

# Effect of Employee Compensation on Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Nakuru County

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**ABSTRACT:** Employee performance is a fundamental determinant of educational quality, accountability, and service delivery within public secondary schools. Despite its critical role, evidence suggests that teacher performance in public secondary schools in Kenya, including those in Nakuru West Sub-County, has remained inconsistent and below optimal levels. Although the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Government of Kenya have implemented salary structures, professional allowances, and recognition schemes aimed at motivating teachers and enhancing performance, the effectiveness of these compensation mechanisms in improving teacher performance remains unclear therefore the study sought to examine the effect of employee compensation on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Kenya. Anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), the research adopted a correlational descriptive design. The target population comprised 271 TSC-employed teachers across 7 public secondary schools and 4 TSC officers at the Sub-County Education Office. Using Nassiuma's formula, a sample of 73 teachers was proportionately selected via simple random sampling, while a census included all 4 officers. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires administered via drop-and-pick method, yielding a 73% response rate (56 usable responses). A pilot study in Menengai High School in Nakuru East Sub County confirmed instrument reliability (Cronbach's alpha: 0.876 for compensation; 0.768 for performance). Data was analyzed using SPSS version 25, employing descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and inferential statistics (correlation, regression). Results revealed strong agreement on compensation's role (overall mean = 4.23) and teachers' performance (overall mean = 4.34). Correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship ( $r = 0.974$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), while regression indicated a unit increase in compensation leads to a 2.300-unit rise in performance ( $\beta = 2.300$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The study concluded that employee compensation has a significant effect on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Nakuru County. The study recommends that TSC and SRC review packages for competitiveness, ensure timely payments, and integrate non-financial incentives to enhance motivation, retention, and instructional quality.

**Keywords:** *Employee Compensation, Teachers' Performance, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory*

## I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Employee compensation refers to the total remuneration provided to employees in recognition of their roles, responsibilities, and contributions toward organizational objectives (Armstrong & Taylor, 2021). In educational institutions, compensation encompasses salaries, performance allowances, teaching excellence awards, and other benefits aimed at motivating teachers, enhancing their professional commitment, and promoting effective instructional delivery (Larkin, Pierce & Gino, 2020). By linking compensation to performance and responsibilities, schools create an environment that encourages teachers to align their efforts with educational goals and institutional standards (Nyaga, 2020).

Globally, employee compensation has been recognized as a key factor in improving teacher performance and overall education quality. In the United States, structured reward systems, including merit allowances and recognition programs,

are used to incentivize high-performing educators, improve student learning outcomes, and reduce teacher turnover (Thompson & Meyer, 2022). In Europe, countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and Sweden integrate performance-related allowances and recognition schemes to enhance teacher motivation, instructional effectiveness, and accountability within public schools (Brown & Purcell, 2021). In Asia, nations like Japan, China, and Singapore employ compensation strategies that link rewards to teaching quality and student achievement, contributing to improved educational standards (Li & Zhang, 2022).

In Africa, compensation strategies have been increasingly adopted in public education systems to motivate teachers and improve performance. In South Africa, public schools utilize structured performance allowances and recognition awards to encourage teacher commitment and accountability (Mabaso & Dlamini, 2022). In Nigeria, monetary rewards and allowances aim to reduce absenteeism, boost classroom engagement, and improve teacher productivity, although challenges such as delayed payments and inequitable distribution persist (Okafor & Ume, 2023). Similarly, Ghana and Uganda have implemented compensation programs in public secondary schools that recognize high-performing teachers, leading to better instructional quality and retention (Boateng & Osei, 2022).

In Kenya, employee compensation in the public education sector is primarily administered by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). Compensation packages include salaries, professional allowances, performance recognition awards, and other benefits intended to motivate teachers and enhance their performance (Kariuki & Omondi, 2022). Despite these measures, challenges such as delayed disbursement, limited funding, and unclear performance evaluation mechanisms continue to affect the overall effectiveness of compensation in improving teacher performance (Wambua & Njoroge, 2023).

Teacher performance in public secondary schools can be assessed through indicators such as instructional effectiveness, classroom management, student academic achievement, participation in co-curricular activities, and adherence to curricular standards (Mutua & Kariuki, 2021; Omondi & Gichuhi, 2022). Well-structured compensation systems that align with these performance measures are critical in motivating teachers, enhancing instructional quality, and improving educational outcomes. This study therefore sought to examine the effect of employee compensation on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Nakuru County, to inform strategies that promote teacher motivation and academic excellence (Nyaga, 2020).

## **II. Statement of the Study**

Employee performance is a fundamental determinant of educational quality, accountability, and service delivery within public secondary schools. It influences how effectively teachers deliver the curriculum, manage classrooms, and contribute to student learning outcomes. Despite its critical role, evidence suggests that teacher performance in public secondary schools in Kenya, including those in Nakuru West Sub-County, has remained inconsistent and below optimal levels. Many schools face challenges such as low motivation, inadequate recognition, limited career progression opportunities, and weak compensation systems, which hinder teacher commitment and productivity (Mutua & Kariuki, 2021). The absence of well-structured compensation mechanisms has contributed to reduced morale, high absenteeism, and poor instructional outcomes, thereby affecting student achievement and overall school performance.

Although the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Government of Kenya have implemented salary structures, professional allowances, and recognition schemes aimed at motivating teachers and enhancing performance, the effectiveness of these compensation mechanisms in improving teacher performance remains unclear (Chege & Njenga, 2023). In some schools, enhanced allowances and recognition programs have led to short-term improvements in teacher effort, while in others, issues such as delayed disbursement, perceived inequity, and unclear performance evaluation criteria have undermined their impact (Maina & Waweru, 2022). This inconsistency suggests that employee compensation in public secondary schools may not be adequately structured or effectively implemented to drive sustained teacher performance. Therefore, this study sought to examine the effect of employee compensation on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Nakuru County.

### **III. Research Hypothesis**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Employee compensation has no statistically significant effect on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub- County.

### **IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study was anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, developed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959, to explain the factors that influence employee motivation and performance in the workplace. The theory posits that employee motivation and job satisfaction are determined by two sets of factors: hygiene factors and motivators (Herzberg, 1959). Hygiene factors, which include salary, working conditions, company policies, and job security, do not necessarily motivate employees but their absence can lead to dissatisfaction. Motivators, on the other hand, such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, and opportunities for growth, directly influence job satisfaction and encourage higher performance (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory emphasizes that employee performance is influenced not only by the provision of adequate compensation and working conditions but also by intrinsic motivators that foster professional growth and personal achievement (Robbins & Judge, 2019). When hygiene factors are poorly managed, employees may experience dissatisfaction and low morale, resulting in absenteeism, reduced productivity, and limited commitment to organizational goals. Conversely, when motivators are effectively implemented alongside appropriate compensation, employees are more likely to exhibit high engagement, dedication, and improved performance (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005).

In the context of public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides a useful framework for understanding how employee compensation influences teacher performance. Teachers' effectiveness is affected not only by their salary and allowances but also by recognition, career development opportunities, and professional growth prospects. If compensation packages and work conditions are perceived as inadequate or unfair, teachers may demonstrate low motivation, poor instructional quality, and absenteeism (Mutua & Kariuki, 2021). Conversely, when compensation systems are fair, transparent, and complemented by intrinsic motivators such as recognition and responsibility, teachers are more likely to perform effectively, enhance student learning outcomes, and contribute positively to school performance.

Applying Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, this study posits that teacher performance in public secondary schools can be enhanced when both hygiene factors (adequate salary, allowances, and working conditions) and motivators (recognition, professional growth, and achievement opportunities) are adequately addressed. The theory provides a strong conceptual basis for examining how employee compensation can be structured to improve teacher motivation, satisfaction, and overall performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County, Nakuru County.

#### **Empirical Review**

Marman, Arafat and Syaiful (2021) did a study on the effect of teacher compensation and job satisfaction on teacher performance. The study adopted a descriptive quantitative research design. The sample of this research were 77 respondents with data collection techniques in the form of questionnaires. The results showed that teacher compensation affect job satisfaction on teacher performance. However, the study left out the Kenyan context, where compensation structures and incentive systems for public school teachers differ significantly, creating a contextual gap. Conceptually, it failed to explore how non-monetary rewards such as recognition or professional development influence teachers' motivation and performance. Methodologically, the reliance on a small sample size and purely quantitative data limits the generalizability and depth of findings.

Emalia (2022) did a literature review on the effect of employee compensation on job satisfaction and their impact on employee performance. The article reviewed determination job satisfaction and employee performance, analysis workload and compensation, and a study of human resource management literature. The result revealed that employee compensation affect employee performance. However, the study left out an empirical assessment, creating a methodological gap since the review did not test the relationships through primary data. Conceptually, it did not account for variations across professions such as teaching, where intrinsic motivation plays a stronger role in performance.

Contextually, the findings may not apply to the education sector in Kenya, where compensation structures are influenced by government policy.

Keynan (2018) did a study on effect of employee compensation management practices on employee performance in Wajir County, Kenya. The study targeted the entire political, technical and civic leadership of Wajir County. The study used descriptive research design. Chi square test was used to test the significance of the coefficient of correlation at 5% level of significance. The study used convenience sampling technique to select respondents from the categories of sub-counties. The study collected data using primary sources. Questionnaires were used to elicit responses from the respondents. Data was analyzed using SPSS, and multiple regression analysis. The study concluded that employee compensation management practices affect employee performance. However, the study left out the education sector, creating a contextual gap, as the public administration environment differs from that of teaching institutions. Conceptually, the study did not differentiate between short-term incentives and long-term rewards and their respective impacts on performance. Methodologically, the use of convenience sampling may have introduced selection bias, affecting the reliability of the findings.

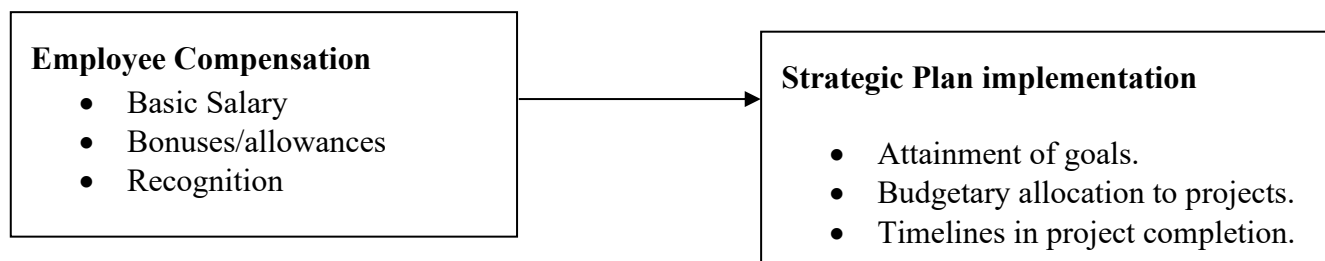
Mangale (2019) investigated the effects of employee compensation on employee productivity a case study of Kenya Literature Bureau, South C Nairobi. The study adopted a descriptive research design that enabled the use of questionnaires as research instruments. The target population consisted of one fifty (150) employees of Kenya Literature Bureau South c Nairobi. Stratified proportionate random sampling was used to obtain a sample size of 45 respondents. The data was analyzed using the qualitatively and quantitatively through the use of SPSS and then put on tables and figures. The study concluded that employee compensation affect employee productivity. However, the study left out the education context, presenting a contextual gap, as compensation systems in corporate organizations differ from public schools. Conceptually, it focused on productivity rather than the unique performance indicators relevant to teaching, such as syllabus completion and student achievement. Methodologically, the study relied heavily on self-reported data without triangulation, raising a methodological gap in data validity.

Kakai (2019) assessed the effects of compensation on employee performance in organizations, a case study of Kenya Seed Company Kitale Kenya. The study was conducted through survey design. Out of a targeted population of 4500 workers, a unit sample of 50 workers was drawn. The questionnaire interviews and observations was the main sources of primary data. The results revealed that compensation affect employee performance. However, the study left out the education sector, creating a contextual gap, as the working conditions and motivation drivers of teachers differ from those in the corporate sector. Conceptually, it did not consider how delayed or inadequate compensation affects teachers' morale and lesson delivery. Methodologically, it used simple descriptive statistics without regression analysis, leaving a methodological gap in determining the strength of relationships.

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### **Independent Variable**

#### **Dependent Variable**



### **V. Methodology**

The study adopted a correlational descriptive research design to establish the relationship between employee compensation and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. The target population consisted of 271 TSC-employed teachers across 7 public secondary schools and 4 TSC officers at the Sub-County Education Office. Using Nassiuma's formula to determine a sample size of 73 teachers, the study proportionately distributed them

across the schools, while a census technique was employed to include all 4 TSC officers. A simple random sampling technique was used to ensure that every teacher in the population had an equal chance of being selected. The study relied on primary data, which was collected through a structured questionnaire administered using a drop-and-pick method. A pilot study was carried out in Naivasha Sub-County, where 8 questionnaires were distributed to teachers in similar positions to test the reliability and validity of the research instrument. Feedback from the pilot study was used to refine the questionnaire before the main data collection exercise. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in the analysis. Descriptive statistics included the use of percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations to summarize the data. Inferential statistics involved the use of correlation and regression analysis to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between employee compensation and teachers' performance. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25 and the results were presented in the form of tables for clarity and interpretation.

## **VI. Results**

### **Response Rate**

The study administered 77 questionnaires to respondents, out of which 56 responses were filled out and returned. This represented a 73% response rate.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

	Sample Size	Completely Filled	Non-Response Rate
Frequency	77	56	21
Percent (%)	100	73	28

### **Reliability of the Research Questionnaire**

Before the main study the researcher conducted a pilot, study was conducted in Menengai High School in Nakuru East Sub County where 7 questionnaires were distributed to teachers representing. Table 2 shows the result of the findings.

**Table 2: Reliability Test Results**

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Employee compensation	7	0.876
Teachers' Performance	7	0.768

The reliability results showed that all the variables in the study had Cronbach's alpha values above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7. specifically, employee compensation had an alpha value of 0.876 and teachers' performance recorded an alpha value of 0.768. this confirmed that the survey items consistently measured the constructs under investigation.

### **General Information**

#### **Gender of Respondents**

The study sought to determine the gender distribution of employees at the county government of Nakuru. The findings are indicated below.

**Table 3: Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	27	48
Female	29	52
Total	56	100

From the findings, the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 52% of the sample. This indicates that women form a slightly larger proportion of the teaching workforce in public secondary schools within Nakuru West Sub-County. Male respondents made up 48% of the sample, representing a significant portion of teachers who also contribute valuable perspectives on employee performance management practices and teachers' performance. The gender distribution suggests that the study captured views from both male and female teachers, ensuring that the analysis reflects a balanced perspective in terms of gender representation. The relatively even distribution between male and female respondents may also reflect the overall gender balance in the teaching profession in public secondary schools in the area.

### Education Qualification

The researcher sought to determine education qualification of the respondents. The findings are indicated in Table 4.

**Table 4: Highest Education Qualification Attained**

Education Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	20	36
Degree	27	48
Masters	7	13
PhD	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

From the findings, 36% of the respondents held a diploma, representing teachers with foundational professional training that equips them with essential pedagogical and classroom management skills. The majority of respondents, 48%, possessed a bachelor's degree, indicating that a significant proportion of teachers have undergraduate-level qualifications that provide both subject expertise and methodological competence for effective teaching. A further 13% had attained a master's degree, reflecting the presence of teachers with advanced academic preparation, which can enhance instructional quality, curriculum development, and leadership within schools. The smallest group, 3%, held a PhD, signifying the availability of specialized expertise that may contribute to research, educational policy development, and strategic decision-making. The overall distribution suggests that public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County benefit from a well-qualified teaching workforce with diverse academic backgrounds, combining practical skills with advanced scholarly insight. The findings agrees with Chege and Mbugua (2019) in Kenya revealed that schools with teachers from varied academic backgrounds benefit from a rich pool of knowledge that enhances curriculum delivery and broadens learning perspectives.

### Descriptive Findings for Employee compensation

The researcher sought to assess the aspects of employee compensation in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. The findings were as indicated in table 5.

**Table 5: Employee Compensation on Teachers' Performance**

Employee compensation	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std
Basic salary offered enhance teacher commitment hence improving teacher performance	56	4.00	5.00	4.6786	.47125
Basic salary offered enhance the level of teacher satisfaction which positively affects performance	56	4.00	5.00	4.6607	.47775
Bonuses improves teacher performance and engagement with students	56	3.00	5.00	4.3929	.80178
Bonuses are a awarded to the best performing teacher which encourages other teachers to improve on their performance	56	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.63246
Teachers receive praise for the work they do in school which enhances performance	56	2.00	5.00	3.8036	1.16650
All teachers are accorded equal recognition in school	56	2.00	5.00	3.8036	1.16650



All teachers receive promotion based on merit in the school	56	4.00	5.00	4.2679	.44685
<b>Average</b>				<b>4.2296</b>	<b>0.7376</b>

From the findings, the majority of respondents strongly agreed that the basic salary offered enhances teacher commitment, thereby improving performance (mean = 4.6786, SD = 0.47125). In addition, most respondents agreed that the basic salary increases the level of teacher satisfaction, which positively affects performance (mean = 4.6607, SD = 0.47775). These high mean scores with low standard deviations suggest a strong and consistent perception that fair base pay is a critical driver of teacher morale and output.

The majority also agreed that bonuses improve teacher performance and engagement with students (mean = 4.3929, SD = 0.80178). Similarly, respondents agreed that awarding bonuses to the best-performing teachers encourages others to improve their performance (mean = 4.0000, SD = 0.63246), reflecting the role of financial incentives in promoting healthy competition and motivation. Furthermore, respondents moderately agreed that teachers receive praise for the work they do in school (mean = 3.8036, SD = 1.16650) and that all teachers are accorded equal recognition in school (mean = 3.8036, SD = 1.16650). Although these means are still relatively high, the large standard deviations indicate variations in recognition practices across different schools.

The majority strongly agreed that all teachers receive promotions based on merit (mean = 4.2679, SD = 0.44685), indicating that career progression opportunities are perceived as fair and performance-oriented. Overall, the average mean score for employee compensation was 4.2296, with a standard deviation of 0.7376, suggesting strong agreement that compensation practices—both financial and non-financial play a vital role in enhancing teacher performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. These results align with previous studies such as Muli (2020), who found that competitive salaries and fair promotion systems boost employee commitment, and Kariuki (2021), who observed that recognition and rewards foster positive work attitudes among teachers. Similarly, Odhiambo (2019) emphasized that a combination of monetary and non-monetary rewards significantly influences motivation and job satisfaction in the education sector.

### **Descriptive Findings for Teachers' Performance**

The researcher sought to assess the aspects of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. The findings were as indicated in table 6.

**Table 6: Teachers' Performance**

<b>Teachers' performance</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
The overall mean score of the school has improved for the past five years.	56	4.00	5.00	4.6786	.47125
Majority of the students have excelled in national exams in the past five years.	56	4.00	5.00	4.6607	.47775
Teachers have nurtured student's talents through co-curricular activities.	56	3.00	5.00	4.3929	.80178
The school has recorded higher performance in co-curricular activities	56	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.63246
Learners are able to effectively answer majority of questions in class	56	2.00	5.00	3.9464	1.18198
<b>Average</b>				<b>4.3357</b>	<b>0.7130</b>

From the findings, the majority of respondents strongly agreed that the overall mean score of the school has improved over the past five years (mean = 4.6786, SD = 0.47125). This indicates that academic performance has shown consistent progress, suggesting effective teaching practices and institutional support. In addition, most respondents strongly agreed that the majority of students have excelled in national examinations during this period (mean = 4.6607, SD = 0.47775), highlighting sustained achievement in core academic outcomes.

Furthermore, respondents agreed that teachers have nurtured students' talents through co-curricular activities (mean = 4.3929, SD = 0.80178), reflecting an emphasis on holistic development beyond academics. The findings also show that schools have recorded higher performance in co-curricular activities (mean = 4.0000, SD = 0.63246), although this score is slightly lower than academic indicators, suggesting that while progress has been made, there may still be room for further strengthening in extracurricular domains. Additionally, respondents agreed that learners are able to effectively answer the majority of questions in class (mean = 3.9464, SD = 1.18198). The relatively high standard deviation indicates some variation in classroom engagement and comprehension levels, possibly reflecting differences in subject areas, teaching methods, or student preparedness.

Overall, the average mean score for teachers' performance was 4.3357, with a standard deviation of 0.7130, signifying strong agreement that public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County are performing well across both academic and co-curricular dimensions. These results align with previous research, such as that by Darling-Hammond (2022), which emphasizes that teacher effectiveness is a critical driver of improved student outcomes. Similarly, Kyriakides and Creemers (2023) highlight that a balance between academic excellence and talent development fosters comprehensive student success. The findings also support the conclusions of Musyoka (2020), who noted that consistent exam performance and active co-curricular engagement are indicators of a well-rounded and high-performing educational institution.

## Inferential Statistics

**Table 7: Correlation Analysis**

		Teachers' Performance
Employee Compensation	Pearson Correlation	.974**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	56

From the findings, the study revealed a very strong and positive statistically significant relationship between employee compensation and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County ( $r = 0.974$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This indicates that fair and competitive compensation motivates teachers, fosters job satisfaction, and improves commitment to achieving high performance. This finding resonates with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which underscores the role of rewards in motivating employees, and with Milkovich et al. (2021), who found that competitive compensation is a strong predictor of performance.

**Table 8: Regression Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.593	.430		6.029	.000
	Employee compensation	2.300	.253	2.349	9.091	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' Performance

From the findings a unit increase in employee compensation would lead to a 2.300 unit-increase in in teacher's performance.

$$Y = 2.593 + 2.300X_1 \dots \dots \dots 4.1$$



## Hypothesis Testing

The null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) stated that employee compensation has no statistically significant effect on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. The results showed a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. Consequently, the study rejects the null hypothesis and concludes that employee compensation has a statistically significant effect on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. This is consistent with the study by Njenga and Omondi (2020), who found that fair and competitive compensation packages enhance teacher satisfaction, reduce turnover, and encourage higher levels of professional commitment.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the study concluded that employee compensation has a statistically significant and positive effect on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Nakuru West Sub-County. This implies that fair and competitive remuneration packages motivate teachers to perform better, increase job satisfaction, and reduce turnover rates. Adequate compensation also enhances teachers' commitment and dedication to their duties, fostering a stable and effective teaching environment. These findings align with Njoroge and Kibe (2021), who found that competitive pay structures enhance staff morale, attract skilled personnel, and improve service delivery in educational institutions.

## VIII. RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) should review teacher compensation packages to ensure they are competitive and commensurate with workload, qualifications, and performance. Timely payment of salaries and allowances should be prioritized to maintain motivation and morale among teachers. Furthermore, non-financial incentives such as recognition awards, career advancement opportunities, and housing or transport benefits should be enhanced to complement financial rewards. These measures will improve teacher satisfaction, reduce turnover, and strengthen classroom performance.

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