

## **Work-Life Balance as A Moderator Between Teaching Competence Standards and Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Igembe North Sub-County, Meru County**

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### **Abstract**

The evaluative systems by TSC expect teachers to deliver good performance in every aspect of the teaching competence standards. However, the performance of primary school teachers has continued to raise concerns from different stakeholders, raising a question of whether the teaching competence standards are sufficient in explaining the annual teacher's performance or whether there are other issues such as the work-life balance that have a bearing on the teacher's performance outcome. This study assessed the moderating effect of the work-life balance on the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teachers' performance in public primary schools in the Igembe North sub-county in Meru County. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. A sample size of 202 teachers, 14 headteachers, and one Sub-County Education Officer participated in the study. A proportionate simple random sampling technique was used in selecting teachers and headteachers, while the Sub-County Education Officer was purposively selected. Data was collected using questionnaires and an interview guide whose validity and reliability was verified. The mean, standard deviation, correlation, and regression analysis were used in analyzing the quantitative data, while thematic analysis was used on qualitative data. Most teachers had multiple roles with competing interests; hence, balancing work, family, personal, and community responsibilities was a daunting task. The work-life balance was found statistically significant in moderating the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teacher's performance in public primary schools. The study recommends strengthening supportive systems on all three teaching competence standards and embracing work-life balance practices by the TSC. The TSC and principals should ensure that teachers of public primary schools have moderated work-related responsibilities and develop a workplace policy on work-life balance. The findings have enormous implications on organizational culture, leadership, and human resources management practices in public primary schools.

**Keywords:** *Work-life balance, TPAD, Teacher's performance, Performance management*

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## 1.0 Introduction

The performance of a primary school teacher is very significant in determining the education outcomes of learners and further affects the overall performance of a school in the national examination. It has implications for teachers' promotion, career progression, job satisfaction, and teacher performance are measured using appraisal scores, learners' examination results, and other qualitative parameters which vary across countries globally (Almeida, 2017; Yoon, 2017; Nzaro, 2020). It is also valuable to teachers and other stakeholders in the education sector (Bichi, 2017; Soland, Hamilton & Stecher, 2013).

Most countries have established systems for monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance. A common practice in the assessment of teacher's performance in most African countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Uganda is an appraisal system (Bichi, 2017; Obasi & Adanma, 2014; Ganyaupfu, 2013). Countries such as Poland, Australia, Chile, Finland, Austria, and Denmark have elaborate mechanisms and systems for evaluating teachers' performance, as outlined by Evaluation and Teaching (2013).

In Kenya, teachers are assessed and appraised according to the Teachers' Service Commission of Kenya (TSC) guidelines which are detailed in the teaching performance appraisal and development operation manual (TPAD). The manual has highlighted three teaching competence standards: instructional delivery, teacher conduct, and community of practice (TSC, 2019) which are used to assess the teacher's performance. The TPAD highlights the specific teaching competence standards that are critical in determining the teachers' performance. Examples of justifications of each teaching competence standard for quantifying teachers' performance are well stipulated in the manual. Structured performance scores are designated against each of the teaching competence standards. The manual has specifically highlighted three teaching competence standards: instructional delivery, teacher conduct, and community of practice (TSC, 2019). Each competence standard bears a weighted average performance score. Adopting the three teaching competence standards is expected to enhance teachers' performance. This study postulated that the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teachers' performance in public primary schools in the Igembe North sub-county in Meru County was moderated by the work-life balance. This is a unique bearing that necessitated the need for the current study.

### *Problem Statement*

The government of Kenya, through the TSC, has put in place mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the teachers' performance in public primary schools in Kenya via the teaching competency standards (instructional delivery, teachers' conduct, and community of practice) as outlined in the TPAD. With these systems in place, teachers are expected to deliver their best performance in every aspect of the competence, in-classroom, and off-classroom (Kareithi, 2018; UNESCO, 2005; Xu & Qi, 2019). Despite the above mechanisms and systems established by TSC, the performance of primary school teachers has continued to raise concerns as indicated by absenteeism, poor lesson attendance, failure to cover syllabus, hostility, poor class management practices, unconducive working environment, and poor interpersonal relationship among others (Nzaro 2020). Public primary schools from the Igembe North sub-county have continued to record underperformance in the national examinations in the sub-county over the years (Jonyo, 2017). This has been heavily linked to the non-performance of primary school teachers (Jonyo, 2017). The absence of literature in the aspects mentioned above further justifies the research gap. This scenario raises the question of whether the teaching competence standards are sufficient in explaining the annual teacher's

performance or whether there are other engagements such as the work-life balance that have a bearing on the teacher's performance outcome.

### ***Objectives and research hypothesis***

This study aimed to assess the moderating effect of the work-life balance on the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teachers' performance in public primary schools in the Igembe North sub-county in Meru County. The information gathered enabled the testing of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), which predicted that work-life balance does not moderate the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teacher's performance in public primary schools in Igembe North Sub-County.

## **2.0 Overview of literature Review**

Work-life balance refers to a satisfactory level of involvement or fits between the multiple roles in a person's life (Hudson (2005). It is simply handling a balance of responsibilities emanating from the workplace, family, and society (Muthulakshmi, 2018). Inability to balance one aspect is likely to undermine an individual's optimal performance in the workplace (Hobson et al., 2001). Balancing between family responsibilities and work responsibilities has become a challenge for people in many professions, causing strain between work and family roles among teachers (Saravanan, 2014). Fulfilling the competing demands of family and work is frustrating and stressful, often leading to sickness and absenteeism and consequently affecting the productivity of an individual (Talip et al., 2021).

The work-life balance comprises three main components, which are also referred to as the spheres. Mehtha (2012) illustratively describes components that include the work sphere, personal sphere, community, or social sphere using a work-life pyramid. On the one hand, the work sphere covers all that a teacher does in the school, such as teaching, reporting, chairing meetings, and examining to receive a salary at the end of the month. On the other hand, the personal sphere is more of the family responsibilities and the individual interest to add knowledge, new skills, and competencies to their profession. Finally, the social sphere comprises the religious platforms teachers affiliate themselves with and the internal gatherings where they come together to share their experiences, contributions, fears, and disappointments in the workplace.

Work-life balance can be influenced by factors not limited to the number of hours required to work in a given profession, the type of work one does, supervisors' expectations, deadlines, interpersonal relations, social support, marital status, recreational interests, children and family, health and fitness, training and leadership development, and values and beliefs (Saravanan, 2014). The indicators of balanced work-life include satisfaction at work and life, mental health well-being, performance at work and home, and the impact on individuals in society (Talip et al., 2021).

The existing literature regarding the work-life balance such as by Talip et al. (2021) in Malaysia, Boone et al. (2019) in Brazil, Muthulakshmi (2018) in India, Sultan et al. (2016) in Pakistan, Adebayo (2016) in Nigeria, Moshoeu (2017) in South Africa, and Njeri (2014) and Muasya (2015) in Kenya have emphasized the need for employers to provide an atmosphere that supports employees to balance issues in the workplace and society. Strategies for balancing work, personal, and community responsibilities have been discussed. However, these studies have not addressed how the same can be incorporated in determining the teacher's performance. In addition, the assessment of the moderating impact of the work-life balance on the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teachers' performance has not

been addressed. The current study managed to address this gap and made appropriate recommendations.

### 3.0 Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach and adopted a correlational research design. The target population comprised of teachers, headteachers of public primary schools, and the Sub-County TSC Director in Igembe North Sub-County. A proportionate simple random sampling technique was used in sampling teachers and headteachers, while the purposive sampling method was applied to the Sub-County TSC Director. Data was collected using questionnaires and an interview guide whose quality was ensured by checking construct and content validity, while reliability was verified using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. The results showed a reliability coefficient of 0.753 for work-life balance (X) and 0.849 for teachers' performance (Y). A reliability coefficient above 0.7 is regarded as reliable in social sciences (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Thematic analysis was applied in analyzing qualitative data. Out of a sample size of 202 teachers and 14 headteachers, the study recorded 95% and 86% response rates, respectively. Factor analysis, mean and standard deviation were computed accordingly, while regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. Information was presented using tables, figures, and narratives.

### 4.0 Results and Discussion

The results of this research have been presented and discussed as guided by the main constructs of the study.

#### *Findings on Teachers' Performance*

Overall, most teachers reported having scored 60 points during the last annual performance evaluation. This performance score was attributed to personal factors, school-based factors, government/employer-related factors, and parental factors. In addition, several sentiments on teachers' performance in public primary schools were presented to respondents on a 5-level Likert scale to solicit their views on the same.

The performance score was further measured using the continuous scale on the fourteen sentiments and finally transformed into a latent variable using the mean values. The aspects measured by the feelings mainly focused on performance evaluation, classroom observations, flexible working schedule, training opportunities, training and development committee, appraisal results, feedback, and recognition. The descriptive results on the outcome variable were ranked according to the descending values of the mean on each sentiment as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics on teachers' performance in public primary schools**

Statements on teachers' performance (N = 191)	Mean	Std. D
a) Recognition of the small achievements by the headteacher motivates me to improve my teaching services and eventually raises my performance	4.19	1.089
b) Nature and application of instructional delivery play a role in improving my performance score	3.86	1.074
c) The headteacher is concerned with teachers' commitments that impede their performance inside and outside the school	3.84	1.113
d) Involvement in a community of practice activities plays a role in improving my performance score	3.76	1.149
e) A flexible working schedule and timetable plays a role in improving my performance score	3.70	1.011

f) Regular evaluation of teachers reciprocates improvement of their performance	3.53	1.349
g) The nature of teachers' conduct plays a role in improving my performance score	3.48	1.174
h) Work-life balance reciprocates my performance in the teaching job	3.47	1.251
i) The feedback I receive from my appraiser helps me take the required actions to improve my performance	3.44	1.177
j) Teacherperformance09	3.24	1.236
k) Ability to have a work-life balance plays a role in improving my performance score	3.17	1.304
l) Classroom observations by supervisors enable me to improve my performance	3.15	1.303
m) The headteacher uses the appraisal results to motivate teachers to perform better	2.84	1.340
n) Our school has a staff training and development committee that helps the teacher deliver superb performance	2.45	1.280

The results in Table 1 show nine aspects that had a high level of agreement in the responses (the mean value was above the expected median, mean>3.4). The sentiments were about recognition motivation, instructional delivery, and the headteacher factor. Others were on involvement, workplace flexibility, regular evaluation, the nature of teachers' conduct, and work-life balance. These aspects can broadly be classified into two, that is, leadership-based factors (the recognition programs put in place, concerns on teachers' commitments from the headteacher, having flexible working schedules, regular evaluation of teachers' performance, providing feedback on teacher's performance); and individual-based factors (nature of instructional delivery applied by a teacher, participating in the community of practice activities, and ability to have a work-life balance).

The results confirm the claim by Staines (1980) Zedeck (1987) and Talip et al. (2021) in the Spillover theory, which recognizes the role of leadership in achieving a teacher's performance by facilitating positive spillover. The theory notes that satisfaction in the work domain may pose dissatisfaction in the family and personal domain. As a result, the headteacher should foster a conducive school environment to fathom positive spillover, which ensures an excellent work-life balance.

### ***Results on work-life balance for teachers in public primary schools***

This study hypothesized that work-life balance moderates the relationship between teaching competence standards and teachers' performance in public primary schools in Igembe North Sub-County. Balancing between work and other responsibilities in life is a daunting task. Teachers are engaged in performing various duties at the workplace, at home, and in the community where they live. All these responsibilities require a balance, or one's performance is adversely affected. This study first asked the teachers to indicate their roles inside and outside the school and which were affecting their effectiveness in teaching. Responses got showed that teachers were involved in multiple roles that included class teacher, disciplinary teacher, games teacher, church leader, head of a department/subject, club patron, PTA member/member of BoM, and were also involved in other leadership positions in the local community. Notably, teachers are readily available in the locality and are the most visible elites in the community. Therefore, the community usually appoints them to head funds drives, churches, school boards, and even elective positions such as Members of County Assemblies (MCA) and Members of

the National Assembly. Moreover, the head teacher-12 remarked, "Men who work far from home prefer marrying teachers because they are stationed near home, and would hence take care of the children". On the same point, the head teacher-10 noted,

*"Some female teachers have worked in one station till retirement, while others keep rotating within the schools in their locality. No wonder, if you see a nice home, an educated child, a car or a shop, mostly, it belongs to a teacher".*

The study noted that deep involvement in the roles that are mentioned above might largely affect a teacher's performance, hence an indispensable need for a work-life balance.

An elaborate question was further posed to respondents to establish the extent to which work-related obligations were affected by personal, family, and community responsibilities. In that connection, work-life balance was measured as a latent variable. Various sentiments were presented to respondents requiring them to indicate their rating against each using a Likert scale, where VSE (1) represented to a very small extent, SE (2) to a small extent, ME (3) to a moderate extent, LE (4) to a large extent, and VLE (5) to a very large extent. The findings are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics on the work-life balance of public primary school teachers**

Statements of work-life balance of public primary school teachers (N = 191)	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Deviation
a) I sacrifice sleep to finish my teaching-related work	13 (6.8%)	19 (9.9%)	36 (18.8%)	58 (30.4%)	65 (34%)	3.75	1.218
b) I sacrifice sleep to finish my family obligations	9 (4.7%)	35 (18.3%)	47 (24.6%)	50 (26.2%)	50 (26.2%)	3.51	1.196
c) My workload affects how I perform in my job	30 (15.7%)	23 (12%)	41 (21.5%)	50 (26.2%)	47 (24.6%)	3.32	1.379
d) I sacrifice sleep to finish church-related obligations	19 (9.9%)	44 (23%)	44 (23%)	39 (20.4%)	45 (23.6%)	3.25	1.313
e) I sacrifice sleep to finish community obligations	15 (7.9%)	34 (17.8%)	73 (38.2%)	26 (13.6%)	43 (22.5%)	3.25	1.214
f) I sacrifice sleep to finish school obligations	30 (15.7%)	28 (14.7%)	44 (23%)	42 (22%)	47 (24.6%)	3.25	1.388
g) I get involved in the community of practice despite my various responsibilities	30 (15.7%)	27 (14.1%)	50 (26.2%)	49 (25.7%)	34 (17.8%)	3.21	1.529
h) I usually have make-up lessons covering for absence	35 (18.3%)	34 (17.8%)	36 (18.8%)	47 (24.6%)	39 (20.4%)	3.11	1.404

i) I am satisfied with the time I spend with my family	50 (26.2%)	24 (12.6%)	31 (16.2%)	44 (23%)	42 (22%)	3.02	1.515
j) My family responsibilities affect how I perform in my teaching job	43 (22.5%)	33 (17.3%)	39 (20.4%)	45 (23.6%)	31 (16.2%)	2.94	1.402
k) My family responsibilities have denied me time to develop professionally	43 (22.5%)	38 (19.9%)	42 (22%)	43 (22.5%)	25 (13.1%)	2.84	1.353
l) I achieve a good balance between my work demands and my family	42 (22%)	33 (17.3%)	59 (30.9%)	42 (22%)	15 (7.9%)	2.76	1.241
m) My responsibilities in the workplace have denied me time to develop professionally	47 (24.6%)	37 (19.4%)	48 (25.1%)	40 (20.9%)	19 (9.9%)	2.72	1.310
n) My responsibilities in the community, family, and church affect my teaching strategies	59 (30.9%)	42 (22%)	26 (13.6%)	34 (17.8%)	29 (15.2%)	2.70	1.639
o) My responsibilities in the community, family, and church affect my conduct as a teacher	76 (39.8%)	24 (12.6%)	27 (14.1%)	42 (22%)	22 (11.5%)	2.53	1.479
p) Our school has a policy that effectively enables us to balance our family and work activities	55 (28.8%)	44 (23%)	51 (26.7%)	28 (14.7%)	13 (6.8%)	2.48	1.239
q) My responsibilities in the community have denied me time to develop professionally	65 (34%)	45 (23.6%)	41 (21.5%)	24 (12.6%)	15 (7.9%)	2.43	1.574
r) My responsibilities in the immediate community affect how I perform in my teaching job	59 (30.9%)	46 (24.1%)	45 (23.6%)	29 (15.2%)	12 (6.3%)	2.42	1.245

s) My responsibilities in our church affect how I perform in my teaching job	77 (40.3%)	32 (16.8%)	38 (19.9%)	28 (14.7%)	16 (8.4%)	2.34	1.355
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From the findings presented in Table 2, it is clear that 75% of public primary school teachers sacrifice their sleep to finish their teaching-related work, family obligations, church-related obligations, community obligations, and other school obligations (the mean for each of these items was the above-expected medium of 3.4). The responses were affirmative, where the majority of respondents indicated to a great extent or a very great extent against each sentiment. Lack of balancing here may result in lateness at the workplace; hence, the conflict between the affected teacher and the administration. The art of balancing work, family, and community responsibilities is a real challenge in many professions and causes strain in the workplace (Saravanan, 2014). The results show that the teaching workload is a thorny issue to the extent that it affects teachers' performance. This particular observation agrees with a study by Njeri (2014). The findings further indicate that some teachers carried some work home to maintain a good performance. Spending too much family time doing work-related obligations denies time meant for other matters. It can result in personal strain or fathom other problems in the family, which may ultimately spill over to the workplace.

When asked whether the teachers were satisfied with the time they were spending with their families, most respondents (1/3), that is, 74 (38.8%), disagreed, indicating dissatisfaction to some extent. In comparison, 31 (16.2%) were satisfied to a moderate extent. This shows that although the mean was 3.02 and a standard deviation of 1.515, the number of dissatisfied teachers due to limited time spent with the family was an issue of concern. This can be attributed to the various obligations related to teaching, family, church-related, and community-based, which were worsened by the teaching workload and other obligations in the school. This magnifies the need for a work-life balance. The relationship between work-life balance and the workload was reported by Njeri (2014) among NGOs in Kenya. A balanced role at the workplace, work schedules, and responsible management was among few measures noted by Njeri for promoting work-life balance among employees.

The results in Table 2 further show that family responsibilities affect how teachers perform their teaching job and have denied some the time to develop themselves professionally. During interview sessions, headteachers complained of delocalization, denying them time with their families. One excerpt from Head teacher-07 indicated, *"I have to travel every weekend to where my family is; hence I cannot afford the time to focus on professional development courses"*. This indicates a work-life imbalance detrimental to teachers' progress and promotion.

Another issue that acts as a drawback to professional development is responsibilities in the workplace, where a quarter, 48 (25.1%) of teachers indicated moderate extent; 40 (20.9%) to a large extent, and 19 (9.9%) to a very large extent. These results show that family and work responsibilities were seriously hampering teachers' professional development in public primary schools in Igembe North Sub-County.

When respondents were asked about a policy that enables them to balance their family and work activities effectively, more than half, 99 (51.8%) indicated that the procedure in the workplace was either not there or was not effective in enabling them to balance family and work activities. This points out an urgent need for workplace policy regarding work-life balance for public primary school teachers. According to Nwagbara (2020), a policy on work-



life balance is essential and should be developed cooperatively between employers and employees in a win-win situation. In addition to having a responsive workplace policy that operationalizes work-life balance, the teachers indicated in an open-ended question the need for self-examination for all teachers, which would result in coping mechanisms that included exercising good time management and self-sacrificing. This may involve waking up early, sleeping late, and working from home or near your home, which helps to save money and avoids time-wasting. These measures may not necessarily reflect water-tight coping mechanisms. This is because self-sacrificing and waking up early and sleeping late may lead to stress and burnout, hence poor work output. The poor work output among teachers translates to poor performance appraisal scores and may ultimately lead to a lack of progression. This can be not very encouraging to teachers and also to learners.

The idea of working from home was linked to saving money and time. No wonder most teachers termed the delocalization exercise by TSC as counter-productive. One teacher lamented, "*The delocalization exercise by TSC is separating us from the families, making many of us negate our crucial family responsibilities.*" However, according to TSC, the delocalization and massive deployments of teachers are meant to promote national cohesion and ensure that one does not teach in one's locality the entire life (Media team, 2021). A sizeable number of teachers said that they were delegating responsibilities to other people in the circle to cope with the competing demands in the workplace as occasioned by the delocalization and massive deployments of teachers. As delegation is a prudent management practice, it cannot work on some matters. For example, some family roles such as parenting and personal responsibilities such as furthering studies cannot be delegated. They cannot be undertaken by any other person except the principal teacher.

To overcome the challenges related to the work-life imbalance, teachers, headteachers, and the TSC Sub-County Director were asked to suggest what should be done to help achieve a work-life balance without compromising teachers' performance. Various suggestions were noted, which ranged from increasing salary, employing more teachers to reduce workload, training on time management, abolishing delocalization, especially for old families, creating a friendly environment for teachers, restructuring the school calendar to accommodate the emerging issues, offering guidance and counseling, and supporting teachers when they need assistance. They also noted a need for workplace policy on work-life balance. Good leadership in the school also featured prominently in the open-ended responses. This indicates that a conducive working environment motivates and encourages teachers. They feel appreciated, understood, and cared for and are further able to balance issues. This implies a need for good and supportive leadership in public primary schools. Supportive leadership was identified by Sirisookslip et al. (2015) as a critical predictor of teacher effectiveness in teaching. Notably, the headteachers can create a friendly environment for teachers while in the school.

TSC can also provide the requisite support for teachers by organizing a series of training on workplace matters and individual and family wellness. Furthermore, employing more teachers in public primary schools helps reduce workload and afford them time to attend to personal obligations and community responsibilities. Moreover, it should be noted that approximately half of the teachers, 97(50.8%), indicated that workload affects how they perform in the teaching job (see Table 4.4) hence addressing workload is part of the needed solution. TSC should also re-address the delocalization of teachers and enact appropriate workplace policies aimed to foster a supportive environment for teachers. Similarly, increasing salary from the current levels will cause public school primary teachers to reduce their involvement in the side

hassle activities, which often results in work-life imbalance and exert ripple effects on their performance.

**Testing of the moderation effect**

The relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teacher’s performance in this study was hypothesized to be moderated by the work-life balance. The variables linked to the three teaching competence standards were tested in a combined model, and the findings were presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Moderation effect of work-life balance: Model validity**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.123	3	10.041	30.879	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	60.808	187	.325		
	Total	90.931	190			
2	Regression	30.245	4	7.561	23.175	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	60.686	186	.326		
	Total	90.931	190			
3	Regression	31.173	5	6.235	19.301	.002 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	59.758	185	.323		
	Total	90.931	190			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2

c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2, work-life balance

d. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2, work-life balance, interaction terms

Results in Table 3 show that model one,  $F(3, 187) = 30.879, P < .000$  indicate that it is valid for further analysis. When the work-life balance was introduced in model two as a predictor variable, the F statistics,  $F(4, 186) = 23.175, P < .000$ , indicated that the second model remained valid and demonstrated statistically significant influence by all the predictor variables. When the interaction term ( $X_i * Z_j$ ) was introduced, the new model (third model),  $F(5, 185) = 19.301, P < .000$  remained valid, indicating a significant influence on all the teaching competence standards; work-life balance, interaction term ( $X_i * Z_j$ ) on the teacher’s performance in public primary schools in Igembe North. The statistics provided in the model summary Table 4 helped determine the actual moderation effect of the work-life balance on the relationship between the teaching standards and teacher's performance.

**Table 4: Moderation effect of work-life balance: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F	df1	df2	
1	.576 <sup>a</sup>	.331	.321	.57024	.331	30.879	3	187	.000
2	.577 <sup>b</sup>	.352	.334	.57009	.021	.974	1	186	.542
3	.586 <sup>c</sup>	.476	.452	.55786	.124	7.872	1	185	.032

a. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2

b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2, work-life balance

c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2, work-life balance, interaction terms

d. Dependent Variable: Y

The column labeled R Square Change in Table 4 shows the increase in variation that is explained by the addition of the interaction term (that is, the change in  $R^2$ ). The results indicate that all the three teaching competence standards explain 33.1 % of the total variations of the teacher's performance in public primary schools ( $R^2 = .331$ ). When the work-life balance (the moderator) was introduced into the model, the R square value improved slightly by 2.1%. This meant that the work-life balance improved somewhat in the model ( $\Delta R^2 = .021$ ,  $p = .542$ ), but the model became insignificant. This implied that the moderator (work-life balance) does not statistically influence a teacher's performance when added to the model.

However, when the interaction term ( $Z1 * Xi$ ) in the third model was introduced, the R square improved further by 12.4% ( $\Delta R^2 = .124$ ,  $p = .032$ ). The resulting model became significant. This led to the conclusion that Z1 (the work-life balance) is a statistically significant moderator between the teaching competence standards and the teacher's performance in public primary schools in Igembe North, Meru County. These findings led the study to reject the null hypothesis that work-life balance does not moderate the relationship between teaching competence standards and teacher performance in public primary schools in Igembe North Sub-County. The study concluded that the work-life balance statistically and significantly moderates the relationship between the three teaching competence standards and the teacher's performance in public primary schools in Igembe North Meru County.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

The study confirmed the proposition that work-life balance moderates the relationship between teaching competencies standards and teachers' performance in public primary schools in Igembe North Sub-County. This is because the work-life balance was found statistically significant in moderating the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teacher's performance in public primary schools. Apart from the regular teaching job, most teachers were also involved in multiple roles such as class teacher, disciplinary teacher, games teacher, church leader, head of a department/subject, club patron, PTA member/member of BoM, and other leadership positions in the local community. All these responsibilities have competing interests; hence balancing them is a daunting task for teachers in public primary schools. If the situation is left unaddressed, it would compromise instructional delivery, fathom teachers' misconduct, and diminish their participation in community practice. Lack of participation or poor involvement in the community practice activities is retrogressive and limits the opportunity for knowledge sharing among teachers. It also negatively affected teachers' interpersonal relations, morale, type of work done, and the number of hours teachers worked.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

The performance of a teacher is paramount. It affects the teachers' progression and learners' academic performance. The achievement of exemplary performance endeavored by TSC among teachers in public primary school is achievable. It requires strengthening supportive systems on all three teaching competence standards and embracing work-life balance practices in the teaching profession. A teacher must have moderated work-related responsibilities in and outside the school to handle personal obligations and other community-oriented responsibilities appropriately and effectively. The TSC should support teachers by developing work-life balance policies covering lactating mothers, parental leave, and support for career progression, career development, and engagement with community-related activities.

### ***Implications of the findings on theories***

The study noted that the ability to balance the four areas; work, personal, family and community was moderating the relationship between the teaching competence standards and the teacher's performance. However, balancing work, personal, family, and community is very challenging. The Spillover Theory by Staines argues that a spillover in one sphere affects another sphere, hence making it a tricky balancing affair. The theory noted that a disruption in one aspect of life sphere causes dissatisfaction in others. In the current study, teachers of public primary schools had multiple roles and responsibilities cutting across their schools, families, and society. The act of balancing was therefore causing some strain on most of them. The study noted that a teacher requires individual action, a work-life policy in the schools, and leadership support to balance all the spheres effectively. Although the study recognizes the role of leadership support in achieving the desired performance of a teacher in public primary schools, Staines's spillover theory only concentrated on the work-life spheres without providing a component on solutions. The findings of this study propose a need to improve Staines's spillover theory by incorporating the four distinct work-life balance and their respective weight in the overall model. The sphere includes the work sphere, personal sphere, family sphere, and community/society sphere. The theory should add another component in the middle of the model to offer a solution to the imbalance in the spheres. This study noted that individual action, environment, and leadership are critical responsive elements in addressing the work-life imbalance. Embracing good practices on work-life balance has enormous implications on organizational culture, leadership, and human resources management practices in public primary schools.

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