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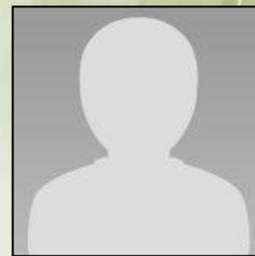
**“INFLUENCE OF TRADE UNION ADVOCACY ON TEACHER  
PRODUCTIVITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOL KAKAMEGA  
COUNTY, KENYA”**



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## **Abstract**

Trade unions have a big role to play in taking care of employees' welfare; little has been established locally about the extent of the relationship particularly between the activities of the trade unions and employee productivity. The study investigates the influence of Trade Union advocacy on teacher productivity in Kakamega East sub-county with 95 primary schools, 41 secondary schools and 1 tertiary institution with a population of 1000 teachers and a 100 were randomly sampled. Descriptive survey design was used. Data was collected using questionnaires, books, journals, research reports, exam results slips and teachers' professional records. The findings were presented using tables and figures. The study revealed a statistically significant and positive influence between Trade Union advocacy and teacher productivity. Public schools should let trade unions advocate for teachers.

**Key Words: Advocacy, Productivity, Teachers, Trade union**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background Of The Study**

Sababu (2010) in his works established that trade unions have become very crucial in the world today, since they are involved in protecting the employees. In the developed countries of Europe the associations of wage earners were first formed in the late 18th century. The trade unions became popular in many countries as a result of the development of industrial revolution, when many workers were mistreated and underpaid because the bargaining power shifted to the employer.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, women, children, rural workers and immigrants were pulled to the industrial sector due to its rapid expansion and growth. The pull of semiskilled and skilled labor later became an important arena for the development of trade unions. Trade unions as such were endorsed by the Catholic Church towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Pope Leo XIII spoke against the atrocities workers faced and demanded that workers should be granted certain rights and safety regulations. Industries like textile mills and railways companies had started in India in the latter half of the 19th century.

According to Aluchio (1998), Some important changes which contributed to the emergence of trade unions took place between 1900-1946. The two world wars and the intensive training

of soldiers from east Africa in carpentry, masonry and driving, had an influence on the workers. Their experiences in places like Italy, India, Egypt, Ceylon and Burma had shown them new ways of life. They returned home after the war with the experience of the intensive training they were given and the working conditions in other countries. The working conditions and terms in Kenya agitated them. The increase in number of wage earners in agricultural, manufacturing and other sectors led to greater awareness amongst wage earners of their economic plight. This increase in awareness led to the formation of workers organizations in the 1940's.

Teachers were subjected to different terms and conditions of service by their employers. Their employers, who included missionaries and local councils never allowed them to meet and exchange views. This kept them totally ignorant as regards to their rights and therefore were seriously exploited by their masters. Despite the fact that they were kept in the dark, they slowly learned the need to form organizations still based on religious sect organized to the highest at provincial level.

However by 1934 James Gichuru and Eluid Mathu formed a teacher's organization known as Kenya African Teachers Union (KATU). Unfortunately the organization was not active because it was very difficult to organize an effective national organization of workers at that time due to communication problems. In 1957 the government allowed teachers to form one national body. This made the Minister for Education to invite all leaders to a meeting in December 1957 at Pumwani D.E.B. School. At this meeting, one teacher's organization called Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) was born ([www.knut.or.ke](http://www.knut.or.ke)). On 14th May 1959 KNUT was officially registered as a trade union. In 1970 KNUT was de-linked from COTU. It was silently categorized as offering essential service, and as such it is governed by the essential services Act of Kenya.

The Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) was registered in 1998 to respond to challenges of sectoral representation among teachers. It was launched at a time when both secondary and college tutors were yearning for a forum to voice their concerns. The birth of KUPPET was as a result of a long struggle between the post primary teachers and the government in regard to a platform which would truly represent their aspirations, hopes and interests.

## 1.2 Statement Of The Research Problem

According to Armstrong (2009), trade unions have the responsibility of promoting and protecting the interests of their members. Trade unions provide the employees with a stronger collective voice to make their wishes known to the management. The unionized employees direct their problems on work issues to their unions. The unions have a responsibility of solving the problems.

Nabibya J (2013) in her research deduced that KNUT had an influence on teacher's job satisfaction. In the study majority of the head teachers asserted that job satisfaction was a vital component to teacher's performance in the school. Majority of the teachers asserted that job satisfaction was a vital component to teacher's performance in the school. Thus KNUT fulfilled their empowerment needs since an organization like a KNUT may be used to realize or solve a multitude of needs for its members. Primary schools head teachers in the district felt that KNUT was important for fighting for professional code of conduct, teacher's rights, better remuneration and organizing HIV/AIDS seminars for teachers. Majority of the teachers seem to agree that KNUT helps in agitating for promotion of teachers, better working conditions and it defends teachers in course of their duties.

Ramjas V. (1989) analyses the extent to which trade unions affect productivity in the Indian context. Based on an analysis of data (1960-1980) from the Indian chemical industry, the author finds that trade unionism brings down productivity. He suggests that the potential of trade unions to increase productivity has not been fully exploited owing to factors such as managerial response to unionism, working conditions, wages of workers, and the socio-political climate in the country.

Many authors have argued that trade unions have a big role to play in taking care of employees' welfare; little has been established locally about the extent of the relationship particularly between the activities of the trade unions and employee productivity.

This research study therefore sought to help fill this empirical gap by assessing the influence of trade unions on the productivity of teachers. That was to establish whether teachers can perform better when they are unionized or not. This was because the teachers' unions have been very vocal of late.

Studies have been done on the influence of trade unions on the productivity of teachers, but so far no study has been conducted in Kakamega East sub-county. Chiveli J. (2013), in her report states that KNUT has an influence on the performance of teachers in public primary schools in Kamukunji district, Nairobi County, Kenya. so this study aimed to find out whether KNUT and KUPPET advocacy influence teacher productivity.

### **1.3 Objectives**

To determine the influence of Trade Union advocacy on teacher productivity.

### **1.4 Hypothesis Of The Study**

There is no influence of Trade Union advocacy on teacher productivity.

### **1.5 Scope Of The Study**

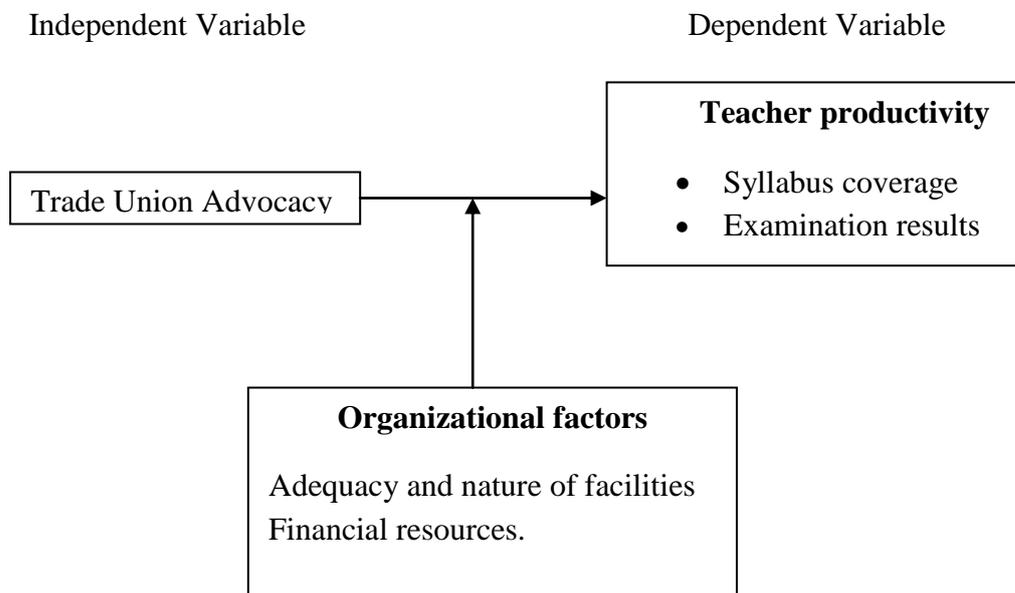
The research study was carried out in public secondary and primary schools in Kakamega East District. The study considered education records between the years 2006 and 2012. The study also sought to evaluate trade unions' activities such as work issues, organizational factors on teachers' productivity between 2001 – 2012, while assessing syllabus coverage and exam results. It was limited to the two trade unions (KUPPET and KNUT) and targeted 1404 primary and secondary school advocacy teachers.

### **1.6 Significance Of The Study**

The study findings may benefit the policy maker which is the Government, to come up with policies that may benefit the players in the education sector and planners in the Ministry of Education, formulate and design effective policies that will enhance good service delivery, TSC as the principal employer of teachers to institute and strategize on policies that may improve the working conditions of teachers, various educational institutions, stakeholders in education, County and National Directors of Education, KNUT and KUPPET. The study may also raise issues and questions that would be useful for further research.

### **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

The study was guided by the conceptual framework below. Figure 1.1



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 General Perspective Of Trade Unions And Employee Productivity

According to Armstrong (2009) Trade unionism is considered as an organized expression of the needs, wishes, aspirations and attitudes of the working class. The chief objective of a trade union is to protect and promote the interest of its members.

Freeman et al (1984) indicated that trade unions provide workers with a 'collective voice' to make their wishes known to the management and thus bring actual and desired conditions closer together. This is an avenue for the workers to not only address issues related to terms of employment but also to address their grievances, discipline and redundancy. Trade unions may thus see their role as that of participating with management on decision making on matters affecting their members' interests.

Millward (1992) established that the characteristics of union-free employee relations were as follows: strikes were almost unheard of, labor turnover and absenteeism were high, managers viewed employee relations in the non-union sector as being better than in the union sector, pay levels were set by the management, there was a greater incidence of low pay, there was greater use of freelance and temporary workers, employees in the non-union sector were two

and a half times as likely to be dismissed as those in the unionized firms and the incidence of compulsory redundancies was higher. Trade unions create opportunities for workers to participate in management so that the organization can reap the benefits of better ideas of efficient and intelligent employees. It also reduces dissatisfaction among employees.

## **2.2 Trade Union Activities**

Armstrong (2009) avers that the key reasons why people join trade unions are to obtain external support and protection from employment problems or seeking improvements in pay and terms and conditions of employment. They may also join because union membership is common at the work place or because of a belief in unionism.

## **2.3 Advocacy**

Alex Bryson (2007) established that the primary goal of trade unions is to maintain and improve workers' terms and conditions; particularly workers who are members of the union, through collective bargaining with employers. He states that the success of a union depends, in large part, on its bargaining strength, which is based on its ability to restrict the supply of labour to the employer and the ability of employers to concede above-market wages (Freeman and Medoff, 1984).

Armstrong (2009) affirms that money in the form of pay is the most obvious extrinsic reward. Money seems to provide the carrot most people want. Doubts were cast on the effectiveness of money by Herzberg et al (1957); they claimed that while the lack of it can cause dissatisfaction. People on fixed salaries feel good when they get an increase. This is a highly tangible form of recognition and an effective means of helping people to feel valued.

Money is a powerful force that is linked directly or indirectly to the satisfaction of many needs. Money may have no intrinsic meaning, but it acquires significant power to motivate people to be productive, because it comes to symbolize so many intangible goals.

Badly designed and managed pay structures can lead to underproduction among employees. Jacques (1961) emphasized the need for such systems to be perceived as being fair and equitable. The reward should be clearly related to effort or level of responsibility and people should not receive less money than they deserve compared to their fellow workers. Jacques called this the 'felt fair' principle.

According to Sababu (2010), salary or pay structures are constructed on the basis of job evaluation and range in flexibility from the most rigid rate for age and service scales to those which can accommodate various individual increments. The pay scales should overlap such that an employee in a lower job group such as K can earn the salary of an employee in job group N within a specified time span. The employee will however not be allowed to enjoy the benefits of job group N, which will only be available when the employee is promoted to job group N. The aim is to motivate the employee to yearn to move to the next senior position of the group.

The salaries should be reviewed within a stated time span in view of inflation, cost of living, merit, age and labor market conditions. An efficient salary administration avoids possible disputes as regards salary payment and also ensures purposeful co-operation from the work force. Injustice and favoritism should be avoided in the salary administration as they lead to dissatisfaction among the employees and this may lead to disputes which are harmful to employers and workers. A satisfactory compensation scheme will enable the organization to not only attract capable and competent persons but also to retain them for long periods.

According to Sababu (2010), Promotion is an upward job mobility which is followed by greater responsibilities and higher payments directly i.e. salaries, and indirectly in the form of benefits related to the job. Promotions play a role in rewarding a member for fidelity and efficiency. This prevents the employee from resigning, motivates him or her for more performance and productivity and increases a sense of organizational belonging, and prevents discontent and unrest. The results of these are employee job satisfaction, improved morale and reduced turnover.

The factors that are considered when promoting employees are character, personality, education qualification, general working attitude, practical abilities, and the length of service with the organization. Teachers are mainly selected for promotion through interviews.

Kenya currently has both a shortfall of serving teachers and a large number of unemployed teachers. School classes were overcrowded because of an insufficient number of teachers. The U.S. Department of State (2010) established that The TSC in Kenya, which by legislation is responsible for the recruitment of teachers, is reported to have wanted Kenya's government to lift a freeze on teacher recruitment to address shortages in both primary and

secondary schools. According to the TSC, Kenyan primary schools and secondary schools need new teachers. The teacher shortage has been aggravated by a rapid expansion of schools and the Kenyan government failing to replace teachers who have left. It was reported in March 2010 that Kenya's Education Minister had said that the number of teachers recruited was far short of the traditional annual recruitment numbers because a law had been passed in 2009 that increased the retirement age for teachers from 55 to 60 years.

## **2.4 Employee Productivity**

### **2.4.1 Syllabus Coverage**

According to APHRC (2011), students are often taught for only a fraction of the intended number of hours. Teacher absenteeism is one of the reasons why time is wasted in schools. Abadzi (2007) argues that teachers who are present are often involved in other activities leaving students to play instead of engaging in learning. In most cases, invaluable time is spent handing out textbooks, copying from the blackboard or doing small chores. Also, teachers may interact only with the small number of students who are of higher ability and exclude the rest. This study aims at finding out whether trade unions can help improve the situation.

According to Shikuku (2012), Students who cover the syllabus have a better mean score than those who fail to cover the syllabus. To achieve good grades both teachers and students should be present in school and actually attend lessons. Carroll (1963) suggested that the amount of time spent learning is also determined by the amount of time the school and the teacher allocate to a particular learning task or subject area.

Rowan et al (2002) observed that time-on-task is one of the instructional process aspects that have received a lot of attention in the recent times in teaching research. In the process-product research, it is argued that what matters is how teachers use this instructional time. Gillies et al (2008) also observed that Time on task provides pupils with the opportunity to be exposed to the subject content and hence the opportunity to learn. Time in class is affected by policies e.g. better remuneration, better working conditions, availability of resources etc. The teacher can cover the syllabus in time if conditions are favorable.

### **2.4.2 Examination results**

According to Amy et al (2011), a quality teacher is one who has a positive influence on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communications/interpersonal skills. Quality teachers are life-long learners in their subject areas, teach with commitment, and are reflective upon their teaching practice. They transfer knowledge of their subject matter and the learning process through good communication, diagnostic skills, understanding of different learning styles and cultural influences, knowledge about child development, and the ability to marshal a broad array of techniques to meet student needs. They set high expectations and support students in achieving them. They establish an environment conducive to learning, and leverage available resources outside as well as inside the classroom.

Victor Lavy (2009) in his research established that incentives led to significant improvements in test taking rates, conditional pass rates and mean test scores. This was because teachers were rewarded cash bonuses for improving their students' performance in high school matriculation exams. Marcus A. et al (2008) also established that pay-for-performance plan that rewards teachers for student achievement growth on standardized assessment led to improved student test score gains in math, reading and language exams.

Few topics in education have captured as much attention from policymakers and practitioners as the connection between teaching quality and student achievement. Prior research has clearly shown that quality teaching matters to student learning. Teacher quality has been consistently identified as the most important school-based factor in student achievement, and teacher influences on student learning have been found to be cumulative and long-lasting. However, researchers continue working to untangle important aspects of these relationships, including the specific ways in which quality teaching operates, the degree to which it drives learning, and how effectiveness evolves as teachers progress through their careers. This study is seeking clarity on whether trade unions have a role to play in improving and sustaining the performance of students.

## **2.5 Knowledge Gaps**

Many employees struggle to join trade unions. Recently teachers' trade unions have been very vocal. Therefore research in this area will help to determine the influence of KNUT and KUPPET in the productivity of teachers.

A lot of research has been done on the trade unions and their influence on the employees. The studies have not focused on teachers in Kakamega east Sub County. Josephine Nabibya (2013) did a research to determine the influence of KNUT on teachers' performance in public primary schools in Nairobi County.

In 1989 Ramjas did a research on the impact of trade unions on productivity in Indian chemical industry. This means that no sufficient research has been done in this area especially on trade unions influence on teachers. That is why this study seeks to determine the influence of KNUT and KUPPET on the productivity of teachers in Kakamega County, Kenya.

### 3. Research Methodology

A descriptive survey design was employed with a population in this case encompassed 1404 unionized teachers in primary and secondary schools, while the accessible population was 1000 teachers. Simple random sampling was used to get 100 respondents

Level	population	sample	%
Primary	800	80	10
Secondary and tertiary	200	20	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10</b>

Table 3.1 study population

The primary data was collected through questionnaires. The secondary data was obtained from books, previous written information, journals, teachers' professional records and students' notes. In addition, policy documents from the Ministry of Education and from the Unions were examined. One close-ended questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire facilitated data collection from the teachers.

Data was collected, questionnaires coded and the data was descriptively analyzed according to the objective of the study.

## 4. Data Analysis, Interpretation And Discussion

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics Of Advocacy As A Trade Union Activity

Several questions concerning Trade Union advocacy were asked and the results were as discussed in Table 4.1 below:

<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std deviation</b>
My trade union speak on my behalf	4.3201	0.16751
My trade union represents me during the negotiation of salaries	4.4189	0.41212
My union has made me proud	4.3415	0.3761
My union has raised my voice when I was down	4.5612	0.2341
My trade union has made my work easier	4.8711	0.10918
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4.50256</b>	<b>0.2598</b>

Table 4.1 Advocacy

Source: Research data 2015

The questions were rated on the five (5) point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, 5=strongly agree. My trade union speak on my behalf had a mean of 4.3201 with standard deviation of 0.16751, my trade union represents me during the negotiation of salaries had a mean of 4.4189 with standard deviation of 0.41212, my union has made me proud had a mean of 4.3415, with standard deviation of 0.3761, my union has raised my voice when I was down had a mean of 4.5612 with standard deviation of 0.2341, while the last question my trade union has made my work easier had a mean of 4.8711 with standard deviation of 0.10918. The overall mean was 4.50256 while the overall standard deviation was 0.259802. The results therefore imply that the overall mean was between 4 and 5. On the Likert scale, 4= agree while 5=strongly agree. The respondents were therefore in agreement that Trade Union advocacy affect teacher productivity.

#### **4.2 Research Hypothesis And Discussion**

The central thesis of this research was to assess the influence of trade unions' advocacy on teachers' productivity in public schools in Kenya. The study used simple regression analysis beta ( $\beta$ ), which is equivalent to the Karl Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) (Sekaram, 2003) to answer the questions. The questions were tested at 0.05 % significance level, with 95% confidence, which is acceptable in social research work.

### 4.3 Influence Of Trade Union Advocacy On Teacher Productivity

In order to determine whether Trade Union advocacy had any influence on teacher productivity, the study set out the following null hypothesis;

There is no influence of Trade Union advocacy on teacher productivity.

The study used the correlation  $r$  (beta,  $\beta$ ) to either reject or accept the null hypothesis. The test criteria was set such that the study rejects this hypothesis if  $\beta_1 \neq 0$ . To test the hypothesis, mean of teacher productivity (P) was correlated with mean of advocacy (A). The correlation results between the mean of self advocacy and the mean of teacher productivity (P) had a beta term  $\beta_1 = 0.752$  at  $p = 0.01$ . However, from this results, the value of beta  $\beta_1 = 0.752$  and yet  $0.752 \neq 0$ . The value of beta is positive. This implies that there exists a statistically significant positive influence between Trade Union advocacy and teacher productivity.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.752 <sup>a</sup>	.566	.561	.45519		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Advocacy						
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	26.445	1	26.445	127.633	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	20.305	98	.207		
	Total	46.750	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Teacher productivity						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Advocacy						
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	.765	.242	3.159	.002
	Advocacy	.744	.066	.752	11.297 .000

Dependent Variable: Mean of teacher productivity  
Level of significance=0.05

Table 4.2 Correlation results of Trade Union advocacy and teacher productivity  
Source: Research data 2015

This correlation results in table 4.2 above show that Trade Union advocacy account for 56.6% of teacher productivity ( $r^2=0.566$ )

## 5. Summary, Conclusions And Recommendations

### 5.1 Summary And Key Findings

In order to determine whether Trade Union advocacy had any influence on teacher productivity, the study set out the following null hypothesis; there is no influence of Trade Union advocacy on teacher productivity. The study used the correlation  $r$  (beta,  $\beta$ ) to either reject or accept the null hypothesis. The test criteria was set such that the study rejects this hypothesis if  $\beta_1 \neq 0$ . To test the hypothesis, mean of teacher productivity (P) was correlated with mean of advocacy (A). The correlation results between the mean of self-advocacy and the mean of teacher productivity (P) had a beta term  $\beta_1=0.752$  at  $p=0.01$ . However, from this results, the value of beta  $\beta_1=0.752$  and yet  $0.752 \neq 0$ . The value of beta is positive. This implies that there exists a statistically significant positive influence between Trade Union advocacy and teacher productivity.

## 6. Conclusions

The study revealed a statistically significant and positive influence between Trade Union advocacy and teacher productivity. These results are in line with those of Armstrong (2009) who affirmed that money in the form of pay is the most obvious extrinsic reward. Money seems to provide the carrot most people want. Doubts were cast on the effectiveness of money by Herzberg *et al* (1957); they claimed that while the lack of it can cause dissatisfaction. People on fixed salaries feel good when they get an increase. This is a highly tangible form of recognition and an effective means of helping people to feel valued.

## 7. Recommendations

The public schools should let trade unions advocate for teachers. The study has found out that there exists statistically significant positive influence of Trade Union advocacy and teacher productivity.

### **8. Suggestions for further research**

Further research is encouraged to be done in universities to establish out if the results are still the same. Further study is encouraged in other parts of the country to find out if the results are still the same. A study is encouraged to establish the influence of organizational factors on the teacher productivity. Other studies to be done on the influence of unions on teachers' welfare and to training.

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