The Influence of Kenya National Union of Teachers’ Role on Academic Performance in Primary Schools in Rachuonyo, Kenya

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Abstract: The role of Kenya National Union of Teachers in enhancing quality education in Kenya cannot be over emphasized. Despite the role of Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) on teachers’ performance in Public Primary Schools, Rachuonyo North Sub-County continues to pose unimpressive negative deviation index in Kenya Certificate of Primary School Education (KCPE). The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of KNUT’s role on teachers’ performance in public primary schools in Rachuonyo North Sub-County. Employing Descriptive Survey Design, this study adopted Committed and Work Engagement Goals Theory. Five hundred and forty nine (549) respondents were sampled out as follows:- Headteachers (55), KNUT school representatives (55), Std 8 class teachers (55), other school subject teachers (337 out of 55 selected primary schools), KNUT executive officials (4) and 330 School Management Committee members, from 55 primary schools. Questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussion guide were used to collect data as the instruments were used due to their flexibility and adoptability. The validity of the research instrument was ascertain by use of a five—point Likert scale rating by experienced experts to ascertain whether questions were relevant, while the reliability was ascertain by test re-test technique using pilot study. Both validity and reliability depended on accuracy of research instrument i.e; technique procedure and findings. Heterogeneous aspects of the respondents were considered, including respondents ability, clarity of instructions and nature of construction. The instruments was administered for twelve weeks, then data was sorted, edited and coded for the purpose of allocation and entered for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 22). Data from interviews and Focus Group Discussion were analyzed qualitatively in an on-going processes as themes and sub—themes emerged from the data. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentages, frequencies and bar—graphs. Inferential statistics were used to help making inferences and draw conclusions. The findings of the study showed that KNUT brings teachers together and enhance academic performance.

Keywords: Knut’s Role, Academic performance, Influence

1.Introduction

Internationally, trade union conducts collective bargaining on behalf of its members in terms of pay and conditions of work (Ken 1988). Today’s global economy presents many challenges and opportunities for both employers and employees. The two is capable to change the competitive environment facing the education sector (Handy 1976).

According to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2003), education is viewed as a human right and a necessary condition of the full exercise of other rights. It is one of the basic rights and universal covenant of economic, social and cultural right. And that the purpose of education is to replace the empty mind with the open one where the implementer (teacher) to perform his duties to achieve ended goal.

Wood (1997), put it that a trade union is an agency and a medium of power seeking to address the imbalance power in the work place. The trade unions are also referred to as labor unions whose main purpose is to promote, protect and improve the social and economic interests of employees through respective collective action. Workers are
expected to perform according to their area of specialization to improve output. (results)

According to Bennel (2 for better performance, the employees must be contented and satisfied with the union they are worThe teacher trade union should work collaboratively and collectively with school administration to enhance education performance through implementors, all aspects of teacher responsibilities and act of professionalism should be adhered to, in order to realize quality performance. Therefore, primary function of trade union is to protect the interest of workers against discrimination and unfair practices.

Thus, International Trade Union (ITU) like other trade unions, has the following objectives and roles to play; which improves performance to participate in all matters calculated to lead to the improvement of education. In many countries, teachers through their trade unions, have to press their employers for the salary increment and good terms and conditions of service likewise, trade unions also influence through their representatives in educational institutions to improve their performance at place of work. (Dimitris, 1995).

In Britain, traditionally there are four types of trade union; Craft, General, Industrial and Occupational also referred to as white collar. This white collar union is for non-manual workers and recruits its members with particular jobs and professions. It was started in 1958 and largely bureaucratic. Britain has one national federation; Trade Union Confederation (TUC) which advocates for teacher performance at basic level. Britain Teachers Union (BTU) is a member of the confederation which remains self-governing but pay attention to group policy. The main aim of the federation is to make effective body for national negotiations as embraced in three primary objectives; one of its core objectives is to improve teacher performance by working closely with school administration. British teachers has been known of going on strike all the way back in 1889 due to poor salary and terms and conditions of work, but teachers have taken the initiative to improve performance in education sector, both in basic and tertiary learning institutions. In France, Confederation Francoise Democratique du Travail (CCFDT), is the French Democratic Federation of labor (FDFL). French teachers du Union (FTU) as a member of the CFDT, operates within CCFDT constitution and rules. The FTU has various roles to play for its members to work close with school administration through its representative to enhance teacher performance. The union as well played a significant role in making its members to perform duties in a conducive environment so as to improve academic performance. FTU has been faced with many challenges; one of them being that primary education is still based on the syllabi of 2004 where the abilities developed are; writing and reading skills in the same class. (Dimitris, 1995)

In Germany, the German Trade Union Federation (GTUF) has over six-million members. The GTUF is a member of European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) which is an umbrella to all trade union within European Continent. German Teachers Union (GTU) is an affiliate to GTUF and is autonomous in its operations which include: matters pertaining to education development where teachers are encouraged through organized capacity building programmes to perform their duties effectively. (Dimitris,1995). Papachristos (2015), emphasized that in Germany and Greece, teachers union annually meet to discuss cooperation and solidarity of their members. One major challenge they face is “serious problems pupils face in schools in terms of pupil-teacher ratio-to-poor conditions of work for teachers.” In Greece, the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture, has accepted a 40% of trained teachers – employment annually to limit the gap of unemployment besides Board of Council internship recruitment to maintain the ratio.

In United States of America (USA) teachers unions have broken the bonds of industrial unionism and have created a tentative stake in organizing as mental workers rather than as industrial workers. They have begun to depart from the boundaries of wages, hours and conditions of employment to organize what has been called the “other a half of teaching” – the substance of their work as opposed to the conditions under which it takes place. They have begun to define and enact standards for teaching quality and they are claiming their place as school reformers. Both the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the Nation Education Association (NEA) have officially put themselves in the quality education business. Both have endorsed; peer review, training standards for teachers and teachers work schedules that treat professional development as part of improving performance in teacher’s schools.. But small numbers of union-locals are following this lead. (Dimitris,1995).

Andrew (2008), spotted that, one of the major challenges facing American Federation of Teachers leaders, is uniting teachers together. This is because of diversity of education system existing in
different federal states, secondly, affiliated teachers unions social and cultural background.
Like any other world trade unions, AFT have the following roles to play to its members; press teachers employers for salary increment; good terms and conditions of services; provide teachers support for their ability to mobilize and represent teachers interests nationally; and advocacy for teachers empowerment, professional development, job satisfaction; and improving learning of students. (Dimitris,1995)

In Africa, many countries are members of the giant All Africa Teachers Organization (AATO). For example, the South Africa Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) was launched in Jonesburg on 6th October, 1990. The union had brought a legacy in South Africa because a range of racially divided teachers’ organizations merged together into a unit structure with a progressive vision (www.sadtu.org.za/do). SADTU challenged the legitimacy of ethnic education departments and made an important contribution to the struggle for non-racialism in South-Africa. SADTU, presently represents more than 200,000 teachers and enjoys international affiliation to Education Internal, AATO and the Southern African Teachers Organization (SATU). The main aim of SADTU is to eradicate all forms of discrimination in education and strive towards a free and democratic system of education in South Africa and to participate in a transformative programme of national reconstruction and development. A major challenge is to unite and faster an espirit de corps among teachers and education workers in education in promoting and maintaining standards of teaching and learning as teachers are expected to perform their duties as expected, professionally. (http://moe.go.SAZ).

Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) is a major trade union in Nigeria. The union was formally inaugurated in 1931. NUT came as a result of vulnerabilities exposed by the great depression, which led to cuts of teachers’ salaries and lack of job security. It was formed to create a united front for practitioners of the teaching profession in the country. Its major objectives included: improving economic conditions of teachers and general economic security for all teachers. To some extent, the union has live-up to its expectation. Several strikes actions were embarked upon at the instances of the union. (Wikipedia the free encyclopedia 2010). The role of ‘NUT’, on teachers has a lot of impact on teachers’ performance at their work stations. It has improved teacher-pupil ratio in public schools.(Ozono,2013)

In Tanzania, Tanzania Teachers Union (TTU) feel that their concerns are not addressed and if their concern remain, then quality of education is bound to suffer. There is a need for various stakeholders, government and teachers themselves to come together to resolve the problems facing teachers to improve academics. Thus, TTU must play its core functions and address the issues affecting teachers.(Ozono,2013).But despite the high levels of commitment shown by teachers.

In Zambia, Ozano (2015), teachers had been using improvised local materials to aid teaching – learning process. Secondly, of late (4/7/15) four teachers had issued their union (ZTU) for over using members’ dues for their own selfish ends and not putting the government on round-table-dialogue to address teachers’ plights to improve.

The establishments of trade unions in Kenya after World War II, became little less than a crusade. The Labor Government of Britain, the American Federation of Labor, the International of Free Trade Union (IFTU) and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) took the interests of the African laborer to heart and fastened the formation of trade unions as a way of salvation. (Alice,2006)).

Kenya employees since then had formed trade unions to air their grievances. Teachers were not exception. On 4th December, 1957 Kenya Union of Teachers (KNUT) was established. Although significant progress has been realized in teacher professionalism management, quality of education in Kenya has been hampered by limited skills, large class sizes, inadequate teachers training and facilities, poor remuneration compared to other economy sectors. All these have resulted in frequent calls for strike. “A teacher trade union is supposed to create a favorable working conditions, employment, professional development and job satisfaction for better performance in school by the teachers. For many years KNUT has been accused on concentrating on fighting for teachers cause with little emphasis on their performance” (Ibrahim, 2007).

Kenya National Union of Teachers is an association of teachers Country wide whose core value includes; to bring together and unite teachers of all grades and qualifications in Kenya and providing a forum for cooperation, to fight for improved terms and conditions of service for teachers and protecting teachers interests, promoting programmes aimed at improving teachers welfare or socio-economic status, to offer assistance to individual members in professional as well as legal matters. To settle disputes between members of the union or between its members and their employers through collective and constitutional means. To cooperate with other societies, bodies, unions or organizations within or outside Kenya with similar objectives. To promote matters leading to the improvement of education
and the establishment of a common system of education. To secure effective representation of the teaching profession on the government, public and private bodies or organization where such representations may be necessary. (Ibrahim, 2007).

However, aims and objectives of the KNUT according to its constitution include: to bring together and to unite teachers of all grades and qualifications in Kenya; to provide decision on matters affecting interests of education and the teaching profession in Kenya; to participate in all matters calculated to lead to the improvement of education; to extend the influence of the teaching profession in Kenya; to raise and maintain the standard and status of the teaching profession, to watch the administration and the working of the various educational codes, ordinances, regulations, minutes and circulars and to procure amendments and their removal where educationally desirable and to offer advice and general assistance to individual members in education and professional matters. (KNUT – Handbook; Revised, 2002).

KNUT, in its constitution, had laid more emphasis on the roles of school KNUT – representatives to work as agents at institutional level to; encourage members to perform their professional responsibilities and to be a spokesman or mediator in relation to the management of the school or college among other roles. (KNUT – DLF – LO/FTF, 2002). Professional responsibilities include; preparation of professional records, (Hendrinkz, 2011).

In Rachuonyo North Sub County, Homa Bay County the role of trade union (KNUT) performance has some significant impact. For example, KNUT has been closely working with school administration and KNUT-schools representatives as enshrined in KNUT constitution (2002) to improve teacher performance. It is therefore important to understand the role of KNUT on the education sector and its implications on the academic achievement in all public primary schools in Rachuonyo North Sub County. Hence there is a relationship between influence of KNUT and teacher performance as the two parties have vital roles to play to improve education academic achievement. But, the quest of better performance in KCPE for the last five years remain a concern. The public primary schools continue to pose unimpressive performance with private academies taking the lead. This euphoric and skewed perennial performance has posted KCPE candidates in Rachuonyo sub-county on a bad map in national examination notwithstanding the fact that KNUT has a role to play in enhancing improvement of teacher performance and advising them on their responsibilities.

Research Methodology:

Descriptive research design was used in this study and it is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. It can be used when collecting information about people’s attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Orodho and Kombo, 2003). According to Kothari (2013), descriptive research studies are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or group. This design was appropriate for this study as it attempted to describe what was in the social aspect such as school, and it allowed use of standardized instruments like questionnaires, interviews schedule and focus group discussion guide to be used in the survey design. Secondly, descriptive research design was preferred since it is carefully designed to ensure complete description of the situation, making sure that there is minimum bias in the collection of data and to reduce errors in interpreting the data collected. According to Cooper and Schindler (2001) descriptive study is concerned with finding out who, what, where and how of the variables which was there. The target population had a total of; 184 school headteachers, 184 school KNUT representatives, 1247 other TSC teachers in schools, 15 KNUT branch executive officials and 2292 school management committee from 184 schools. A sample was drawn from each stratum (purposive) from which respondents were randomly picked into the sample. The study used 30% sample from accessible population of 1412 teachers and 3128 school management committees as respondents. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), for descriptive studies, 10% - 30% of the accessible population provides a sufficient sample size when the target population is both homogenous and heterogeneous and probably not exceeding 2000(Kothari, 2004 also confirmed). The study used percentages to be able to get the recommended sample. Therefore 55 out of 184 public primary schools were randomly picked from zones, into the sample. The respondents included, 55 headteachers, 55 KNUT School representative; 55 standard eight class teachers; 1247 other subject teachers, 4 KNUT Officials, and 8 School Management Committee (SMC) members were purposively selected on the ground that schools have singled stream from STDs one to eight where each class was represented by a committee member for the study totaling to 549 respondents.
The main research instruments that were used for data collection for this study consisted of; questionnaires, interview schedule and focus group discussion guide. Informants responded by filling in questionnaires, participants’ voices were videotaped during interview schedule and focus group discussion guide was organized to other respondents.

The researcher studied the answers in the questionnaire to ascertain whether all the objectives had been addressed from the responses and answers given. For this study content, validity of the research instruments were established by having the instruments appraised by the supervisors and experts in education administration and during the pilot study where all the vague questions were reviewed. Constant consultation, adjustment and modifications with the supervisor were soughted to enhance validity. Validity of the instruments were seen in two aspects; whether respondents had completed questionnaires accurately, and whether those who failed to respond were given the same distribution to refill. To test reliability of the instrument test-retest technique was used. This test-retest method involved administering the same instrument twice to the same group of subjects.

The provisional draft of the questionnaire was pre-tested on a pilot study. The pilot study provided a check on the feasibility of the proposed procedure for collecting data and show-flows and ambiguities (Kasomo, 2006) This particular study compared the findings from questionnaire, interview schedules and focus group discussion guide. To ensure reliability, a pilot study was conducted in six public primary schools to test the reliability of the research instruments. Pilot survey is the replica and rehearsal of the main survey. It brings to the light the weaknesses (if any) of the questionnaires and also of the survey techniques and from the experience gained, improvement can be detected (Kothari, 2013). The schools selected for the pilot study were not included in the actual study, within the sub-county. The pilot study enabled the researcher to familiarize oneself with the administration of the instrument. The research instruments were piloted also to test their appropriateness of the items on influence of KNUT’s role on academic performance in public primary schools in order to enhance validity and reliability of the instrument. Through piloting, item deficiency and ambiguity was uncovered (Faranenkel and Wallen, 2000). Crobach Alpha was used to measure internal consistence of the data.

**Reliability test**

Reliability of the instrument for data collection was tested by assessing the scale’s internal consistency-the degree to which the items that make up the scale ‘hang together’. This was done using Cronbach’s alpha. According to Orodho (2009), a questionnaire has good internal consistency if the Cronbach alpha coefficient of a scale is above .7. In this current study a Cronbach alpha coefficient was established .814, as indicated in the SPSS output below. This implies that good internal consistence of the scale was established.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.836</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trustworthiness and Authenticity of Qualitative Data**

Trustworthiness and authenticity is the process of establishing truthness and credibility of the qualitative data. This was made possible in this study by adopting the four criteria proposed by Guba and Shukla (2012). These are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

**Credibility** is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. The study had 549 informants which was accurate enough to build a good report. The questions from the instruments enabled the researcher to develop an explanation of the research design. **Transferability** is the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to the other situations. The researcher prepared a detailed questionnaire to allow comparisons to be made. ** Dependability** was addressed using methodological procedures of the research report, thus a future researcher can be able to repeat the same work. **Conformability** deals with the findings as the results of the experiences and ideas of the informants rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher. This was acknowledged and explained by giving reasons that was used and any weaknesses in the techniques to be employed. Thus the trustworthiness of the current data was established through main instruments to be used.

**Data Analysis**

Upon receiving questionnaires, interview schedules and response from focus group discussion guide the tools were checked, coded, processed and analyzed. The researcher analyzed data according to research questions. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 22) was used to produce frequency distribution and percentages. SPSS enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe the distribution of scores or measurements using a few statistics or indices. Spont Likert scale value will be used where; strongly agreed (SA) = 5; agreed (A) = 4 undecided (U) = 3, disagree (D) = 2 and
strongly disagreed (SD) = 1 (Fied, 2009), were used to code the respondents views on influence of KNUT on teachers performance in primary schools in Rachuonyo North Sub-County.

In addition, the qualitative data from interviews were reported in verbatim, transcribed and coded according to various themes, categories and subcategories per objective as they emerge during the study as required by the principles of thematic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to investigate the role of KNUT on teachers’ performance in public schools as the main dependent variable in the study. To investigate this variable, the researcher designed 10-itemed questionnaire to explore the role of KNUT as viewed by head-teachers, the standard eight teachers and school KNUT representatives. Items of the questionnaire were linked to facts/perceptions which were related to constructs deemed to be the roles of KNUT. The respondents were presented with the statements which were in Likert-scaled item type items, in which respondents choose from 5-point score; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The respondents were asked to score on each statement based on their perception of the statement in regard to their level of satisfaction on the influence of KNUT. The researcher computed percentage frequencies of the responses from the head teachers, standard eight teachers and school KNUT representatives, and were tabulated separately.

Head teachers’ view on the role of KNUT

Table 4.6: Head teachers’ view on the role of KNUT (n=53).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of KNUT</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNUT brings together and unite teachers.</td>
<td>41 (77.4%)</td>
<td>12 (22.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT settle disputes between members and employer.</td>
<td>42 (79.2%)</td>
<td>9 (17.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT fights for improved terms and conditions of service.</td>
<td>44 (83.0%)</td>
<td>9 (17.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT defends teachers in the course of their duties.</td>
<td>28 (52.8%)</td>
<td>23 (43.4%)</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT strives for quest for better working conditions.</td>
<td>35 (66.0%)</td>
<td>13 (24.5%)</td>
<td>5 (9.4%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT promotes/ improves teachers welfare/status socio economic.</td>
<td>25 (47.2%)</td>
<td>14 (26.4%)</td>
<td>9 (17.0%)</td>
<td>5 (9.4%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT work in collaboration with other inters nation teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS.</td>
<td>14 (26.4%)</td>
<td>22 (41.5%)</td>
<td>10 (18.9%)</td>
<td>7 (13.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT effectively addresses challenges affecting teacher union.</td>
<td>23 (43.4%)</td>
<td>22 (41.5%)</td>
<td>4 (7.5%)</td>
<td>4 (7.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT helps in determination of teachers work load.</td>
<td>21 (39.6%)</td>
<td>16 (30.2%)</td>
<td>7 (13.2%)</td>
<td>9 (17.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT addresses issues on professionalism.</td>
<td>34 (64.2%)</td>
<td>15 (28.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>3 (5.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Source: Survey data (2015)

The findings of the study show that most of the head teachers in Rachuonyo North Sub-County were satisfied with their union, KNUT, whose core values they said is to bring together and unite all teachers and to provide a forum for cooperation, to fight for improved terms and conditions of service. For example, slightly more than three quarters, 77.4% (41), of the head teachers who took part in the study strongly agreed that KNUT brings together and unite teachers as they fight for common interests. This is in agreement with Ken (1988) who cited that trade union conducts collective bargaining on behalf of its members in term of pay and condition of work. However Papachristos (2015) emphasized those teacher trade unions should meet annually to discuss cooperation and solidarity of their members. During interview, most of the informants indicated that, KNUT is a unifying factor which brings together and unite teachers. Among them were the KNUT officials who one of them presented;

“KNUT does not want to isolate teachers. Teachers play a very significant role in education sector. Everything and anything starts from education. Therefore as much as the government tries to disintegrate teachers on union membership line, we as KNUT officials stand strong to unite our members and speak with one voice.” (KNUT informant 3).

This was confirmed by focus group discussion groups where majority of other subject school teachers came up with the remark;
“As much as we are united under the umbrella of KNUT, we shall continue to strive and overcome our professional challenges. KNUT has put us together and its role is unquestionable. We shall continue relying under it” (other subject teachers group 14).

Majority of school management committee during focus group discussion commented on support of the union as a unifying factor commented;

“We as parents, forming school community; we support KNUT on its endeavor to continue uniting teachers together. A divided house falls, a united house stands.” (participant group 18)

In view of the informants its true to agree that KNUT plays a significant role in bringing and uniting teachers together. This is a typical indication that KNUT role to its members is very significant.

Handy (1976) suggested that trade union and its members are capable to change the competitive environment facing education sector, and speak with one voice to achieve intended goals and objects. This is also supported by Papachristos (2015) who emphasized teachers union should meet annually to discuss cooperation and solidarity of their members.

True to the generally held opinion that to effectively settle disputes between members of a union and their employers through collective and constitutional means, a union must cooperate with other societies, bodies, unions or organizations within or outside Kenya with similar objectives, the findings of this study confirm that 79.4% (42) of headteachers, strongly agreed that KNUT settle disputes between members and employer. 17.0% (9) agreed while 1.9% (1) undecided with the same 1.9% (1) disagreed. This means that almost 86.2% (51) agreed on KNUT’s role in setting disputes. It emerged that headteachers who work as school administrators are working in collaboration with KNUT to achieve its role.

During the interview with KNUT officials, majority indicated that KNUT settle disputes between members and employer, as one informant remarked;

“We work on policies. There is no way an employer can intimidate its employee anyhow. We always consult with employer to come up with a working solution to a problem. I am happy, for example, TSC has been very much cooperative except on extreme cases.” (KNUT informant 2).

During focus group discussion with other school subject teacher with other school subject teachers, majority agreed that KNUT plays a significant role on setting disputes between members and employee. A group commented;

“Our goalkeeper is KNUT. At times our employer, TSC, goes overboard, for example coming up with very unnecessary professional issues just to victimize teachers. KNUT had been very strong on this to act as a mediator.” (informant 24).

School Management Committee members, during focus group discussion, also showed their support on KNUT role in setting disputes between teachers and employer. A group presented;

“We support KNUT in setting disputes between teachers and TSC. Let them continue as we know our aim, we are working for the child.” (informant 9).

This is a clear indication that the majority of informants and respondents are supporting KNUT’s role and effort in setting disputes between its members and employer.

Lewis (1993), argued that the core function of any trade union is to create a conducive atmosphere/environment between employee and employer in order to achieve desired goal.” This perfectly enhance positive attitude towards work and gain positive out-come.

On the same note, more than four out of five, 83.0% (44) of the headteachers who took part in the study strongly expressed satisfaction with KNUT on the basis that it fights for improved terms and conditions of service for the members. 17.0% (9) were in agreement. This means that all of headteachers 100.0% (54) were in the agreement that KNUT fights for improved terms and conditions of service.

KNUT officials during the interview had a view that the union had been fighting for improved terms and conditions of service. One informant stated

“We are here to improve terms and conditions of service. We only need support and cooperation from teachers and other stakeholders to achieve our objectives” (informant 3).

Majority of other school subject teachers also commented during focus group discussion;

“KNUT must come up to work for teachers and improve their terms and conditions of service.” (informant 7)

School Management Committee members also came up with formidable remark during focus group discussion. Majority concurred,
“Community support KNUT. Teachers terms and conditions of service need to be improved better.” (participant 20)

According to views of the informants, majority were in support that KNUT should put more effort to fight for the improved terms and conditions for teachers. Majority of the respondents also had the same feeling. Armstrong (2003) asserted that trade unions have all the rights and obligations to advocate for its members on improved terms and services. Ozano, (2013) also pointed out that the issues of poor working conditions of services may lead to strikes.

On the other hand, nearly all the head teachers from Rachuonyo North Sub-County were in agreement that KNUT effectively defend teachers in the course of their duties, as was indicated by 96.2% (51) of the head teachers who took part in the study. 1.9% (1) were both undecided and disagreed on the opinion that KNUT defends teachers in the course of their duties. This means that majority of headteachers supported this role of KNUT.

Interview conducted to KNUT officials on teachers defence had a remark; “Its our priority to defend teachers in the course of their duties. And we are proud of that. But teachers should not take it as obvious. They should not go extreme, expecting that we are ever on the defence side.” (KNUT informant 1).

During focus group discussion with other subject teachers, majority of the group consented; “KNUT is really out to defend us. We give it support. But a times we do condemn unbecoming professional conduct among some teachers. Some of us do misbehave professionally taking KNUT as a personal lawyer advocating for anything.” (informant 11).

This implies that majority of informants and respondents agreed with KNUT’s role on defending teachers in the course of their duties. Lewis, J. (1998) asserted that trade unions should defend their workers to realize better productivity.” This is a reality of the day.

The findings of the study show that about two thirds, 66.0% (35), of the head teachers who took part in the study held that KNUT strives for better working conditions for teachers. This fact was supported by a further 24.5% (13) others who agreed that KNUT usually participate in activities that are geared towards improving teachers welfare or socio-economic status. But 9.4% (5) of them were undecided although the standard deviation stands at 0.67, with a mean of 4.57. This means that a majority of 90.5% (48) were in the agreement of KNUT questioning for better working conditions of teachers, to enhance their performance.

During the interview with KNUT officials, one of the officials asserted; “We are out to strive for quest for better working conditions for our union members. That is our duty. We have to do it so that they have goodtime for better performance.” (informant 2).

Majority of other subject school teachers during focus group discussion on KNUT’s quest for better working conditions stated; “KNUT is doing a lot to teachers. But this can not be really realized because of their big number. Teachers are many and government allocation to the Ministry of Education should be proportionally increased.” (participant 19).

This was confirmed by focus group discussion. Participants – other subject teachers – that; ‘The role of KNUT is self-explanatory when it comes to its quest for better conditions for teachers. A good worker works best in an conducive environment.” (participant 21).

However school management committee members argued; “Do they really change the life of our children, because KNUT has advocated for better house allowance and other allowances but still no proper academic improvement.” (participant 29).

This implies that, majority of the respondents and informants were in the agreement that KNUT plays a significant role towards striving for quest for better working conditions. A report by UNESCO (2006), put it that many teacher trade unions, should, a part from appealing for a better working conditions for their workers, they should also assess the end result of work.

On trade unions, the findings of this study show that most head teachers generally agree that primary function of KNUT is to protect the interest of teachers against discrimination and unfair practices. This was revealed by 47.2% (25) of the head teacher respondents who strongly believed that KNUT promotes and improves teachers welfare such as socio-economic status. However, 9.4% (5) of them did not believe that KNUT has promoted or improved teachers’ welfare.
and another 17.0% (9) others remained non-committal on whether KNUT really succeeds in promoting and advancing teachers welfare, as indicated in Table 4.6.

When KNUT officials were interviewed over the issue of promoting teachers welfare and social economic status, one of the official boldly stated;

“We are out for it. Teachers welfare should be initiated and protected. A hungry teacher is a angry teacher. Improving teachers socio-economic status is our prioty.” (informant 3).

During the focus group discussion with other school subject teachers on the issue of KNUT’s role in promoting and improving teachers welfare and socio-economic pointed out that;

“KNUT has initiated many welfare organizations/ societies to improve socio-economic status of its members. But the problem is proper management of these societies. Its better to replace in competed personnel.” (participant 13).

When School Management Committee members were put on task during the focus group discussion, majority asserted;

“We have heard of many societies being formed to teachers to improve their socio-economic status, but some teachers are poorly made. They have nothing appreciable. But some few are making good progress and development.” (participant 28)

In agreement to the generally held opinion between the respondents and informants, it implies that KNUT promote and improve teachers welfare and socio-economic status. Wood, (1997)… asserted that trade unions are also labor unions whose main purpose is to promote, protect and improve social and economic interest of employee through collective action.

For example, slightly more than two thirds, thirds, 67.9% (36), of the head teacher respondents held a belief that KNUT work in collaboration with other international trade unions, such as International Labour Organization and Confederation of Africa Teachers, among others. 18.9% (10) and 13.2% (7) were undecided and in disagreement of the opinion respectively. This means that majority of 67.9% (36) of the opinion of KNUT role in working in collaboration with other international trade unions on capacity building on HIV/AIDS.

In interview with KNUT officials on the issue of role of KNUT in working collaboration with other international teacher trade union in capacity building on HIV/AIDS, an informant remarked;

“Really, no union can work in isolation. We need both national and international partners to achieve a common global issue. HIV/AIDS is a scourge which, its impacts can be seen socially, economically and felt psychologically. The teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS as a big issue and by teachers involvement, i am sure we are going to make a bigger stride in terms of teacher performance.” (informant 1).

Other school subject teachers during the focus group discussion on the same issue spotted out;

“That KNUT impact on capacity building on HIV/AIDS is very minimal. This is a very heath – sensitive area and the pace they take to feel the impact is very negligible although they work in partnership with TSC.” (Participant 8).

On the other hand school management committee members when involved in focus group discussion commented that;

“The sufferers of the HIV/AIDS scourge are the parents. We have many orphans as a result of scurge. KNUT should come out with a different approach to help the HIV/AIDS orphans. Even teachers they should do the count down and assist where necessary. (participant 16).

The findings of both the respondents and informants had some good agreement in that majority agreed KNUT’s effort to work in collaboration with other international teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS. According to KNUT education policy document – 2010; the policy stated that KNUT works in collaboration with other international teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS. TSC – Breaking the Silence Magazine (June, 2010) estimated on its report that by 2005 about 156,000 children were infected by HIV/AIDS and about 2.4 are HIV positive; teachers included.

It emerged that although 7.5% (4) of the head teachers who took part in the study did not agree, majority [strongly agreed: 43.4% (23); agreed: 41.5% (22)] of them were in agreement that KNUT effectively addresses challenges affecting teachers. However, 7.5% (4) of them remained non-committal on the level of effectiveness of how the union addresses the challenges of the teachers. This means that majority of headteachers 84.9% (45)
were in the agreement of KNUT’s commitment to address the issues challenging thee union.

During the interview, most KNUT officials indicated that tries to effectively address challenges affecting teachers union. One of the informant stated;

“We are fully out to address issues on challenges affecting teacher union. They are many and need both material financial supports. We are in the process and well other stakeholders to chip-in.” (KNUT informant2)

But other school subject teachers during focus group discussion, majority remarked;

“All is lies with the government because they allocate fund to the Ministry and therefore, both KNUT and the Ministry should work in collaboration to achieve this sensitive objective/ goal.” (participant, 14).

School management committee members on the same issue had an idea. Majority suggested;

“Let KNUT priorities challenges and see which ones need national attention. We are ready to support.” (participant 23).

The opinion, views and suggestions given and observed by respondents and informants of the issue of KNUT effectiveness to address challenges affecting teacher union were in agreement. Majority feel KNUT is effectively trying to perform its role. Wamukuru (2000) pointed out, that a trade union should address issues affecting its operation so as to deliver to its members. This would enable teachers perform their duties. 13.2% (7) of the respondents had undecided opinion and 17.0% (9) were in total disagreement. This means that simple majority agreed with KNUT’s role on the issue.

During the interview with KNUT officials, one of them noted;

“We know of the curriculum workload to teachers. But it is not as heavy as it was during the inception of the real 8-4-4 system of education. This curriculum content is manageable. KNUT is concern with the curriculum content.” (informant 4).

Majority of other school subject teachers put it during the focus group discussion;

“The workload is heavy due to understaffing; otherwise its manageable.” (participant 36).

During the focus group discussion with school management committee members, majority agreed;

“The workload of teachers is not too much. But the fear is on the government side where schools are understaffed. The government should improve by recruiting more teacher. That it.” (participant 19).

The views of majority of the respondents and informants had it that KNUT plays a significant role in determining of teachers workload. Both KNUT and the Ministry should work in collaboration to determine on teachers workload. Nyambala (2001) attested that KNUT has achieved tremendous goals for its members... in ensuring that the government through the Ministry of Education is committed to providing quality public education with moral and valuable curriculum contents. He further noted that KNUT has put a lot of effort into influencing the improvement of professional standards. Barber (2000) argued that the skills and knowledge earns the professional status in a society and the benefits that go with it.

On the same note, it came out from the study findings that KNUT addresses issues on professionalism, as it was confirmed by 64.2% (34) of the head teachers who took part in the study who agreed that the union’s role has not been limited to championing for the rights of the teachers alone but also involve promoting professionalism among its members. It emerged that school - KNUT representatives who work as agents at institutional level encourage members to perform their professional responsibilities including preparation of professional records, punctuality and regular attendance to school, and prompt syllabus content coverage.

28.3% (15) of them agreed held perception that KNUT addresses issues on professionalism; while 1.9% (1) and 5.7% (3) were undecided and disagree respectively. This shows that 92.5% (49) of headteachers were in the agreement that KNUT addresses issues on professionalism.

During interview, KNUT officials indicated that KNUT is fully out to address issues on professionalism. For example an official of KNUT stated;

“Issues on teachers professionalism is an aspect of concern. We do encourage teachers to observe and prepare relevant professional records and use them accordingly. It would be improper to continue on working without records.” (informant 3)

This fact was also reflected among other subject teachers, during the focus group discussion, came out with the comment. Majority pin-pointed that;
“We do adhere on areas of professionalism. We appreciate the effort KNUT put in addressing issues on professionalism. But KNUT at times miss very important functions such as education days to address teachers a part from organizing seminars.” (participant 34).

Majority of school management committee members, during focus group discussion consented; “KNUT should organize meetings or conferences comprising teachers and community so that we get an opportunity to face and talk one by one with KNUT also to get our points on the sport and share ideas. It would be very healthy.” (participant 29).

The study generally held opinion that KNUT enable to address issues on professionalism among teachers. Both respondents and informants were on agreement on the issue. But Philip, (1993) argued that some trade unions had only improved workers professional development in only one specific aspect. It should be holistic in nature. “in respect of this KNUT had played an average role over the issue of professional development to teachers.

On the same note, more than four out of five, 83.0% (44), of the head teachers who took part in the study strongly expressed satisfaction with KNUT on the basis that it fights for improved terms and conditions of service for the members. Quite a significant majority, 64.2% (34), of the head-teachers who participated in the study agreed that, to some extent, KNUT has lived-up to its expectation since it was formally formed. They alluded that the union has created a united front for workers of the teaching profession in the country with a major objective of improving the economic conditions and general economic security for all teachers. Wood (1997) asserted that a trade union is an agency and a medium of power seeking to address the imbalance of power in the work place. The trade unions are also referred to as labour unions whose main purpose is to promote, protect and improve the social, economic and political interests of employees through collective action, the workers welfare has been neglected for so long, and hence low performance in their areas of specialization.

KNUT works closely with other teacher trade unions. It emerged that a majority of 79.2% (42) of the head teachers who took part in the study confirmed that KNUT occasionally settle disputes between the members and the employer.

4.3.2: Standard eight teachers’ view on the role of KNUT

The research study wanted to establish standard eight teachers view on the role of KNUT. The views were categorized according to the role of KNUT.

Table 4.7: standard eight teachers’ view on the role of KNUT(n=55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of KNUT</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNUT brings together and unite teachers.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT settle disputes between members and employer.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT fights for improved terms and conditions of service.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT defends teachers in the course of their duties.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT strives for quest for better working conditions.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT promotes/ improves teachers welfare/ status socio economic.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT work in collaboration with other nation teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT effectively addresses challenges affecting teacher union.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT helps in determination of teachers work load.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT addresses issues on professionalism.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA- strongly agree, A-agree, UD-undecided, D-disagree and SD-strongly disagree; Std.Dev.-Standard deviation.

Source: Survey data (2015)

According to the result on table 4.7, majority of standard eight teachers, 98.2% (54) had the view that KNUT is a unifying factor bringing and uniting teachers together. Only a few 1.8% (1) was undecided. This implies that majority of the standard eight teachers were in the agreement that KNUT is a unifying factor.
During interview, most of the informants indicated that, KNUT is a unifying factor which brings together and unite teachers. Among them were the KNUT officials who one of them presented; “KNUT does not want to isolate teachers. Teachers play a very significant role in education sector. Everything and anything starts from education. Therefore as much as the government tries to disintegrate teachers on union membership line, we as KNUT officials stand strong to unite our members and speak with one voice.” (KNUT informant 3).

This was confirmed by focus group discussion groups where majority of other subject school teachers came up with the remark; “As much as we are united under the umbrella of KNUT, we shall continue to strive and overcome our professional challenges. KNUT has put us together and its role is unquestionable. We shall continue relying under it” (other subject teachers group 14).

Majority of school management committee during focus group discussion commented on support of the union as a unifying factor commented; “We as parents, forming school community; we support KNUT on its endeavor to continue uniting teachers together. A divided house falls, a united house stands.” (participant group 18).

In view of the informants its true to agree that KNUT plays a significant role in bringing and uniting teachers together. This is a typical indication that KNUT role to its members is very significant.

The views of standard eight teachers together with the informants indicate that majority agreed with the KNUT’s role in bringing and uniting teachers together.

The findings of the study show that teachers, like their head teachers, also had a lot of faith in their union. For example, nearly all [98.2% (54)] the teachers were satisfied with KNUT as a teachers’ union that it has always endeavored for better working conditions of the members. This was reflected by 40.0% (22) of the teachers who took part in the study who were in strong agreement with the assertion that KNUT works towards better working conditions of the teachers. The observation agrees with Nyambala (2001) who attested that KNUT has tremendous goals for its members not only in spearheading issues affecting the welfare of teachers, but also in ensuring that the government is committed to providing quality public education. Similarly, although 3.6% (2) of the teachers were not satisfied with KNUT in its quest to improve teachers welfare and socio economic status, more than four out five 81.8% (45) of them expressed their satisfaction with union arguing that it has always, stood tall in promoting teachers socio-economic status in form of better remuneration. However, 14.5% (8), of the teachers who participated in the study remained non-committal on whether KNUT really has effectively executed its role of agitating for improved teachers welfare, especially their social status.

It emerged from the findings of the study that although about a tenth 10.9% (6) of the respondents were undecided; a significant majority of 81.8% (46) of them was in agreement that KNUT effectively addresses challenges affecting teachers. In fact, a similar proportion of the teachers who took part in the study observed that KNUT always defend teachers in the course of their duties, 87.4%(46)

On the other hand, the findings of the study show that only 30.9% (17) of the teachers from Rachuonyo North Sub-County were in full agreement that KNUT works in collaboration with other international teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS. The assertion conformed to Beech (2000) who asserted that for good performance employees must be contented with organization they are working for. However, 10.9% (6) of the teachers were not sure whether KNUT really collaborates with other international teacher unions in a bid to address issues on HIV/AIDS among its members.

The study findings show that teachers were sharply divided on the involvement of KNUT in determination of teachers work load. For example, although 43.6% (24) of the teachers who took part in the study agreed, more than a quarter 27.7% (15) of them refuted the assertion that KNUT participates in determination of teachers work load. Nyambala (2001) noted that in its professional role, KNUT has put a lot of effort into influencing the improvement of professional standards. He points out that KNUT has always been involved in the running of in-service courses as means of improving academic and professional levels of many serving teachers. But, Barber (2000) argued that the skills and knowledge earns the professional status in the society and the benefits that go with it.
4.3.3: School KNUT representatives’ view on the role of KNUT

Table 4.8: School KNUT representatives’ view on the role of KNUT (n=54)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of KNUT</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNUT brings together and unite teachers.</td>
<td>36 (66.7%)</td>
<td>18 (33.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT settle disputes between members and employer.</td>
<td>40 (74.1%)</td>
<td>14 (25.9%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT fights for improved terms and conditions of service.</td>
<td>36 (66.7%)</td>
<td>18 (33.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT defends teachers in the course of their duties.</td>
<td>26 (48.1%)</td>
<td>25 (46.3%)</td>
<td>3 (5.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT strives for quest for better working conditions.</td>
<td>22 (40.7%)</td>
<td>29 (53.7%)</td>
<td>3 (5.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT promotes/ improves teachers welfare/ status socio economic.</td>
<td>20 (37.0%)</td>
<td>25 (46.3%)</td>
<td>9 (16.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT work in collaboration with other international teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/AIDS.</td>
<td>19 (35.2%)</td>
<td>28 (51.9%)</td>
<td>4 (7.4%)</td>
<td>3 (5.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT effectively addresses challenges affecting teacher union.</td>
<td>24 (44.4%)</td>
<td>24 (44.4%)</td>
<td>5 (9.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT helps in determination of teachers work load.</td>
<td>28 (51.9%)</td>
<td>20 (37.0%)</td>
<td>4 (7.4%)</td>
<td>2 (3.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT addresses issues on professionalism.</td>
<td>32 (59.3%)</td>
<td>18 (33.3%)</td>
<td>2 (3.7%)</td>
<td>2 (3.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA-strongly agree, A-agree, U-undecided, D-disagree and SD-strongly disagree; Std. Dev.-Standard deviation.

Source: Survey data (2015)

From Table 4.8, it was evident that school KNUT representatives were of the opinion that like any other trade unions, KNUT has played major roles of pressing teachers’ employer (TSC) for salary increment, good terms and conditions of services; mobilize and represent teachers interests nationally; unite and bond teachers for common interest and advocate for teachers empowerment and job satisfaction. For example, it was established that two thirds 66.7% (36) of the school KNUT representatives were in strong belief that KNUT brings together and unite teachers.

Majority of standard eight teachers 56.4% (31), strongly agreed on KNUT settling disputes between members and employer. 44.4% (24) agreed. This indicates majority opinion and faith teachers have on KNUT in executing its role to teachers.

During the interview with KNUT officials, majority indicated that KNUT settle disputes between members and employer, as one informant remarked;

“We work on policies. There is no way an employer can intimidate its employee anyhowly. We always consult with employer to come up with a working solution to a problem. I am happy, for example, TSC has been very much cooperative except on extreme cases.”

(KNUT informant 2).

During focus group discussion with other school subject teacher, majority agreed that KNUT plays a significant role on setting disputes between members and employee. A group commented;

“Our goalkeeper is KNUT. At times our employer, TSC, goes overboard, for example coming up with very unnecessary professional issues just to victimize teachers. KNUT had been very strong on this to act as a mediator.” (informant 24).

School Management Committee members, during focus group discussion, also showed their support on KNUT role in setting disputes between teachers and employer. A group presented;

“We support KNUT in setting disputes between teachers and TSC. Let them continue as we know our aim, we are working for the child.” (informant 9).

This is a clear indication that the majority of informants and respondents are supporting KNUT’s role and effort in setting disputes between its members and employer.

Standard eight teachers view and other informants interviewed were in strong agreement of KNUT’s role in setting disputes between members and employer. This enhances teachers performance due to strong agreement they had on their trade union.

Like both the head teachers and the standard eight teachers, the school KNUT representatives were in strong agreement that KNUT has played very effectively its mandate of settling disputes between members and the employer. This was observed by nearly three quarters, 74.1% (40), of the school KNUT representatives who participated in the study.
In addition, two thirds 66.7% (36) of the school KNUT representative strongly held a perception that KNUT mainly fights for improved terms and conditions of service. On the same note, the findings of the study show that 40.7% (22) of the respondents strongly believed that KNUT does its best to achieve better working conditions.

About 98.2% (54) of standard eight teachers agreed on KNUT’s role to fight for improved terms and conditions of service. Only 1.8% (1) were undecided. This implies that standard eight teachers who took part in the study were in strong agreement with the assertion that KNUT works towards better working conditions of service.

KNUT officials during the interview, had a view that the union had been fighting for improved terms and conditions of service. One informant stated;

“We are ever a lert on improving teachers terms and conditions of service to our dedicated teachers. The employer is the snug, especially the current TSC officials. They are adarmant even on very touchy issues.” (KNUT informant 1).

Majority of other school subject teachers also commented during focus group discussion; “KNUT must come up to work for teachers and improve their terms and conditions of service.” (informant 7/21)

School Management Committee members also came up with formidable remark during focus group discussion. Majority concurred; “Community support KNUT. Teachers terms and conditions of service need to be improved better. Parents feel good when life of teachers are safe.” (participant 5)

In view of the informants, majority were in support that KNUT should put more effort to fight for the improved terms and conditions for teachers. Majority of the respondents also had the same feeling.

It emerged from the results of the study that KNUT generally protects teachers from unnecessary attacks. This was indicated by 48.1% (26) of the school KNUT representative who participated in the study who strongly insisted that KNUT major role has been to defend teachers in the course of their duties.

In fact, a similar proportion of the teachers who took part in the study observed that KNUT always defend teachers in the course of their duties. A significant majority of 87.3% (48) of standard eight teachers were in agreement; while 10.9% (6) and 1.8% (1) were undecided and disagree respectively. This means that majority of the respondents were in the agreement on the role played by KNUT.

Interview conducted to KNUT officials on teachers defence had a remark;

“KNUT is a real advocate for teachers. We are ready to fight upto the end provided that we are fighting genuinely on obvious intimidation.” (KNUT informant 4).

During focus group discussion with other subject teachers, majority of the group consented; “KNUT is really out to defend us. We give it support. But a times we do condemning unbecoming professional conduct among some teachers. Some of us do misbehave professionally taking KNUT as a personal lawyer advocating for anything.” (informant 11/16/19).

The study findings shows that the standard eight class teachers had a lot of faith in KNUT likewise to informants interviewed and involved in group discussion.

The findings of the study show that standard eight class teachers, like their headteachers, also had a lot of trust on their union. For example, nearly 98.2% (54) standard eight teachers were satisfied with KNUT as a teachers’ union that it has always endeavored for better working conditions of the members. 10.9% (6) of teachers remained undecided and 1.8% (1) disagrees. This indicates that majority were in support of KNUT over its role on quest for better working conditions.

During the interview with KNUT officials, one of the officials asserted;

“We are out to strive for quest for better working conditions for our union members. That is our duty. We have to do it so that they have goodtime for better performance.” (informant 2).

Majority of other subject school teachers during focus group discussion on KNUT’s quest for better working conditions stated;

“We are aware of KNUT quest for better working conditions. But we are suggesting for a blue-print that covers ALL what knut intends to do with TSC. It should be adhered to in order to see some commitment ” (participant 23).

This was confirmed by focus group discussion. Participants – other subject teachers – that;
The role of KNUT is self-explanatory when it comes to its quest for better conditions for teachers. A good worker works best in an conducive environment." (participant 21/29)

However, school management committee members argued:

“Do they really change the life of our children, because KNUT has advocated for better house allowance and other allowances but still no proper academic improvement.” (participant 29).

This implies that, majority of the respondents and informants were in the agreement that KNUT plays a significant role towards striving for quest for better working conditions. A report by UNESCO (2006), put it that many teacher trade unions, should, a part from appealing for a better working conditions for their workers, they should also assess the end result of work.

On the same note, although 16.7% (9) of the school KNUT representatives who participated in the study were undecided, a significant majority of 93.3% (45) of them generally accepted that KNUT promotes teachers welfare and socio-economic status. Similarly, although 3.6% (2) of the standard eight teachers were not satisfied with the KNUT in its quest to improve teachers welfare and socio-economic status, more than four out of 81.8% (45) of them expressed their satisfaction with union arguing that it has always stood tall in promoting teachers socio-economic status in form of better remuneration. However, 14.5% (8), of the teachers who participated in the study remained non-committal on whether KNUT really has effectively executed its role of agitating for improved teachers welfare, especially their social status.

When KNUT officials were interviewed over the issue of promoting teachers welfare and social economic status, one of the official boldly stated:

“We have many schemes which we encourage our members to join in order to improve their welfare and social economic status. It’s true that many of them live a standardized life.” (informant 4).

During the focus group discussion with other school subject teachers on the issue of KNUT’s role in promoting and improving teachers welfare and socio-economic pointed out that:

“KNUT has initiated many welfare organizations/societies to improve socio-economic status of its members. But the problem is proper management of these societies. Its better to replace incompetent personnel.” (participant 13/27/31).

When School Management Committee members were put on task during the focus group discussion, majority asserted;

“Good houses within villages nowadays belong to teachers. Majority have also venture in good bussines. Not only that, they have given their children some good education” (participant 10)

In agreement to the generally held opinion between the respondents and informants, it implies that KNUT promote and improves teachers welfare and socio-economic status. Wood, (1997)… asserted that trade unions are also labor unions whose main purpose is to promote, protect and improve social and economic interest of employee through collective action.

For example, 35.2% (19) strongly held that KNUT work in collaboration with other international teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/ AIDS; more than half [59.3% (32)] of them believed that KNUT has effectively addressed issues that affect teachers on professionalism.

For example, the study show that KNUT has been closely working with school administration and schools KNUT representatives as enshrined in KNUT constitution to improve teacher professionalism, as revealed by 74.6% (40) of the school KNUT representatives surveyed.

On the other hand, the findings of the study show that only 30.9% (17) of the teachers from Rachuonyo North Sub-County were in full agreement that KNUT works in collaboration with other international teacher trade unions in teacher capacity building on HIV/ AIDS. The assertion conformed to Beech (2000) who asserted that for good performance employees must be contented with organization they are working for. However, 10.9% (6) of the teachers were not sure whether KNUT really collaborates with other international teacher unions in a bid to address issues on HIV/AIDS among its members.

In conclusion, the findings of the study established that teachers rated the role of KNUT of settling disputes between members and employer as the highly effective; this was approved at a mean of 4.56 and standard deviation of .49. On the flip flop, at a mean of 4.13 and standard deviation of .87, teachers alluded that KNUT’s role of helping in determination of teachers work load was the least successful. Ngware et. al.(2008) also revealed that teachers in public schools had huge workload which affect teacher performance. But Oso (2009) had a different view. He pointed out that a salaried worker should work round the clock to achieve
something tangible which is qualitative. That idea of workload is a scapegoat.

The study findings has shown that KNUT had begun to depart from the preserves of agitating for salaries and remuneration and conditions of employment, but also been involved in organizing the substance of teachers’ work as opposed to the conditions under which it takes place alone. In fact, nearly nine out of ten, 88.8% (48), of school KNUT representatives held a general belief that KNUT effectively addresses most of the challenges affecting teachers. It emerged from the findings of the study that although about 14.5% (8) of the respondents were undecided, a significant majority of 81.8% (45) of standard eight teachers were in the agreement that KNUT effectively address challenges affecting teachers.

During the interview, most KNUT officials indicated that they try to effectively address challenges affecting teachers union. One of the informant stated;

“We are out to tackle very sensitive issues that may hinder our progress in handling challenging issues related to education development. One serious challenging issue is child labour and many more” (KNUT informant 3)

But other school subject teachers during focus group discussion, majority remarked;

“Everything lies with the government because they allocate fund to the Ministry and therefore, both KNUT and the Ministry should work in collaboration to achieve this sensitive objective/goal.”
(participant, 13/17/24).

School management committee members on the same issue had an idea. Majority suggested;

“Let KNUT priorities challenges and see which ones need national attention. We are ready to support.” (participant 23).

The opinion, views and suggestions given and observed by respondents and informants of the issue of KNUT effectiveness to address challenges affecting teacher union were in agreement. Majority feel KNUT is effectively trying to perform its role. Wamukuru (200) pointed out, that a trade union should address issues affecting its operation so as to deliver to its members. This would enable teachers perform their duties.

13.2% (7) of the respondents had undecided opinion and 17.0% (9) were in total disagreement. This means that simple majority agreed with KNUT’s role on the issue.

During the interview with KNUT officials, one of them noted;

“We know of the curriculum workload to teachers. But it is not as heavy as it was during the inception of the real 8-4-4 system of education. This curriculum content is manageable. KNUT is concern with the curriculum content.” (informant 4).

Majority of other school subject teachers put it during the focus group discussion;

“Understaffing will never end because the government is ever on record that they don’t have even if the children are suffering. KNUT recently suggested to use money ment for laptop to employ more teachers. Too much workload gives skewed result”(participants 6/9/22).

During the focus group discussion with school management committee members, majority agreed;

“The workload of teachers is not too much. But the fear is on the government side where schools are understaffed. The government should improve by recruiting more teacher. Thats it.” (participants 19/15/29).

The views of majority of the respondents and informants had it that KNUT plays a significant role in determining of teachers workload. Both KNUT and the Ministry should work in collaboration to determine teachers workload.

The study findings show that the teachers were sharply divided on the involvement of KNUT in determination of teachers’ workload. For example, although 43.6% (24) of the teachers who took part in the study strongly agreed; more than a quarter 27.7% (15) of them refuted the assertion that KNUT participants in determination of teachers’ workload.

During the interview with KNUT officials, one of them noted;

“The only problem with the government is that it never works in consultation. Even key stakeholders just get very vital information through media. Secondly, the ministry never priorities it needs as required to run the ministry effectively.”
(informant 3).

Majority of other school subject teachers put it during the focus group discussion;

“The workload is heavy due to understaffing, otherwise it’s manageable.”(participant 36/42/45/47).
During the focus group discussion with school management committee members, majority agreed; “The workload of teachers is not too much. But the fear is on the government side where schools are understaffed. The government should improve by recruiting more teachers. That it.” (participant 19).

The views of majority of the respondents and informants had it that KNUT plays a significant role in determining of teachers work load. Both KNUT and the Ministry should work in collaboration to determine on teachers workload. In addition, it was further found that the union has played a significant role in making its members feel its role in addressing issues on professionalism. 72.7% (40) of standard eight teachers strongly agreed and 25.5% (14) agreed. A mere 1.8% (1) remained undecided. This means majority agreed 95.5% (54) with KNUT effort.

These findings agrees with the aims and objectives of the KNUT as indicated in its constitution: to bring together and to unite all teachers in Kenya; to provide decision on matters affecting interests of education and the teaching profession in Kenya; to participate in all matters calculated to lead to the improvement of education; to raise and maintain the standard and status of the teaching profession and to offer advice and general assistance to individual members in education on professional matters.

In conclusion, the findings of the study established that teachers rated the role of KNUT of settling disputes between members and employer as the highly effective; this was approved at a mean of 4.56 and standard deviation of .49. On the flip flop, at a mean of 4.13 and standard deviation of .87, teachers alluded that KNUT’s role of helping in determination of teachers work load was the least successful. Ngware et. al.(2008) also revealed that teachers in public schools had huge workload which affect teacher performance. But Oso (2009) had a different view. He pointed out that a salaried worker should work round the clock to achieve something tangible which is qualitative. That idea of workload is a scapegoat.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the study, it was clear that all participants headteachers, standard eight class teachers and school KNUT representatives agreed that Kenya National Union of Teachers bring and unite teachers together. Majority of the teachers had faith in their trade union while a significant minority number thought that this is not true. Majority of the informants KNUT officials, other school teachers and school management committee members eluded that KNUT has created a united front for workers in the teaching profession. From the findings, it was reasonable to conclude that there was a significant agreement that KNUT’s role on teachers had been highly supported in Rachuonyo North Sub-County.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study findings it was established that majority of the respondents headteachers, standard eight class teachers and school KNUT representatives were satisfied with KNUT’s role on academic performance in Rachuonyo North Sub-county. This is supported by significant majority of other informants; KNUT officials, other school teachers and school management committee.

RECOMMENDATION

The Recommendations were derived from the study findings and made to the key education stakeholders in the Kenya Government, which may also be relevant to other education holders world-wide. Thus, following are recommendations of the study based on the findings;

1. government through the Ministry of Education should revise the curriculum contents regularly to avoid unnecessary work load to teachers.
2. Teachers should be in fore-front of ensuring that they live to the expectation of the society, abide to professional ethics and realize the significant role played by KNUT by discharging their duties diligently.

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