

## COMMUTING DISTANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG TEACHERS IN TANZANIA

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George Mrope, PhD, Department of Social Science and Humanities, Mzumbe University - Mbeya Campus College. Email: [gmrope@mzumbe.ac.tz](mailto:gmrope@mzumbe.ac.tz)

### ABSTRACT

*This study sought to examine the effects of commuted distance on teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzania. The study was carried out in Songwe Region using a cross-sectional survey design. A sample size of 68 respondents was determined using a Cochran formula from a population of 84 teachers, and were drawn using simple random sampling. The data were collected using closed-ended questionnaires. Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to analyse the demographic data, and respondents' attitudes on commuted distances. Binary logistic regression was used to measure the effects of commuting distance on teachers' job satisfaction. The findings reveal that, teachers who commute to a distance of 1 to 3km from home to workplace have the highest mean satisfaction score of 3.87, and the Standard Deviation of 1.183. Again, teachers who commute to a distance of 100-399km from workplace to their domiciles have the highest mean satisfaction score of 3.60, and the Standard Deviation of 1.271. The findings also reveal a substantial relationship between commuting distance and teachers' job satisfaction as shown by odds ratio (Pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> = 0.367). The study establishes that teachers who commute short distance from home to workplaces are more satisfied with their jobs than those who commute long distance from home to workplaces. Not only that but also, teachers who commute short distance from workplace to place of domicile are more satisfied with their job than those who commute long distance from workplace to place of domicile. Thus, based on the findings, a plausible conclusion can be drawn that commuting distance has effect towards teacher's job satisfaction in Songwe Region. The study recommends that; employers should take into account commute distances while employing teachers in a nationwide arrangement. Finally, studies on approaches to lessen teachers' commuting distance challenges are suggested to increase employers' awareness and teachers' job satisfaction.*

**Keywords:** *Commuting Distance, Job Satisfaction*

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### INTRODUCTION

Commuting distance is the distance an employee travels in terms of kilometres to get to their place of employment (Rao, 2018). It is the distance that employees travel from their homes to their workplaces. Goerke and Lorenz (2017) argue employees always commute between home and workplaces. Currently, the average percentage of workers commuting distance between home and workplace in the world is on the increase. For instance, there is increasing commuting distance in Germany (Federal Statistical Office, 2013). According to the National Travel Survey (2012) in UK, the average commuting distance has increased to 14.5 kilometres. In Turkey, teachers commuted up to 240 kilometres (Önen & Doganer, 2021). In the same vein, Emre and Elci (2015) argue that lately in developing countries, commuting distances to work is evidently increasing as cities and towns are becoming more congested.

The same situation is prevalent in Tanzania as teachers commute across vast distances to and from work while hunting for decent home. Table 1 shows the average distance teachers commute to and from work in Tanzania.

**Table 1:** *Average Distance Commute by Teachers in Tanzania*

Region	Average Distance Commute by Teachers in Km
Temeke	10 Km
Kinondoni	10 Km
Kisarawe	13 Km
Songwe	3 Km

**Source:** Kyara, (2013); Shonje, (2016); Nzilano (2018) and URT, (2019).

Thus, it seems that commuting distance has effects on teachers’ work and families at large. Goerke and Lorenz (2017) argue that employees who commute long distances are not able to come daily at work and therefore, about 20% of such employees do not attend to their workplaces regularly contrary to employees who commute short distance. Similarly, Dickey (2022) and Daka (2016) argue that commuting long distance accompanied with negative attitude to community for instance lead to decline in number of students perusing teaching career in order to run and avoid such chaos. According to Chondoka (2022), long commuting also reduces teachers’ time to spend with their families. On the other hand, other teachers tend to use commuting as a strategy to get close to their families but the time they get is very few compared to teachers with no commute or who commute short distance. In the same vein, Kariuki (2014) argues that several feelings are connected to family issues; for instance, children feel miserable in the absence of their parents, family income is jeopardized due to the increased cost of commuting to and from home, and the emergency of infidelity that emerges in the family. In this way, long distance commuting does not only lead to cost, time consuming, and stressful work, but also can lead to employees’ physical and mental health problem, job frustration, social separation, and boredom that in turn can contribute to increased tension and stress for workers (Shakti, Ray & Gupta, 2021).

Literature show that, long distance commuting triggers employees’ dissatisfaction with work conditions and environment-related variables such as family issues like good schools for kids, houses, employees’ health and other social amenities (Shonje, 2016 & Rao, 2018). According to Önen and Doganer (2021), teachers in rural areas prefer to live in urban or semi-urban areas to take care of partners and indeed special care of relatives. Therefore, employees decide to relocate to areas where amenities are available as well as where friends and partners live.

In this regard, certain initiatives have been made by the Tanzanian Government to ensure teachers’ job satisfaction. In 2016, the government announced free travel to and from school to teachers in parts of Dar Es Salaam city to cover teachers commuting costs. Also, the government through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in various projects set a budget to ensure houses are built for the sake of reducing teachers’ commuting distance and attitude accompanied by the situation (URT, 2015).

Moreover, the literature reveals that environment-related factors such as commuting distance and job satisfaction have received little attention (Shakti, Ray & Gupta, 2021) and therefore, Murphy and Angelski (1997) in Dickey (2022) call for the need of research and determine if teachers occasionally leave rural school locations due to increased distance from families and community remoteness. According to Önen and Doganer (2021), studies to examine teachers’ challenges in rural areas were done except, studies on the effects of commuting distance towards job satisfaction. Therefore, this

study assesses the effects of commuting distance on job satisfaction among teachers in Songwe Region, Tanzania.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Different studies have been carried out regarding commuting distance and employees' job satisfaction. Huysman (2008) shows that in Florida, 48 school teachers commute up to 8 miles, 13 school teachers commute 9 up to 16 miles, 4 teachers commute 16 up to 23 miles, 9 teachers commute 24 up to 30 miles, and 11 teachers commute 31 and above miles. Similarly, Sprumont *et al.* (2014) reported an increase in commuting distance to and from work among the university staff member in Luxemburg City and Germany. It was found that 6 of the University staff commute up to 3 km to work, 21 of the university staff commute 3 to 10 km, 64 of the university staff commute 11 to 20 km, 157 of the staff commute 21 to 50 km, while 81 staff commutes 50 km and above (Sprumont *et al.*, 2014). Thus, teachers and academic staff nowadays experience the challenge of increasing commuting distance in their workplaces. Besides, long distance commuting to work seems to be common among employees, often bringing negative attitudes among them and have an impact on their job and on their well-being.

The increased distance commuted to teachers is accompanied by attitudes towards their work. A number of studies established that long-distance commuting affects teachers' job satisfaction. For instance, Hakansson and Lundmark (2019) in Sweden observed that employees are affected by commuting distance to and from work as they commuted 7.5 to 10 kilometres daily. Daka (2016) found that teachers are affected by the commuting distance in Patauke District Zambia. In Zambia, teachers commute 6 to 92 kilometres from school to the town where teachers live. A study by Janssen (2017) in Netherland reveals a small and negative relationship between commuting distance and job satisfaction as indicated by the coefficient of determination,  $\beta = 0.016185$ ;  $P = 0.032$ . The findings reveal that, for every additional kilometre commuted between home and workplace, job satisfaction tends to decrease to 0.0016185. Therefore, commuting distances have an impact on teachers' job satisfaction because long commutes induce stress that lower teachers job satisfaction.

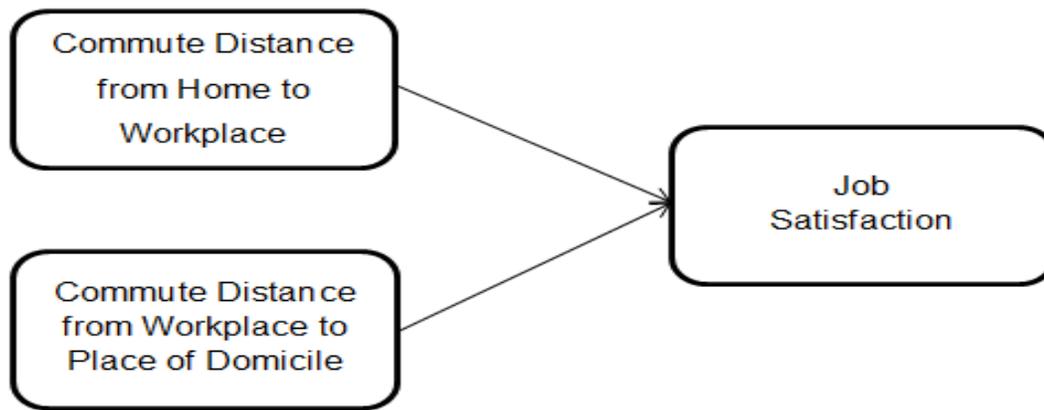
Abdu and Nzilano (2018) found that in Temeke District, teachers are dissatisfied with commute distance to 10 km daily to and from work. Kyara (2013) observed the same in Kinondoni District where teachers commuted long distances of 10 km daily to and from schools. Similarly, Shonje (2016) reported that the situation is not only to teachers who live in Temeke and Kinondoni district but also for teachers who live in Kisarawe District. The studies show that teachers are dissatisfied with long distance commuting inside Tanzania. It is again argued that teachers in Tanzania face a challenge of long-distance commuting as long-distance commuting tied teachers' job satisfaction in their work environment because it increases teachers' travel time and other life difficulties.

Once employees are dissatisfied with the distance commuted, they decide to quit their current work (Han, Hakansson, and Lundmark (2019). Daka (2016) found that 82.5% of teachers' performance is affected by the distance commuted from home to school as teachers come to school late and tired something that affects teaching directly. On the other hand, Shonje (2016) found that teachers who live far away from the schools are accompanied by low teaching morale; as a result, teachers have low attendance at school, attrition and sometimes informal arrangement with students in attending school sessions (Kyara, 2013). Conversely, researchers like Spies (2006) found that the growing commuting distance between home and workplace does not necessarily cause lower job satisfactions. Similarly, Sanjeewa and Dilina (2018) asserts that commuting distance to place of domicile does not affect job satisfaction. These contradictory findings may be due to various factors, including the specific work environment and individual variations in how people perceive and react toward commuting. Therefore,

it is crucial to take into account a variety of studies' findings and viewpoints in order to comprehend the relation between commuting distance and job satisfaction.

Therefore, the literature conceptualized that, Job Satisfaction =  $f$  (Commuting distance from home to workplaces, and from work to domicile places). The model, therefore, recognises job satisfaction as an outcome of perceived commuted distance by teachers. Thus, teachers' satisfaction depends on the distance commuted from home to workplace and from work to place of domicile. Hence, the present study examines the effects of commuting distance towards job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzania.

**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework



**Source:** Literature Review (2023)

**METHODOLOGY**

The study applied a cross-sectional survey design. The cross-sectional design was adopted due to the fact that the study intended to collect data on teacher's attitude and perception towards commuting distance at Songwe region. The study was worth to be studied in Songwe region as teachers averagely travel to a long distance of 3 km to and from home to school in the region (URT, 2019). The study adopted the purposively sampling techniques to select four primary schools namely; Mkulwe, Msangano, Chikanamilo and Nkangamo with a total of 84 teachers that makes a population of a study. A sample size of 68 respondents was determined using the Cochran formula in a population of 84.

$$S = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q \cdot N}{e^2 (N-1) + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

Where:

S = Sample Size  
 Z= 1.96, e = 0.05, p = 0.5, q = 0.5, N = 84, n = 68

Stratified random sampling was utilized to allocate the sample to each selected school. The number of teachers in schools was proportionate represented. At the end, the numbers of sample from each school were as follows: - Mkulwe (12), Msangano (15), Chikanamilo (23), and Nkangamo (18). From the schools, respondents were drawn using simple random sampling where a researcher asked employees in a sample population independently to fill in the questionnaire without replacement until the sample size of 68 respondents was obtained. The data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire. With regards to the nature of a questionnaire, quantitative data were solicited. Before data collection, a pilot study of 8 people to test the content, relevant, adequate, and wording of the questions in the

questionnaire was conducted to ensure validity of the measuring instrument. Moreover, reliability was ensured by adoption of the questionnaire from Spices (2006). On the other hand, the questionnaire was self-administered to ensure a high rate of respondents. Variables in the questionnaire were measured using kilometers teachers commute. The dependent variable in this study was job satisfaction while independent variable was commuting distance from home to office and vice versa. Descriptive statistical analysis and Binary Logistic Regression (BLR) were used to analyze the data. Binary logistic regression model was adopted due to the fact that job satisfaction has been measured as a binary outcome in which teachers are required to respond are satisfied with distance commute or not. Henceforth, the findings were presented in tables and discussed.

The binary logistic regression model

$$\text{logit}(\Pi) = \log\left(\frac{\Pi_i}{1-\Pi_i}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \beta_2 x_{i2}$$

Where:

$X_1$  = Commute distance from home to workplace (CDHO)

$X_2$  = Commute distance from workplace to the place of domicile (CDWD)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Demographic profile of the respondents

To determine the profile of the study, respondents' gender, age, marital status and work tenure were considered. The findings in table 2 reveal that 41 (60.3%) of the study respondents were males and aged between 31 to 50 (94.2%) years old; and 27(39.7%) of the study respondents were females. The findings also report that, 65 (95.6%) of the respondents are married. Regarding the respondents' tenure, the results show that 6 (7.3%) of respondents have 1 to 6 years of work experience, 13 (19.2%) of respondents have 6 to 9 years of work experience, 16 (23.5%) of respondents have 9 to 12 years of work tenure, and 34 (50%) of respondents to have 12 and above work years' tenure. In this study, the inclusion of both male and female respondents ensures gender diversity although the female respondents were relatively fewer than male counterparts. Moreover, the demographic profile indicates that the study respondents were matured enough to provide sufficient information about commuting distance and job satisfaction among teachers as several respondents were aged and experienced enough between 31 to 50 years old and 9 years and above respectively. The demographic profile assures the researcher that the respondents included in the study had the required skills, sufficient information and knowledge about commuting distance and job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzania.

**Table 2:** Demographic Profile of the Respondents

SN	Demographic	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1.	<b>GENDER</b>		
	Male	41	60.3
	Female	27	39.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>
2.	<b>AGE</b>		
	20-30	2	2.9
	31-40	42	61.8
	41-50	22	32.4
	51 and above	2	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>	
3.	<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
	Married	65	95.6

	Others	3	4.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>
4.	<b>TENURE</b>		
	< 3 years	2	2.9
	3-6 years	4	4.4
	6-9 years	13	19.2
	9-12 years	15	23.5
	12 and Above	34	50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2023)

### Teachers' satisfaction with commuted distance from home to workplace (CDHO)

In this study, teachers' satisfaction with the distance commuting from home to workplace was determined. The results of the analysis are shown in table 3. The table presents the mean and standard deviation of teachers' satisfaction with their commuted distance from home to workplace. The results show that, teachers who commute to a distance of 1to 3km from home to workplace have the highest mean satisfaction score of 3.87 with the standard deviation of 1.183. The results also reveal that teachers who commute to a distance of 4-6km from home to workplace have a low mean satisfaction score of 3.78 and the standard deviation of 1.104. Moreover, the findings show a low mean satisfaction score of 2.93, with standard deviation of 1.633 for the teachers who commute to a distance of 6 to 9 km from home to workplace. Similarly, the results reveal a lowest mean satisfaction score of 2.01 and standard deviation of 0.970 for the teachers who commute to a distance of 9 to 12 km from home to workplace. On the other hand, the findings reported that teachers who commute to a distance of 12km and above from home to workplace have a moderate mean satisfaction score of 2.26 and the standard deviation of 1.265.

These findings imply that, teachers who commute short distance to workplaces are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs than those who commute long distance. On the other hand, the findings denote the decreases of teachers' job satisfaction as the commuting distance from home to workplace increases. The findings also signify that, teachers who travel to a moderate distance from home to workplace knowledge a lessening in their job satisfaction. Similarly, the findings suggest that teachers who commute longer distance from home to workplace have the lowest job satisfaction level compared to those who commute shorter distance from home to workplace. Generally, the findings imply that, the increase in distance commute for teachers from home to workplaces declines their job satisfaction. Therefore, teachers who commute short distance to their workplace are more satisfied with their jobs. The study findings support the findings by Han, Hakansson and Lundmark (2019) who found that teachers who commute short distance of 1 to 3 km from home to workplace are satisfied with their works. Perhaps, commuting short distance from home to workplace avoids not only work but also family challenges. For instance, commuting short distance to school will waive teachers cost of transport to workplace. Thus, the money that was supposed to be used for daily transport to and from work could be used for other family activities-such money is worth to be saved because it is huge amount of money. Due to the remoteness of the areas in Songwe region, motorcycle is the means of transport referred here. Therefore, teachers who commute from urban areas to interior for working have to hire motorcycle as a means of transport. The cost to hiring motorcycle for one trip to work is not less than three thousand, and therefore go and return is six thousand per day. Hence, it is difficult for a teacher to manage such cost for all days required to be at work. In such regard, teachers prefer to commute short distance in order to avoid cost and the challenges associated with the means of transport as well as work attitude accompanied in such working environment. On the other hand, commuting

short distance is expected to be connected to teachers' performance as teachers will be able to attend schools on time without tiredness and can avoid absenteeism rates.

**Table 3:** Teachers' Satisfaction with Commuted Distance from Home to Workplace

CDHO	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-3 Km	3.87	1.183
4-6 Km	3.78	1.104
6-9 Km	2.93	1.633
9-12 Km	2.01	.970
12 Km and above	2.26	1.265

**Source:** Field data (2023)

**Teachers' satisfaction with commuted distance from workplace to the place of Domicile (CDWD)**

Teachers' satisfaction with commuted distance from workplace to the place of domicile was also determined in the study. The Results of the analysis are shown in table 4. The table presents the mean and standard deviation of teachers' satisfaction with their commuted distance from their workplace to their place of domicile. From the table, the result show that, teachers who commute to a distance of 1-99 KM from their workplace have a higher mean satisfaction score of 3.25, with a standard deviation of 1.596. The results also show that teachers who commute to a distance of 100-399 KM have the highest mean satisfaction score of 3.60, with a standard deviation of 1.271. Teachers who commute long distance in a range of 400-899 KM have a lower mean satisfaction score of 2.69, with a standard deviation of 1.026. Moreover, it is revealed that teachers who commute at a distance of 900-1199 KM have low mean satisfaction score of 2.21 and a standard deviation of 1.073. Similarly, teachers who commute at a distance of 1200 KM and above have the lowest mean satisfaction score of 1.43, with standard deviation of 0.606. The results imply that, the increase in commuted distance from the workplace to the place of domicile, decreases teachers job satisfaction levels. Therefore, as the commuted distance from workplace to place of domicile increased, teachers' satisfaction tends to decrease. Teachers who commute less frequently indicate higher levels of satisfaction than those who commute longer distance. Therefore, teachers who commute short distance from workplace to place of domicile are more satisfied with their job than those who commute long distance from workplace to place of domicile. The findings concur with the findings of Clark *et al* (2020) who acknowledged that, shorter commute distances from workplace to place of domicile is associated with increased job satisfaction. Perhaps, the findings validate that teachers prefer to work nearby domicile places to minimize transport costs on a regular visit while attending family and social matters especially taking care of the old parents, making families, building houses, farming, visiting and meeting with friends. All these are possible if the distance to the place of domicile is close and not otherwise.

**Table 4:** Teachers' Satisfaction with Commuted Distance from Workplace to the place of Domicile

CDWD	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-99 Km	3.25	1.596
100-399 Km	3.60	1.271
400-899 Km	2.69	1.026
900-1199 Km	2.21	1.073
1200 and above Km	1.43	.606

Source: Field data (2023)

### Binary Logistic Regression Results

The Binary Logistic Regression was performed to assess the relationship between commuting distance and teacher’s job satisfaction. Table 5 displays the findings of the analysis. From the table, the findings show that the model is statistically significant and can predict teachers’ job satisfaction (Hosmer-Lemeshow = 8.062,  $p = 0.0327$ ). Moreover, the findings show a substantial association between commuting distance and teachers' job satisfaction as revealed by the odds ratio (Pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> = 0.367). The results indicate that approximately 36.7% of the variation in job satisfaction among teachers in Songwe Region can be explained by commuting distance variables included in the present study while the remaining percentage are explained by other variables not accounted for in the study. However, commuting distance has been shown to have a negative association with teachers' job satisfaction. The findings suggest that the increase in commuting distance is linked with decreasing teachers' job satisfaction.

On the other hand, results in table 5 show a relationship between distance commute from home to the workplace and teachers job satisfaction as reported by the odds ratio 0.44, with a 95% confidence interval of 0.15 to 1.43 and p-value of 0.022. The results suggest that increasing distance commuting from home to work is related to the decreasing likelihood of teachers’ job satisfaction. Moreover, the findings reported that there is a relationship between commute distances from the domicile to the workplace with teacher’s job satisfaction as shown by the odds ratio 0.58, with a 95% confidence interval of 0.35 to 1.76 and p-value of 0.01. Result implies that increasing commuting distance from the place of domicile to the workplace is linked with the decreasing likelihood of teacher job satisfaction. These findings concur with the findings of Janssen (2017) who also found that commuting distance have association with job satisfaction. Possibly, commuting to employees acts as a coping strategy towards work environment challenges such as housing, health and other amenities as it appears that, employees are sent to work remotely interior where living is not appealing compared to their home place and place of domicile where such amenities are pliantly and adequately available. Employees therefore, found that home place and domicile place are better for living than in work place.

**Table 5: Relationship between Commute Distance and Teachers Job Satisfaction**

Variable	Bivariate analysis		Multivariable Analysis	
	Crude Odds Ratio	P-value	Adjusted Odds Ratio	P-value
CDHO	0.59(0.23 - 1.24)	0.03	0.44(0.15 - 1.43)	0.022
CDDW	0.74(0.35 - 2.24)	<0.001	0.58(0.35 - 1.76)	0.01
<b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup>=0.367, Hosmer-Lemeshow = 8.062, p=0.327</b>				

Source: Field data (2023)

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that, teachers who commute short distance from home to workplaces are more satisfied with their jobs than those who commute long distance from home to workplaces. Moreover, teachers who commute short distance from workplace to place of domicile are more satisfied with their

jobs than those who commute long distance from workplace to place of domicile. The study also concluded that commuting distances have a negative relationship with teacher's job satisfaction. It is recommended that employers must take into account teachers commute distances while employing them in a nationwide arrangement. Furthermore, a similar study should be conducted in other regions to validate the present study findings. Finally, studies on approaches to lessen teachers' commuting distance challenges are suggested in order to increase teachers' job satisfaction and general well-being.

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