

Teachers Emotional Well-Being: The Role of Demographic Variables in Mediating Workload and Emotional Exhaustion

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ABSTRACT

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The relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion is dynamic. Various demographic variables mediate between workload and emotional exhaustion, including gender, age, marital status, level of education, work experience, number of lessons per week, teaching subject, and the school category. However, there is a lack of current information on various demographic variables' role in the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion among teachers. This article aims to explain the mediation role of the selected demographic variables in the relationship between workload and the emotional exhaustion of high school teachers in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study utilized 367 teachers, of which 331 responded to the questionnaire. Multinomial logistic regression analyses were used to determine how the variables mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion of the teachers. The mixed results indicated that various demographic factors mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion either positively or negatively. Given the dynamic nature of the workload for teachers, it would be essential to consider the demographic variables to ensure teachers' emotional health.

Keywords:

Workload, emotional exhaustion, teachers, demographic, public secondary schools, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies have suggested a connection between high school teachers' workload and emotional exhaustion (Khan, Khan, Kundi, Khan, Nawaz, Khan., & Yar, 2014; Njuguna, Odiemo & Wango, 2022a). This connection has primarily been linked to the type of work that teachers do, which extends beyond classroom instruction and includes other responsibilities that frequently put them under pressure emotionally and physically (Afzal, Idrees, Fardous & Ambreen, 2019; Njuguna, Odiemo & Wango, 2022b; Wang, Zheng, Hu & Zheng, 2014). Nevertheless, it is unclear how the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion is influenced by demographic factors, including gender, age, marital status, level of education, work experience, number

of lessons per week, teaching subject, and the school category. Studies that have been done previously showed inconsistent findings.

Gender has been associated with the emotional well-being of teachers. In a study conducted to explore the level of work-related emotional exhaustion among public school teachers, a gender difference in emotional dimension was reported (Shaheen & Mahmood, 2020). Females scored higher than the male teachers in emotional exhaustion measured against the state of being exhausted emotionally, straining to meet the work demand, tiredness, and the amount of frustration emanating from work life. The study used three hundred eighty public elementary, primary, and secondary school teachers. According to Shaheen and Mahmood (2020), school workload demands and domestic roles created an imbalance in the amount of time dedicated to the work in school and led to emotional exhaustion. These differences are associated with the various roles, expectations, work-life balance, demands, and interrelationships (Anbu, 2015; Muasya, 2020; Shaheen & Mahmood, 2015). Generally, females take care of

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family issues more than men. These roles take a lot of time which may interfere with the time taken to attend to their school duties, and therefore, they are likely to be more prone to stress and burnout than males (Muasya, 2020). Additionally, in another study conducted on the role of gender in predicting work burnout, the findings established that male teachers were more prone to higher burnout than their female counterparts as they reported higher scores across all the dimensions of burnout, including emotional exhaustion (Anbu, 2015). The study used the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES) to collect data from a sample of 28 participants among English teachers in Malaysia. This study utilized a small sample. Also, the study made no comparisons with the other subjects since the sample was drawn from teachers teaching English only. Therefore, another study was needed to fill the gap where the sample would comprise teachers teaching different subjects. Another study was conducted aimed at analyzing teacher burnout. Data were collected from 162 teachers from rural Ohio schools using a questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed gender differences in burnout scores. Male teachers were lower in emotional exhaustion than females (Rumschlag, 2017). These results suggested that males are more likely than females to employ defense mechanisms such as distancing themselves. As a result, they can eradicate or reduce feelings of hopelessness, intolerance, and irritability and prevent emotional exhaustion. Generally, female teachers take care of the family more than men, which requires a lot of time, minimizing the time taken to attend their school work (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013; Desouky & Allam, 2017; Wang, Ramos, Wu, Liu, Yang, Wang, & Wang, 2015). Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla (2013) examined work-related stress and professional burnout using a sample of 388 participants drawn from public primary and secondary school teachers in Attica, Greece. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Analysis was done using regression analysis procedures. The findings indicated that more females than males had more workload. Moreover, Desouky and Allam (2017) opined that females were more depressed than males due to the many roles that females engaged in. Females engage in different roles both at work and at home. Unlike men, female teachers are nurturers by nature and are likely to get more involved with the learners' concerns outside the classroom, while their home roles as mothers and wives are also challenging teaching. They are at times not able to balance work and home life. Wang et al. (2015) reported similar findings. However, Wang et al. (2015) sample had more females (548) than males (133), which may have influenced the results in a way that introduced bias. Thus, there was a need for another study. However, some studies found no gender differences concerning workload and emotional exhaustion (Musakali, Sindabi, & Njong'e, 2014; Mullen, Maloney, Denny, & Dietz, 2018). Musakali, Sindabi, & Njong'e (2014) conducted a study to examine the

relationship between gender and job burnout. The study had a sample of 79 females and 70 male staff drawn from private and public Universities in Kenya and working in the department of student affairs. The findings of the study indicated that personnel dealing with students' affairs experienced high levels of emotional burnout regardless of their gender. This was because of the amount of work they were involved in. Mullen, Maloney, Denny, and Dietz (2018) found a significant gender difference in workload and burnout. In all studies, the participants lamented over long hours of working that were overstretching, the inadequacy of staff members, a lot of work involved, and frequent crisis management welfare emanating from the students.

Age has been linked to the relationship between workload and burnout. In a study conducted to examine the relationship between the level of workload and job burnout, the findings indicated that age strongly mediated the relationship between workload and job burnout in that an increase in age led to an increase in the level of burnout (Ziaei, Yarmohammadi, Moradi & Khadnan, 2015). The study was a cross-sectional descriptive study conducted among administrative staff at Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences in Iran with a sample of 242 participants drawn from a population of 427 and data collected using the NASA-Task Load Index and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-S) for workload levels and burnout respectively and analysis done using ANOVA and Pearson tests. Ziaei et al. (2015) concluded that there was a need to address the workload issue if burnout is to be reduced or eliminated. The study used the NASA-Task Load Index to measure workload and ANOVA to test the relationship. Wang et al. (2015) explored the effects of work stress on burnout using a sample size of 681 participants drawn from both primary and secondary school teachers in Liaoning, China, and performed linear and logical regression analysis. The findings indicated that age mediated the relationship between workload and burnout among the staff. The outcome unveiled that middle-aged teachers 30 - 40 years old had a higher emotional exhaustion burnout than those of other ages ranging between 21-30 years and 41-50 years and above. These findings were attributed to being in positions of authority, in charge of curriculum activities, supervisory, student management affairs, and administrative duties. Burnout among older teachers was due to higher pressure towards meeting attendance and the required expectations created by the amount of workload involved, as many were in administrative positions. For the younger teachers, it was due to inexperience with the challenges, especially from the students and the parents, and the fact that they were still getting used to the working environment. The results further suggested that work overload, lack of rewards, inadequate supervision support, and inadequate co-worker support contributed significantly to high burnout (Wang et al., 2015). These findings were in line with Desouky and Allam (2017)

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findings that teachers aged 40 years and above who had more workload had more stress than those younger than 40 years. In another study, Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa (2014) argued that young practicing teachers experienced more emotional exhaustion than older teachers. These findings were attributed to; the anxiety and stress caused by the overwhelming workload in the new environment, students' misbehaviors, inability to contact family, and uncomfortable working environment. The study was conducted in the Eastern region of Ethiopia among 112 participants drawn from a target population of 197 teachers using stratified random sampling methods. Results further showed that more female than male teachers had more stress. These findings agreed with a prior study that the years of age predicted the prevalence of burnout, where younger participants reported higher levels of burnout than the older ones (Kalui, 2013). According to Kalui (2013), inadequate competent skills among younger teachers that may help them deal with the challenges and demands of the work were the cause of their burnout. The comparative study sought to research the prevalence of burnout experienced by the athletic directors from the United States and the physical education and games department chairpersons in Kenyan higher education institutions. However, these studies were limited to young practicing teachers and teachers engaging in games and sports only. However, Johnson, Machoski, Holdsworth, Ker, and Zapf (2017) found that, although older people had more burnout, they also had better skills and other abilities acquired with the time that helped them self-regulate their burnout than the younger teachers. Therefore, they were not worse than the younger teachers. Accordingly, the findings affirm that although age contributed to the development of work burnout, there may be other factors that determine work burnout. Afsar, Govil, and Gupta (2015) conducted a study on burnout and demographic variables with a sample of 300 secondary school teachers from the Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. A questionnaire was used to collect data, and analysis was done using a t-test and analysis of variance. The findings of his study indicated that although there was a slight difference concerning age and burnout levels, this difference was not statistically significant. Afsar, Govil, and Gupta (2015) concluded that there was no significant relationship between age and the emotional exhaustion dimension of burnout among teachers. It is unclear whether a sample from another group of professionals may give the same results.

Previous studies investigating the association between marital status and workload have presented inconsistencies in the findings. A study by Wang et al. (2015) found a difference in the mediation role of marital status among teachers. It found that married teachers had lower scores in emotional exhaustion burnout than single teachers, divorced, widowed, or separated. The effect of marital status was attributed to the absence of social support from a life partner for those who

were single and a sense of security for those who were married. Similarly, Anbu (2015) revealed that married teachers shoulder more responsibilities than those not married and without families in terms of school work, family, and society. As they strive to satisfy the expectations of their position from all the dimensions, they experience higher levels of stress, eventually leading to burnout. This study used the stress inventory tool to collect data from 200 secondary school teachers in the Nagercoil region. Moreover, secondary school teachers working in government schools had more stress because they had to fulfill the duties and the responsibilities given to them from time to time by the administration and the heads of departments, hence more responsibilities. To do this, the individual requires a lot of energy, commitment, and efficiency in work (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

In their study, Shaheen and Mahamood (2015) investigated the effects of gender and marital status on workload and burnout among 380 teachers using the Burnout Inventory (BI) with 48 questions to measure the three dimensions of burnout to assess their emotional burnout status in their work environment. The study found that non-married teachers were more frustrated and stressed while the married teachers reported low levels of emotional exhaustion. This finding was supported by Shaheen and Mahmood's (2020) study on the predictors of burnout among teachers, where marital status was a good predictor of burnout, especially the emotional exhaustion dimension of burnout. However, these studies examined the demographic effects on teacher burnout. Therefore, it was hard to estimate the effects of these factors on the various teacher workload categories. Also, these studies were drawn from primary and secondary schools in China, so the results may not be the same in Kiambu County, Kenyan. Another study needed to be done to establish the situation in Kenya. Dehal and Kumar (2017), in a study conducted among college teachers in Himachal Pradesh, found no gender difference between the marital status of the teachers and the levels of job burnout experienced. The study used burnout inventory to collect data from a sample of 546 participants, and both descriptive and inferential statistics analysed data. Similarly, Afsar (2015) conducted a study on burnout and demographic variables with a sample of 300 secondary school teachers from the Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. A questionnaire was used to collect data, and analysis was done using a t-test and analysis of variance. The findings indicated that teachers had low levels of burnout. The study also found no statistically significant difference between the married and non-married participants concerning burnout. Similarly, Ziaei, Yarmohammadi, Moradi, and Khadnan (2015) found no statistical difference in workload and burnout between married professionals and those who were single. Both genders scored nearly the same in burnout, implying that other factors could have contributed to burnout. This study also did not attribute burnout to workload. Thus,

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there was a need to do another study to establish whether workload influences burnout among teachers.

Studies have established that the level of education achievement influences workload expectations and the level of burnout experience of an individual (Sahni & Deswal, 2015; Ziaei, Yarmohammadi, Moradi & Khadnan, 2015). A study was conducted to examine the relationship between biographical, psychological, and organizational variables and teacher burnout with a sample of 122 participants drawn from teacher educators in government colleges in Haryana. The findings indicated that teachers with Ph.D. qualifications reported higher emotional exhaustion (Sahni & Deswal, 2015). These results were attributed to increased growth expectations as they achieved higher education levels. Failure to achieve these expectations would lead to increased work burnout. Similarly, Desouky and Allam (2017) associated workload and education qualification with stress and depression among teachers. The study explored the prevalence of anxiety and depression among teachers. Data was collected using a questionnaire distributed to 568 Egyptian teachers and analyzed with the help of descriptive and chi-square test procedures. The findings indicated that teachers with master's degrees and higher workloads had more anxiety and depression than teachers with bachelor's and diploma levels of education. These results may be attributed to the higher expectations the teachers may have as they attain higher education.

In contrast, Ziaei, Yarmohammadi, Moradi, and Khadnan (2015) opined that staff with diploma certificates had more emotional exhaustion than other staff with different qualifications and significantly workload physical demands instead of those with other qualifications. These findings were in tandem with the findings of previous studies that there is a positive effect of education level relationship on the relationship between workload and burnout, where lower academic level mediated the relationship positively (Ismail, Al Faisal, Hussein, Wasfy, Al Shaali, & El Sawaf; 2015; Nassar, Reid, Kahn moui, Tuma, Waheed, & McConnell, 2020). Both Ismail et al. (2015) and Nassar et al. found teachers with diploma levels of education have higher scores in burnout levels than those with bachelor's and master's degrees (Ismail et al., 2015; Nassar et al., 2020). Similarly, Wang et al. (2015) reported similar findings where undergraduate teachers were more emotionally exhausted than graduate teachers.

Work experience has been associated with workload and burnout (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013; Kalui, 2013; Subon & Sigie, 2016). Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla (2013) studied work-related stress, burnout, and work experience related to skills acquisition. The study used a sample of teachers who had worked between 1 year to 35 years and were categorized into four groups ranging from (1 – 5) years, (6 –

10) years, (11 -15) years, and 16 years and above. Their findings indicated that teachers with a work experience of 11 – 15 years had higher emotional exhaustion than those who had worked for more than 15 years but lower than those with a working experience of between 1 to 10 years. The study concluded that the more work experience one had, the more one adapted to work demands and working conditions. The study concluded that long work experience equips the individual with coping skills such as problem-solving skills and a positive approach to the problem and task strategies, among others. These skills enable the individual to positively address the challenges encountered in work, thereby reducing stress and burnout. These results also explain why people with more experience are likely to have less burnout. Moreover, teachers with short experience may lack coping skills to enable them to cope with work challenges, and as a result, they are likely to experience high burnout. Another study conducted in 2016 affirmed that work experience influences burnout because of the regular daily routine for an extended period without a change (Subon & Sigie, 2016). The study used fifty teachers from Samarahan District in Malaysia, with only 37 responding to the questionnaire. It used descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the data to establish whether burnout was related to the length of service. The study's results indicated that work experience positively influenced emotional exhaustion positively, due to the tendency to get exhausted as one follows a daily routine for many years. Specifically, teachers with work experience of 10 to 23 years and aged between 35 to 55 years were emotionally exhausted. In contrast, few studies reported no link between work experience and emotional exhaustion. Rumschlag (2017) noted no difference in the working experience and the relationship between burnout and workload. The study reported that teachers with low and high working experiences scored nearly the same across all three dimensions of burnout. These findings indicate that teachers can be overwhelmed by high workload demands regardless of the length of the working experience.

Subject specialization has been linked to emotional exhaustion (Koruklu, Feyzioglu, Ozenoglu-Kiremit & Aladag, 2012; Tsigilis, Zournatzi, & Koustelios, 2011). A study was conducted among secondary school teachers working in Aydm to establish the relationship between burnout levels and demographic variables. Data was collected from 532 participants and analysed using descriptive statistics. The results indicated that teaching subjects influenced the level of emotional exhaustion experienced by the teacher. Subjects such as sciences and languages require more preparation time, teaching resources, and lab work than humanities and social sciences (Koruklu, Feyzioglu, Ozenoglu-Kiremit & Aladag, 2012). A similar study was conducted on burnout among teachers teaching physical education in schools in Greece with a sample size of 207

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teachers. Teachers teaching physical education were more emotionally exhausted (Tsigilis, Zournatzi, & Koustelios, 2011). Furthermore, Azmi, Nazri, and Latiff (2012) conducted a study among teachers of English at the University Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu, to analyse the teaching of English and stress using a sample of 51 teacher trainees on practice and 38 experienced teachers. It collected data using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and analysed it quantitatively and qualitatively. Researchers argued that teachers teaching English subjects were more prone to emotional exhaustion. The experienced and new teachers experienced burnout due to the nature of the subject, and therefore, no significant differences were reported. In the same vein, in their study, Jamshidirad, Mukundan, and Nimehchisalaem (2012) reported low job burnout levels in emotional exhaustion. The study was conducted among the teachers of English using a sample of 28 participants. It had a limitation in that the sample consisted of only the teachers of English while excluding the other subject teachers, which created a methodological gap that needed to be filled. Therefore, it was unclear whether other subject teachers would show the same results. The current study drew a sample that included teachers teaching in other areas of subject specialization to establish the actual status.

There is limited documented literature on the number of lessons teachers teach per week and how it can affect workload and burnout among teachers. A study was conducted to investigate the teachers' beliefs when implementing an innovative educational system in the Netherlands, using a sample of 490 teachers drawn from the upper grades of higher general secondary education schools. Data was collected using the Dutch version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory for teachers and analysed using regression procedures. The study's findings revealed a positive association between the number of hours and emotional exhaustion: the more hours the teacher worked, the more emotionally exhausted they became (Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2002). In addition, Wange'ri and Okello (2014) conducted a study among teachers in Kasarani, Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings revealed that almost all the participants had work-related burnout, which was associated with the number of lessons taught per week, among other factors. Specifically, teachers teaching more than 22 lessons per week and had other duties reported being work overloaded, eventually leading to emotional exhaustion. Nevertheless, these studies did not clear how the number of lessons would affect the relationship between workload and burnout.

Studies have linked school settings to teachers' burnout because of the different status and the prevailing working conditions in different schools (Mukundan, Zare, Zarif, Manaf, & Sahamid, 2015). Schools also differ in size,

students' –teacher ratio, location, adequacy of resources and teachers, expectations, and school management, among other factors. All these factors are likely to determine the amount of work involved. A study was conducted to examine the relationship between school type and job burnout among teachers in Maleka state in Malaysia, with a sample of 714 primary school teachers from different types of schools. The school variable was based on the main language of instruction and included Malay primary schools, Chinese primary schools, and Tamil primary schools, all of Malaysia's national schools. The difference in burnout levels resulted from teachers working under pressure in some schools. Teachers teaching in the Chinese education system were pressurized as they were expected to give and mark homework and assignments for the learners than those working in Tamil primary schools, where the pressure was not as much. These results imply that in schools where there are more tests and assignments to be done regularly with strict deadlines to be met and other work demands, teachers are more likely to be burnout out than in schools where the amount of work is moderate or low. This study was conducted among teachers in China, where the work context differs from the Kenya context. Dehal and Kumar (2017) conducted the study to examine burnout among college teachers and assess the influence of school type and burnout among college teachers in Himachal Pradesh, India, and used a sample of 546 participants drawn from private, government, urban, and rural schools. Data were analysed using t-test analysis. The study results found that teachers working in urban schools had higher burnout levels than those teaching in rural schools, while those teaching in government had higher burnout levels than those teaching in private schools. However, Afsar, Govil, and Gupta (2015) found that teachers from semi-urban areas exhibited higher burnout scores than those teaching in urban and rural secondary schools. Those working in urban schools also had higher burnout levels than those teaching in rural schools. These results were attributed to the unpredictable status of life in the urban schools, while those in semi-urban schools were concerned that they neither belonged to the urban life nor to the rural life where teachers do not compete. The study utilized a sample of 300 teachers drawn from urban, rural, and semi-urban schools using a purposive stratified sampling technique and descriptive statistics to analyse the data. Schools differ in many ways, including the school setting, facilities, available resources with different management styles, and expectations, among many other factors. Kenyan schools are categorized into National, Extra- County, County, and Sub-County. Therefore, it was unclear how teaching in different schools affects workload and burnout among teachers.

METHODOLOGY

This study was descriptive and had a random sample of 367 participants drawn from a target population of 4447 teachers

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from public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. Sample determination was calculated using the formula provided by Yamane, 1973.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size, N = Total population size and e = level of precision.

The researcher created strata samples proportional to the population from each stratum.

The sample was chosen randomly within each stratum to ensure that individuals in a particular sub-group had equal chances of being included in the study sample. The purpose was to ensure that the sample included all the sub-groups and avoided bias. The workload was measured using a questionnaire, while emotional exhaustion was measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory Scale (MBI-S). The

MBI-S instrument was adapted and modified from the original scale. The researcher obtained permission to use the research instrument. The MBI-S items were measured on a 7-Likert Scale. Emotional exhaustion was assessed using nine items based on the frequency with which the respondents experienced the identified feelings.

Results

The study examined the relationship between workload and the demographic variables on the emotional exhaustion dimension of burnout. The effect of the demographic variables on the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion was analysed. The results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Multinomial Logistic Regression on Emotional Exhaustion against Workload and Demographic Variables

<i>Emotional Exhaustion</i>	β	<i>Robust SE β</i>	<i>t-statistic</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Workload (IV)					
Group 2	-1.6455	.8257	-1.99	0.046*	[-3.2638, -.0271]
Group 3	-.4597	.6986	-0.66	0.511	[-1.8288, .9095]
Group 4	.2331	.9919	0.23	0.814	[-1.7111, 2.1772]
Group 5	-1.9217	.6929	-2.77	0.006*	[-3.2798, -.5635]
Group 6	-1.7574	.8762	-2.01	0.045*	[-3.4748, -.0399]
Group 7	-1.7016	.7389	-2.30	0.021*	[-3.1498, -.2534]
Group 8	-.6208	.7412	-0.84	0.402	[-2.0735, .8319]
Gender	1.5083	.5052	2.99	0.003*	[.5180, 2.4985]
Age in years					
31-40 Years	1.7140	.8534	2.01	0.045*	[.0414, 3.3866]
41-50 Years	3.1094	1.0406	2.99	0.003*	[1.0699, 5.1488]
51-60 Years	2.8963	1.1185	2.59	0.010 *	[.7041, 5.0886]
Marital Status	1.4319	.3768	3.80	0.000*	[.6934, 2.1704]
Education	-.9779	.4885	-2.00	0.045*	[-1.9353, -.0205]
Experience					
16-25 Years	-1.6555	.8149	-2.03	0.042*	[-3.2527, -.0582]
26-35 Years	-1.9785	.9219	-2.15	0.032*	[-3.7854, -.1715]
Department					
Languages	-2.7904	.6210	-4.49	0.000*	[-4.0076, -1.5734]
Humanities	-.8963	.6627	-1.35	0.176	[-2.1951, .4025]
Technical	-3.3055	.5999	-5.51	0.000*	[-4.4812, -2.1297]
Periods/Lessons					
22-27	-.9231	.5403	-1.71	0.088**	[-1.9820, .1357]
27-32	-.2732	.6043	-0.45	0.651	[-1.4577, .9113]
>32	.4009	.5989	0.67	0.503	[-.7730, 1.5749]
School Category					
Extra County	-1.8936	.7221	-2.62	0.009*	[-3.3089, -.4781]
County	-2.5082	.6709	-3.74	0.000*	[-3.8233, -1.1932]
Sub County	-2.3782	.6554	-3.63	0.000*	[-3.6628, -1.0936]
Constant	1.6642	1.3584	1.23	0.221	[-.9982, 4.3266]
Pseudo R²	0.3273				
No. of Observation	331				

Note: * and ** mean statistically significant at the 5% and 10% levels of significance respectively.

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Table 1 shows the effects of demographic variables on relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion.

Gender

Females reported being more emotionally exhausted than male teachers.

Age

Respondents aged between 31-40 years, 41-50 years, and 51-60 years were more emotionally exhausted than those aged 30 years and below.

Of the three age categories, the strongest was between 41-50 years, followed by those between 51-60 years and 31-40 years, respectively.

Marital Status

Respondents who were single more emotionally exhausted compared to the married individuals.

Level of Education

Respondents with master's degree and above were more emotionally exhausted compared to those with the bachelor's degree.

Work experience

Respondents with work experience between 16-25 years and between 26-35 years were less emotionally exhausted compared to those with work experience of 15 years and below. Category between 26- 35 the least exhausted emotionally.

Teaching subject

Respondents teaching Languages, Technical and Applied, and humanities subjects were less likely to be emotionally exhausted compared to those teaching sciences and mathematics. Those in the Technical and Applied subjects were the least exhausted emotionally.

The number of lessons per Week

Respondents teaching 32 lessons and above were more emotionally exhausted than those teaching less than 22 lessons, those between 22-27, and between 27-32 per week. The least emotionally exhausted respondents taught 22-27 lessons per week.

School Category

Respondents teaching in the extra-county, county, and sub-county school categories were less likely to be emotionally exhausted compared to those teaching in the National Schools.

DISCUSSIONS

Gender positively mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion. Female teachers were

more likely than males to have emotional exhaustion. As reported during the focus group discussions, these findings were because of the many roles the female teachers have to play inside and outside the school. These findings concur with the findings of previous authors who reported that female teachers had higher emotional exhaustion than male teachers (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013; Avanzi et al., 2018; Shaheen & Mahmood, 2015; Ziaei, Yarmohammadi, Moradi & Khadnan, 2015; Wang et al., 2014). Females have various roles at work and home, including family nurturance. Unlike men, female teachers are nurturing and are likely to get more involved with the learners' concerns outside the classroom, while their home roles as mothers and wives also challenge their school work. These roles may sometimes affect them negatively, making them unable to balance work and home life, hence, emotionally exhausted. However, these findings contradict Anbu's (2015) claim that males had higher emotional exhaustion than females. Other researchers found no gender differences in emotional exhaustion due to workload (Arvidsson et al., 2016; Musakali, Sindabi, & Njong'e, 2014; Rezaei, Karami, Hajizadeh, Soroush, & Nouri, 2018). Age positively mediated the relationship between workload and burnout. Concerning emotional exhaustion, the effect of age was weak and positive. Participants aged between 31- 40 years were more emotionally exhausted than those aged 30 years and below and those aged from 51-60 and 41-50, while those aged between 51 - 60 years were more emotionally exhausted than those aged between 41 - 60 years and those aged 30 years and below. Age, however, significantly affected the relationship between workload and emotional burnout across all age groups. The positive findings are in line with the previous reports that middle-aged teachers (31 – 40) years were more emotionally exhausted than those aged between 21 - 30 years and those aged 41 - 50 years and above (Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa, 2014; Wang et al., 2015). However, these findings contradict Ziaei et al. (2015) findings that older teachers were more emotionally exhausted than younger teachers. Elsewhere, Johnson et al. (2017) suggested that older people have better skills and other abilities acquired over time, enhancing their self-regulation. Therefore, older teachers are likely to better manage their emotional issues due to high workloads, reducing their vulnerability to emotional exhaustion. Marital status positively mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion burnout. The respondents who were not married were more emotionally exhausted than those who were married. The finding concurs with previous findings that married respondents experience less emotional exhaustion than non-married teachers (Shaheen & Mahamood, 2015; Wang et al., 2015). According to Wang et al. (2014), single teachers become emotionally exhausted because they lack support from a life partner, which married teachers enjoy. These results, however, differ from Anbu's (2015) findings, which

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associated married teachers with more emotional exhaustion. These findings were attributed to the responsibilities outside the school that require their attention, which may not be the case with single teachers. The level of education negatively mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion. Teachers with master's degrees and above were less emotionally exhausted than teachers with bachelor's degrees. These negative findings are similar to previous findings that teachers with Ph.D. qualifications had higher emotional exhaustion than those with a master's degree (Sahni & Deswal, 2015). In contrast, the current findings differ from those of other previous studies, such as Ismail et al. (2015) and Wang et al. (2015), which found that teachers with bachelor's degrees were more emotionally exhausted than those with master's and Ph.D. Similarly, Ziael et al. (2015) study reported that diploma teachers are more emotionally exhausted than teachers with bachelor's, master and Ph.D. degrees. The work experience negatively mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion. However, the effect of the working experience was statistically significant with emotional exhaustion. Concerning emotional exhaustion, teachers who worked between 16-25 years and between 26-35 years were less emotionally exhausted with the work than the teachers with a working experience of fewer than 25 years. Further, teachers with a working experience of 16-25 years were more emotionally exhausted than those with a working experience of between 26-35 years but lower than those with a working experience of 15 years and below. These findings indicate that emotional exhaustion decreases with increased working experience. The findings also suggest that the longer the individual has worked, the more adjusted to the workload demands one becomes, and the less likely they are to get emotionally exhausted. The current findings align with Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla (2013), who reported that the more experienced an individual was, the lesser the vulnerability to burnout. These findings, however, contradict the findings of Subon and Sigie (2016), who found that work experience had a moderately positive effect on both emotional exhaustion, as teachers who had worked for 10 to 23 years reported higher burnout than those with a less working experience, mainly the newly employed. According to Subon and Sigie (2016), emotional exhaustion was associated with work monotony for an extended period. Also, Kalui (2013) found that teachers who had worked for a few years were less vulnerable to burnout than those who had worked for a more extended period. In contrast, the findings differ from Cicek and Guvercin (2016), who found no effect of working experience on workload and burnout across all the dimensions of burnout. The teaching subject negatively mediated the relationship between workload and burnout for emotional exhaustion. With emotional exhaustion, teachers teaching languages, humanities, and technical subjects had a weak and negative effect on the relationship than teachers

teaching science subjects and mathematics. These results imply that teachers teaching languages (Kiswahili, English, French, German), humanities (History, Geography, Religious education, and others), and technical subjects (business, Home Science, Agriculture, and others) were less emotionally exhausted as a result of their work than the teaching science subjects (Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Mathematics). However, the findings were significant in the languages and technical subjects in emotional exhaustion. The negative findings were supported by the qualitative data where several science teachers expressed that they have to do a lot of pre-preparation for the classes, especially for the practical lessons, which are time demanding and frustrating, especially when needed resources are not available. The current findings concur with Jamshidirad et al.'s (2012) findings that English teachers had low emotional exhaustion. The findings also partly concur with previous findings that, although the specific teaching subjects' relationship was not clear, there was a revelation that different subjects related to burnout differently (Koruklu et al., 2012). However, the findings differ from the earlier findings that English teachers experienced more emotional exhaustion (Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2016). Elsewhere, Tsigilis, Zournatzi, and Koustelios (2011) found that teachers teaching physical education were more emotionally exhausted than teachers teaching other subjects, while Azmi, Nazri, and Latiff (2012) reported that teachers teaching English were prone to burnout across all the dimensions of burnout. Furthermore, Cui et al. (2018) found no difference in teachers' teaching subjects and burnout. The number of lessons the teacher taught per week had negative and positive mediation effects on the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion. Concerning emotional exhaustion, teachers teaching 22-27 and between 28-32 lessons were less emotionally exhausted, while teachers teaching 32 lessons and above were more emotionally exhausted than teachers teaching less than 22 lessons. These findings indicate that the more lessons the teacher taught, the more emotionally exhausted they became. However, the negative effect on emotional exhaustion was significant between 22-27 lessons taught per week. These findings were attributed to the enormous work teachers have to do in preparing for the classes, given that the streams are many in some schools, attending meetings and engaging in other activities. All these put a lot of pressure on the teacher, making them experience mental clogging. The positive findings concur with the previous findings that teachers teaching 22 lessons and above were emotionally exhausted in their work (Wang'eri & Okello, 2014). School category negatively mediated the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion of the teachers. The Extra County, County, and Sub-county schools had weak and negative effects on the relationship than those in the National schools. The findings were statistically significant across the three school categories. These findings indicate no significant

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differences in emotional exhaustion in the three school categories.

CONCLUSION

This paper explored the mediating role of demographic variables in the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion among high school teachers. The study reported mixed findings where the selected demographic variables had different mediation role in the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion of the teachers. Gender, age, and marital status mediated the relationship positively, the level of education, work experience, teaching subject, and the school category mediated the relationship negatively while the number of lessons taught per week had both negative and positive mediating roles on the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion among teachers.

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