

Influence of Bureaucratic Leadership Styles on Teacher Turnover

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Abstract: *The trend of teachers leaving teaching profession for other jobs or moving to other schools is worrying. The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of leadership styles of principals on teacher turnover in public secondary schools in Kenya. The objectives sought to determine the influence of autocratic leadership style on teacher turnover in public secondary schools and ways of reducing teacher turnover in public secondary schools. This study was guided by the human capital theory. The study population involved 35 principals and deputy principals and 612 teachers. The study estimated the influence of leadership styles of principals on teacher turnover in 10 secondary schools out of 35 public secondary schools in Gem Sub County. From these 10 schools, 10 principals and 183 teachers were sampled for the study and all the 35 deputy principals made the sample size for the study. To obtain the sample of the study, stratified random sampling was used. The study established that teacher turnover was experienced in most of the schools with varying reasons.*

Keywords: bureaucratic, teacher, turnover, promotion, education

INTRODUCTION

Turnover can be considered from different perspectives depending on the subject in question. Among teachers, turnover refers to the rate of departure among staff engaged in schools for a given time frame. Teacher turnover can be obtained by identifying the stock of teachers through government departments, principals of schools and even teachers themselves. This is then compared with the actual cases of withdrawals in percentage terms, having taken care of re-entry to derive turnover rates (Maicibi, 2003).

Regionally, a study carried out in South Africa by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) for the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) in 2005 noted that student indiscipline was among those cited for teacher turnover in secondary schools. Related to this is a study carried out in Ghana on the wrong solution to the teacher shortage which found indiscipline and attendance

problems among students a cause of teacher turnover (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the picture is varied. According to a study by the International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All (2010), females are always reluctant to take up posts in remote areas which may lead to greater turnover early in their careers.

In Kenya, a number of teachers have transferred their services to other sectors like the Ministries of Education, Youth and Gender; The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) Secretariat; the Media Industry; Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) among others (Okungu, 2012). The government froze the supply driven teacher recruitment in 1997 and resorted to replacing only those lost under natural attrition in 2001, due to not being able to get a teaching post. Because the Ministry of Education does not hire teachers, most teachers consider leaving the country and or the profession for elsewhere where their qualification would secure them jobs (Oster, 2007; UNESCO, 2003).

In Siaya county teacher turnover have been experienced due to several factors. Factors contributing to low teacher job satisfaction according to the survey were poor working conditions, poor leadership styles, lack of recognition of teachers by the public, lack of promotion, heavy workloads, poor school policies, supervision and poor human relations.

Statement of the Problem

Leadership styles among other factors might be the possible reason for the teacher turnover. As skilled and experienced employees are the back bone of any institution, management of schools should consider all the factors of teacher turnover and also the influence of leadership style that is being implemented. The influence of leadership styles of principals in public secondary schools on teacher turnover is certainly an area that warrants investigation. This study therefore intended to establish how leadership styles of principals in secondary schools influence teacher turnover in public secondary schools. This study tried to address the problem of teacher turnover related to bureaucratic leadership style in secondary public schools.

Objective

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of bureaucratic leadership style of principals on teacher turnover in public secondary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Influence of bureaucratic leadership style was reviewed in public secondary schools globally, regionally, nationally, and in Siaya county Gem sub-county to be specific. This helped in identifying gaps from studies done by other researchers which the study may fill. The last one reviewed on the ways which could be used to help in the reduction of teacher turnover in public secondary schools worldwide and aim at determining if the same is true in Siaya Gem sub-county.

Leadership Styles

Leadership is one of the critical and important factors in enhancing an organizational performance (Riaz 2010). According to Lambert (2003) leadership is the cumulative process of learning through

which we achieve the purposes of the school. It is an influence relationship among leaders and followers to perform in such a way to reach a defined goal or goals. Hence it is an important element for the success of an organization regardless of its nature of activities, profit or charity oriented, private or government linked organizations. Leadership is indispensable in business, educational and social institutions for the attainment of goals. Several views have been expressed on leadership but most leadership theorist agrees that the traits, styles and contingency dominate the leadership literature.

Bureaucratic Leadership Style

This type of leadership involves following established rules procedures and regulations. Decision making is based on such rules and procedures. This leadership style focuses more on hierarchical structure, establishing control and setting boundaries. This leadership style is preferred in government agencies or organizations like the army that require strict discipline, defined authority and clear chain of command. It can also be used in large and complex organizations that require defined hierarchical structure for smooth management. This leadership style is also preferred when the work environment demands a high level of predictability when there is strict adherence to rules and procedures to ensure compliance with laws, regulations and industry standards. Intelligence or security agencies that deal with a lot of sensitive data requires this leadership style to set about clear rules or protocols. This leadership style allows members to follow clear procedures and make strategic decisions to achieve results.

It ensures predictability in a business environment and enables the management to make calculated decisions. It focuses on specialization which leads to division of labour which helps improve overall work efficiency. Following standard procedures leaves no room for creativity and can hinder personal growth of employees. It makes it challenging for people to adapt to change as there is hardly any scope for flexibility. Employee turnover refers to the rate of movement of employees in and out of an organization. Salaries and conditions of service, job performance, career growth, work environment, job satisfaction, supervisory styles, employee commitment and many other factors play a significant role in shaping employee turnover. Employee turnover is the outcomes of a number of push and pull factors that come into play during the course of employment relationship. As noted by Jafari (2011) in the turnover process everyone usually points out one factor for their turnover choice, but there are always more factors that work as a driving force for turnover intentions. Panday (2008) have revealed that the factors that influence turnover intentions in organizations can be categorized into three distinct categories. External environmental factors where economic conditions are responsible for driving and shaping employee turnover across the labour industry. Individual factors where employees specific factors that shape turnover decisions examples include age, length of service with the organization, family responsibilities, education personality and other personal considerations. The third category is organizational factors which refers to organizational policies, such as opportunities for progress, supportive management, supportive human resource policies, organizational culture and other factors.

Principal leadership plays a significant role in teacher turnover. According to Simon & Johnson (2015), teachers identify the quality of administrative support as a key factor in decision to leave

a school. In addition teachers point to the importance of school culture and collegial relationships, time for collaboration, and decision making input. Principals tend to be weaker in high poverty low achieving schools and in such cases principal quality can have an even greater bearing on teacher attrition. Local state and federal policy makers have a role to play in recruiting and retaining principals.

Principals' leadership and support are among the most important factors in teacher's decisions about whether to stay in a school or in the profession. Studies across the nation have found that the quality of leadership can have a large effect on teacher turnover. Teachers often identify the quality of administrative support as more important to their decision than salaries. Garisson (2011), study found that improvements in school leadership were strongly related to reduction in teacher turnover. His recent data show teacher turnover rates reaching nearly 25% among teachers who strongly disagree that their administrator encourages and acknowledges staff, communicates a clear vision and generally runs a school well.

Sutcher, Darling and Hammond (2016) found out in their study that in addition to salaries and resources for teaching, other key factors in teachers professional decisions include school culture, collegial relationships, time for collaboration and decision making input. More over talented principals who remain in their schools can be associated with retaining more effective teachers even when controlling students and school characteristics. Research identifies at least two major components of school leadership that contributes to teacher decisions about whether to stay in the profession, these include administrative support and leadership style. Teachers are more likely to remain in the classroom when they feel supported by administration. According to Kraft, Marinell & Shen (2016), principals' support can matter more than even teacher workload when it comes to decisions to stay or leave a school. This support can take many forms including providing emotional and instructional support. School leaders who support teachers with instructional resources, teaching materials and professional learning opportunities have also been associated with lower teacher attrition rates.

Nguyen (2018) study also found that a principals' leadership style is associated with teachers' decision to leave the school or profession. Principals who do not view themselves as traditional omnipotent, top-down administrators have been associated with low teacher attrition rates. Instead, these principals generally describe their leadership responsibilities as facilitators, collaborators or team leaders. To foster collaboration and create a broader sense of ownership these principals often employ leadership teams, interview teams or site-based management teams to make school based decisions. Recruiting and retaining excellent teachers and principals is critically important for the success of future generations, especially for those living in underserved communities. In addition, the research point to the critical role that high quality school leaders play in building a strong and stable teacher workforce. An investment that can reap significant dividends both in the form of increased teacher retention and the improved academic opportunities that comes with a strong instructional leader.

The frequency at which teachers leave the teaching profession is significantly higher than the corresponding rate in any other domain. Studies have shown that teaching is a stressful career which often lead to teacher burnout and hence turnovers. Teachers across the globe are quitting teaching at an alarming rate (Hanushek, 2007; Ingersoll & Smith 2003). Teacher turnover is a global problem that impacts very negatively on students' achievements and that is a highly costly phenomenon. Leadership is one of the critical and important factors in enhancing organizational performance (Riaz, 2010). Lambert (2003) suggests that leadership is the cumulative process of learning through which we achieve the purposes of the school. Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers to perform in such a way to reach a defined goal or goals. Leadership therefore is an important element for the success of an organization, regardless of its nature of activities, profit or charity oriented private or government linked organizations. From the studies mentioned above, no study has been conducted in Kenya on the influence of leadership styles on the reduction of teacher turnover in public secondary schools. This study therefore intends to fill this gap.

Ways of Reducing Teacher Turnover

According to Newman and Lamb (2012) each follower or staff member has specific needs and desires, for example some are motivated by money while others by change and excitement. The individualized consideration element of transformational leadership recognizes these needs, the leader must be able to recognize or determine through eavesdropping or observation what motivates each individual. Through one on one coaching and mentoring, the transformational leader provides opportunities for customized training sessions for each team members. These activities allow team members to grow and become fulfilled in their positions. Mumford and Hunter (2005) argues that leaders who actively work to create a diverse environment and supportive environment where individual differences are respected and celebrated. They know each of their followers individually and happily listen to any concerns or needs that their team members may have. They act as mentors and coaches for team members working to develop, empower and inspire them to achieve more. The individual effort is key to achieving the best results and creating future leaders. Teachers are the key inputs in educational production process, their source and stability in the system are the most important keys to improving learning outcomes.

Webb (2009) in a study conducted in USA on Christian higher education institutions noted that individual considerations and inspirational motivation positively predicted teachers' job satisfaction. It is worth noting from these studies that successful attempts in minimizing teacher transfer requests in the USA have been due to teacher induction and mentoring, improvement of schools, safety and discipline, restructuring of schools to make them smaller, recruitment from the community they belong and provision of retention bonuses. Namrata (2004) in her study on the influence of leadership styles on teacher job satisfaction in private schools in United Arabs Emirates (UAE) supported the above view and noted that individual consideration had the highest positive influence on teacher job satisfaction. Teachers are in a service organization that is geared towards human development and character molding. That is why the national policy on education declared that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers (Agih, 2015).

Ensuring that all students have access to a qualified teacher is a universal struggle. Studies conducted in Africa on transformational leadership posts similar results with those conducted in the west. In Sub-Sahara Africa teacher attrition has become a subject of regional concern and schools are facing the challenge. The success of any educational sector depends on the teaching staff since the teacher is central to the learning process, hence the teachers position is scared in relation to the students. In order to entice exceptional individuals into the teaching profession and to retain these gifted teaching staff, to accord their loss into other profession, teachers' salary should be increased and paid when due, favourable working conditions and facilities that will make teachers' function effective and efficient to be provided, teaching should be accorded its social recognition and prestige and finally there should be provision of mentoring as a strategy that improves teachers retention and enhances teaching quality (Babalola & Ayeni, 2015; Pistoe, 2013).

Hedges, (2002) study reveals that in Ghana a policy that involved posting newly qualified teachers in pairs seems to work well. Those posted with another teacher seemed to draw strength from the ready-made friendship especially in hostile communities. Another strategy in Ghana involved linking rural deployment with a teacher education outreach program with the aim of helping female teachers to feel safe and have a greater sense of control over their development (Hedges, 2000). The education management information system (EMIS) data in Malawi reveals a strong association between the availability of housing in an area and the retention of teachers in school and more so female teachers (Mulkeen, 2005). Similarly a study carried out in Uganda considered provision of housing to be a key factor in ensuring teacher retention especially in rural areas. In addition some NGOs and even local communities have constructed teacher housing in an attempt to make rural locations more attractive.

Studies conducted by Nguni et al (2006) in Tanzania, Ejimofor (2007) in Nigeria and Hukpati (2009) in Ghana supported the above view and noted that providing opportunities for teachers professional growth and considering their views in decision making by the principals enhances teamwork and job satisfaction. Hukpati (2009) further noted that the use of intellectual stimulation challenges and motivates followers to be more focused in carrying out their assigned tasks. According to him this increases the degree of satisfaction and commitment to work. These views however are contrary to Wegges (2000) earlier study which expressed fears in the creation of teamwork geared towards the realization of schools' mission and vision. He asserted that individuals within a group may lazy around at the expense of performing their duties. However in Africa the provision of financial incentives in the form of hardship allowance, housing, special study leave, training opportunities have had positive impact on the teacher retention (Mulkeen, 2005).

Gwavuya (2011) affirms that the in competent leadership results in poor performance, high levels of stress, low commitment, low job satisfaction and high turnover intentions. Consequently leadership in organization plays significant roles in employee motivation and retention especially if employees receive regular positive feedback and recognition. A supervisor's positive attitude towards subordinate employees improves the employees attitudes towards work, their leave and organization. In turn the employees develop intrinsic motivation and a good match between intrinsic and extrinsic

motivation results in job satisfaction and a stronger propensity to stay with the employer. Callier (2011) is of the view that participatory decision making is one of the measures by which management can minimize employee turnover intention. Participation is a process in which decision making is shared among individuals who are not generally considered to have equal status in the organization and it's a function of democratic leadership style. The outcomes of participatory leadership style are numerous but notably are employee motivation and reduction in turnover intentions. Job satisfaction which is a factor of quality management in organization is yet another critical factor in shaping employee turnover intentions. As noted by Callier (2011) in the United States alone, 77% of employees are unhappy with their current jobs and are considering leaving for better alternatives. Numerous research results show that job satisfaction is found to be significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions on a consistent basis (Callier 2011).

Theoretical Approach

This study was guided by the human capital approach theory which states that human beings can increase their productive capacity through greater education and skills training. Individuals make systematic assessments of benefits and costs of entering and staying in a profession, the greater the accumulation of specific capital the lower the probability of attrition hence turnover is more likely early in the career (Engel & Cannata 2015). The proponent of this theory can be traced back at least to Adam Smith in 18th century. The modern theory was popularized by Gary Becker an economist and Nobel Laureate from university of Chicago. This theory explains how the process of finding, accepting, and offering a job is conducted in an environment of uncertainty the worker and the employer both have incomplete knowledge of each other and the other employment alternatives.

Figure 1 below illustrates the theoretical framework which guided this study.

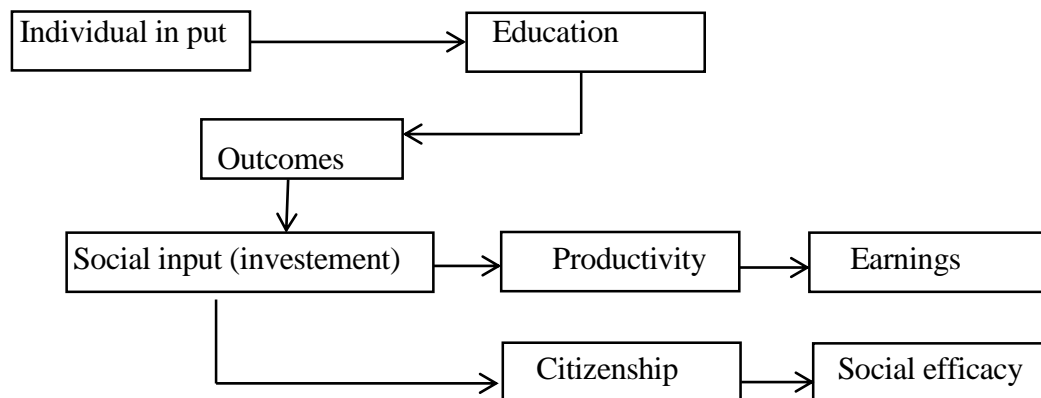


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

Adapted from Swanson and Holton (2001)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used concurrent mixed method design since the design involves the collection analysis and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single or multiphase study. This study dealt with both quantitative and qualitative data hence the design was most appropriate. A descriptive cross-sectional survey method was employed in this study to investigate the relationship between bureaucratic leadership style and teacher turnover. This method was suitable because it enabled the researcher collect data at a single point in time from individuals with different characteristics to establish connections between bureaucratic leadership style and employee turnover intentions.

Study Area

Gem Sub County is in Siaya County and is comprised of 35 public secondary schools. These schools are categorized into three namely extra-county, county and sub-county schools which are either girls/boys or mixed schools. These schools are further categorized into boarding, day and both day and boarding. Gem Sub-County borders Ugunja Sub-County, Alego-Usonga Sub-County and Kisumu County. Yala - Kisumu-Busia Road and Kisumu-Kisian-Bondo road passes through Gem Sub County. This makes the Sub County well connected by a good transport network. Gem Sub County is among the sub counties which has been having massive teacher turnover leading to teacher shortage in secondary schools. The causes of teacher turnover have been established by other researchers in the Sub County. Effects of teacher turnover on the students' academic performance have also been established by other researchers within the sub-county. However, reduction of teacher turnover has not been researched on and still remains a challenge, this is what prompted this study in Gem Sub County.

Study Population

According to Gem Sub County Education Office (2019) the Sub County has a total of 35 public secondary schools. These schools are of different categories. Some are day schools while others are boarding schools. Some of the schools are pure boys' schools, pure girls' schools, and mixed schools. There are 35 principals, 35 deputy principals, 612 teachers and 16,200 students. This gives a total population of 16,882 (Sub-County Education Office, 2019). The study was conducted in all the sampled public secondary schools and was carried out on teachers, deputy principals, principals and the Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (SCQASO).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study used stratified random sampling to get 10 schools where the research was carried out. 30% (10 principals) of the total number of principals in Gem Sub County were sampled. 30% (183 teachers) of the total population of teachers in Gem Sub County sampled for the study through simple random sampling. 35 Deputy Principals from all the 35 schools were involved in the research.

Instruments of Data Collection

This study used questionnaires and interview schedules as instruments of data collection. These instruments are very relevant in the cases where the respondents are the persons from whom facts are being gathered or whose attitudes, feelings or beliefs are being explored (Jacobs, 2006). Questionnaires and interviews are used to collect data that is not directly observable from the participants in a sample about their experiences and opinions. This helps to generalize the findings to a given population presented by the sample (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Some of the questions in the questionnaire will be open-ended while others will be close-ended.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This Section presents analysis, results and discussions of the findings of the study to allow the respondents to speak for themselves and numbers would be used to represent the respondents in order not to reveal the identity of the respondents. They will be referred to as principal1, 2 3 teacher1, 2, 3 and so on.

Bureaucratic Leadership Style

Teachers have cited administrative support as one of the largest determining factors in leaving a school or a profession. The study explored the perception of the principals own leadership styles through interview schedules. Statements on various leadership styles were provided through interviews to principals who were requested to respond to them verbally. Perception of the teachers and deputy principals were sought using statements from the questionnaires and their responses were justified using verbal responses from interviews. When teachers receive support from colleagues and administration, they are less likely to leave their position. Teachers should be given more opportunities to express their opinions and voice their concerns. Hearing teacher input improves their work and enables teachers to become more involved.

Teacher 40 said that our principal listens to every staff member before a decision is made, this makes us feel part of all activities going on within the school. Most of us are very comfortable working with the principal and no one wishes to leave.

Similar comments were got from teacher 81, teacher 100 and teacher 160 hence it can be inferred that administrative support and stronger teacher cooperation reduces teacher turnover. These findings are similar to the findings of Torgerson Damon, (2022) who found out that there were several administrative support issues that led to the teachers departure. The issues included the administration not supporting or even blocking social justice efforts, insufficient support for discipline and troubled relationship with administration. The researcher concluded that 27% of teachers were not satisfied with the leadership styles of their principals and recommended that support should include an open door policy, disciplinary support and maintaining healthy relationships with the teachers. This study also found that building collaborative relationships led to retention of teachers. Principals who provided avenues for teachers to collaborate with each other helped to cultivate a positive work environment built on trust. This served as an effective form of professional development which improved classroom instructions. High quality induction

and mentoring programs were found to improve teacher effectiveness and retention. Newly employed teachers also required immediate access a valuable teacher network. These findings are in line with the findings of Kathleen, (2009) who found that principals with awareness of issues affecting new teachers, principals with a proactive approach in supporting new teachers and principals with a commitment to professional growth and excellence for themselves, teachers and their students were retaining teachers at high rate than their counterparts.

Teachers need to feel valued and that their opinions are solicited and incorporated into decisions or policies. They are called to foster the collaborative process and to empower teachers they should invest in trusting relationship with staff. Principals should distill the values hopes and needs of teachers into a vision and then encourage and empower followers to pursue that vision. They should conceive leadership as helping people to create a common vision and then to pursue that vision until its realized. The administration should consider teachers personal attributes while taking decisions on posting and transfers. The teachers should be trained to develop their communicative and interpersonal skills. This is an effort to increase teacher retention level in the teaching profession. The principals should take steps to create conducive environment in the institution.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study examined influence of bureaucratic leadership style on teacher turnover. The study also tried to find out ways of mitigating teacher turnover. However increase in a unit transformational leadership leads to a decrease in teacher turnover intention. Leaders display various kinds of behaviour depending on their personality, values and situations. The most effective leaders can adopt their style to the specific needs of their teachers or schools, some take a more proactive approach and work directly with teachers to improve working conditions. Leaders play an essential role in setting and managing teachers expectations. By doing so they help ensure that teachers are not overworked and that they can meet the demands of their jobs. Influential leaders can develop the capacity of poorly performing teachers to match the job demand and perform as well as the rest of the teachers without which their jobs are in line. A great leader takes the time to teach, mould and mentor teachers who may need some extra attention. Teachers have an obligation to seek assistance from the human resources office if they feel like a lousy leader is leading them. Some employees might not speak up because they are afraid of reprisal, but it is ethical to develop leaders by providing them with the leadership skills to grow. It is widely accepted that there is a strong relationship between leaders and teacher turnover. This is because teachers who are unhappy with their leaders are more likely to leave their jobs while those who are satisfied with their leaders are more likely to stay. There are some reasons why this may be the case, first teachers who are unhappy with their leaders may feel that they are not being treated fairly or allowed to do their best work. This can lead to dissatisfaction and a desire to leave the school. Second teachers who are satisfied with their leaders may feel that they are being allowed to grow and develop within the school. This can lead to loyalty and desire to stay within the school. The study therefore recommends the adoption of democratic decision making practices in institution by including subordinates in decision making process thereby increasing self-belonging drive and commitment

of employees towards institution objectives. This can be achieved by training leaders in team building and participatory decision making exercises. From the findings of the study, the following can be recommended to be used in trying to mitigate teacher turnover in secondary schools. Collaboration opportunities; Teachers work better when they collaborate and collaboration also improves retention rates. By providing collaborative opportunities from the very start, most school leaders and teachers agreed that professional collaboration is beneficial. Not only do teachers benefit by learning but also through sharing of experiences. When schools provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate with one another their teacher retention rates increases.

Support professional development; teachers should be encouraged to participate in external training programs and support advanced degrees or certification. Some of the teachers interviewed talked of professional support being particularly important in changing school contexts and perceived professional mastery.

Balanced workload; At times when the school cannot afford to lose valuable teachers, improving autonomy and reducing workload up to certain manageable level would increase job satisfaction and could help address the retention situation.

Enabling policy development; high teacher turnover is destabilizing for everyone in the education and continual staffing flux makes change and creates discontinuity hence there should be a policy to guide the same.

Empower teachers to succeed; outside classroom teachers need to develop their curriculum, plan upcoming lessons and units, review students work and assessment, take data of students and create support. School leaders can be proactive in their staff retention efforts by addressing issues that cause teachers to leave the profession too soon.

Working conditions; leaders should ensure that their teachers have the best working conditions possible promote a positive school culture where both teachers and students feel safe. Challenging working conditions, limited resources low quality buildings, large classrooms sizes, lack of education leaders and team work should be addressed.

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