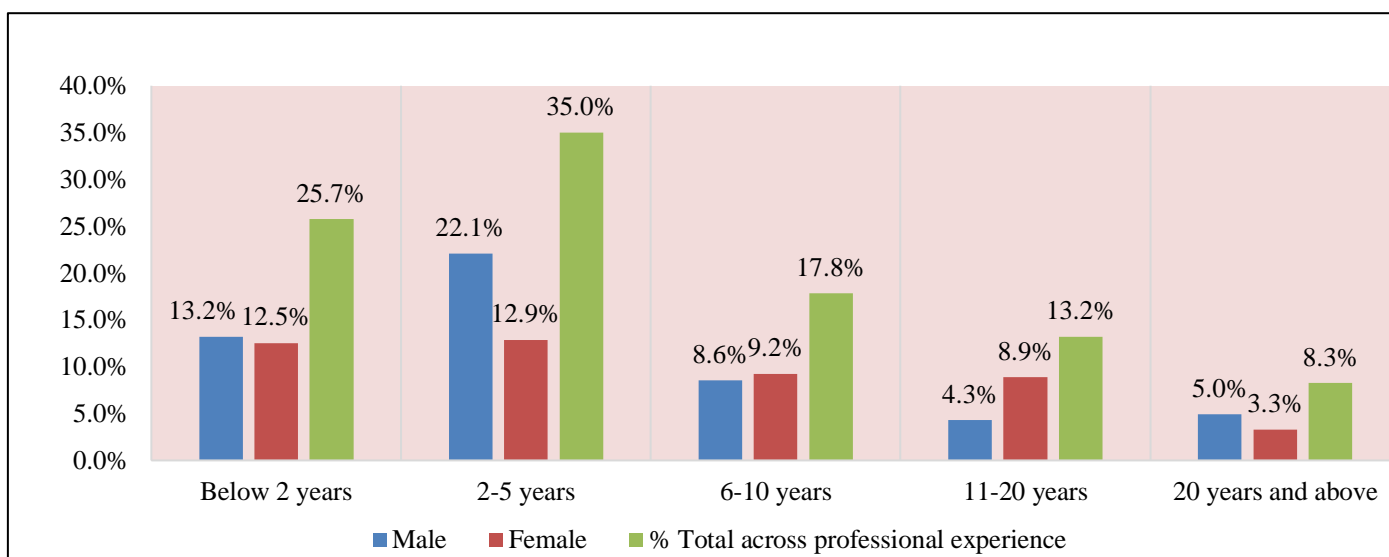


Figure 2
Gender and Professional Experience

The study then determined the teachers' academic backgrounds. According to the findings, the majority of teachers (81.5%) had bachelor's degrees, followed by diplomas (9.6%), master's degrees (4.6%), and PhDs (1.3%), which were the highest academic degrees obtained by 3.0% and 1.3% of the instructors, respectively. The results also indicate that, at the bachelor's degree level, there were significantly more male (44.2%) than female (37.3%) teachers. There were no gender differences that were particularly noticeable at the other levels of qualifications. According to the TSC regulations for deployment in staffing teachers around the nation, this shows that instructors in Tharaka Nithi are qualified to perform and deliver their duties. Secondary teachers must possess at least a Diploma in their academic field, according to the TSC. However, the fact that teachers are pursuing higher degrees demonstrates that they are driven to find employment happiness. The findings are presented in Figure 3.

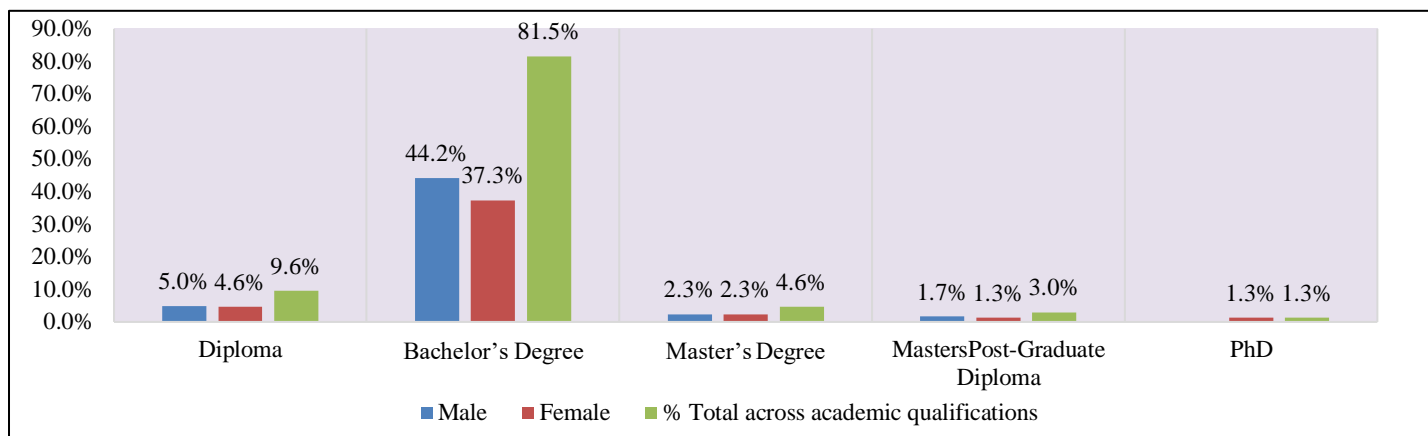


Figure 3
Gender and Academic Qualification

4.2 Workload and Teacher Burnout

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of workload on teacher burnout in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. First, a cross-tabulation across gender, school types, and workloads was done. In a mixed-gender day school, the majority of male teachers (28.9%) and 14.5% of female teachers indicated that the workload had a low impact on burnout. In contrast, 15.4% and 14.6% of male and female teachers indicated that the workload had a moderate impact on burnout. Finally, 16.5% and 13.4% of male and female teachers indicated that the workload had a high impact on burnout.

In girls boarding school, the majority of male teachers (15.5%) and 14.4% of female teachers indicated that the workload had a high impact on burnout. In contrast, 9.8% and 7.3% of male and female teachers indicated that the workload had a moderate impact on burnout. Finally, 9.6% and 9.6% of male and female teachers indicated that the workload had a low impact on burnout.

In boys boarding school, the majority of male teachers (15.5%) and 11.3% of female teachers indicated that the workload had a high impact on burnout. In contrast, 14.6% and 9.8% of male and female teachers indicated that the workload had a moderate impact on burnout. Finally, 4.8% and 14.5% of male and female teachers indicated that the workload had a low impact on burnout. The findings suggest that there were no significant differences between male and female teachers on the effect of workload. However, the teachers' job workload increases across the gender divide with working in boarding schools. The findings are presented in Figure 4.

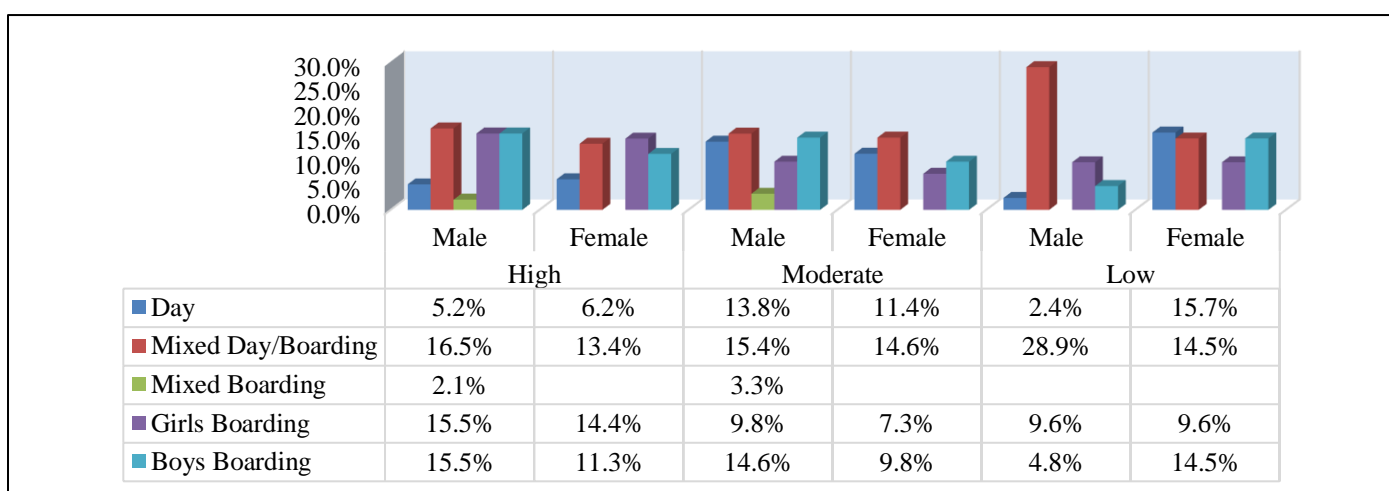


Figure 4
Gender, School Types and Work Loads

The respondents were asked to respond to 8 selected statements aimed at establishing the effect of workload on teacher burnout. The levels of agreement with the statements were rated on a scale of 1-5 where “1-to a very low extent; 2-to a low extent; 3- to a moderate extent; 4-to a high extent and; 5-to a very high extent.” The summary of the descriptive statistics derived from the data collected is summarized in the following sections.

Table 5 shows teachers' responses to items on the burnout scale in the form of mean and standard deviations. Of the sampled teachers, the majority moderately agreed (M=3) with the statement that workload due to certification processes contributed to teacher burnout. These findings agree with the study by Pucella (2011) that show that teachers' workload due to certification processes as well as demands to fulfill teaching obligations contributed to increases in burnout. It is thus pertinent to ensure that certification processes are accorded enough time to reduce the burden they placed on teachers.

Table 5

Workload Due to Certification Processes Contributes to Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Workload due to certification processes contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	3	1.12

N=303

The teachers however agreed to a high extent (M=4) that demands to fulfill teaching obligations contributed to teacher burnout. These findings as presented in Table 6 align with the study by Pucella (2011) that shows that teachers' workload due to certification processes as well as demands to fulfill teaching obligations contributed to increases in burnout. This shows that demands by MOE officials for teachers' compliance drained teachers' energies.

Table 6

Demands to Fulfill Teaching Obligations Contributes to Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Demands to fulfill teaching obligations contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	4	1.12

N=303

When asked whether working for long periods to complete various tasks contributed to teacher burnout, they agreed to a high extent (M=4). These findings were presented in Table 7. Sichambo (2012) found that to enhance the academic performance of students, teachers were faced with demands for remedial lessons, a lot of paperwork, large classes and working for long periods to complete various tasks. It is thus evident that such demands contributed to teacher burnout as was the case with this current study.

Table 7

Working for Long Periods to Complete Various Tasks and Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Working for long periods to complete various tasks contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	4	1.11

N=303

As shown in Table 8, the teacher went on to moderately agree to a lack of capacity to handle immense tasks increases teacher burnout (M=3). These findings are in line with a related study in Kenya by Sichambo (2012) that established that teachers often work for long periods to complete various tasks. This led to burnout as envisaged by this current study. This called for interventions aimed at lessening teacher loads.

Table 8

Lack of Capacity to Handle Immense Tasks Increases Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lack of capacity to handle immense tasks increases teacher burnout	1	5	3	1.21



N=303

The teachers, as shown in Table 9, also agreed to a high extent that demand for new skills with curriculum changes contributes to teacher burnout (M=4). This agrees with the study by Gacheri (2017) that underlined the effect played by curriculum obligations on teachers. In this regard, it is important to ensure that teachers are empowered to deal with immense curricular demands.

Table 9
Demand for New Skills with Curriculum Changes and Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Demand for new skills with curriculum changes contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	4	1.28

N=303

To a moderate extent, they agreed that constant stress due to many social interactions contributed to teacher burnout (M=3). These findings were presented in Table 10. This corroborates the findings by Molero et al. (2019) who posited that education professionals are under constant stress due to a large number of social interactions which contributes to teacher burnout.

Table 10
Constant Stress Due to Many Social Interactions Contributes to Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Constant stress due to many social interactions contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	3	1.23

N=303

The teachers also agreed to a high extent that physical exhaustion due to a heavy workload contributed to teacher burnout (M=4) as shown in Table 11. These findings agree with a study by Jensen et al. (2019) who also found out that immense pressure on teachers contributed to exhaustion and leading to severe levels of burnout among teachers. It can thus be deduced that the higher the level of physical exhaustion, the higher the level of burnout.

Table 11
Physical Exhaustion Due to a Heavy Workload and Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Physical exhaustion due to a heavy workload contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	4	1.23

N=303

The teachers went on to agree to a high extent that emotional exhaustion due to a heavy workload also contributed to teacher burnout (M=4) as presented in Table 12. This aligns with the study by Jensen et al. (2019) that shows that physical exhaustion affected teachers' burnout. These findings show that the workload-related challenges as shown in the preceding discourse contributed to teacher burnout in the study area.

Table 12
Emotional Exhaustion Due to a Heavy Workload Contributes to Teacher Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Emotional exhaustion due to a heavy workload contributes to teacher burnout	1	5	4	1.20

N=303

The principals, TSC officials, and QASOs show that Teachers in Tharaka Nithi displayed evidence of burnout. They said that high workload played a major role in aggravating their working conditions as noted in the study by Hardwick-Franco (2019). One of the respondents affirmed this by saying:

Too much work denied a teacher time to attend to other chores. This caused stress due to overworking. As a result, teachers often experience burnout due to heavy workloads. (Respondent V, Tharaka Nithi County, May 2022).

Burnout was also aggravated by low staffing. This meant that teachers had to attend many classes and handle many students due to a low number of teachers in the schools which led to burnout. This is in agreement with the study by Muguongo (2015) that found that in Maara Sub-County of Tharaka Nithi, lack of resources, and understaffed schools contributed to teacher burnout. This was affirmed by one of the respondents:

In schools where there is a teacher shortage, burnout can easily take place. However, this was assuaged by the Board of Governors (BOG) who employed teachers to fill the staffing gap (Respondent III, Tharaka Nithi County, May 2022).

Another challenge related to workload was identified as pressure. When teachers had much work to do, they ended up working under pressure. Time for preparation was reduced, which eventually led to burnout. These findings further align with Muguongo (2015) that was also undertaken in Tharaka Nithi County. These findings are indicative of the fact that workload continued to contribute to teacher burnout in the study area.

Pearson correlation as shown in Table 13 shows that there were positive and significant correlation between teacher burnout in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya (the dependent variable) and workload ($r=0.275$, $P<0.05$). These findings agree with Hardwick-Franco (2019) who posited that heavy workload due to teaching many lessons as well as large class sizes which could lead to burnout.

Table 13
Pearson Correction between Workload and Teacher Burnout

		Teacher Burnout Scale Scores
Teacher Workload Scale Scores	Pearson Correlation	.275**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	303.000
	R ²	0.08

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

4.3 Teacher Burnout (Dependent Variable)

The respondents were asked to rate the effect of teacher burnout. First, a cross-tabulation across gender, school types and teacher burnout levels was undertaken. In day school, male teachers (7.9 and 10.5 % of female teachers rated school types as having a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 7.5 % and 12.5 % of male and female teachers rated school types as having a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 8.2 % and 10.2 % of male and female rated school types as having a moderate impact on teacher burnout. This shows that the type of school has effects on burnout levels among students. This as envisaged by Louw et al. (2011) who used the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) could be due to different demands in different types of schools.

In mixed day / boarding school, male teachers (25.0 %) and 13.2 % of female teachers rated school types as having a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 11.3 % and 12.5 % of male and female teachers rated school types as having a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 21.1 % and 15.6 % of male and female teachers rated school types as having a moderate impact on teacher burnout. These findings show that schools types have impact on burnout levels among students largely due to divergent duty demands (Ndung'u, 2017).

In girls boarding school, male teachers (11.8%) and 13.2 % of female teachers rated school types as having a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 5.0 % and 16.3 % of male and female teachers rated school types as having a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 13.0 % and 12.4 % of male and female teachers indicated that moderate resources had a moderate impact on teacher burnout. These findings agree with the study by Muguongo (2015) that shows that the various schools have different resource endowment which could go on to affect burnout differently.

In boys boarding school, male teachers (13.9 %) and 12.6 % of female teachers indicated that less resources had a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 3.6 % and 12.7 % of male and female teachers indicated that more resources had a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 15.0 % and 5.4 % of male and female teachers rated school types as having a moderate impact on teacher burnout. The findings show that there were significant differences

between male and female teachers on the effect of school types on teacher burnout. The findings are presented in Figure 5. The findings show that burnout was higher in mixed day / boarding school as well as boys’ boarding school. This could be due to challenge related to high disciplinary demands schools of different gender with boys’ schools being more demanding (Bishay, 2011).

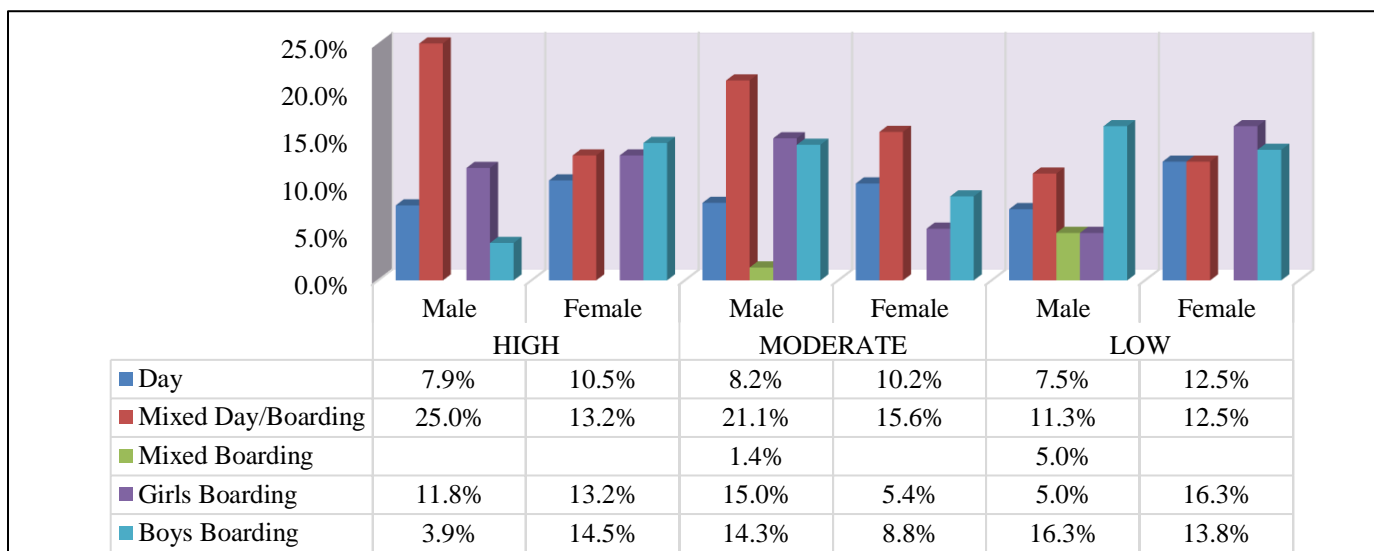


Figure 5
Gender, School Types and Teacher Burnout Levels

Secondly, a cross-tabulation across gender, academic qualifications and teacher burnout levels was carried out. The result show that only 9.2 % of male teachers and 5.3 % of female teachers related diploma qualification with a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 2.5 % and 8.8 % of male and female teachers related Diploma qualification with a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 4.1 % and 2.0 % of male and female teachers related diploma qualification with a moderate impact on teacher burnout. There are some differences regarding the effect of academic qualifications on burnout levels which agrees with the study by Ndung’u (2017).

About 34.2 % of male teachers and 36.8 % of female teachers related Bachelor’s degree qualification with a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 37.5 % and 42.5 % of male and female teachers related Bachelor’s degree qualification with a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 53.1 % and 34.7 % of male and female teachers related Bachelor’s degree qualification with a moderate impact on teacher burnout. This further supports the study by Babbie (2013) that shows that divergent experiences due to training can affect resilience to burnout differently.

Furthermore, 5.3 % of male teachers and 6.6 % of female teachers related Master’s degree qualification with a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 5.0 % and 1.3 % of male and female teachers related Master’s degree qualification with a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 0.7 % and 2.0 % of male and female teachers related Master’s degree qualification with a moderate impact on teacher burnout. And for PhD, only female rated it as having effect on teacher burnout. The findings are presented in Figure 6. This could be explained by the fact training affected abilities to deal with workload challenges (Ndung’u, 2017).

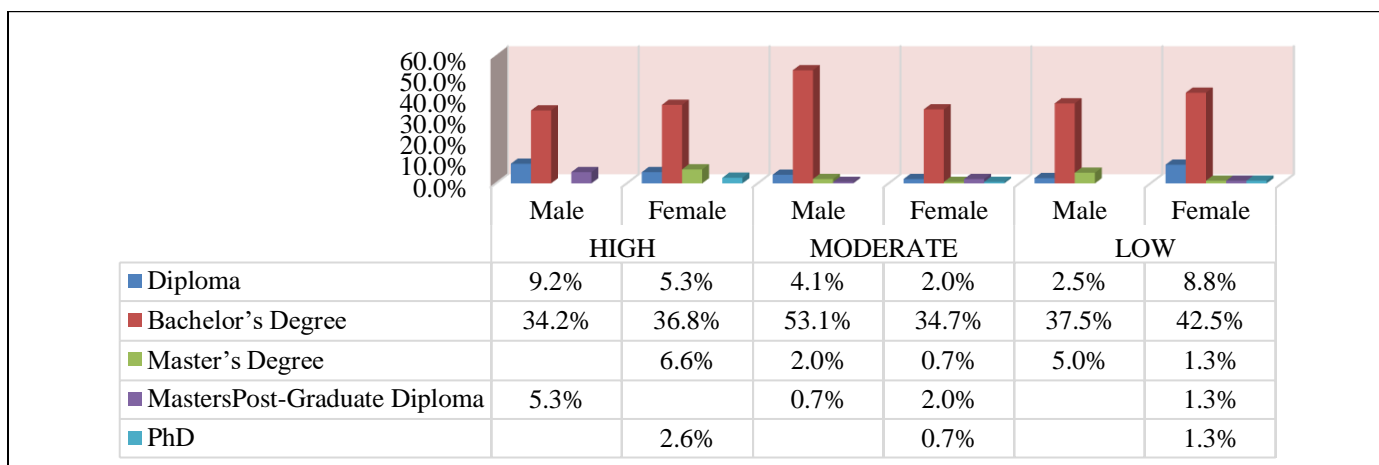


Figure 6
Gender, Academic Qualifications and Teacher Burnout Levels

In addition, a cross-tabulation across gender, professional experience and teacher burnout levels was also conducted. The result show that only 9.2 % of male teachers and 17.1 % of female teachers rated professional experience of below 2 years as having a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 18.8 % and 10.0 % of male and female teachers rated professional experience of below 2 years as having a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 12.2 % and 11.6 % of male and female teachers rated professional experience of below 2 years as having a moderate impact on teacher burnout. As pointed by Babbie (2013), learning at the work place can affect the level to which an individual was affected by burnout hence these differences.

About 13.2 % of male teachers and 1.3 % of female teachers rated professional experience of 2-5 years as having a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 21.3 % and 27.5 % of male and female teachers rated professional experience of 2-5 years as having a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 27.2 % and 10.9 % of male and female teachers rated professional experience of 2-5 years as having a moderate impact on teacher burnout. These differences are a pointer to the fact that experience could affect the level of burnout in a population (Babbie, 2013).

11.2 % of male teachers and 15.8 % of female teachers rated professional experience of 6-10 years as having a high impact on teacher burnout. In contrast, 5.0 % and 6.3 % of male and female teachers rated professional experience of 6-10 years as having a low impact on teacher burnout. Finally, 8.8 % and 7.5 % of male and female teachers rated professional experience of 6-10 years as having a moderate impact on teacher burnout. And for 11-20 and above, the rating indicated significant differences between male and female as shown in Figure 7. These findings show that work experience could affect burnout levels as posited by Babbie (2013).

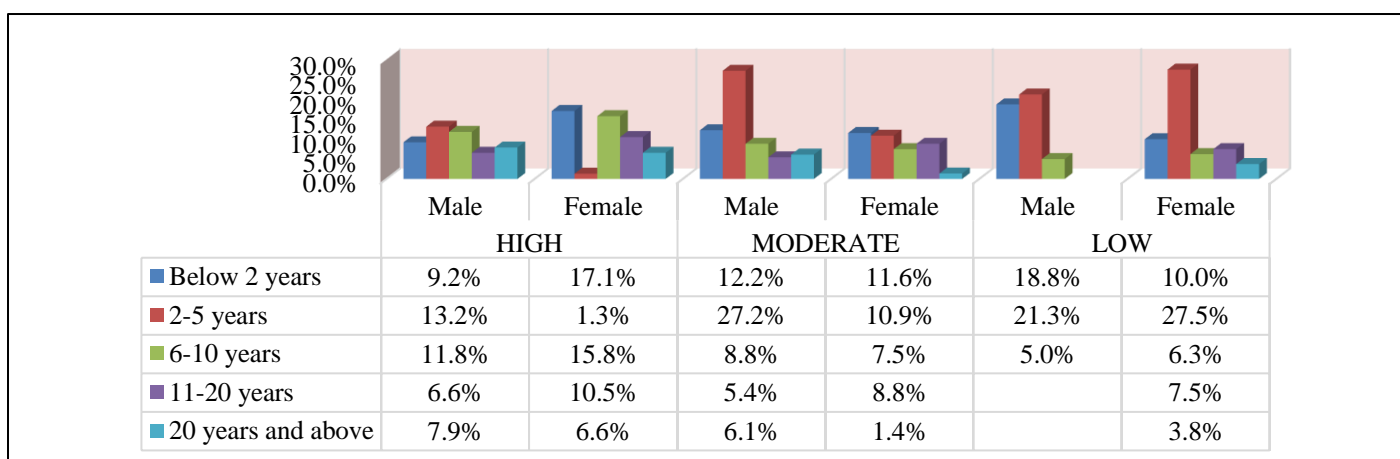


Figure 7
Gender, Professional Experience and Teacher Burnout Levels

When presented with selected Likert-scale statements, the teachers agreed to a moderate extent (M=3) that burnout led to high levels of drunkenness among teachers as shown in Table 14. These findings agree with a report by the Tharaka Nithi County (2022) that shows that some of the teachers had resulted to high levels of alcohol abuse; which resulted in other vices such as display of unbecoming behaviour and complaints from students. It is thus evident that challenges in the school environment affected teacher burnout considerably.

Table 14
Burnout Leads To High Levels of Drunkenness among Teachers

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Burnout leads to high levels of drunkenness among teachers	1	5	3	1.4

N=303

The teachers also agreed also agreed to a moderate extent (M=3) that burnout led to high levels of drug abuse among teachers as shown in Table 15. These findings relate with a study by Farrell et al (2019) that shows that substance abuse was linked to increases in burnout levels among teachers. Substance use was thus a key indicator of substance use among teachers in Tharaka Nithi County.

Table 15
Burnout Leads To High Levels of Drug Abuse among Teachers

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Burnout leads to high levels of drug abuse among teachers	1	5	3	1.3

N=303

The respondents also agreed that burnout also led to high levels of absenteeism (M=3) as shown in Table 16. As posited by Diaz (2018), a classroom, just like any workplace is not immune to work-related stress. This can affect, teacher performance leading to low productivity, absenteeism, hence leading to burnout. This current study shows that there is a direct link between absenteeism and burnout in the study area as opposed to the study by Diaz which shows an inverse relationship.

Table 16
There Are High Levels of Absenteeism among Teachers Due To Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
There are high levels of absenteeism among teachers due to burnout	1	5	3	1.3

N=303

By agreeing to a moderate extent (M=3), the teachers also opined that burnout led to disobedience to authority. These findings were depicted in Table 17. These findings affirm the premise by Maslach (1982) as posited by Golembiewski and Munzenrider, (1988) that shows that feeling of ‘burned out’ from work leads to being easily irritable/Disobedience to authority and feeling of being used up. Teachers who had burnout were thus likely to be disobedient to authorities.

Table 17
There Are Instances of Disobedience to Authority among Teachers Due to Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
There are instances of disobedience to authority among teachers due to burnout	1	5	3	1.2

N=303



The respondents further agreed to a moderate extent (M=3) that burnout had led to high levels of lateness among teachers as shown in Table 18. These findings corroborate the premise of the Golembiewski and Munzenrider’s (1988) Model of Burnout that shows that burnout is indicated by absenteeism among other vices.

Table 18
There Are High Levels of Lateness among Teachers Due to Burnout

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
There are high levels of lateness among teachers due to burnout	1	5	3	1.3

N=303

The respondents, as shown in Table 19, further agreed to a great extent (M=4) that burnout had led to failures to meet target among teachers. This was further in agreement with the Golembiewski and Munzenrider’s (1988) Model of Burnout that shows that burnout contributes to failure to meet deadlines. This could go on to affect work processes as well as the overall performance of the teacher.

Table 19
Burnout Leads to Failure to Meet Targets among Teachers

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Burnout leads to failure to meet targets among teachers	1	5	4	1.2

N=303

Furthermore, the teachers agreed to a great extent (M=4) that burnout affected teachers’ performance in class as shown in Table 20. These findings are in line with the Golembiewski and Munzenrider’s (1988) Model of Burnout that shows that burnout is linked to performance. It is thus pertinent to lessen burnout among teachers so as to enhance their performances in school duties.

Table 20
Burnout Affects Teachers’ Performance in Class

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Burnout affects teachers’ performance in class	1	5	4	1.1

N=303

Lastly, the teachers agreed to a great extent (M=4) that burnout led to poor class management among teachers as shown in Table 21. This buttresses the findings by Gacheri (2017) that shows that burnout could result in teachers being overwhelmed which could go on to challenge classroom management practices.

Table 21
Burnout Leads to Poor Class Management among Teachers

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Burnout leads to poor class management among teachers	1	5	4	1.2

N=303

These findings agree with a study by Farrell et al. (2019) that shows that drug abuse is often linked with teacher burnout. They also agree with Golembiewski and Munzenrider (1988) who pointed out that burnout made teachers easily irritable/Disobedience to authority and feel like being used up. However, they agreed to a high extent (M=4) that burnout led to failure to meet targets among teachers which agrees with the study by Pucella (2011) who noted that burnout affected teachers’ ability to meet demanding obligations. They also agreed to a high extent that burnout affects teachers’ performance in class (M=4) and that burnout leads to poor class management among teachers (M=4). These findings corroborate the findings by Kilonzo (2018) that reported “a positive and significant relationship

between Performance of Teachers and Job burnout.” The findings show that although the various indicators of burnout among teachers were either moderately or highly rated. Teacher burnout was thus a challenge among teachers in the study area.

The outcomes of the study revealed that while instructors consume alcohol, they are unsure if it is related to burnout. According to Maingi et al. (2018), many Kenyan teachers are progressively consuming alcohol. Teachers' absenteeism was also linked to drunkenness, according to the study. Teachers who abuse alcohol do not go to school regularly. According to the respondents, the repercussions of drunkenness, such as hangovers, lead to absence and insufficient teacher concentration on school obligations.

The study went on to examine the level of teacher burnout in the study area in line with the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The findings were presented in Table 22.

Table 22

Teacher Burnout Based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory

Descriptive Statistics				
Statement	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
1 I feel emotionally drained by my work	1	5	2	1.18
2 I feel used up at the end of the day	1	5	3	1.29
3 I feel fatigued when I have to get up in the morning to face another day on the job	1	5	2	1.22
4 I can easily understand how my students feel about things	1	5	4	1.22
5 I feel I treat some students as impersonal 'objects'	1	5	2	1.18
6 Working with people all day is a strain for me	0	5	2	1.14
7 I deal very effectively with the problems of my students	1	5	4	1.23
8 I feel 'burned out' from my work	0	5	2	1.19
9 I feel I'm a positive influence on other people's lives through my work	1	5	4	1.23
10 I have become more callous toward people since I took this job	1	5	2	1.25
11 I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally	1	5	2	1.32
12 I feel frustrated by my job	1	5	2	1.13
13 I feel I'm working too hard in my job	1	5	3	1.42
14 I don't care what happens to some students	0	5	2	1.10
15 I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students	1	5	4	1.38
16 I feel exhilarated after working with my students	1	5	3	1.31
17 I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job	1	5	4	1.29
18 I feel like I'm at the end of my rope	1	5	2	1.10
19 In my work I deal with emotional problems calmly	1	5	4	1.27
20 I feel some students blame me for some of their problems	1	5	2	1.05
21* In my work, people bother me with personal problems that I don't want to be bothered with	1	5	2	1.19
22* I try to keep away from the personal problems of my students	1	5	2	1.45
Mean			3	

N=303

The respondents disagreed to a low extent (M=2) that they feel emotionally drained by their work. This agrees with Maslach (1982) as cited in Golembiewski & Munzenrider (1988) who linked burnout with being emotionally drained. They also agreed to a moderate extent (M=3) that they felt used up at the end of the day. They also disagreed to a low extent (M=2) that they felt fatigued when they get up in the morning to face another day on the job.

However, they agreed to a high extent (M=4) that they easily understood how their students feel about things. The teachers disagreed to a low extent (M=2) that treated some students as impersonal 'objects' and that working with people all day put a strain on them (M=2). They went on to agree to a high extent (M=4) that handled effectively student problems. However, they disagreed to a low extent that they felt 'burned out' from their work and that they had become more callous toward people since they took up the job (M=2). They agreed to a high extent (M=4) that they easily create a relaxed atmosphere with their students and that they feel a positive influence on other people's lives through their work (M=4). Furthermore, they disagreed to a low extent (M=2) that they worry that the job hardened them emotionally. They went on to agree to a moderate extent (M=3) that they felt that they were working

too hard in their job and that they felt exhilarated after working with their students ($M=3$). However, they disagreed to a little extent ($M=2$) that they do not really care what happens to some students; that they feel like they are at the end of the rope; feel that some students blame them for some of their problems; that in their work people bother them with personal problems; that they don't want to be bothered with and; that they try to keep away from the personal problems of my students. Finally, they agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that they had accomplished many worthwhile things in their job and that in their work they deal with emotional problems calmly. The respondents agreed to a moderate extent that the respondents. These findings agree with Louw et al. (2011) who used the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) scale in the Khurdha District of India and found that there was a positive significant positive correlation between teaching demands and burnout.

The outcomes of the study revealed that while instructors consume alcohol, they are unsure if it is related to burnout. Teachers' absenteeism was also linked to drunkenness, according to the study. This agrees with a report from Tharaka Nithi County (2022) that shows that burnout was linked to teacher burnout. Teachers who abuse alcohol do not go to school regularly. According to the respondents, the repercussions of drunkenness, such as hangovers, lead to absence and insufficient teacher concentration on school obligations.

The findings from principals, TSC officials, and QASOs revealed that there were high levels of burnout among teachers in the study area. Such burnout led to teachers having feelings of despair in some instances. Although the government put in place measures aimed at bettering the conditions of teachers. The efforts did not bear much fruit. The study established that generally, burnout affected teachers in different ways.

The findings show that some teachers felt drained by work which was identified by Maslach (1982). Burnout was also evident in teachers with some resulting to drug and substance use. Family relations were also strained due to hard-working conditions that led to emotional exhaustion; a condition noted in the study by Herman et al. (2020). The findings show that some teachers felt drained by work. To support this, one of the respondents said:

There were high levels of burnout among teachers with some often asking for transfers due to deplorable working conditions. However, parents often assuaged the situation by employing some teachers through the BOG. Nevertheless, burnout remained a major challenge among teachers in the study area (Respondent B, Tharaka Nithi County, May 2022).

Burnout was also evident in teachers with some resulting to drug and substance use. Family relations were also strained due to hard-working conditions that led to emotional exhaustion. One of the respondents supported this position by saying:

Tough working conditions among teachers make stressed and tired. Some walked for long distances to schools and by so doing they got tired. Once there, they had to be content with heavy workloads and poor learning facilities. Consequently, most of them ended up fatigued (Respondent K, Tharaka Nithi County, May 2022).

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Based on these findings, it can thus be concluded that workload was an important contextual factor impacting teacher burnout. Based on the findings it can thus be concluded that workload contributed to teacher burnout. Indeed, teachers play a critical role in the development of future generations, and their well-being is critical to their capacity to do so effectively. Despite this, more than half of the participants in the current study reported being very or severely stressed. Teachers have experienced increased stress at work, which has resulted in burnout. This is in line with the Multidimensional Theory of Burnout and Golembiewski and Munzenrider's (1988) Model of Burnout, the conceptual framework, and the results of this study and earlier related reviewed studies. As a result, the study's findings highlight the stress and burnout that many teachers endure, as well as the urgent need for multifaceted solutions to alleviate this load. Interventions aimed at improving teachers' ability to manage their workload, as well as their aptitude for effective emotion management should be proffered.

5.2 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that the teacher's service commission needs to employ more teachers to lessen workload challenges among the teachers.

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