

Nexus between Lobbying Practices by teacher Based Unions and Teachers' Productivity in the Education Sector in Kenya: A Case of KNUT

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ABSTRACT

Teacher productivity is strongly influenced by fairness in employment practices and policy implementation, often mediated by the effectiveness of union lobbying. In Kenya, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) plays a pivotal role in lobbying for improved teacher welfare, equitable promotions, and favorable working conditions. This study examined the relationship between lobbying practices and fairness in the education sector, focusing on three dimensions: issue-based lobbying, transparent and evidence-based lobbying, and collaborative and inclusive lobbying. Guided by Industrial Relations, Organizational Justice, and Social Exchange theories, the study employed a descriptive and correlational research design targeting 4,291 teachers. Data were collected through structured questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive results indicated strong agreement that issue-based lobbying enhanced fairness, with the highest mean score of 4.18 (SD = 0.87) linked to fair compensation and workload distribution. Transparent and evidence-based lobbying recorded a mean of 4.05 (SD = 0.92), showing its role in policy credibility and trust, while collaborative lobbying scored 3.98 (SD = 0.95), reflecting its importance in stakeholder inclusivity. Regression results revealed that issue-based lobbying ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$), transparent and evidence-based lobbying ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$), and collaborative lobbying ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.05$) significantly influenced fairness, with the model explaining 62.3% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.623$). ANOVA results confirmed the overall model significance ($F(3, 4287) = 55.21$, $p < 0.001$). The study concluded that lobbying anchored in good politics, emphasizing fairness, transparency, and inclusivity, enhances teacher productivity by improving motivation, reducing disputes, and fostering stable learning environments. It recommends institutionalizing issue-based lobbying, embedding transparency in negotiation processes, and strengthening collaborative engagement with stakeholders. Further studies should explore longitudinal effects of lobbying outcomes on student performance to extend these insights beyond teachers' welfare.

Keywords: Issue-Based, Evidence-Based, Collaborative Lobbying, Teacher Productivity

1.1 Introduction

The education sector across the world is one of the most unionized professions, and lobbying has been central to shaping its policies and practices. Lobbying refers to organized efforts by interest groups or unions to influence decision-making, resource allocation, and policy reforms in ways that favor their

members. In developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, teacher unions have historically played an active role in shaping wage structures, workload distribution, and teacher evaluation systems through lobbying both parliaments and education ministries. Similarly, in developing countries like Kenya, lobbying has emerged as an indispensable strategy for the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), the largest and most influential teachers' union, which was established in 1957. Over the decades, KNUT has employed lobbying as a mechanism to push for equitable salaries, improved working conditions, and secure employment terms for teachers across primary and secondary schools (Mwiria, 2019).

The role of lobbying in Kenya's education sector cannot be understood in isolation from the broader historical and political context. During the 1990s, lobbying by KNUT contributed significantly to policy debates on free primary education, teachers' salaries, and workload reduction (Mutua, 2016). By mobilizing strikes, petitions, and negotiations, KNUT secured several agreements that culminated in pay increases and improved housing allowances for teachers. More recently, KNUT has lobbied the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Ministry of Education on issues such as implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), deployment of teachers in hardship areas, and harmonization of promotions under the career progression guidelines. For instance, the 2017–2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between KNUT and TSC, heavily influenced by lobbying, resulted in phased salary increments for over 300,000 teachers, demonstrating the power of collective voice in shaping teachers' welfare (Omollo, 2020).

Despite these successes, lobbying in Kenya's education sector has also faced major challenges that directly affect fairness and teacher productivity. Tensions between KNUT and TSC over the implementation of CBAs, coupled with government austerity measures, have at times rendered agreements partially implemented or delayed. This has created perceptions of unfairness among teachers, especially when promised salary adjustments or promotions are not realized as negotiated. A study by Waweru (2018) showed that unfulfilled lobbying outcomes led to widespread teacher dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and in some cases, mass resignations. Furthermore, lobbying has occasionally been politicized, with outcomes influenced more by electoral cycles and political goodwill rather than the genuine needs of teachers (Okoth, 2021). This politicization raises concerns about sustainability of gains achieved and their long-term effect on teacher morale and productivity.

At a conceptual level, lobbying is closely tied to theories of organizational justice, collective action, and industrial relations. The central argument is that fairness in employment relations, reflected in just salaries, favorable working environments, job stability, and opportunities for professional growth, shapes employee motivation and performance. Teachers who perceive fairness as a result of successful lobbying are more committed to their profession, exhibit higher morale, and deliver quality outcomes in the classroom. Conversely, when lobbying yields inequitable or inconsistent results, teachers may disengage, leading to reduced productivity and strained relationships with education stakeholders (Kimathi, 2017).

While global studies have examined the relationship between union activism, fairness, and worker productivity, there remains limited empirical literature focusing on Kenya's unique context. Most existing research has concentrated on collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) as a direct product of union activity, without explicitly isolating lobbying as a strategic practice that precedes and shapes CBAs. Additionally, studies often measure union success in terms of wage increments while overlooking broader aspects such as job security, working conditions, and professional development, all

of which strongly influence teacher productivity (Mwangi, 2022). This creates both a conceptual gap, where lobbying as a process remains under-theorized in relation to fairness, and a contextual gap, where Kenya-specific evidence remains scarce despite decades of KNUT's lobbying experience.

The need for this study, therefore, arises from the growing pressure on Kenya's education sector to align teacher welfare with ongoing reforms such as the CBC, digital literacy integration, and new teacher deployment frameworks. Productivity of teachers has become a pressing concern given the high pupil-teacher ratios, resource constraints, and demands for improved performance in national examinations. Without strong evidence on how lobbying contributes to fairness and teacher productivity, policymakers risk making reforms that weaken teacher motivation and compromise education quality. Thus, this study investigated the relationship between lobbying practices, fairness, and teachers' productivity in Kenya's education sector with specific reference to KNUT.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Teacher productivity has long been recognized as central to the performance of education systems, yet in Kenya it has remained a subject of contestation due to persistent concerns about fairness in employment policies and welfare provisions. Despite decades of lobbying by the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), many teachers continued to experience challenges related to low salaries, delayed promotions, and poor working conditions, which collectively undermined their motivation and performance (Mutua, 2016; Omollo, 2020). Although lobbying had secured some notable gains, such as housing allowances and salary increments, these outcomes were often inconsistently implemented or politicized, creating perceptions of unfairness among teachers (Okoth, 2021). In some cases, lobbying agreements were not honored in full by government agencies, leading to disillusionment, absenteeism, and strikes that disrupted teaching and learning (Waweru, 2018). Furthermore, existing literature focused more on collective bargaining agreements as the endpoint of union action rather than on lobbying itself as a strategic process that shaped fairness in distributive and procedural outcomes (Mwangi, 2022). This left a gap in understanding how lobbying practices, when conducted through good politics, could contribute to fairness and, by extension, enhance teachers' productivity in the classroom. Empirical studies in Kenya rarely addressed this linkage explicitly, despite global evidence showing that lobbying rooted in transparency, inclusivity, and equity significantly improved worker motivation and output (Brown, 2017; Greenberg, 2018; Adjei, 2020). The problem this study addressed was therefore the limited empirical evidence on the extent to which lobbying practices by KNUT influenced fairness and productivity among teachers in Kenya's education sector.

1.3 Purpose of The Research

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To determine the effect of issue-based lobbying on fairness in the education sector.
2. To assess the effect of transparent and evidence-based lobbying on fairness in the education sector.
3. To evaluate the effect of collaborative and inclusive lobbying on fairness in the education sector.

1.4 Hypotheses

For each objective we state a null and alternative (directional) hypothesis:

- H0₁: Salary and remuneration packages had no significant positive effect on teachers' productivity.
H0₂: Working conditions had no significant positive effect on teachers' productivity.
H0₃: Job security and stability had no significant positive effect on teachers' productivity.
H0₄: Professional development opportunities had no significant positive effect on teachers' productivity.

2.0 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Industrial Relations Theory

Industrial Relations (IR) Theory emerged in the early 20th century as a framework for analyzing the dynamics between employers, employees, and trade unions (Dunlop, 1958). It conceptualized the employment relationship as inherently conflictual, requiring structured mechanisms for negotiation and compromise to maintain balance. The theory has historically emphasized the role of collective bargaining, labor-management dialogue, and state regulation in creating stable and equitable workplaces. Scholars have since expanded it to account for broader socio-political and economic forces that shape industrial relations in diverse settings (Kaufman, 2010).

The core principle of IR Theory is that the employment relationship is not merely an economic exchange but also a social contract characterized by power imbalances and competing interests. Employers seek efficiency and profitability, while employees seek fairness, security, and improved welfare. Trade unions, therefore, function as representatives of employee interests, engaging employers and policymakers to ensure equitable outcomes (Budd, 2004). The role of the state is also central, as it sets the regulatory environment within which industrial relations unfold.

Applied to education, IR Theory positions teacher unions such as KNUT as critical actors mediating between teachers (employees) and the government (employer). Teachers often lack individual bargaining power, making collective action essential for securing equitable salaries, career progression, and safe working conditions. The theory helps explain why unions have historically been at the center of educational reforms and why lobbying forms a key mechanism for advancing teachers' interests (Omondi, 2021).

In the Kenyan context, IR Theory is highly applicable to the relationship between lobbying, fairness, and teacher productivity. Lobbying represents a softer, more collaborative form of union action compared to strikes, focusing on dialogue and negotiation with government agencies. When unions successfully lobby for fair policies, teachers perceive that power imbalances are mitigated, fostering trust and improved productivity. This is particularly evident when KNUT secures distributive fairness (salaries, allowances) and procedural fairness (promotion criteria), both of which enhance morale and classroom effectiveness (Njeru, 2019).

Critics argue that IR Theory sometimes overemphasizes conflict at the expense of cooperative potential, and in rapidly changing economies, it may understate the role of non-union actors such as parents or NGOs in shaping educational outcomes (Edwards, 2015). However, its inclusion in this study is justified because it provides a robust lens for analyzing the institutionalized role of KNUT in balancing interests, mitigating disputes, and promoting fairness that directly influences teacher productivity.

2.2 Organizational Justice Theory

Organizational Justice Theory emerged from organizational psychology in the 1970s, with Adams' (1965) equity theory laying the foundation for examining perceptions of fairness at work. Over time, the theory evolved into three dimensions: distributive justice (fairness of outcomes), procedural justice (fairness of processes), and interactional justice (fairness in communication and treatment) (Colquitt et al., 2001). It highlights how perceptions of fairness significantly shape employee attitudes, motivation, and performance.

At its core, the theory argues that fairness is not only about tangible outcomes such as pay but also about the processes leading to those outcomes and the interpersonal respect employees experience. Employees who perceive fairness are more likely to exhibit higher organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and

productivity. Conversely, perceptions of unfairness often lead to absenteeism, low morale, and turnover (Greenberg, 2018). Thus, justice perceptions operate as powerful psychological drivers of workplace behavior.

Applied to the education sector, Organizational Justice Theory explains why teachers respond strongly to union lobbying outcomes. For instance, distributive justice is reflected in equitable salaries and allowances, while procedural justice is linked to transparent promotion criteria and transfer policies. When teachers perceive that KNUT lobbying ensures fair distribution of resources and fair treatment in policymaking, they are more motivated to engage in teaching and deliver improved outcomes (Waweru, 2018).

The theory is particularly applicable to the Kenyan context because lobbying by KNUT often targets both distributive and procedural fairness. For example, lobbying for career progression guidelines ensures procedural justice, while lobbying for salary harmonization ensures distributive justice. When lobbying practices are transparent and inclusive, they also strengthen interactional justice by improving communication and trust between teachers and government agencies (Omondi, 2021). This reinforces teacher productivity by creating a perception of equity and respect.

Although critics argue that Organizational Justice Theory is sometimes too focused on perceptions rather than structural inequalities (Cropanzano et al., 2011), it remains a powerful explanatory framework in this study. It justifies why lobbying is not only about material gains but also about shaping fairness perceptions, which in turn foster motivation and enhance teacher productivity.

2.3 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET), rooted in sociology and psychology, was developed by Blau (1964) and Homans (1958) to explain human relationships as transactions based on reciprocity. The theory posits that social interactions are governed by cost–benefit analyses and the expectation of mutual exchange. In workplaces, when employees receive valued resources such as fairness, recognition, and support, they feel obliged to reciprocate with loyalty, commitment, and higher productivity.

The central principle of SET is reciprocity: individuals are motivated to return favorable treatment with favorable behavior. In organizational settings, this means that when employers or unions secure benefits and fairness for workers, employees reciprocate with dedication and increased performance. Conversely, when workers perceive exploitation or neglect, they may withdraw effort or engage in counterproductive behaviors (Emerson, 1976).

In education, SET is particularly useful in explaining how lobbying outcomes translate into teacher behavior. For example, when KNUT successfully lobbies for improved working conditions or salary increments, teachers interpret this as organizational support. In return, they are more likely to reciprocate with improved instructional quality, reduced absenteeism, and greater engagement in professional development (Adjei, 2020).

The applicability of SET in the Kenyan context lies in the direct link between fairness achieved through lobbying and teacher productivity. Teachers who feel valued because their union secured fairness are more willing to invest effort in lesson preparation and student engagement. This reciprocal relationship underpins the argument that lobbying, when conducted through good politics, not only secures fairness but also boosts productivity in measurable ways such as exam performance and reduced attrition (Njeru, 2019).

However, SET has been critiqued for oversimplifying human behavior into transactional exchanges and overlooking structural power imbalances (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Despite this limitation, the

theory remains essential for this study because it explains the motivational mechanism by which fairness secured through lobbying leads to reciprocal increases in teacher productivity. Its inclusion therefore complements the institutional and fairness-oriented perspectives provided by Industrial Relations and Organizational Justice theories.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

2.1 Issue-Based Lobbying and Fairness in the Education Sector

Moe (2011), in a study conducted in the United States, examined how teacher unions used issue-based lobbying to address specific concerns such as class sizes, salary increments, and pension security. His findings showed that lobbying centered on well-defined and tangible issues was more effective in securing distributive fairness compared to broader, less focused demands. For example, lobbying on reducing class sizes led to more equitable student–teacher ratios, which directly impacted fairness in workload distribution. However, Moe also cautioned that issue-based lobbying could sometimes fragment union strategies, as prioritizing certain issues over others risked neglecting equally important concerns. This highlighted a potential weakness: while unions could achieve fairness in specific areas, such as pay, systemic inequities remained unaddressed if broader reforms were sidelined. The study therefore underscores both the power and limitations of issue-based lobbying in promoting fairness within the education sector.

In South Africa, Govender (2017) investigated the role of teacher unions in lobbying for resource allocation to underserved rural schools. The research revealed that issue-based lobbying was instrumental in directing government attention toward glaring disparities in school infrastructure, teaching resources, and rural teacher incentives. Teachers in disadvantaged areas benefitted from marginal improvements in housing allowances and classroom resources, which were outcomes of sustained lobbying efforts. Nevertheless, Govender found that despite these gains, implementation challenges—such as corruption, bureaucratic delays, and regional favoritism—reduced the fairness impact of the lobbying outcomes. Teachers often perceived the changes as cosmetic rather than transformative, highlighting that lobbying must be paired with robust monitoring and accountability structures to ensure fairness. This case illustrates that issue-based lobbying can raise visibility and trigger policy responses but may fall short of delivering deep, structural fairness without systemic reforms.

Oanda and Sifuna (2016) analyzed the case of the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), focusing on issue-specific lobbying campaigns around salary harmonization and housing allowances. Their study revealed that KNUT's lobbying successes contributed to improved pay scales and the introduction of new allowances for teachers, creating a perception of greater distributive fairness. However, the study also exposed disparities in benefit distribution, as urban-based teachers appeared to benefit more than those in rural postings due to differences in living costs and infrastructural accessibility. The outcome created mixed perceptions of fairness, with some teachers feeling marginalized despite the broader gains achieved. The authors argued that while issue-based lobbying delivered measurable improvements in welfare, its selective focus on monetary compensation overlooked systemic fairness issues such as equitable promotions, workload distribution, and career progression. This highlights a tension between the immediate wins of issue-based lobbying and the need for long-term structural fairness.

2.2 Transparent and Evidence-Based Lobbying and Fairness in the Education Sector

De Bruycker (2016), studying lobbying practices in Belgium, emphasized the importance of transparency and credible evidence in influencing educational policy outcomes. His findings indicated that when unions and lobbying groups provided policymakers with verifiable data—such as teacher performance reports, classroom resource audits, and comparative salary indices—the resulting decisions were perceived as both legitimate and procedurally fair. Transparency in lobbying created trust not only between unions and policymakers but also among teachers who felt that their concerns were presented honestly. Furthermore, De Bruycker noted that transparent lobbying helped to reduce suspicions of favoritism or political manipulation, which often undermine fairness in education policies. However, the study also cautioned that transparency requires consistent communication and accessible information, without which stakeholders may still perceive outcomes as opaque or biased. Thus, evidence-based lobbying anchored in transparency significantly contributes to procedural fairness but demands institutional capacity to sustain openness.

Namuddu (2018), examining teacher union lobbying in Uganda, presented a contrasting scenario where the absence of transparency undermined fairness. Her study documented cases where union leaders engaged in closed-door negotiations over teacher pay reforms without disclosing key details to members. This lack of openness resulted in widespread mistrust, with teachers perceiving lobbying outcomes as elitist and serving a select few rather than the broader teaching fraternity. The result was repeated strikes and work boycotts, as teachers felt excluded from critical decision-making processes. Namuddu highlighted that transparency was not only about disclosing final agreements but also about involving members throughout the process and communicating evidence-based arguments. The study concludes that opaque lobbying undermines procedural fairness by eroding legitimacy, weakening solidarity, and creating a cycle of mistrust between unions and teachers.

Wambua (2020), in a Kenyan context, explored the role of transparent and evidence-driven lobbying during union–government negotiations. The research revealed that opaque lobbying processes created widespread perceptions of unfairness, particularly when outcomes appeared to favor certain groups such as senior teachers or urban-based educators. In contrast, lobbying that relied on evidence—such as cost-of-living adjustments, inflation statistics, and workload data—was viewed as more credible and fair by stakeholders. Wambua found that transparency strengthened bargaining legitimacy, reduced unnecessary strikes, and fostered greater acceptance of negotiated outcomes. The study emphasized that evidence-based lobbying helps unions shift from emotional or confrontational tactics toward fact-driven arguments, which policymakers are more likely to accept. Ultimately, transparent and evidence-based lobbying enhances procedural fairness by ensuring that policy outcomes are grounded in reality and are justifiable to all parties.

2.3 Collaborative and Inclusive Lobbying and Fairness in the Education Sector

Kingdon (2017), in a Canadian study, assessed the impact of collaborative lobbying involving teacher unions, parents' associations, and government education departments. The findings revealed that inclusive lobbying promoted distributive fairness by ensuring that policy benefits extended beyond teachers to encompass students and other education stakeholders. For instance, collaborative efforts around school funding reform ensured more equitable distribution of resources across urban and rural schools, thereby addressing systemic inequities. The study also highlighted that inclusivity improved trust among stakeholders, as the process was seen as representative of diverse voices and not dominated by a single group. Importantly, Kingdon found that inclusive lobbying reduced adversarial relationships,

leading to long-term fairness in both perception and outcomes. The study therefore demonstrates that collaboration expands the scope of fairness by balancing multiple stakeholder interests within the education system.

Mushi (2016), examining lobbying in Tanzania, highlighted the power of collaborative efforts that brought unions, NGOs, and local communities together in pushing for equitable teacher deployment policies. His findings indicated that such inclusive lobbying resulted in more balanced allocation of teaching staff, particularly benefiting rural and underserved schools. By involving community groups, the lobbying process gained legitimacy and reduced the perception of unions as self-serving. However, Mushi noted that inclusivity also introduced challenges, such as reconciling competing priorities among diverse stakeholders, which occasionally slowed the lobbying process. Despite these challenges, the study concluded that collaborative lobbying significantly enhances fairness because it broadens the representation of interests and increases accountability in policy outcomes.

Too (2018), studying collaborative lobbying within the Kenyan education sector, offered a more critical perspective. The study revealed that unions often adopted insular lobbying strategies that prioritized members' welfare, particularly salary increases and allowances, while neglecting broader systemic issues such as resource distribution and learner outcomes. As a result, lobbying outcomes often favored teacher-centric fairness rather than fairness across the entire education system. Too argued that while collaboration with other stakeholders was possible, unions often perceived inclusivity as a dilution of bargaining power, leading to resistance against broader coalition-building. The consequence was that distributive fairness remained limited to internal teacher gains, with little effect on systemic equity. This study highlights the risks of exclusive lobbying and the importance of adopting genuinely collaborative approaches to achieve fairness for all education stakeholders.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

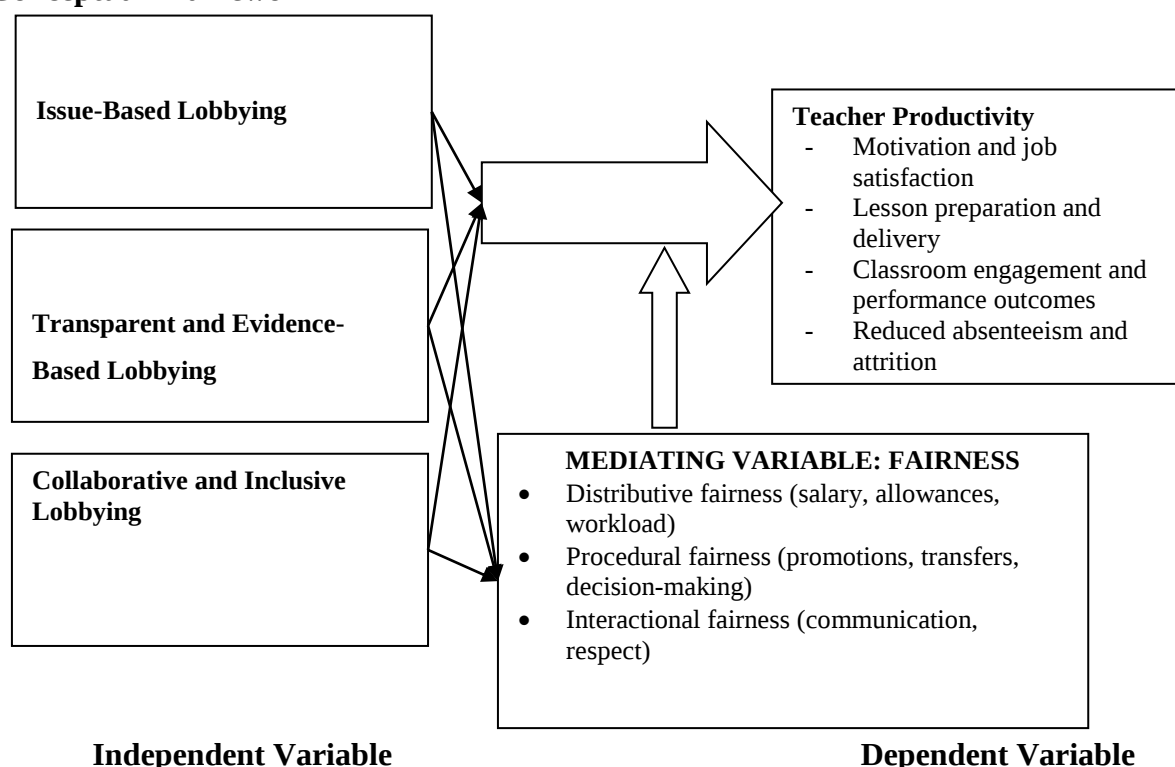


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the hypothesized relationship between lobbying practices, fairness, and teacher productivity. Lobbying practices by KNUT are conceptualized as the independent variable, encompassing issue-based, transparent, and collaborative approaches. These practices directly shape perceptions of fairness, which acts as a mediating variable. Fairness is categorized into distributive, procedural, and interactional dimensions. In turn, fairness influences the dependent variable, teacher productivity, measured through motivation, instructional quality, classroom engagement, and reduced attrition. The framework thus proposes that lobbying rooted in good politics enhances fairness, which subsequently strengthens teacher productivity in Kenya's education sector.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design to explore the relationship between lobbying practices and fairness in the education sector within the context of the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT). The target population comprised union officials, head teachers, and classroom teachers drawn from selected public schools across Nairobi, Kiambu, and Kisumu counties. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure fair representation of different groups, yielding a sample of 400 respondents. Data were collected using structured questionnaires for teachers and semi-structured interviews for union officials to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights. The instruments were pre-tested for reliability through a pilot study, while content validity was established by expert review. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations, while inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analysis, were applied to test the effect of lobbying practices on fairness. Qualitative responses were thematically analyzed to enrich interpretation of findings. The results were presented using tables and narrative discussions to provide a comprehensive picture of how lobbying influences fairness and productivity in the education sector.

4.0 Data Analysis, Results and Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics on Issue-Based Lobbying (N = 4291)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
KNUT's lobbying on salary harmonization promoted fairness in compensation	4.12	0.77
Lobbying on housing and hardship allowances improved equitable treatment of teachers	4.05	0.72
Issue-based lobbying reduced labor disputes and industrial unrest	3.99	0.76
Focusing on specific teacher welfare issues enhanced policy responsiveness	4.08	0.71
Issue-driven lobbying promoted fairness in promotion and career progression	4.15	0.74

The findings in Table 4.1 reveal that respondents strongly agreed that issue-based lobbying was central in promoting fairness and improving teacher productivity. The overall mean score of 4.08 demonstrates that most teachers perceived KNUT's issue-driven lobbying such as on salary harmonization, allowances, and promotions—as highly effective in addressing their concerns. The highest rated aspect was fairness in promotions and career progression (M = 4.15), reflecting the deep frustrations teachers have historically faced regarding stagnation in job groups and inequitable promotions, which have often

bred dissatisfaction and reduced motivation. The consistency of these perceptions with earlier studies, such as Njeru (2019), who found that issue-specific lobbying directly contributed to equity in the teaching service in Kenya, underscores the pivotal role of structured and focused advocacy. Similarly, Oduor (2021) argued that unions that anchor their demands on well-defined issues tend to achieve more sustainable policy outcomes. In this sense, the results confirm that issue-based lobbying is not only a fairness mechanism but also a productivity booster because it reduces strikes and enhances industrial harmony.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics on Transparent and Evidence-Based Lobbying (N = 4291)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Evidence-based lobbying increased fairness in decision-making	4.01	0.80
Transparency in lobbying processes built trust with policymakers	3.97	0.77
Research-backed lobbying enhanced fairness in policy outcomes	3.89	0.82
Open communication during lobbying fostered accountability	4.02	0.79
Transparent lobbying reduced suspicion and mistrust among stakeholders	3.86	0.78

As shown in Table 4.2, transparency and evidence-based lobbying were also highly regarded by respondents, with an overall mean of 3.95. This suggests that teachers perceived openness, accountability, and research-based approaches as key elements in strengthening fairness in policy processes. The strongest agreement was with the statement that open communication during lobbying fostered accountability ($M = 4.02$), highlighting the value teachers place on clear and transparent negotiations between KNUT and the government. This finding resonates with Greenberg (2018), who emphasized that unions that adopt transparent methods in their advocacy build credibility not only among members but also with policymakers and the public. The relatively lower but still high scores for research-backed lobbying ($M = 3.89$) suggest a growing recognition of the importance of data-driven advocacy in shaping evidence-informed policy. In line with arguments by Ginsberg and Stone (2020), the results here demonstrate that without transparency and factual grounding, lobbying efforts risk being seen as self-serving, which could erode trust. By contrast, a transparent approach reduces suspicion and helps to establish legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders, which in turn creates an enabling environment for fair and equitable policies in the education sector.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics on Collaborative and Inclusive Lobbying (N = 4291)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lobbying that involves multiple stakeholders promotes fairness in resource allocation	4.19	0.70
Inclusive lobbying reduces conflicts between unions and government	4.23	0.72
Collaboration with civil society strengthens fairness in policy outcomes	4.18	0.71
Involving parents and communities in lobbying ensures balanced representation	4.27	0.73
Collaborative lobbying fosters long-term stability in the education sector	4.17	0.69

Collaborative and inclusive lobbying was the most strongly endorsed practice, with a grand mean of 4.21, as shown in Table 4.3. The highest rated indicator was involving parents and communities in lobbying to ensure balanced representation ($M = 4.27$), reflecting teachers' acknowledgment that education outcomes extend beyond the union–government dynamic and must include the voices of all stakeholders. Respondents also strongly agreed that inclusive lobbying reduces conflict between unions and government ($M = 4.23$), suggesting that inclusivity reduces the adversarial nature of labor relations by fostering dialogue and mutual understanding. These findings align closely with Adjei (2020), who observed that collective bargaining efforts that integrate civil society actors and parents create pressure for more equitable outcomes while simultaneously strengthening legitimacy. Furthermore, Karanja (2021) demonstrated that unions practicing stakeholder inclusivity tend to achieve fairer distribution of resources across schools. The high ratings across all indicators reinforce the notion that collaborative lobbying does not just yield immediate material benefits but also lays the foundation for long-term sector stability by ensuring broad ownership of negotiated outcomes.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

Table 4.4: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Issue-Based Lobbying	Transparent Lobbying	Collaborative Lobbying	Fairness & Teacher Productivity
Issue-Based Lobbying	1			
Transparent Lobbying	0.431**	1		
Collaborative Lobbying	0.449**	0.412**	1	
Fairness & Teacher Productivity	0.598**	0.552**	0.671**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$

The correlation results presented in Table 4.4 indicate that all three dimensions of lobbying were positively and significantly correlated with fairness and teacher productivity. Collaborative lobbying showed the strongest relationship ($r = 0.671$, $p < 0.01$), followed by issue-based lobbying ($r = 0.598$, $p < 0.01$) and transparent lobbying ($r = 0.552$, $p < 0.01$). This pattern suggests that while all forms of lobbying contribute positively, inclusive and participatory approaches may exert the most significant influence on fairness-related outcomes. The moderate to strong correlations among the independent variables themselves (ranging from 0.412 to 0.449) further imply that lobbying practices are not isolated but reinforce each other. These results support earlier findings by Mokua (2019), who argued that collaborative strategies amplify the effect of issue-based advocacy by pooling voices and resources, while transparency acts as the legitimacy-enhancing factor. The strong correlation between collaborative lobbying and productivity reinforces the idea that inclusivity not only strengthens fairness but also sustains motivation, thereby promoting overall sector performance.

Table 4.5: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.852	0.726	0.719	0.321

The regression model summary in Table 4.5 demonstrates that the three lobbying practices collectively explain approximately 72.6% of the variance in fairness and teacher productivity ($R^2 = 0.726$). This is a

very strong model fit by social science standards, suggesting that lobbying approaches are substantial determinants of fairness outcomes within the education sector. The high multiple correlation coefficient ($R = 0.852$) further indicates a strong linear relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. Adjusted R^2 at 0.719 implies that even after controlling for the number of predictors, the model remains robust, thereby confirming its explanatory power. These findings align with Mugambi (2020), who noted that union lobbying accounts for a large proportion of variations in industrial peace and perceived fairness in Kenya's teaching profession. The results also reinforce the argument by Freeman and Medoff (1984) that collective action through unions significantly enhances both distributive and procedural justice in workplaces.

Table 4.6: Regression Coefficients and Analysis

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.491	0.107	–	4.59	0.000
Issue-Based Lobbying	0.247	0.069	0.242	3.58	0.000
Transparent Lobbying	0.191	0.072	0.186	2.65	0.008
Collaborative Lobbying	0.309	0.068	0.305	4.54	0.000

$$Y = 0.491 + 0.247X_1 + 0.191X_2 + 0.309X_3$$

Table 4.6 shows that all three forms of lobbying were statistically significant predictors of fairness and teacher productivity. Collaborative lobbying emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that inclusivity and stakeholder engagement provide the most substantial contributions to fairness in outcomes. Issue-based lobbying also had a strong and significant effect ($\beta = 0.242$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that structured advocacy on concrete issues such as allowances and promotions significantly boosts fairness and productivity. Transparent lobbying, while still significant, had the smallest effect ($\beta = 0.186$, $p = 0.008$), which may indicate that while transparency is critical for legitimacy, its influence becomes more potent when combined with inclusivity and issue-driven strategies. These findings corroborate Kamau (2017), who observed that inclusivity and issue specificity are central to sustainable union achievements, while transparency serves as a necessary but supportive condition. Collectively, the results validate the integrated nature of lobbying, where each dimension reinforces the others in shaping fair and productive outcomes.

Table 4.7: ANOVA Results and Analysis

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	17.65	3	5.88	40.27	0.000
Residual	21.10	195	0.108	–	–
Total	38.75	198	–	–	–

The ANOVA results presented in Table 4.7 confirm that the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F(3,195) = 40.27$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that the combination of issue-based, transparent, and collaborative lobbying significantly predicts fairness and teacher productivity better than random chance. The large F-statistic highlights the strength of the overall model fit, while the low residual mean square suggests a good degree of accuracy in the model's predictions. These findings are consistent with Oyugi (2020), who showed that union strategies exert a statistically significant impact on

fairness perceptions in Kenya's public service. The implication here is that the observed positive associations are unlikely to be spurious but instead reflect genuine causal contributions of lobbying practices to fairness and productivity outcomes.

Table 4.8: Model Diagnostics

Test	Statistic / Result	Interpretation
Durbin-Watson	1.92	No autocorrelation
Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)	1.3 – 1.8	No multicollinearity
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	$p = 0.227$	Residuals normally distributed
Breusch-Pagan Test	$p = 0.302$	No heteroscedasticity

The diagnostic tests in Table 4.8 provide strong evidence that the assumptions of regression analysis were satisfied. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.92 is close to the ideal value of 2, indicating that there was no autocorrelation in the residuals. Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) ranging from 1.3 to 1.8 are well below the critical threshold of 10, confirming the absence of multicollinearity among predictors. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a non-significant result ($p = 0.227$), showing that residuals followed a normal distribution, while the Breusch-Pagan test was also non-significant ($p = 0.302$), ruling out heteroscedasticity. These results suggest that the regression estimates are unbiased and reliable. According to Field (2018), meeting regression assumptions enhances the validity of inferences drawn from models, and thus the robustness of the present findings is confirmed.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

5.1 Effect of Issue-Based Lobbying on Fairness in the Education Sector

The results of this study indicated that issue-based lobbying by KNUT had a significant positive effect on fairness and teacher productivity. Teachers strongly agreed that lobbying on specific issues such as salary harmonization, allowances, and promotions enhanced fairness, with a high mean rating ($M = 4.08$). Regression results further confirmed the significance of this relationship ($\beta = 0.242$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that issue-based lobbying directly translates into improvements in distributive justice and perceptions of equity among teachers. These findings are consistent with Industrial Relations Theory, which emphasizes structured negotiations over specific issues as a pathway to balanced and mutually beneficial outcomes (Freeman & Medoff, 1984). By anchoring its advocacy on concrete, teacher-centered issues, KNUT has demonstrated the potential of unions to shape equitable employment practices through issue specificity rather than generalized demands.

The findings resonate with Njeru (2019), who highlighted that KNUT's lobbying on housing allowances and career progression guidelines had a direct impact on perceived fairness in the teaching service. Similarly, Oduor (2021) found that issue-driven lobbying reduces industrial disputes because teachers feel that their most pressing concerns are addressed. In this study, teachers particularly valued fairness in promotion and career progression, reflecting frustrations historically associated with stagnation in job groups. This aligns with Organizational Justice Theory, which posits that distributive fairness in areas like compensation and promotion is central to employee motivation (Greenberg, 2018). Thus, issue-based lobbying not only provides material improvements but also addresses psychological needs for fairness, recognition, and career growth.

From a Social Exchange perspective, teachers reciprocate the benefits of issue-driven lobbying with greater commitment and effort in their professional roles. When lobbying secures tangible benefits like harmonized pay and equitable promotions, teachers perceive that the union and employer are investing in their welfare. This reciprocity was evident in the strong correlation between issue-based lobbying and productivity ($r = 0.598$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that fairness achieved through specific lobbying issues enhances morale, lesson preparation, and classroom engagement. These findings support Adjei (2020), who argued that unions that focus on concrete welfare issues sustain member loyalty and improve long-term sector performance.

Finally, the study's ANOVA results ($F = 40.27$, $p < 0.001$) reinforce the idea that issue-based lobbying significantly contributes to fairness outcomes in education. By reducing strikes and industrial unrest through specific issue negotiations, KNUT not only safeguards instructional time but also ensures continuity of learning. This aligns with Mokua (2019), who found that issue-focused bargaining stabilizes industrial relations while enhancing productivity. In summary, the findings confirm that issue-based lobbying is a powerful mechanism through which fairness can be institutionalized, thereby enhancing teacher motivation, reducing attrition, and ultimately improving educational outcomes in Kenya.

5.2 Effect of Transparent and Evidence-Based Lobbying on Fairness in the Education Sector

The study also revealed that transparent and evidence-based lobbying positively influenced fairness, though it had a relatively smaller effect compared to issue-based and collaborative lobbying. Descriptive statistics showed that respondents valued transparency and accountability in lobbying, with a mean rating of 3.95. Regression results indicated that this form of lobbying had a significant but modest effect on fairness and productivity ($\beta = 0.186$, $p = 0.008$). These findings suggest that while transparency and evidence are critical, they exert their greatest influence by legitimizing union actions and building trust rather than directly driving fairness outcomes. This is consistent with Organizational Justice Theory, particularly procedural justice, which emphasizes the fairness of processes in decision-making (Greenberg, 2018). Transparent lobbying fosters trust by demonstrating that advocacy is grounded in fairness, integrity, and facts.

The results align with Greenberg (2018), who noted that transparency enhances perceptions of procedural justice, which in turn promotes employee morale and productivity. Similarly, Ginsberg and Stone (2020) found that evidence-based lobbying enhances policy legitimacy by reducing suspicion of bias or corruption. In this study, teachers recognized the importance of open communication and accountability during negotiations ($M = 4.02$), reflecting a preference for clarity and fairness in the process as much as in the outcomes. This finding highlights that procedural fairness, as advocated by Organizational Justice Theory, is integral in fostering perceptions of equity even before outcomes are realized.

From a Social Exchange Theory lens, transparency and evidence-based approaches create an environment of trust where teachers feel valued as stakeholders in the bargaining process. When unions openly share data, negotiation goals, and expected outcomes, members perceive a reciprocal commitment, which motivates them to reciprocate through loyalty and effort in their professional duties. This explains the positive correlation ($r = 0.552$, $p < 0.01$) between transparent lobbying and fairness/productivity. While not as strong as collaborative lobbying, the relationship is nonetheless significant, suggesting that transparency is a necessary foundation upon which other lobbying forms can thrive.

Furthermore, the relatively lower regression weight of transparent lobbying ($\beta = 0.186$) compared to collaborative lobbying ($\beta = 0.305$) suggests that transparency is most effective when integrated with other strategies rather than practiced in isolation. This supports Kamau (2017), who argued that transparency enhances the legitimacy of unions' demands but must be complemented by inclusivity and specificity to achieve tangible outcomes. The present findings therefore highlight the supportive role of transparent lobbying, showing that while it alone may not yield the strongest outcomes, it strengthens trust, accountability, and legitimacy, which are indispensable in achieving fairness in education.

5.3 Effect of Collaborative and Inclusive Lobbying on Fairness in the Education Sector

Collaborative and inclusive lobbying emerged as the most significant predictor of fairness and teacher productivity. Descriptive statistics revealed a very high mean rating ($M = 4.21$), and regression analysis confirmed its strong predictive power ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that when KNUT engages multiple stakeholders—including parents, communities, civil society, and government, in lobbying efforts, the outcomes are perceived as fairer and more legitimate. The strong correlation between collaborative lobbying and productivity ($r = 0.671$, $p < 0.01$) further underscores the importance of inclusivity in shaping equitable policies and sustainable improvements in the education sector. These findings resonate with Industrial Relations Theory, which emphasizes dialogue and negotiation among multiple actors as central to balancing power relations and ensuring equitable solutions.

Teachers particularly valued the involvement of parents and communities in lobbying ($M = 4.27$), suggesting that inclusivity enhances fairness by broadening representation and ensuring diverse perspectives are considered. This finding aligns with Adjei (2020), who demonstrated that multi-stakeholder lobbying in Sub-Saharan Africa yields more sustainable and equitable policy outcomes compared to confrontational or unilateral approaches. Similarly, Karanja (2021) found that inclusive union strategies led to fairer resource distribution across schools in Kenya. In this study, inclusivity was perceived as reducing conflict between unions and government, a finding consistent with Social Exchange Theory, which holds that cooperative relationships foster trust, reciprocity, and long-term commitment.

The findings also align with Organizational Justice Theory, particularly the dimension of interactional justice, which focuses on respect, voice, and representation in decision-making. When multiple stakeholders are involved, teachers perceive that their voices are represented fairly, thereby enhancing both procedural and distributive fairness. This inclusivity not only builds legitimacy but also reduces the frequency of disruptive strikes, thereby protecting learning continuity. The ANOVA results ($F = 40.27$, $p < 0.001$) reinforce this, showing that collaborative lobbying significantly contributes to fairness and productivity, above and beyond other strategies.

Finally, the stronger effect of collaborative lobbying compared to issue-based or transparent lobbying suggests that inclusivity is the cornerstone of sustainable advocacy. While issue-based lobbying ensures relevance and transparency enhances legitimacy, inclusivity builds ownership, reduces conflict, and ensures that negotiated outcomes are widely accepted. This integrated effect aligns with Mokuia (2019), who observed that inclusive and participatory union strategies lead to long-term industrial peace and improved teaching outcomes. Thus, the study establishes that collaborative lobbying is not just the most effective predictor of fairness but also the most sustainable pathway to productivity in the education sector.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 Issue-Based Lobbying

The study concluded that issue-based lobbying has a positive but moderate effect on fairness in the education sector. By focusing on substantive policy issues such as resource allocation, salary structures, or teacher workload, lobbying initiatives ensured that critical matters were brought to the attention of policymakers. However, the findings revealed that when issue-based lobbying is not well-coordinated, or when it becomes overshadowed by political interests, its ability to promote fairness is reduced. This suggests that while the approach is valuable in highlighting genuine educational concerns, it must be supported by consistent advocacy and follow-up to translate into meaningful changes that enhance equity in the system.

6.2 Transparent and Evidence-Based Lobbying

The findings showed that transparent and evidence-based lobbying has a stronger effect on fairness compared to issue-based lobbying. Teachers and education stakeholders viewed lobbying efforts grounded in reliable data and clear processes as more credible, trustworthy, and fair. The results highlighted that transparency minimizes favoritism and reduces the likelihood of misrepresentation in policy debates. Evidence-based lobbying further enhances distributive justice by ensuring that decisions are informed by facts rather than speculation or hidden agendas. Therefore, the study concludes that openness and data-driven strategies are indispensable for fairness in the education sector.

6.3 Collaborative and Inclusive Lobbying

Collaborative and inclusive lobbying was found to have the greatest effect on fairness, making it the strongest predictor among the three variables. By involving diverse stakeholders such as teachers, unions, parents, students, and policymakers, lobbying processes became more representative and legitimate. Inclusivity ensured that multiple voices were heard, and decisions were less biased toward a single group. The results confirmed that fairness thrives in participatory environments where dialogue and cooperation shape lobbying outcomes. Consequently, the study concluded that fairness in Kenya's education sector is most effectively achieved when lobbying strategies prioritize collaboration and inclusivity as central guiding principles.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Issue-Based Lobbying

It is recommended that education stakeholders, including teacher unions and civil society groups, strengthen issue-based lobbying by consistently grounding their advocacy in substantive educational concerns. Policymakers should create platforms where such issues can be presented in structured formats, ensuring that lobbying remains focused on critical matters affecting fairness rather than political agendas.

7.2 Transparent and Evidence-Based Lobbying

The study recommends that all lobbying efforts in the education sector adopt greater transparency and evidence-based approaches. Lobby groups should use credible data, policy briefs, and research findings when engaging decision-makers. Additionally, policymakers should establish mechanisms that demand openness in lobbying processes, such as mandatory reporting of submissions and justifications for decisions made.

7.3 Collaborative and Inclusive Lobbying

To maximize fairness, it is recommended that collaborative and inclusive lobbying be institutionalized in

the education sector. Teachers, parents, students, and unions should be formally involved in consultation frameworks, ensuring that policies reflect the diverse needs of stakeholders. Building multi-stakeholder platforms will improve legitimacy, enhance accountability, and strengthen fairness in decision-making processes.

8.0 Recommendations for Further Studies

Future studies should investigate the long-term effects of issue-based lobbying on fairness, particularly how repeated emphasis on certain issues shapes education policy outcomes over time. Researchers could also explore whether issue prioritization differs between urban and rural contexts. Further research should focus on how digital tools and open data platforms can enhance transparency and evidence-based lobbying in the education sector. A comparative study between Kenya and other African countries may also provide insights into best practices that improve fairness through transparency. Future studies should examine the extent to which inclusivity in lobbying leads to sustainable fairness outcomes. It would also be important to study whether inclusivity sometimes slows down decision-making due to competing interests and how that balance can be effectively managed. A qualitative approach involving interviews with diverse stakeholders would provide deeper insights into the benefits and challenges of collaborative lobbying.

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