

## SOMALI SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE TEACHING PROFESSION

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the study is to determine the attitudes of Somali secondary school students towards the teaching profession. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design whose purpose is to describe the state of affairs and involves a method of collecting data by interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. The results of the questionnaire were then analyzed with the aid of SPSS. A sample size of 96 respondents of a targeted population of 320 was selected. The results of the study showed that students have negative attitude towards teaching profession, that teaching is a difficult task, and teachers are not well paid compared to other professions.*

*From the finding the study recommends that the Ministry of Education and the private school owners should ensure that teachers' salaries are placed high considering their role in nation building And also the study recommended that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education in conjunction with the educational organization bodies should help project teacher's image and fight for their course by paying attention to development of their profession through capacity building programmes*

**Keywords:** Work overload in teaching, teacher's salary, students' attitudes, teaching profession

### INTRODUCTION

Education is the key to participation in the highly competitive global economy of the 21st century based on technological revolution, communication and transfer of information as well as major changes in production, transport, distribution and the economic value of knowledge. In other words, education is the fulcrum of modern day socio-political and economic development. The binding relationship among education, economy and society is interactive. To this end, the teacher plays a pivotal role in the educational development of any society and nation (Ololube, 2004). It has been said that no nation can grow beyond the quality of its education (teachers) and that a nation can only develop meaningfully and attain professionalism through a virile teaching profession (Obemeata, 1999).

Teaching is one of the oldest of human activities or professions because in those days, parents, elders in the community, religious leaders and other adults took it upon themselves to teach the young ones how to speak, act and, or, perform any other activity that might be required of them. Hence the teacher was seen as an important personality in the society. Teaching profession is based on vocational and personal skills and competencies, involves professional and ethical standards and models, and entails a continuous process of professional development.

In a survey conducted among media houses, teachers, parents and teaching assistants in England, Hargreaves et al (2006) found that while the majority of the general public surveyed considered the teaching profession to be quite an attractive career due largely to an attractive

salary package, the media's perception of teaching is more of a profession deserving some sympathy. Even among the general public that viewed teaching as an attractive career, a good number of them (32%) still regarded teaching as unattractive. In spite of the many studies that have been conducted and opinions that have been made (Hargreaves et al 2007, Hargreaves et al 2006, Hoyle 2001 among others) on the perception of teachers, parents and students of the teaching profession, there still exist divergent views of teaching in view of the efforts of governments at all levels and the private sector in improving the status of teaching. Research has indicated that positive teachers' attitudes and perceptions are fundamental for effective teaching, and teachers' beliefs, perceptions and attitudes affect their practice and influence the students' performance (Eggen & Kauchak, 2001). High teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession have effects on their classroom performance and teaching practice, and are correlated with the burnout level (Ispir, 2010). In order to understand teachers' attitudes, job satisfaction was used to assess teachers' attitude towards work (Ahmad & Sahak, 2009). Education fosters the intellectual discipline necessary to solve problems, and the civic virtues essential for good governance. The central role played by teachers in determining the quality of education received by students is widely recognized internationally (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2006).

Teachers are seen as the "central actors in education, facilitators of learning, bringers of knowledge, brokers of relationships between pupils and the societies in which they live" (Voluntary Services Overseas [VSO], 2002). Within developing societies specifically, teachers are often perceived to be the central learning resource given the difficult working and living conditions prevalent in these societies.

Good education can help reduce gender inequalities, child exploitation, and the likelihood of future violence in the wider society. The issue of quality in basic education in sub-Saharan Africa is inseparable from the quality of the teachers involved.

The collapse of the Somali state and the subsequent civil war(s) have altered most aspects of Somali life; but they have been particularly devastating in the area of education, where an entire generation has lost out on one of the most precious opportunities of childhood. The restoration of regular schooling is critical if Somalis expect to survive the present upheaval and envision a hopeful future. Education can provide structure and stability for children who have been traumatized by war.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The teacher is the pillar of educational development. Country's level of development among other things is hinged on the quality of education given to its citizenry by the teacher. It is important for the educational sector to have willful and talented teachers who will help to promote and sustain educational system which is almost at the dead point especially in Somalia. The outbreak of civil war in Somalia in the early 1990s took its toll on the formal education system in the country. School premises were turned into accommodation for the internally displaced people fleeing from the war (Abdi, 1998), and many educated people left the country as refugees (Lindley, 2008). As well as denying a large number of Somalis the opportunity to access education, this relocation of educated people delayed the process of reviving the education system after the war. The education system in Mogadishu is not managed fully by the government although now the influence of the government to education system in the country is growing gradually. Private schools have become characteristic of urban education in South Central Zone, with 14 administrative "umbrellas" managing 399 schools that served 89,850 students throughout Mogadishu as of late 2014, according to the Education Management Information System (EMIS) database.

There is a large body of literature that addresses why teachers may leave the profession and become disappointed. Reasons include a lack of administrative support (Ingersoll, 2000; Liu & Meyer, 2005; Macdonald, 1995; Madsen & Hancock, 2002; Tye & O'Brien, 2002), insufficient mentoring (Kelley, 2004), poor facilities (Buckley, Schneider, & Shang, 2005), and low pay (Ingersoll, 2000; Liu & Meyer, 2005; Macdonald, 1995; Stinebrickner, 2001; Tye & O'Brien, 2002). Researchers have attempted to identify occupational stressors in the teaching environment. These include work overload, role ambiguity and conflict, pressures of the teacher's role, inadequate resources, poor working conditions, lack of professional recognition, low remuneration, and lack of involvement in decision-making, lack of effective communication, staff conflicts, and pupil misbehavior (Boyle et al., 1995; Pithers & Fogarty, 1995; Pithers & Soden, 1998). The evidence on teacher workloads is particularly weak. Increasing hours of work, larger class sizes, more subjects, and constantly changing curricula are cited as major de-motivators in many countries.

The starting salary for teacher's lags behind that for other professionals in business and industry, and the teacher compensation system lacks differentiation by expertise and work quality (Grissmer & Kirby, 1997; Rumberger, 1987). In particular, chemistry and physics teachers who can command higher salaries in the private sector tend to leave teaching for high-paying jobs in industry (Murnane et al., 1989). Teachers capable of developing skills for other careers may also move to different professions because the economic reward outweighs the cost of their career change. All these present the teacher as a poor, pitiable and helpless fellow in the society. Career choice is considered as one of the major areas of concern for young people nearing the end of their schooling (Alberts, Mbalo, & Ackermann, 2003). Since it is a challenge to make a choice of their career, it is important for both parents and their children. As teaching plays vital role in preparing future generations of any society, it is essential to employ qualified and dedicated teachers in the profession. Therefore, choosing teaching as a career becomes more crucial.

Many other factors within and outside the family have also been linked with career choices in teaching profession as well as other professions. When teacher recruitment is concerned, it is claimed that the profession fails to attract bright young people (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000). It has some structural, social and psychological reasons (Ingersoll, 2001; Lai, Mok, Ko, & Li, 2000; Menter, Hutchings, & Ross, 2002; Coulthard & Kyriacou, 2002).

In Somalia, most schools are owned and managed by private, most of which lack basic management capacities. Teachers at many of these schools complain bitterly about unfair recruitment, low salary, poor management and work overload. These challenges led teachers on their own believed on this as they regard themselves as less privileged compared to other profession concluding that their reward is in heaven. This believe about teachers might contributes to some extent the negative attitude of students towards teaching profession.

A report by Smith a leader of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) (in BBC News 1999) indicated that secondary school learners believe that teaching offers too much stress and too little pay. Unlike other professions such as medicine, law and engineering the teaching profession lacks status and glamour and these the researchers implicated as the major deterrents for students not to choose the teaching as a profession (Austin 2008; Gough 1990; Kyriacou and Coulthard 2000; Sumsion 2000).

Therefore, this study therefore sought to examine the attitudes of Somali secondary school students towards the teaching profession.

## Study Objectives

The paper has the following objectives:

1. To establish how work overload in teaching affects the attitudes of Somali secondary school students towards the teaching profession.
2. To explore how teacher's salary affects the attitudes of Somali secondary school students towards the teaching profession;

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Work overload in teaching and secondary school students' attitudes towards the teaching profession*

The sensitive and crucial issue of teachers' working conditions is at the heart of any examination of the quality of basic education in sub-Saharan Africa. Many appear to have no enthusiasm for teaching and some even express a dislike of the teaching profession. Teachers who are dissatisfied with their work display lower commitment and are at greater risk for leaving the profession (Evans, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001). Liu and Ramsey (2008) found that stress from poor work conditions had the strongest influence on teachers' job satisfaction and noted that inadequate time for planning and preparation and a heavy teaching workload reduced satisfaction from teaching. Teaching may bring personal satisfaction, but it also brings stress, with demands from administrators, colleagues, students, and parents compounded by work overload, student misbehavior, and a lack of recognition for accomplishments (Greenglass & Burke, 2003).

### *Teacher's Salary and secondary school students' attitudes towards the teaching profession*

Teachers are a central actor in the learning process that takes place in schools, and teachers' attitudes and effectiveness can vary depending on the incentives they face. Teacher salaries have been a much discussed topic amongst teacher reformers. But, unfortunately, data on teacher salaries have often been misleading. In order to place teachers' salaries in perspective, it is useful to compare them to the salaries earned in other lines of work. Traditionally teachers have long been called the "economic proletarians of the professions" (Mills, 1951), and the data continue to bear this out. Different data sources have long documented that the salaries of new college graduates who have become teachers are considerably below those of new college graduates who chose many other occupations.

For instance, data from the nationally representative 2008-09 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study show the median salary (in 2010, one year after graduation) for college graduates who became teachers was below the median for all college graduates. Graduates working in business were paid 20 percent more than teachers, those working as nurses were paid 34 percent more, and those working as engineers were paid 57 percent more than their peers working as teachers (Cataldi et al. 2011). Typically, teachers in Africa have at least five direct dependents. Low salary was often found to be the significant predictor of teacher attrition (Murnane, Singer, & Willett, 1989; Shen, 1997; Stinebrickner, 1998; Theobald, 1990). Teachers at private-for-profit schools also earn less, on average, than in the public sector. Salary administration is also poor in most countries. In Somalia, late and half payment of salaries is very common. Teachers are not properly paid; salary is meager compared to other workers. This demoralizes would be teacher resulting to show negative attitudes towards the profession.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Research Design and Target Population*

The study used a descriptive research design to achieve the study objectives. The Office of Human Research Protection (2013) defines a descriptive study as a study that is conducted with the aim of establishing the relationship between variables without affecting the environment.

The study involved four private secondary schools targeting the form 1, 2,3and 4classes which have an enrolment of 320 pupils making up the population of this study. Simple random sampling method was used to select a sample of 96 pupils. The proportion of the sample was 30% of the population of 320 form 1, 2, 3 and 4 pupils. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommend 30% of the population as a good sample.

### *Sample Procedure*

The primary data of this study collected by using questionnaire, Questionnaire is used in view of the realty that the study will concerned with variables that can't be observing such information, The questionnaires of this study was developed by the researcher and they based on literature review whose congruent their dimensions of research and research objectives through steps in order to get relevant information on the research questions then researchers structured questionnaires into three sections: part (A) profile of the respondents, part (B) research questions one. Part (C) research questions two; and format of questionnaire designed as five point liker's scale.

### **Reliability Test**

To measure reliability the researchers used Cronbach's alpha. It is most commonly used when there are multiple Likert questions in a survey questionnaire that form a scale, and you wish to determine if the scale is reliable. In the light of the collected data, the Cronbach's Alpha is found to be less than and near to 1.00 this shows that it is reliable since there are some scholars who suggest that a chronbach's alpha of 0.71 is reliable, as it is argued by kathuri & palls (1993) the instrument with validity coefficient of at least 0.70 or 70% are accepted as valid in research.

## FINDINGS

### **Profile of Respondents**

As shown in tables 1 below, the majority of the respondents, 62(64.6%) were male compared with, 34 (35.4%) of female. Hence, the above finding reveals that majority of the respondents were male. In terms of age, 47 (49.0%) of the respondents were between 15- 20years old. In terms of the marital status, exactly 84.4% of the respondents were single.

	<i>Demographic Profile</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>
<i>Gender</i>	Male	62	64.6	64.6
	Female	34	35.4	100
<i>Age</i>	15- 20	41	42.7	42.7
	20-30	47	49	91.7
	Above 30	8	8.3	100
<i>Marital Status</i>	Single	81	84.4	84.4
	Married	15	15.6	100
	Total	96	100	



**Work overload in teaching and secondary school students’ attitudes towards the teaching profession**

The study sought to find out how work overload in teaching affects the attitudes of secondary schools students towards the teaching profession and the findings are presented in table 2. The findings indicate that 59.4 % respondents agreed that there is over workload in the teaching profession, 68.8% respondents agreed that teaching is a very stressful profession and 64.6 % of respondents agreed that workload in teaching as a difficult task. The overall aggregate mean score for this work overload was 3.55 and the standard deviation at 1.478.

These results support the opinions of Chisholms et al. (2005) and McCormarck (2004) both of whom state that teachers are over worked. These findings suggest that, if high school students perceive or see teaching as imposing a work overload, then considerable attention should also be given to these aspects so as to address the attitudes of the high school students towards the teaching profession. A study by Butcher and Lewis (2002) indicates that the Year 12 students regarded teaching as stressful and that teachers cannot handle it.

**Table 2. Work overload in teaching and attitudes towards the teaching profession**

<b>Work Overload in Teaching</b>	<b>SA (%)</b>	<b>A (%)</b>	<b>N (%)</b>	<b>D (%)</b>	<b>SD (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Students believe that there is over workload in the teaching profession.	32.3	27.1	2.1	26.0	12.5	3.41	1.477
Students believe that teaching is a very stressful profession.	36.5	32.3	13.5	2.1	15.6	3.72	1.389
Students see workload in teaching as a difficult task.	35.4	29.2	10.4	1.0	24.0	3.51	1.563
<i>Average score</i>						<b>3.55</b>	<b>1.478</b>

**Teacher’s Salary and secondary school students’ attitudes towards the teaching profession**

The study sought to find out how teacher’s salary affects the attitudes of secondary schools students towards the teaching profession and the findings presented in table 4.3. 93.7% of respondents felt that teaching does not offer good salary. 96.9% of respondents agreed that

**Table 3. Teacher’s Salary and attitudes towards the teaching profession**

<b>Teacher Salary</b>	<b>SA (%)</b>	<b>A (%)</b>	<b>N (%)</b>	<b>D (%)</b>	<b>SD (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Students see teaching offers attractive salary.	0.0	1.0	5.2	22.9	70.8	1.36	.634
Students feel that teaching doesn't pay enough given the amount of work and responsibility.	61.5	35.4	2.1	1.0	0.0	4.57	.594
Students feel that teachers are too economical due to the poor nature of their salary.	50.0	39.6	7.3	1.0	2.1	4.34	.831
Students feel that teachers are not adequately remunerated .	62.5	33.3	3.2	1.0	0.0	4.57	.611
Students feel that Pay and cost of living Incompatible.	71.9	26.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	4.69	.505
<i>Average score</i>						<b>3.91</b>	<b>0.644</b>

teaching doesn't pay enough given the amount of work and responsibility, 89.6% of the respondent agreed that teachers are too economical due to the poor nature of their salary, 95.8% of respondent agreed that teachers are not adequately remunerated, 97.9% of respondents agreed that Pay and cost of living incompatible. The overall aggregate mean score for this teacher's salary was 3.91 and the standard deviation at 0.644.

These results support the findings of Kubberud et al. (1999), who noted that indeed the salary of teachers is low and renders the profession unattractive to high school students. Armstrong (2009) suggest that the most obvious reason that teachers leave the profession is that teacher salaries lag far behind those of many other professions.

**Students' attitudes towards the teaching profession**

The study sought to establish the effects on students' attitudes towards the teaching profession. Table 4 presents the findings from the respondents, 95.9% of respondents do not see teaching as a noble profession, 91.7% of respondents agreed that they prefer teaching to other profession, 88.5% of respondents do not prefer to join teaching profession so as to be popular in the society, 97.9% of respondent do not regard teaching as a status profession and 90.6 of respondents do not see teaching profession is prestigious. The overall aggregate mean score for this students 'attitudes towards the teaching profession was 2.05 and the standard deviation at 0.751.

Austin (2008) attests that more and more high school students are shunning the teaching profession because it lacks 'glamour'. These results support Du Plessis (2009) who states that the teaching profession in South Africa is not a popular choice with school leavers, although the South African government has made substantial bursaries available to students of Education. If the current high school/secondary school pupils say that teaching doesn't attract them as a career as it offers 'too much stress and too little pay'.

**Table.4. Students' attitudes towards the teaching profession**

Students' Attitudes	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students see teaching as a noble profession	0.0	0.0	4.1	29.2	66.7	1.38	.567
Students prefer teaching to other profession	56.3	35.4	5.2	0.0	3.1	4.42	.854
Students feel like joining teaching profession so as to be popular in the society	2.1	4.2	5.2	26	62.5	1.57	.926
Students see teaching is a status profession	0.0	1.1	1.0	22.9	75.0	1.28	.537
Students see that teaching profession is prestigious	1.0	2.1	6.3	37.5	53.1	1.60	.788
<b>Average score</b>						<b>2.05</b>	<b>0.751</b>

**SOMALI SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the assumption of linearity between the dependent and the independent variables. Table 4.5 indicates that there was a significant negative linear relationship ( $r = -.317$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between work overload in teaching and students' attitudes towards the teaching profession at 5% level of significance. The results also indicate existence of a significant negative linear relationship ( $r = -.435$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between teacher's salary and students' attitudes towards the teaching profession at 5% level of significance.

**Table 5. Linearity test**

Dependent variable	Students' Attitudes towards the Teaching Profession			
	Independent variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2tailed)	N
Work overload in teaching	-.317**	0.000	96	Linear
Teacher's Salary	-.435**	0.000	96	Linear

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

## DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of the study was to examine Somali secondary school students' attitudes towards the teaching profession. Factors that were highlighted in the literature review as being the ones that are influential on the attitudes of high school towards the teaching profession also indicated as having effect. High school students indicated that the salary of teachers is relatively low, thus teachers are being paid "peanuts". The high school students also stated that they do not like the teaching profession as they do not like the work the teacher's do. The results of the study showed that students have negative attitude towards teaching profession, that teaching is a difficult task, and teachers are not well paid compared to other professions.

The findings were in line with those of Smitters and Robbison (2003) who reported that teaching is a difficult task when compared to other profession. Although salary is often mentioned as a possible inducement for teachers to stay into teaching profession salary is rarely given as the primary reason for leaving. Parent seeing that teaching profession does not accord any respect followed by poor salary, do not advice their children to go into it despite that they are the nation builders. No teacher nowadays advices his child to take to teaching as a profession in fact, some teachers by word or deed discourage interested people from taking up teaching as a vocation. Worse still, the serving teacher if asked or given an option on whether to continue in his field or change to another area will quickly choose to serve in another field simply because he is burnout and is paid too little. Eze (2004) supported the findings when he remarked that while the Doctor, physician, lawyers created an image of gentlemen and the best in the society, the name teacher elicited a feeling of insignificance and disrespect even vulgarity.

These findings reflect a similarity to the findings by Spear, Gould and Lee (2002) when they explained that poor salary was a primary reason for those intending to leave the profession and increase in salary was a way of improving teachers' morale. Additionally, Maheed (2004) stated that salary has been cited as a dissatisfied and an increase in salary as a starting point for increase in status.

## CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to determine the interrelationships among work overload in teaching and teacher's salary on Somali secondary school students' attitudes towards the teaching profession. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires that comprised of pupils questionnaire.

It is obvious that students have negative attitude towards teaching profession. A lot of factors have contributed to the negative attitude of students towards teaching profession among them are the meager nature of salary, irregular payment of salaries and fringe benefit, lack of promotion, excess work load, poor environment, parent negative influence and poor financing of education etc. To Somali students, teaching is a low status job and is no longer a noble profession as the salary is low. And also Somali students see teaching as stressful as teachers are overloaded with lots of work and added responsibilities. Another aspect worth noting is



the fact that students indicated that teachers themselves are discouraging the high school students from following a career in teaching.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations were made based on the literature review and the empirical investigations in the study:

1. Improvement of income of teachers in line with other professions like management, law, medicine, IT, Business, Economics, Engineering, etc.
2. The public should portray teaching as a noble and ideal profession and must refrain from negative reporting which is always influenced by the career choice of high school students
3. The over workload issues should be decreased to manageable situation. The over workload ends with a stress and unsuccessfulness
4. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education and the private school owners should ensure that teachers' salaries are placed high considering their role in nation building
5. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education in conjunction with the educational organization bodies should help project teacher's image and fight for their course by paying attention to development of their profession through capacity building programmes.
6. Parent should be educated on the need to encourage their children to study education courses and to avoid depriving the child his right for choice of course
7. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education should come up with policies that will address and govern the issues of teachers in private schools
8. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education should organize capacity building programmes for serving teachers to improve on their skills attitudes and abilities for better performances of their roles.
9. Building of National Union of Teachers should be encouraged. Teachers should maintain one umbrella that could pilot their affairs.

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