

# THE INFLUENCE OF GRIEVANCE HANDLING ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THIKA WEST DISTRICT

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## Declaration

This management research project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.

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This management research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.

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## **Dedication**

This research project is dedicated to my beloved wife Mary and our children Lisa and Tevin.

## Abstract

Grievance management is an important topic in the area of industrial relations. Research on grievance management is burgeoning, and yet the understanding of its influence on employee satisfaction in private secondary schools remains unclear. This research discusses the influence of grievance handling on employee satisfaction in private secondary schools in Thika West District in Kenya. It was conducted to achieve two main objectives which were to investigate the style the private school managers use in handling grievances and to examine the influence of grievance handling on job satisfaction among the teachers. The population of the study consisted of class teachers, heads of departments, deputy principals and principals from seventeen registered private secondary schools in Thika West District. The response rate was 72.72%. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

The results of the study revealed that the grievance handling styles with highest preference by respondents were Compromising and Integrating styles with 89.6% and 81.2% levels of preference respectively. Dominating, Avoiding and Obliging styles had 24.9%, 29.1% and 20.87% levels of preference respectively. The study also revealed that respondents in the study derive most satisfaction when Compromising and Integrating styles are used in handling their grievances with 89.05% and 84.8% respectively reported satisfied. The percentage of respondents satisfied with Obliging, Dominating and Avoiding styles were 31.3%, 22.93% and 12.5% respectively.

The study concluded that Compromising and Integrating styles lead to high job satisfaction since they are associated with a high concerns for both parties involved in a conflict. Dominating, Avoiding and Obliging styles. lead to low job satisfaction since they are associated with a high concern for one party and a low concern for the other party involved in a conflict.

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## 1.1 Background of the study

The great majority of employees are quite enthusiastic when they start a new job, but in most organisations, employee morale sharply decline after their first few months and continue to deteriorate afterwards. According to Armstrong (2006), it is an interesting fact that when people are asked directly if they are satisfied with their job, most of them (seventy to ninety percent) will say they are. This is regardless of the work being done, and often in spite of strongly held grievances. Pearson and Robinson, (1997) argues that the fault lies squarely at the feet of management in the policies employed in managing their work force and in the relationships that individual managers establish with their workforce. Chaykowski and Slotsve, (1992); Tan, (1994) state that constructive grievance handling largely depends on ability of managers and supervisors to recognise, diagnose, and correct the causes of potential employee dissatisfaction before they become formal grievances. Yahya et al(2011) states that the style of handling grievances affects the employee satisfaction. Private secondary schools have their of share management issue just like any other business entities in terms of grievance handling. Roche (2002), underscores the importance of open and sincere relationships between the school management and teachers. A well-managed and motivated human resource could help solve many if not all of the problems experienced in schools. It is important that teachers feel important and satisfied with their jobs for them to be willing to give their best to the education of the students. Many times if a teacher feels unappreciated or lacks job satisfaction his/her performance is poor, and in fact can lead to a high teacher turnover rate.

### 1.1.2 Grievance handling

Issues of grievance are normally associated with dissatisfaction among employees which relate to working procedure, working facilities(Bea. 1994), confusions on provisions stated

in company's policy (Ayadurai, 1996) and the violations of provisions in terms and conditions of employment stated in collective agreement (Salamon, 2000). In resolving grievances, aggrieved employees will file their dissatisfaction through grievance procedure and their immediate managers or supervisors are responsible to take action within a given period (Rose, 2004). Appropriate styles used to resolve workers' grievance will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of grievance procedure (Rahim, Magner and Shapiro, 2000). Rahim's Organisational Conflict Inventory –II (ROCI-II) has identified styles of handling grievances. The instrument combines two dimensions, that is, concern of self and concern of others (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Combining these dimensions, they have introduced five styles of grievance handling namely avoiding, dominating, obliging, compromising and integrating. Gomez, (2005) states that managers therefore need special training on how they should apply the styles and the Human Resource department should provide guidance wherever necessary.

### **1.1.3 Job satisfaction**

All organisations strive and hope for a satisfied workforce. Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Spector, 1997). It is believed that satisfied employees are highly productive employees. According to Gupta (2004), the style of leadership applied by managers to their subordinates can influence job satisfaction. Equity theory takes into account not only the needs of an individual but also the opinion of the reference group to which the individual looks for guidance. Satisfaction is highest when managers/supervisors apply participative employee leadership styles, while considerate supervision on the other hand tends to improve job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction impacts on the health of the organisation. When employees are satisfied they cooperate and are motivated to work and achieve the organisation's objectives. However,

when employees are not satisfied, they will most likely: produce low quality work; go on strike; be absent from work; invoke grievance procedures or leave the organisation altogether (Gupta, 2004). According to Plunkett and Attner (1994), an unmet need frustrates an employee and will continue to influence his or her behaviour until it is satisfied. Managers can therefore effectively work with an employee by identifying the level of need which he or she is trying to satisfy and by attempting to build into the work environment opportunities that will allow the individual to satisfy his or her needs.

#### **1.1.4 Private secondary schools in Kenya**

Formal schooling in Kenya was introduced by the missionaries and later taken over by the government after independence. In the 1980s, the deteriorating quality of public education in Kenya and the rationing of spots created demand for private alternatives. Entrepreneurs responded, and by 2001 there were 700 primary and 300 secondary private schools throughout Kenya. Because of the need for laboratories, athletic facilities and other amenities, secondary schools are more capital-intensive than primary schools and therefore typically less attractive investments. This has led to a greater number of private primary schools than private secondary schools, despite the fact that the market is potentially even more underserved. Private secondary schools are not administered by the government and thus retain the right to select teachers. The secondary level includes schools offering Form 1 to Form 4 (8:4:4 system recommended by the government) or Form 6 for those following the British educational curriculum. Thika West district hosts 17 Ministry of Education registered private secondary schools, 9 within the municipality and 8 in peri-urban.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

A study by Gathoronjo (2008) shows that poor grievance handling is a major contributory factor to labour disputes. He suggests that mechanisms need therefore to be put in place to

take care of worker's grievances in the work places. Yahya et al(2011) notes that the style of handling grievances employed by managers affects the employee satisfaction. Private secondary schools, whose employees (teachers) are employed on temporary basis, are non-unionised business enterprises. The negotiation for better term of service and conducive working environment are often conducted between the teacher and the manager who in most cases is the owner, with powers to hire and fire, makes all the major decisions and often not a professional teacher but a business person. Often disagreements arise between the employer and employee motivated by the idea that the business' goals are not in line with the goals of the employee. The employer's interest is success and profitability while the employee seeks fairness, respect and equality. Grievances arise when the business goals overturn what employees feel is their best interests. Gupta (2004) underscores the importance of grievance handling on job satisfaction. He states that employee job satisfaction or dissatisfaction arise from the style the management employs to handle their grievances.

Studies done on grievance handling include those done by Hook et al(1996), who conducted a study on supervisor and manager styles of handling grievances in a telecommunication firm. Results from the research showed that respondents preferred more participative styles when dealing with grievance. However, when respondents perceived a situation that appears to direct threat to their authority, they revert to a much more autocratic style which is first telling their subordinate their decision and the persuading them of its correctness. Study by Tjosvold and Morishima (1999) identified the behaviour and perception of individuals on grievance resolution outcomes. Results of the study showed that in cooperative style of handling employees' grievances, respondents were confident that they could interact effectively and discuss grievance issues openly and constructively. In contrast, competitive style diminished expectations of an effective and open-minded interaction. Competitive style was found to be negatively related to feelings, efficiency and quality.

Yahya, et. al (2011). who studied the influence of heads of department personalities on the selection of grievance handling styles at a Telecommunication headquarter, found out that the grievance handling styles used by managers are integrating, compromising and dominating. In general, the study revealed that extraversion negatively and significantly influences the selection of integrating style, conscientiousness contributes significantly to the prediction of dominating style, and finally emotional stability positively and significantly influences compromising style of handling grievances; a study by Clark(1988) identified that correlation coefficients showed strong relationship between attitude towards the grievance procedure and attitude of the supervisors; Labig and Greer's(1988) study denote that a high number of grievances in a unit or subunit can be indicative of many factors, including both effective and ineffective supervisory performance. So far most studies on grievance handling have placed a greater emphasis on manufacturing and telecommunication organisations.

The study intended to bridge this existing knowledge gap by conducting a research among teachers and principals in private secondary schools and provide research findings on the influence of grievance handling styles on job satisfaction. This was achieved by examining practices within private secondary schools to establish the grievance handling styles applied by managers/ principals and how these styles influence employees' job satisfaction. The study therefore sought to answer the following questions; what grievance handling styles are applied by principals in private secondary schools in Thika West district and what influence do they have on job satisfaction among teachers.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

- (i). To investigate grievance handling styles used by principals in Private secondary schools.
- (ii). To establish the influence of grievance handling on employee job satisfaction in Private secondary schools.

## **1.4 Importance of the study**

The results from this study will be useful to school managers in setting up grievance handling styles informed by the best practice in the sector thus enhancing good working relations. It will also be useful to the teaching staff in evaluating the various avenues through which to resolve their grievances making the working environment conducive for sound performance. Further, the study will be important to future academic work and researches in the area of grievance handling as the study will form part of literature review for future researchers.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Concept of grievance handling

Constructive grievance handling largely depends on ability of managers and supervisors to recognise, diagnose, and correct the causes of potential employee dissatisfaction before they become formal grievances (Chaykowski and Slotsve, 1992; Tan, 1994). Ivancevich (2001) mentioned that supervisors should take every grievance seriously, work with the union representative, gather all information available on the grievance, after weighing all the facts, provide an answer to the employee who is voicing the grievance. Hook et al(1996), conducted a study on supervisor and manager styles in handling grievances. The study utilised styles established by Wright and Taylor which are “tell”, “tell and sell”, “tell and listen”, “ask and tell”, “problem solving” and “ask and listen”. Results from this descriptive research showed that respondents preferred more participative styles when dealing with grievance. However, when respondents perceive a situation that appears to direct threat to their authority, they revert to a much more autocratic style which is first telling their subordinate their decision and the persuading them of its correctness.

Study by Tjosvold and Morishima (1999) identified the behaviour and perception of individuals on grievance resolution outcomes. Underpinned by theory of conflict resolution constructed by Deutsch (1949), this study has assumed that people believe their goals are positively interrelated and were able to manage conflict more effectively than those with competitive goals. As suggested by Deutsch (1949), in resolving interpersonal conflict the study used competitive and cooperative as the styles in handling employees' grievances. Results of the study showed that in cooperative style of handling employees' grievances, respondents were confident that they could interact effectively and discuss grievance issues openly and constructively. In addition cooperative style was correlated with positive effect, efficient resolution and a creative, high quality solution. In contrast, competitive style

diminished expectations of an effective and open-minded interaction. Competitive style was found to be negatively related to feelings, efficiency and quality. Tjosvold and Morishima (1999) concluded that cooperative style in resolving grievances drove positive feelings and satisfaction for both union and management. Competitive style on the contrary, left feelings of frustration and anger at management.

McGrane, Wilson, Cammock (2005) accomplished a study on one-to-one dispute resolution. The study targeted managerial and non managerial employees. In establishing one-to-one dispute resolution, McGrane et al(2005) came out with three methods of dispute management that are often used by leaders and their employees. These methods are fight, flight and intervention. Fight style aims at identifying a winner and a loser; flights occurs by avoiding an issue or transferring away from a problem; while intervention is where employees request that their line manager intervene directly and manage their dispute for them. Another study on handling employees' dispute among managers has been carried out by Karambayya and Brett (1989). From this research it was revealed that by using the Varimax-rotated seven-factor solution, four roles have been determined as manager's behaviours in handling disputes. The first role was named inquisitorial role where managers imposed own idea, made final decision and proposed own idea; the second role was mediational role which allows the manager to ask their employees questions regarding conflicts, requests proposals from employees and try to incorporate their ideas into employees' proposals; the third role was procedural marshal. Managers taking this role describe the dispute-handling procedures to be followed and strictly enforce those rules; the fourth role was motivational role, in this role managers rely on threats and incentives.

## 2.2 Grievance handling Styles

Styles in handling employees' grievances may give an impact in industrial relation culture (Holt and Devore, 2005). A unitary organisation which is more centralised (Rose, 2004) may utilise avoidance and dominating styles in resolving grievances (Green, 1987). On the other hand, a bilateral organisation which is more decentralised (Rose, 2004) may employ compromising, integrating or obliging styles when confronting with employee's grievances. Rahim's (1983) study has constructed independent scales to measure five styles of handling grievances namely integrating, obliging, compromising, dominating and avoiding.

### 2.2.1 Integrating style

Integrating style involves high concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is concerned with collaboration between parties (for example openness, exchange of information and examination of differences) to reach an acceptable solution to both parties (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Hook, et al(1996) called it the problem solving style. Thomas and Kilmann (1974) labelled this style as collaborating mode. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with others to find some solution that fully satisfies their concerns. It means digging into an issue to pinpoint the underlying needs and wants of the two individuals. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights or trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem. Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative. Deutsch (1949) named this style the cooperative style. According to him, cooperative style of handling grievances generates flexible and open-minded discussion between the supervisor and employees. Cooperative goals are a shared understanding of the problem and its resolution, and union and management acceptance of each other's goal. A study by Tjosvold and Morishima (1999) notes that in cooperative style of handling employees' grievances, respondents were confident that they could interact effectively and discuss grievance issues openly and

constructively. In addition, cooperative style was correlated with positive affect, efficient resolution and a creative, high quality solution.

### **2.2.2 Obliging style**

Obliging style involves low concern for self. An obliging person attempts to emphasise commonalities to satisfy the concern of the other party (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Thomas and Kilmann (1974) named this style as accommodating mode. Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative. When accommodating, the individual neglects his own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view. Hook, et.al(1996) portrays this style as "ask and tell" approach. This approach involves the employees having a greater degree control over the interaction.

### **2.2.3 Compromising style**

This style involves moderate concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is associated with give and take or sharing whereby both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision (Rahim and Magner, 1995). According to Thomas and Kilmann (1974) compromising is moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls intermediate between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating. In some situations, compromising might mean splitting the difference between the two positions, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground solution.

## **2.2.4 Dominating style**

Dominating style involves high concern for self and low concern for the other party involved in the conflict. It has been identified with a win-lose orientation or with forcing behaviour to win position (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Thomas and Kilmann (1974) portrayed dominating style as power-oriented mode or competing style. Competing is assertive and uncooperative—an individual pursues his own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode in which you use whatever power seems appropriate to win your own position—your ability to argue, your rank, or economic sanctions. Competing means "standing up for your rights," defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win. Hook et al(1996) calls the style as telling style, where power is vested on the supervisors. Deustch (1949) names it competitive style. The style is negatively related to feelings, efficiency and quality. The style leaves a feeling of frustration and anger at management. McGrane et al(2005) calls it the fighting style which aims to identify a winner and a loser. Hook et al calls it "tell and sell" approach where the supervisor informs the employee of the decision that the supervisor has made and will try to persuade the employee of the correctness of that decision.

## **2.2.5 Avoiding style**

Avoiding style is associated with low concern for self as well as for the other for the other party involved in conflict. It has been associated with withdrawal, passing-the-buck, sidestepping or "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" situations (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative—the person neither pursues his own concerns nor those of the other individual. Thus he does not deal with the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974).

McGrane et al (2005) names this style as flight method. According to them, it occurs by avoiding an issue or transferring away from a problem.

### 2.3 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the degree to which a person reports satisfaction with intrinsic features of a job (Warr, Cook and Wall 1979). Sills (1968) argued that job satisfaction and commitment are intertwined and one cannot do without the other. Thus for one to be committed, there must be certain factors that guarantee satisfaction to him or her. In the same way one cannot have satisfaction in the absence of commitment to one's duty. Mullins(2000) state that job satisfaction is more of an attitude, an internal state. It could for example be associated with a feeling of achievement, either quantitative or qualitative. Lloyd, (2003) also views job satisfaction as an employee's general attitude towards a job. Job satisfaction is a work related attitude.

The main theoretical approaches to job satisfaction include; Need Fulfilment theory; equity theory; Two Factor theory; Discrepancy theory and Equity-Discrepancy theory. Need fulfilment theory, advanced by Maslow (1970) proposed that a person is satisfied when he gets from his job what he wants. Maslow saw satisfaction of needs in a hierarchical order. Schaffer (1953) says "job satisfaction will vary directly with the extent to which those needs of an individual which can be satisfied are actually satisfied". Thus job satisfaction is viewed as a function of the degree to which the employee's needs are fulfilled in the job situation. Two Factor theory-Fredrick Herzberg (1950) state that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are interdependent. The hygiene factors described as characteristics of a work place include: company policies, working conditions, pay, co-workers, and supervision among others. These factors can make people unhappy if they are poorly managed, however no matter how good these factors are they will make people truly satisfied or motivated to do a good job.

The second category of factors is known as motivators. Motivators are described as the nature of work itself, the actual job responsibility, an opportunity for personal growth and recognition, the feeling of achievement that the job provides. When these factors are present, jobs are presumed to be both satisfying and motivating for most workers. In equity theory, job satisfaction is viewed as a function of a degree to which job characteristics meet desires of the reference group. Equity theory takes into account not only the needs of an individual but also the opinion of the reference to which the individual looks for guidance (Schaffer, 1953). In Discrepancy theory, job satisfaction depends upon what a person actually receives from his job (Lawler, 1977). When the reward actually received is less than the expected rewards it causes dissatisfaction. This theory fails to reveal whether over satisfaction is or is not a dimension of dissatisfaction. Finally there is the Equity-Discrepancy theory, which is a combination of the Equity and Discrepancy theories.

Job satisfaction is divided into two aspects; first, internal-role working condition with a focus in job specific attitudes such as resources available, equity considerations, training, existence of grievance and discipline system, pay safety and benefits. Second, external-role interpersonal relations such as employee communication, management communication, supervisory communication, managerial concern for employees, career goal, and performance appraisal which are all top organisational systems or environmental issues. This is a test of Herzbergian two factor- maintenance and motivational approach. ( American political Science Association, 2003). While there is no one right way to manage people all of whom have different needs, backgrounds and expectations, Herzberg's theory offers areas that enables starting point. By creating an environment that promotes job satisfaction, one develops employees who are motivated, productive and fulfilled. In the late 1950s, Federic Herzberg, considered by many as the pioneer in motivation theory, interviewed a group of employees to find out what made them satisfied and dissatisfied on the job. He theorised that

employees satisfaction depends on two issues: **Hygiene issues**, which cannot motivate employees but can minimise dissatisfaction, if handled properly. In other words they can only dissatisfy if they are absent or mishandled. They include the employee's environment such as company policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions, and administration. **Motivators**, which create satisfaction by fulfilling individual's needs for personal growth are issues such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. Once the hygiene areas are addressed, the motivators will promote job satisfaction and encourage production.

Gupta(2004) classifies factors influencing job satisfaction into two major categories; namely: environmental/organisational and personal factors. Environmental factors relate to the organisation and work environment and include job content, occupational levels, pay and promotion, work group and supervision. Personal factors include age, sex, educational level, marital status and experience. Mullins(2002) observes that a wide range of variables relating to individual, social, cultural organisation and environment, affect the level of job satisfaction. Glimmer (1961) argues that the higher the level of the job in the organisation hierarchy, the greater the satisfaction of an individual. This is because positions at a higher level are generally better paid, more challenging and provide greater freedom of operation. Such jobs call for greater prestige, self control and higher satisfaction. Workers in large organisations sometimes experience low job satisfaction because of interpersonal communication difficulties, which create frustration and feelings of inability to influence events that affect their working lives.

### **2.3.1 Management style and job satisfaction**

The style of leadership applied by managers to their subordinates can influence job satisfaction. Satisfaction is highest when manager/ supervisors apply participative employee



leadership styles, while considerate supervision on the other hand tend to improve job satisfaction. Work that involves varied interesting and challenging duties is more likely to create satisfaction. McNeese-Smith (1997) noted that job satisfaction was influenced by the manager. According to him, the character of a manager that influenced job satisfaction include provision of recognition, meeting employees personal needs, helping or guiding employees, using leadership skills to meet unit needs and supporting the team. Job dissatisfaction is due to managers not giving due recognition and support, not being able to follow through a problem, and not helping but criticising in a crisis. He further noted besides providing recognition, managers who create a positive climate in the work environment help employees to be more productive. In the same study by McNeese-Smith, the use of leadership behaviours was emphasised especially when managers strive to create open communication. Organisation research shows that employees who experience job satisfaction are more likely to be productive and stay on the job (McNeese-Smith 1997). The Meta-analytical study by Irvine and Evans (1995) support this. The result of the analysis demonstrated a strong negative relationship between job satisfaction and behavioural intentions and turnover. In this study, it was found that the variables related to the employee job satisfaction, the work content and work environment variables which the administration and the employees have more control over, have a stronger relationship with satisfaction than the economic or individual difference variables.

### **2.3.2 Impact of job satisfaction to an organisation**

Gupta (2004) argues that job satisfaction impacts on the health of an organisation. When employees are satisfied they cooperate and are motivated to work and achieve the organisation's objectives. However when employees are not satisfied, they will most likely: produce low quality work, go on strike, be absent from work, invoke grievance procedures or leave the organisation altogether. These behaviours on the overall may affect the

performance of the organisation, in terms of hiring costs, loss of production, increased accidents and general disruption of the working environment. Bennet(1997) argues that grievances interfere with smooth running of the organisation's operations since they create ill feelings among employees and is time wasting to the organisation.

All organisations strive and hope for a satisfied workforce. It is believed that satisfied employees are highly productive employees. This is however, not always the case. The fact is that sometimes satisfied employees perform better and sometimes they do not (Bruce & Blackburn, 1992). A worker may be extremely satisfied with a job, but still perform badly (Benett, 1998). With regard to performance, Cooper and Makin (1984) gave a general consensus among researchers that job satisfaction did not lead by itself to increased performance rather when appropriately rewarded did it lead to satisfaction. Money, in the form of pay or some other sort of remuneration, is the most extrinsic reward. However, it must be remembered that different people have different needs and that it cannot be assumed that money motivates everyone in the same way and to the same extent. Nevertheless, it is a powerful force because it is linked directly or indirectly to the satisfaction of many needs. Abraham Maslow (1959) offered a theory of human motivation. The hub of his theory was that people are motivated to satisfy a variety of different needs and that these needs tend to form a hierarchy in terms of importance. That is, he felt that certain needs, called lower-order needs, super cede others until they are satisfied, and the other needs, called higher-order needs, become significant. Higher-order and lower-order needs are differentiated on the premise that the higher-order needs are satisfied internally whereas lower-order needs are predominantly satisfied externally. Robin (1998). It is important to note that lower-order needs are not less important than higher order needs. Lower-order needs are more or less important at a given point in time. They must be satisfied before the higher-order needs exercise any significant influence. Maslow (1959) theorised that a person could not recognise

or pursue the higher need in the hierarchy until the current recognised need was substantially or completely satisfied.

Job satisfaction cannot be isolated from job design since how jobs are designed determines whether an employee will be satisfied with the job or not. Schermer(1989) defines job design as the process through which specific work tasks are allocated to individuals or groups. Job design addresses job content and job context. The strategies used in job design have been found to include: job simplification, job enlargement and rotation, and job enrichment, which impact on job satisfaction. Bateman (1993) on Hackman and Oldham model of job design says that well designed job leads to high motivation, high quality performance, high satisfaction, low absenteeism and turnover. These outcomes occur when employees experience three critical psychological states. Firstly, when they believe they are doing something meaningful because their work is important to other people; secondly when they feel personally responsible for how the work turns out and thirdly when they learn how well they performed their job. Psychological states occur when the employees are working on enriched jobs, that is, jobs that offer the following dimensions: skill variety, different job activities involving several skills and abilities; task identity- the completion of a whole identifiable piece of work; task significance- an important positive impact on the lives of others; autonomy- independence and discretion in making decisions and feedback- when they receive information on their performance. If this is done individuals will be satisfied with their jobs.

Herzberg (1996) followed the Maslow Principle with evidence to support the lower level (security) and the higher level (job or motivational) factors affecting productivity and satisfaction at work. In his two factor theory, Herzberg stated that there are some aspects of a job which provide positive satisfaction for employees. These are called motivators and they

include such issues as recognition, advancement and achievement. Some aspects however cause dissatisfaction. These are the dissatisfiers or “hygiene” factors and they include elements like company policy, supervision and salary. Since Herzberg’s 1959 work on “satisfiers” and “dissatisfiers” in the workplace, job satisfaction has frequently been held as a means of improving employees’ motivation (Herzberg et al, 1959). According to Plunkett and Attner (1994), an unmet need frustrates an employee and will continue to influence his or her behaviour until it is satisfied. Managers can therefore effectively work with an employee by identifying the level of need which he or she is trying to satisfy and by attempting to build into the work environment opportunities that will allow the individual to satisfy his or her needs. The degree to which employees are satisfied with Human Resource policies and practices can be measured by attitude surveys. This can obtain opinions on such matters as their work, their pay, how they are treated, their views about the company and their managers, how well they are kept informed, the opportunities for learning and career development, and their working environment and facilities(Armstrong, 2003).

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research design

The study adopted a survey research design. According to Kathuri and Pals(1993), the purpose of a survey research is to determine and explore the status of a population in terms of opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a survey research seeks to obtain information that describes the characteristics of a population at a given point in time. The research design was appropriate for the study since the study intended to explore the status of grievance handling styles in private secondary schools and their influence on employee job satisfaction.

### 3.2 The population

The population under study were principals and teachers in private secondary schools in Thika West district. The choice of the district was appropriate since the population had the desired characteristics. It had urban and peri-urban private secondary schools. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the accessible population and the target population must be comparable on many characteristics, which are important to this study. The sampling frame consisted of 261 teachers from 17 registered private secondary schools, 9 of which were within Thika West municipality (Urban) and 8 in Thika West peri-urban (Appendix II).

### 3.3 Sample and Sampling design

All the 17 registered private secondary schools in the district participated in the study. The schools were categorised as urban or peri-urban. Stratified random sampling was applied to achieve desired representation from various subgroups in the population. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), stratified random sampling ensures that sub groups in a population are reproduced in the sample. The criterion for stratification was based on classification of schools as urban or peri-urban (Appendix II). A sample consisting of thirty percent of teachers in each

stratum was picked. This sample consisted of 78 respondents who included class teachers, heads of departments, deputy principals and principals. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), thirty percent of a small population of less than a thousand is representative enough. Simple random sampling method was used in selecting teachers for the study in each school. Teacher's codes on school timetable were used in selecting the sample. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), random sampling gives an equal chance to all in a sampling frame.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

Data was collected of using structured questionnaires, made up of close-ended questions (Appendix I). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) close ended questionnaires are easy to analyse since they are in an immediate usable form. They are also easier to administer because each item is followed by alternative answers. The questionnaires were administered to principals, and deputy principals to collect data on grievance handling style and class teachers to assess job satisfaction. The questionnaires were administered through drop and pick method. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), this method is appropriate as it enables the respondents to dedicate enough time convenient for them to fill the questionnaire. The study involved collecting primary data on grievance handling styles and their influence on job satisfaction.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

The raw data was edited for completeness and consistency. It was coded and checked for coding errors and omissions. The coded data was categorised and tabulation obtained. Descriptive statistics such as means, mode, ranges and percentages were used in analysing the data. According to Mugenda.(2003), where one is interested in exploring an existing situation, descriptive statistical analysis is adequate. The findings were presented in frequency distribution tables, to show the distribution of scores and graphs to exhibit the relationships of the variables and the trend of the distributions.

### 4.1 Respondents characteristics

The study was centred on the influence of grievance handling on employee job satisfaction in private secondary schools in Thika West District. The sample of the study consisted of seventy eight (78) respondents from various private secondary schools within Thika West District. Of the seventy eight sampled, fifty six (56) responded by duly completing the questionnaires and returning them. The respondents consisted of 46.4% (n=26) males and 53.6% (n=30) females. This constituted 72.72% which is considered a reasonably high response rate.

#### Length of service

The number of years the respondents had worked in the school was analysed on Table 4.1

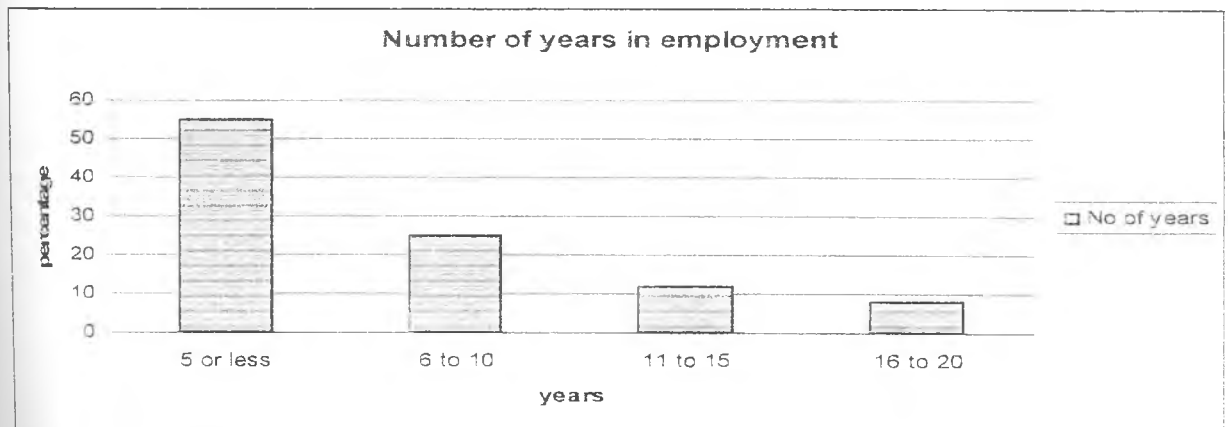
**Table 4.1 The length of service**

No. of years	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
5 and below	31	55.36%	55%
6 - 10	14	25%	80.36%
11-15	7	12.5%	92%
16-20	4	7.14%	100%

Source: Research data

The analysis on Table 4.1 was further presented on Figure 4.1

**Figure 4.1 Length of service**



Source: Research data

From the research, it was observed that 55% of the respondents had worked for a period of five or less years in their respective schools, 25% had worked for a period ranging between six to ten years, 12.5% had worked for eleven to fifteen years, while 7.14% had worked for period between sixteen to twenty years. Cumulatively 80% of the respondents have been employed in the schools for ten years and below. Majority of the respondents had worked long enough to provide reliable and much needed experience and insight into the influence of grievance handling on job satisfaction in their respective stations. From Table 4.1, it is interesting to note that over 55.36% of the employees have worked in the schools for a period of five years and below. This may be an indication of a high turnover, a sign of dissatisfaction. According to Plunkett and Attner (1994), an unmet need frustrates an employee and will continue to influence his or her behaviour until it is satisfied. Managers can therefore effectively work with an employee by identifying the level of need which he or she is trying to satisfy and by attempting to build into the work environment opportunities that will allow the individual to satisfy his or her needs.

### **Level of education**

The level of education of the respondents was analysed on Table 4.2

**Table 4.2 Level of education**

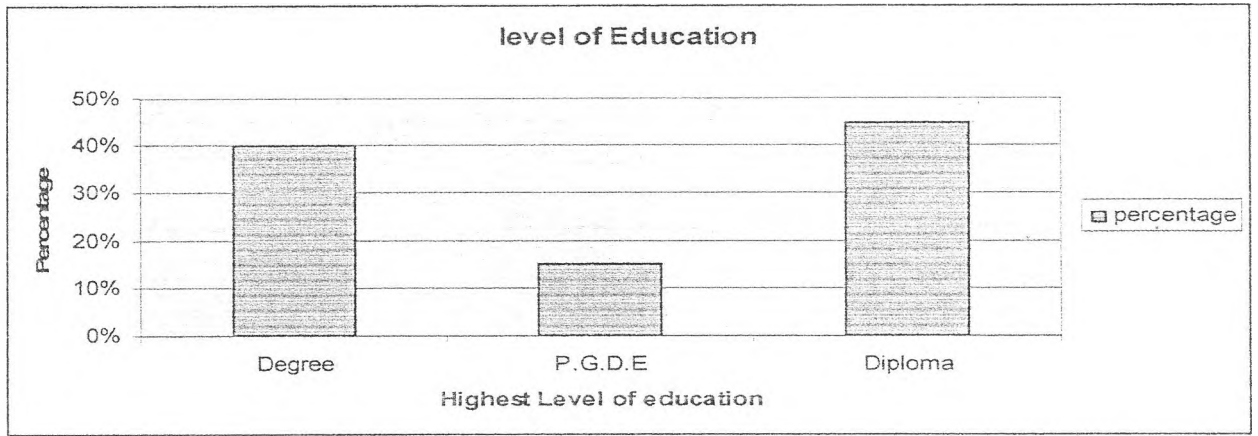
Level of education	frequency	percentage
Degree	22	39.2%
Post graduate diploma	8	14.3%
Diploma	26	46.5%

*Source: Research data*

The analysis on Table 4.2 was further presented on Figure 4.2



**Figure 4.2: Level of education**



*Source: Research data*

The level of education attained would reflect the ability to understand instructions and give an informed feedback. All the respondents have the very least a diploma certificate. From the data analysis it was observed that 39.2% of the respondents were degree holders, 14.3% had attained a post graduate diploma, while 46.5% were diploma holders.

### Positions held by respondents

The positions held by the respondents was analysed on Table 4.3

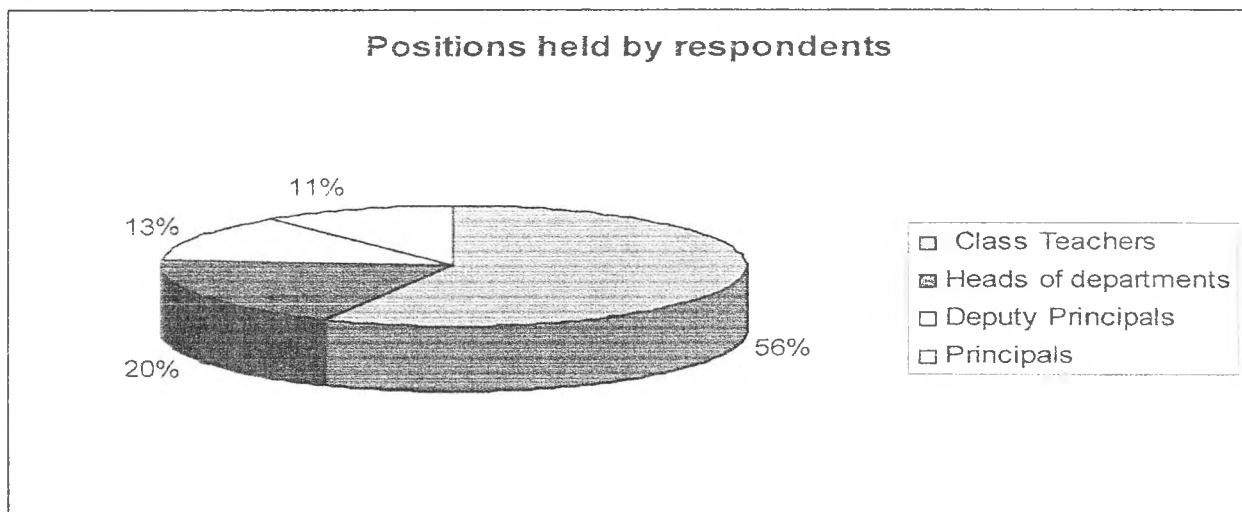
**Table 4.3 Positions held by respondents**

Position held	No. of respondents	percentage	Cumulative percentage
Class Teachers	32	57.14%	57.14%
Heads of departments	11	19.64%	76.78%
Deputy Principals	7	12.5%	89.28%
Principals	6	10.72%	100%

*Source: Research data*

The analysis on Table 4.3 was further presented on Figure 4.3

Figure 4.3 Position held by respondent



Source: Research data

The respondents were asked to indicate the position they held at the school. Titles were indicated as class teachers, head of department, deputy principal and principal. Those titles indicated whether the respondents were in management or not. Principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments all supervise other teachers. 57.14% of the respondents were class teachers, 19.64% were heads of departments, 12.5% were deputy principals while 10.72% were principals. This broad range of respondents provided important information on grievance handling and how it influences job satisfaction. Cumulatively, 42.86% (n=24) of the respondent comprised of management while 57.14% (n=32) were class teachers.

## 4.2 Grievance handling styles

The respondents here consisted of management, that is, principals, deputy principals and heads of departments. The respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with different facets of grievance handling styles on a four-point Likert scale. The first group of 6 statements on Table 4.4 related to Integrating style of handling grievances; the second group of 3 statements related to the Dominating style; the third group consisting of 2 statements related to Compromising style; the fourth statement related to the Avoiding style, while the last related to Obliging style.

**Table 4.4 Preference of Grievance handling style**

	Grievance handling style	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
(i). I try to work with my subordinate to find solution to a problem which satisfies our expectations.	Integrating	1	4.17	2	8.3	5	20.8	16	66.7
(ii). I collaborate with my subordinate to come up with decisions acceptable to us.	Integrating	2	8.3	4	16.7	3	12.5	15	62.5
(iii). I try to integrate ideas with those of my subordinates to come up with a decision jointly.	Integrating	1	4.17	1	4.17	7	29.17	15	62.5
(iv). I try to investigate an issue with my subordinate to find a solution acceptable to us.	Integrating	3	12.5	3	12.5	4	16.7	14	58.3
(v). I try to bring all concerns out in the open so that the issue can be resolved in the best possible way.	Integrating	3	12.5	2	8.3	6	25	13	54.2
(vi). I try to work with my subordinate for the proper understanding of a problem	Integrating	0	0	5	20.8	5	20.8	14	58.3
(i). I use my authority to make a decision in my favour.	Dominating	1	4.17	16	66.7	2	8.3	5	20.8
(ii). I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.	Dominating	3	12.5	16	66.7	2	8.3	3	12.5
(iii). I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.	Dominating	3	12.5	15	62.5	3	12.5	3	12.5

(i).	I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.	Compromising	1	4.17	2	8.3	17	70.8	4	16.7
(ii)	I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.	Compromising	0	0	2	8.3	16	66.7	6	25
(i).	I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my subordinates.	Avoiding	16	66.7	1	4.17	2	8.3	5	20.8
(i)	I give in to the wishes of my subordinate	Obliging	15	62.5	4	16.7	1	4.17	4	16.7

Source: Research data

From the analysis 60.42% of the respondents strongly agreed, 20.83% agreed, 11.78% disagreed while 8.34% strongly disagreed with the statements related to Integrating style. For Dominating style, 15.27% strongly agreed, 9.7% agreed, 65.3% disagreed while 9.7% strongly disagreed with its related statements. Respondents who strongly agreed with Compromising style were 20.85%, 68.75% agreed, 8.3% disagreed while 1% strongly disagreed. Avoiding style had 20.80% strongly agreeing, 8.3% agreeing, 4.17% disagreeing, while 66.70 strongly disagreeing with the statements related to the style. Obliging style had 16.7% strongly agreeing, 4.17% agreeing, 16.7% disagreeing, while 62.5 strongly disagreed.

These results were further analysed on Table 4.5

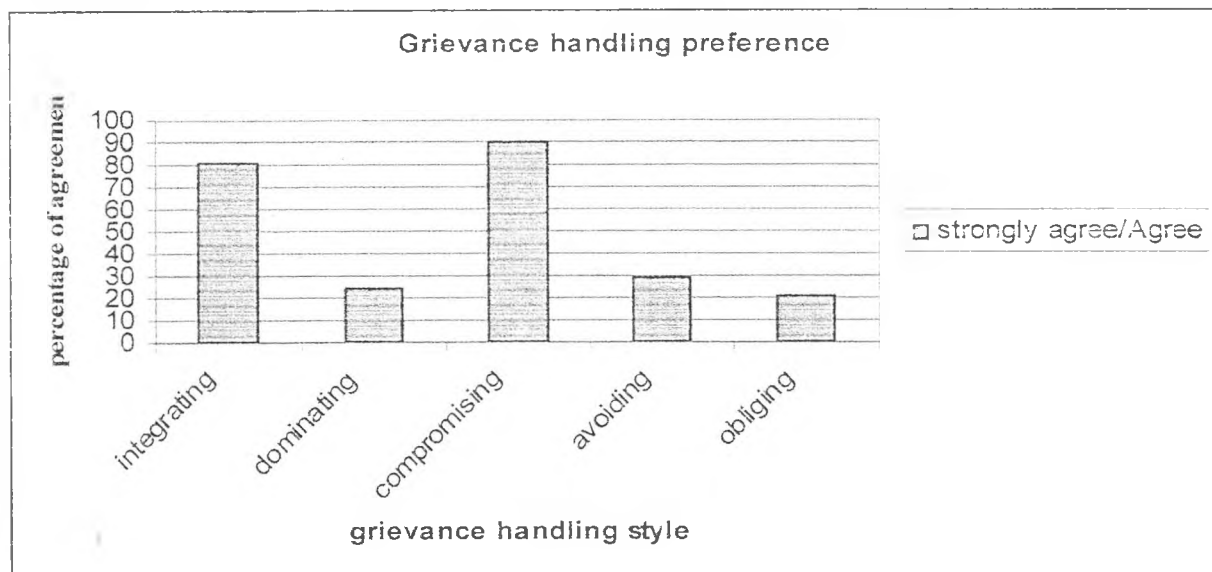
**Table 4.5 Summary of grievance handling preference**

Responses	Grievance handling styles									
	Integrating		Dominating		Compromising		Avoiding		Obliging	
	%	C%	%	C%	%	C%	%	C%	%	C%
Strongly agree	60.42	60.42	15.27	15.27	20.85	20.85	20.8	20.8	16.7	16.7
Agree	20.83	81.25	9.7	24.97	68.75	89.6	8.3	29.1	4.17	20.87
Disagree	11.78	92.03	65.3	90.27	8.3	99.0	4.17	33.28	16.7	37.57
Strongly disagree	8.34	100	9.7	100	1	100	66.7	100	62.5	100

Source: Research data

Cumulative percentage of the respondents who strongly agreed and agreed was further presented on Figure 4.4

Figure 4.4 Percentage of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed



Source: Research data

Further analysis on Figure 4.4 revealed that Compromising style of handling grievance was the most preferred by the management in private secondary schools, with cumulative percentage of 89.6% of those who agreed on its usage. This style involves moderate concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is associated with give and take or sharing whereby both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision (Rahim and Magner, 1995). According to Thomas and Kilmann (1974) compromising is moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. In some situations, compromising might mean splitting the difference between the two positions, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground solution. Roche (2002), underscores the importance of open and sincere relationships between the school management and teachers.

Integrating style was the second preferred with accumulated percentage of 81.25% of those who agreed on using it. Integrating style involves high concern for self as well as the other

party involved in conflict. It is concerned with collaboration between parties (for example openness, exchange of information and examination of differences) to reach an acceptable solution to both parties (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Hook, et al(1996) called it the problem solving style.

Avoiding style was preferred as the mode of handling grievances by 29.1% of the respondents. This style has been associated with withdrawal, passing-the-buck, sidestepping or "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" situations (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Dominating style had 24.97% level of acceptance. This style involves high concern for self and low concern for the other party involved in the conflict. It has been identified with a win-lose orientation or with forcing behaviour to win position (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Obliging style was the least preferred with 20.87% of those who agreed on its usage. According to Thomas and Kilmann (1974), this style takes the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's orders when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

### **4.3 Employee job satisfaction**

The respondents here were class teachers. They were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with regard to grievance handling on a four-point Likert scale. The first group of 6 statements in the table related to Integrating style of handling grievances; the second group of 3 statements related to the Dominating style; the third group consisting of 2 statements related to Compromising style; the fourth group consisting of 1 statement related to the Avoiding style while the last related to Obliging style. The results were summarised in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6 Level of satisfaction**

		Grievance handling style	very satisfied		satisfied		some what satisfied		less satisfied	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
(i).	Working with my superior to find solution to a problem which satisfies our expectations.	Integrating	24	75	3	9	3	9	2	6.2
(ii).	Collaborating with my superior to come up with decisions acceptable to us.	Integrating	23	72.5	4	12.5	4	11.7	1	3.3
(iii).	Integrating my ideas with those of my superiors to come up with a decision jointly.	Integrating	23	72.5	6	19.17	2	6.25	1	3.1
(iv).	Investigating an issue with my superior to find a solution acceptable to us.	Integrating	22	68.3	5	15.6	3	9.4	2	6.2
(v).	My superior bringing all concerns out in the open so that the issue can be resolved in the best possible way.	Integrating	20	64.2	5	15.6	3	9.4	4	12.5
(vi).	My superior working with me for the proper understanding of a problem	Integrating	22	68.8	5	15.6	5	15.6	0	0
(i).	My superior using his/her authority to make a decision in my favour.	Dominating	3	9.4	4	12.5	19	59.4	6	18.8
(ii).	My superior sometimes using his/her power to win a competitive situation.	Dominating	3	9.4	4	12.5	21	66.7	4	12.5
(iii).	My superior using his/her influence to get his ideas accepted.	Dominating	4	12.5	4	12.5	20	62.5	4	12.5
(i)	My superior trying to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.	Compromising	5	15.6	23	70.8	3	9.4	1	3.1
(ii)	My superior usually proposing a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.	Compromising	8	25	21	66.7	3	9.4	0	0

(i)	My superior trying to avoid unpleasant exchanges with me.	Avoiding	1	3.1	3	9.4	8	25	20	6
(i)	My superior giving in to my wishes	Obliging	4	12.5	6	18.8	6	18.8	16	5

Source: Research data

Table 4.7 Summary of level of satisfaction

Level of satisfaction	Grievance handling Styles									
	Integrating		Dominating		Compromising		Avoiding		Obliging	
	%	C%	%	C%	%	C%	%	C%	%	C%
Very satisfied	70.22	70.22	10.43	10.43	20.3	20.3	3.1	3.1	12.5	12.5
Satisfied	14.58	<b>84.8</b>	12.5	<b>22.93</b>	68.75	<b>89.05</b>	9.4	<b>12.5</b>	18.8	<b>31.3</b>
Somewhat satisfied	10.23	95.03	62.87	85.8	9.4	98.45	25	35.5	18.5	50.1
Less satisfied	5.24	100	14.6	100	1.5	100	62.5	100	50.5	100

Source: Research data

An analysis on Table 4.7 revealed that 70.22% of the respondents were very satisfied, 14.58% were satisfied, 10.23% were somewhat satisfied, while 5.24% were less satisfied with the Integrating style of handling grievances. In terms of Dominating style an average of 10.43% were very satisfied, 12.5% were satisfied, 62.87% were somewhat satisfied, while 14.6% were less satisfied. In response to Compromising style, 20.3% of the respondents were very satisfied, 68.75% were satisfied, 9.4% were somewhat satisfied while 1.5% were less satisfied. In regards to Avoiding style, 3.1% were very satisfied, 9.4% were satisfied, 25% were somewhat satisfied, while 62.5% were less satisfied. In terms of Obliging style of handling grievances, 12.5% were very satisfied, 18.8% were somewhat satisfied, while 50.5% were less satisfied. These results were further analysed in Figure 4.5.



Figure 4.5 Very satisfied and satisfied respondents



Source: Research data

From the analysis on Figure 4.5, it was found out that the respondents satisfied with Compromising and Integrating styles had cumulative percentages of 89.05% and 84.8% respectively. For Obliging style, 31.3% of the respondents report that they were satisfied. Dominating style had 22.93% of the respondents satisfied while Avoiding style was the least satisfying with 12.5%.

Compromising style as reported generating the highest level of satisfaction among the respondents. Managers who perform compromising style always search for middle ground by evaluating current grievance with rules and regulations, terms and conditions of employment and results from precedent cases. In making decision with middle ground approach, compromising managers will make sure that grievance resolution outcomes resulted from grievance discussion with aggrieved employee were in line with statutory provisions. According to Derek et al(2008), the purpose of grievance procedures is to determine whether the labour contract has been violated and settling alleged contract violations in a friendly and orderly manner. before they become a major issue thus improving cooperation between management and workers and helping to obtain better climate of labour relations. Compromising managers tend to choose middle ground in resolving grievance because they

are moderately concern for self and others. Hence, they emphasise on resolving grievances without ignoring some considerations on employees. McNeese-Smith (1997) noted that job satisfaction was influenced by the manager. According to him, the character of a manager that influenced job satisfaction includes provision of recognition, meeting employees' personal needs, helping or guiding employees, using leadership skills to meet unit needs and supporting the team. In resolving grievance, compromising managers will plan the alternatives for resolution, explain the alternatives, insure that the aggrieved employee agree with the alternatives, select the best alternative mutually with the aggrieved employee and monitor the result. Thus in executing compromising grievance managers and aggrieved subordinate jointly decides the grievance resolution result.

Integrating style was the second most satisfying style of handling grievances. In integrating grievance handling style, managers emphasise unity of effort with aggrieved subordinate. Both parties exchange information and facts in discussing grievance issues. Constructive communication becomes essential in this style. Managers who perform integrating style believe that grievance negotiation will promote innovation, creativity and development of new ideas which help to eliminate employees' frustration on grievance resolution result. According to McNeese-Smith (1997), work that involves varied interesting and challenging duties is more likely to create satisfaction. To resolve grievances with this style, both parties must utilise wisdom to identify grievance issue and apply relevant procedures and employment lawsuits to innovate good alternatives for resolution. Furthermore, creativity from both parties is needed to select and implement the best alternative. As a result, both parties reach a mutual grievance resolution result.

Obliging, Dominating and Avoiding styles had 31.3%, 22.93%, and 12.5% respectively of respondents reported to be satisfied with these styles. Majority of the respondents were dissatisfied with these styles. Obliging style is associated with high concern for others and

low concern for self. According to this style when disagreements appear, managers and subordinate discuss on those things until mutual resolution is reached. Hence a long time frame is preferred in discussion process in order to reach satisfactory outcome. Managers applying Dominating style are more concerned with their position and authority. Here the managers have a high concern for self and low concern for others (Rahim, 1983). Normally Dominating style is performed when there was a challenge on company's policies or employment contract (Rose, 2004) or if the managers feel that their status and authority are being challenged (Bemmel & Janice, 1996). In performing Dominating style, managers believe subordinates views and opinions are unnecessary and not important. They also believe that subordinates lacked knowledge in employment lawsuits, terms and conditions of employment and company's policies. Therefore, in grievance resolution regarding these issues, managers who perform dominating style use their knowledge and discretion by referring to company's policy, collective agreement and other statutory documents. In Dominating style, managers will decide the resolution by themselves and they will direct the aggrieved subordinate to implement the resolution. Avoiding style was the least satisfying. The responsibility to handle grievances is stated in the collective agreement between a company and the union which urge that all managers are responsible and cannot avoid from confronting with the subordinates' grievances.

### 5.1 Summary

This study was designed to seek answers to two main objectives. The first objective to investigate grievance handling styles in private secondary schools. The second objective was to establish the influence of grievance handling on employee job satisfaction in private secondary schools. The study found out that Compromising style of handling grievances was the most preferred by the management in private secondary schools. This style of handling grievance had cumulative percentage of 89.6% of respondents who agreed on its usage. This style involves moderate concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is associated with give and take or sharing whereby both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision (Rahim and Magner, 1995). According to Thomas and Kilmann (1974) Compromising is moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. For private schools, being business enterprises, quick decision making in is essential, any delays may mean making losses.

The second preferred style of handling grievances was Integrating style. This style had accumulated percentage of 81.25% of those respondents who agreed on using it. Integrating style involves high concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is concerned with collaboration between parties (for example openness, exchange of information and examination of differences) to reach an acceptable solution to both parties (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Avoiding style, Dominating style and Obliging styles, were the least preferred with 29.1%, 24.97% and 20.87% respectively of the respondents who agreed as their preferred mode of handling grievances. These three styles of handling grievances are associated with a high concern for one party and a low concern for the other party involved in the conflict.

The study further found out that grievance handling had influence of on job satisfaction among teachers in private secondary schools. Most teacher (over 80%) reported high job satisfaction when Compromising and Integrating styles are employed in handling grievances. These two styles are associated with high concern for all parties involved in a conflict. Roche (2002), underscores the importance of open and sincere relationships between the school management and teachers. A well-managed and motivated human resource could help solve many if not all of the problems experienced in schools. It is important that teachers feel important and satisfied with their jobs for them to be willing to give their best to the education of the students. It was also found out that low job satisfaction is experienced when Obliging, Dominating and Avoiding styles of handling grievances are employed. These styles of handling grievances are associated with high concern for one party and a low concern for another party involved in a conflict.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The results from the study revealed that grievance handling has an influence on employee job satisfaction. From the study it was found out that employees job satisfaction is improved when the employees concerns are collaborated when handling grievances while low job satisfaction is experienced when their concerns are not taken into consideration. From the study Compromising and Integrating styles lead to high job satisfaction since they are associated with a high concerns for both parties involved in a conflict. Dominating, Avoiding and Obliging styles, lead to low job satisfaction since they are associated with a high concern for one party and a low concern for another party involved in a conflict.

## **5.3 Recommendation**

The main aim in grievance management is to resolve subordinates' dissatisfactions and maintain harmonious working environment. To reach these circumstances, appropriate styles

have to be selected to resolve different issues of grievance because each issue of grievance has its own uniqueness. Constructive grievance handling largely depends on ability of managers and supervisors to recognise, diagnose, and correct the causes of potential employee dissatisfaction before they become formal grievances. The study therefore recommends training of school managers to reinforce and improve on grievance handling as this has a direct impact on teachers' satisfaction and consequently on their performance.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the study**

There are several factors that posed as constraints to the study. First was the time factor-this made the study limited in its depth and scope. Secondly, the study did not achieve 100% response as some school principals did not cooperate at all and neither could they allow their teacher to participate in answering the questionnaires. The study achieved 72.72% response rate. Thirdly, is the fact that the respondents in their different situations may give biased information and their feelings may change overtime. Lastly the study looked at one class of institutions-the private secondary schools and therefore, may not necessarily be applicable to other institutions as grievance handlings vary from one institution to another.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

As this study revealed that Integrating and Compromising styles create a higher job satisfaction among teachers in private secondary schools, more research should be done in other learning institutions such as public schools, colleges and universities to find out whether this is the case. Further research could also be carried out to find out why Obliging, Dominating and Avoiding styles of handling grievances are not preferred by majority when handling grievances in private secondary schools.

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# APPENDIX I

## Questionnaire

This questionnaire investigates the Grievance handling style and Employee Job Satisfaction in Private secondary schools. Information given will be confidential and will only be used for research purposes only. Please respond to the following questions to the best of your ability as per instruction in each part. Please tick where appropriate.

### Section one - General information

1. Kindly indicate your gender.

Male  female

2. How long have you been employed in this school?

a) 5 or less	
b) 6 - 10	
c) 11-15	
d) 16-20	
e) 21 and above	

3. What is your highest level of education?

Degree	
Post graduate diploma	
Diploma	
Others (state)	

4. Kindly indicate your position in your school

a) Class teacher	
b) Head of department	
c) Deputy Principal	
d) Principal	

## Section two –Grievance handling style

On a scale of 1-4 (where 1 is **Strongly Disagree**, 2 is **Disagree**, 3 is **Agree** and 4 is **strongly Agree**) what is your level of agreement with the following statements concerning grievance handling at your school.

		1	2	3	4	5
(a)	I try to work with my subordinate to find solution to a problem which satisfy our expectations.					
(b)	I collaborate with my subordinate to come up with decisions acceptable to us.					
(c)	I try to integrate ideas with those of my subordinates to come up with a decision jointly.					
(d)	I try to investigate an issue with my subordinate to find a solution acceptable to us.					
(e)	I try to bring all concerns out in the open so that the issue can be resolved in the best possible way.					
(f)	I try to work with my subordinate for the proper understanding of a problem					
(g)	I use my authority to make a decision in my favour.					
(h)	I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.					
(i)	I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.					
(j)	I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.					
(k)	I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.					
(l)	I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my subordinates.					
(m)	I give in to the wishes of my subordinate					

### Section Three – Employee Job satisfaction

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with regard to the following issues on grievance handling style in your school ( where 1 is **very satisfied**; 2 is **satisfied**; 3 is **some what satisfied**; 4 is **less satisfied**)

		1	2	3	4
(a)	Working with my superior to find solution to a problem which satisfy our expectations.				
(b)	Collaborating with my superior to come up with decisions acceptable to us.				
(c)	Integrating my ideas with those of my superiors to come up with a decision jointly.				
(d)	Investigating an issue with my superior to find a solution acceptable to us.				
(e)	My superior bringing all concerns out in the open so that the issue can be resolved in the best possible way.				
(f)	My superior working with me for the proper understanding of a problem				
(g)	My superior using his/her authority to make a decision in my favour.				
(h)	My superior sometimes using his/her power to win a competitive situation.				
(i)	My superior using his/her influence to get his ideas accepted.				
(j)	My superior trying to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.				
(k)	My superior usually proposing a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.				
(l)	My superior trying to avoid unpleasant exchanges with me.				
(m)	My superior giving in to my wishes				

End

Thank you.

**APPENDIX II**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION REGISTERED PRIVATE SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS THIKA WEST DISTRICT - JULY 2011**

	<b>Urban Schools</b>	No. of teachers
1.	Equator High School	18
2.	St. Augustine School	13
3.	St. Xavier School	14
4.	St. David Secondary school	15
5.	St. Appolonus Secondary School	14
6.	Heights Academy	14
7.	Sapiencie High School	15
8.	St. Marks Secondary School	16
9.	Pentagon Secondary	13
	<b>Peri-Urban Schools</b>	
10.	Theos Senior School	14
11.	Thika Road girls secondary School	15
12.	Juja Township Secondary School	14
13.	Kalimoni Senior School	21
14.	Bristar Girls Secondary School	17
15.	Juja Senior School	14
16.	St. Bakita School	16
17.	Corner Brook high School	19

*Source- Ministry of Education-D.E.O –Thika West District*