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## **CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KENYA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article reports on findings from a quantitative research study on recruitment of teachers in Kenya's secondary schools.

**Purpose:** To identify issues and challenges facing school-based recruitment of secondary school teachers.

**Method:** The study adopted a quantitative survey involving 81 secondary principals, selected purposively. Data was collected using a questionnaire (open and closed-ended, rating scale items). Data was analysed using SPSS resulting in descriptive data.

**Principle findings:** BOG wants their own people regardless qualifications or competence and paid less attention to qualification than clanism. There were also issues of nepotism, corruption and negative influence, among BOG members.

**Conclusion:** BOG's practices and behaviours undermine the effectiveness of the secondary schools teachers' recruitment policy, resulting in ineffective staff, not closely matched to the needs of the schools.

**Keywords:** Secondary schools, Kenya, Recruitment, secondary school Teachers, Teacher distribution.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hiring qualified teachers has been cited in the literature as a serious problem (Myers et al., 2004) affecting both developed and developing countries. Head teachers claim that the quantity and quality of teachers applying for teaching job is lower than in the past and some candidates applying for the teaching position are not worthy of interview and schools end up using non-teaching staff (Central Teaching Council of Wales, 2001). Liu and Johnson (2006) argue that a close match or fit between teachers' skills, interests and disposition and the position for which they are being hired is very important for not only effective recruitment of teachers but also teacher retention, distribution and quality teaching. This is in turn partially influenced by teacher qualifications and hiring or recruitment policies and practices (Liu and Johnson, 2006). Recently governments in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have made expansion of secondary education a policy priority (Lewin, 2007; IDEA, 2008) for a number of reasons, among them, pressure to achieve UPE(Universal primary education) MDGs (Millennium Development Goals); provision of free primary education and the need for knowledgeable and skilled people in knowledge-based sector of the economy. Therefore increased expansion of secondary education would inevitably require huge number of qualified secondary school teachers if quality provision is to be achieved. Dejaeghee et al. (2006, 533) observe that 'a cross many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa secondary enrolment are growing faster than teachers can be recruited'. Already serious shortage of teachers has been cited in the Wales, England , Isle of Man, Vietnam and in the pacific region just to name a few (Huyen, 2013; House of Commons, 2004; Paumau, 2007; Derbyshire, 2013; Paton, 2012, 2013; Welch, et al., 2011; Central Teaching Council in Wales, 2001). Already in some SSA countries the use of unqualified, less qualified and contract teachers has been cited in the literature (World Bank, 2007; Lewin, 2007). Such practices undermine quality education provision. Also uneven distribution of teachers in terms of geographical locations, ethnicity and level of school performance, just to name a few has been highlighted in the literature (Mulkeen et al. 2004; Mobegi & Ondigi, 2011; Patton, 2012, 2013). In many countries hiring or recruiting teachers is either centralised or decentralised. In 2001 Kenya decentralised secondary school teachers' recruitment policy such that it became a school-based policy. This article reports on the findings of a study



conducted recently investigating issues and challenges associated with the recruitment of secondary school teachers in Nyamira County, Kenya.

## **UNDERSTANDING SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA**

The importance of secondary school education has been underscored by Ngware et al. (2006). They argue that secondary education provides youths with opportunities to acquire human capital through which they could progress to higher education or labour markets (Ngware et al., 2006). They further argue that increased access to secondary education can have implication on welfare. Secondary schools in Kenya cater for students aged 14 -17 years (Njogore and Ole Kerei, 2011). Public schools in Kenya are differentiated into three levels, namely National schools, Provincial schools and District schools (Oketch and Somerset, 2010; Glennerster et al. 2011). National schools are considered elite and most prestigious government and/or public schools in the country (Glennerster et al., 2011). Compared to other schools, they have better facilities, offer a wide range of subjects (16 subjects compared to 11 in other public schools) and provides high quality peer group (Glennerster et al., 2011). In 2007, 80 per cent of teachers in national schools had a degree compared to 68 per cent in other public schools. Also national schools teachers were twice as likely to hold advanced degree compared to teachers in other schools (Glennerster, et al., 2011). National schools admit top primary school candidates from across the country on a district quarter basis and competition for access is intense or rather stiff about one primary school learner in hundred win a place in national secondary schools (Glennerster, et al., 2011; Oketch and Somerset, 2010). In 2004 there were 18 single sex boarding national schools in the country which admitted approximately 3000 top primary school candidates (Glennerster, et al., 2011). National schools include the longest established public schools in the country. The oldest national school is Alliance Boys high school having been set up in 1926 by a group (Alliance) of three protestant missionary societies (Oketch and Somerset, 2010). Provincial schools on the other hand are next to national schools and admit the top remaining primary candidates from within the same province as the school (Glennerster, et al., 2011; Oketch & Somerset, 2010). They are about 1000 in number and therefore outnumber the national schools by a wide margin. They are also much easier to access relative to national schools (Oketch and Somerset, 2010; Glennerster, et al., 2011). And finally the district secondary schools, which are approximately 3000 and occur at the



bottom level among public schools (Glennerster, et al., 2011). They serve the local catchments i.e. draw students from primary schools within the district who could not gain admission into either national or provincial schools (Oketch and Somerset, 2010; Glennerster et al., 2011). Also it is noteworthy that a majority of the current district schools began as local community or self-help Harambee schools and then in the 1970s gradually got absorbed into public schools system. As a result the government began to support them in terms of staff salary and other recurrent expenses. They are the commonest type of public secondary schools in Kenya (Oketch and Somerset, 2010; Amutabi, 2003).

There are striking differences across the three levels or types of schools in terms of resources, level of student preparations and examination performance (Oketch and Somerset, 2010; Glennerster et al., 2011). The differences in facilities, teachers and other inputs perhaps reinforce the differences that exist across them (Glennerster, et al., 2011). For example in 2008 according to Glennerster, et al. 2011, the average KCSE student score in national schools was approximately 9.6 (out of 12), provincial average score was 6.2, while that of district schools was 4 points. In national schools 90 per cent of students scored at least a C+, and no gender gaps in performance was observed; in provincial schools 43 per cent of students scored at least a C+ and but a small (but statistically significant) gender gaps in performance was observed and in districts performance was described as appalling as only 11 per cent of students scored at least a C+ with a significant gender gaps in the performance (Glennerster et al., 2011). It is also noteworthy that some district schools provide boarding facilities while a significant number of them offer day schooling to pupils living within a reasonable walking distance (Oketch and Somerset, 2010). Selection for entry into secondary schools strikingly reflects the three different types of public schools discussed in this article. Primary schools candidates are required to make their choices or selection of the secondary schools they would like to join upon completing their primary education. They make the selection during their final year prior to sitting their final examinations. Each pupil is entitled to make seven choices: two for national schools, two for provincial schools and three for district schools (Oketch and Somerset, 2010). Once the examination results are released by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) selection of students occur in sequence, the national schools first, then provincial schools and finally the district schools (Oketch and Somerset, 2010). Therefore district schools are



disadvantaged because they take those who could not gain admission in national schools and/or provincial schools. In other words district schools take rejects or residues.

In January 2008 the Kenya government introduced what has been uncritically accepted as free secondary education. It is uncritically accepted because the discrepancies that exist between reality and rhetoric. Levies and other fees charged by various schools make the free secondary education much less free. Regarding the free secondary education policy the government provides to schools a subsidy of Ksh. 10,635 (\$US 164) per student per year. It can therefore be argued that a subsidy of Ksh. 10, 635 per student per year cannot qualify an education provision as free. Itunga (2011) and Ohba (2009) also report that the government subsidy is inadequate. Besides, Glennerster et al., (2011) adds that the hidden costs and levies that schools charge parents present a major financial obstacle and that affects primary to secondary transition. Another issue associated with free secondary school education is delays in disbursement of the government subsidy (KENPRO, 2010). The government assumed that by dropping or reducing fees of public schools, education would be available to all children and especially those from vulnerable or disadvantaged households (Burnett, 2012; Chabari, 2010), and that issues of illiteracy, low quality education, low completion rates at secondary school and poor community participation would be addressed (Chabari, 2010). But that has not been the case as Ohba (2009), Oyaro (2013) and Burnett (2012) report on wide ranging issues affecting the free secondary education provision. The issues include shortage of qualified teachers, books, desks, packed classrooms and overused toilet facilities just to name a few. Similar situation has been reported in Tanzania which abolished school fees in 2002 (Burnett, 2012). Kenya operates a single secondary phase system within the 8-4-4 education system, while other countries operate two phases, junior and senior or lower and upper secondary education systems. Yet others operate basic education system (Sang, et al., 2012).

## **UNDERSTANDING RECRUITMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

Review of literature increasingly demonstrates that the situation regarding shortage of qualified teachers is widespread and equally affects both developed and developing countries as mentioned earlier. Therefore head teachers are finding it very difficult to recruit quality teachers for their schools. Huyen (2013) echoes a claim by schools that the 'quality of teachers was not good enough to take the job of teaching'. In Vietnam, according



to the department of HCM City Education and Training, teachers recruitment challenges were evident across all levels of education system, for instance 751 teachers were needed for nursery schools but only recruited 580; in primary schools 1,080 teachers were needed but only 425 were recruited and in secondary schools 850 teachers were needed but only recruited 459 (Huyen, 2013). Puamau (2007) reports that in the Pacific region many countries lacked experienced, and appropriately trained teachers. Welch et al. (2011) also report about difficulties to recruit suitably qualified, high calibre music teachers in England despite additional incentives.

- According to Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) 'teacher quality is the school factor which makes the greatest impact on student achievement'. Similar views are also expressed by Wilkins (1998) who observes that 'teachers are the essential resources in providing children with quality education'. Also Berry et al., (2009) note that teachers make the greatest difference to student achievement. Others who have expressed concerns on teacher quality include Luschei and Carnoy (2010); Mobegi and Ondigi (2011); Mastekaasa (2011) and Liu and Johnson (2006). In fact Liu and Johnson (2006) observe that in the USA the issues of teacher quality had been a centrepiece in the school reform agenda and it is central to the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Derbyshire (2013) reports of a serious and growing concern in relation to recruiting secondary school teachers in the Isle of Man. In Wales in the UK, there has been a noticeable decline in the number of applicants for teaching posts across all subjects (General Teaching Council of Wales, 2001). For instance, there was no applicant for 19 posts that were advertised (General Teaching Council of Wales, 2001). Some of the desperate comments made by head teachers include (General Teaching Council of Wales, 2001):-
- 'We have been unable to find a suitable Welsh teacher, on re-advertisement there were no applicants. Although six applicants were shortlisted for the English post, all had found posts by the interview day
- 'Choice is often limited and those appointed are sometimes of a lower calibre than in the past. For example, there is a crisis in recruiting teachers in Welsh.
- 'The quality /quantity of applicants is far lower than in the past...'



So head teachers are increasingly finding it difficult to fill posts. Therefore hiring quality teachers is a serious problem (Myers et al., 2004). Paton (2012) describes the shortage of teachers as a 'perfect storm'. Primary schools are equally affected (Paton, 2012). The shortage is attributable to two factors, falling demand in the teaching jobs and an increase in pupils' population (Paton, 2012). Paton (2013) also links the shortage of teachers to gender stereotypes and barriers which, for instance, prevented men from joining the professions. Evidence shows that early years in England are largely considered as women province (Paton, 2013). Besides, men also fear of being falsely labelled as paedophiles when working with early years (Paton, 2013). Lack of qualified teachers leaves schools with two options, increasing class size and/or recruit poorly qualified staff (Paton, 2012). Both options undermine the provision of quality education. O'Sullivan (2006) observes that children in cramped conditions cannot receive adequate individual attention. Heavy usage of unqualified, temporary and/or contract teachers has been reported in Uganda and certain Francophone African countries (Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso) (Mulkeen et al. (2004). Mulkeen et al. (2004) also report that in many Sub-Saharan African countries, the projected demand for high- qualified teachers far exceeds projected supply due to remarkable growth in secondary education. The significant growth in secondary education is further linked to increased provision of free primary education, among other factors such as rapid population growth and improved grade retention at primary level (Sang et al., 2012; Dejaeghee, et al. 2006). Leadership crisis potential in the UK schools has also been cited in the literature (Rhodes et al., 2008). School are unable to find suitable candidates for school headship. Maylor (2009) also reports on the perpetual issues and challenges regarding the recruitment of minority ethnic teachers in England. Under- representation of BME (Black minority ethnic) teachers in schools with high proportion of BME pupils has been linked to laddish behaviour and underachievement among the latter (Carrington and Skelton, 2003).

Kenya decentralised public secondary education teacher recruitment policy in 2001(Aloo et al., 2011; Kipsoi and Sang, 2008) and therefore the policy became school-based. It became a demand driven exercise as opposed to the former supply driven which has been operated by Teachers Service Commission (TSC) since 1967 (Aloo, et al., 2011; Kipsoi and Sang, 2008). For details on the recruitment process under the new arrangements (see Aloo et al., 2011; Kipsoi and Sang, 2008). The school- based policy was intended to enhance teacher



retention, equality in teacher distribution and more importantly to improve the efficiency in teacher recruitment practices in public secondary schools in the country (Aloo, et al., 2011). Both positive and negative outcomes have been reported regarding the school-based teacher recruitment policy. The positive one includes noticeable growth in teacher retention, for instance, from 70 per cent in 2002 to 75 per cent in 2007 in Nyando District in Kenya. The other positive outcome is that the supply of teachers to public secondary schools is based on the needs of the schools, what Liu and Johnson (2006) describes as 'Good matches between teachers and their jobs'. Liu and Johnson (2006; 325) further observe that:

The fit between a new teacher and his position can have implications for his job satisfaction and retention. If a position does not closely match a new teacher's preparation, interest or preferences, he may quickly become dissatisfied and not stay in the job (or in teaching for long).

Good match is therefore important for teacher effectiveness. Liu and Johnson (2006) note that:

A new teacher's effectiveness in working with students may depend not only on her general qualifications but also on the fit between her particular skills, knowledge and dispositions and the school position she has been hired to fill.

Besides, Liu and Johnson (2006; 327) observe that:

Better matches or closer fit between new teachers' skills, interests and expertise and the position that they secure are important both for improving skills and improving teacher satisfaction and addressing teacher shortages.

The other positive outcome of the school based teacher recruitment policy is a noticeable attraction of more teachers to hardship or hard to reach schools in e.g. Nyando District, among other areas in Kenya (Aloo, et al. 2011). Some of the negative outcomes of the school based teacher recruitment policy cited in the literature include unnecessary delay by TSC in posting teachers already recruited by schools; TSC is also slow in replacing teachers who have left through natural attrition and those who have been promoted to deputy principalship; manipulation of the recruitment process to suit interest of certain individuals in the society; some schools refuse to shortlist qualified applicants in favour of their 'preferred' candidates; other schools conceal interview dates in order to fill the vacancies



with 'their people'; also Board of Governors (BOG) fail to adhere to the recruitment guidelines (Aloo et al., 2011; Kipsoi and Sang, 2008). Kipsoi and Sang (2008) also report that competence of BOG regarding the correct interpretation and implementation of the recruitment guidelines has been questioned. The school based teacher recruitment policy has also been reported to be bias, tribal and corrupt and not based on merit (Kipsoi and Sang, 2008). There is also a view that BOG members lacked quality management capabilities (Republic of Kenya, 1999: 227 as cited in Kipsoi and Sang, 2008). Wadesango et al. (2012) report about similar practices with the Zimbabwean decentralised teacher recruitment policy. The policy was decentralised in 1998 but issues of nepotism, favouritism, bribery and corruption were rampant as a result the policy was centralised again (Wadesango et al., 2012). Use of school boards in the teachers recruited is not limited to Kenya and Zimbabwe but other countries as well. For in the UK, the 1988 Education Reform increased the role of school boards to include that of appointment and promoting teachers (Stidder, 2002) and issues of corruption, bribery, nepotism, among others have not been reported in the literature reviewed. Perhaps what need to happen in Kenya, Zimbabwe and other countries in relation to school- based teacher recruitment policy is to have measures in place to ensure that the exercise is transparent and fair, and that school governing boards had the right knowledge and skills to do fabulous job because involving various stakeholders in decision has been recognised as a positive practice (Hammad and Norris, 2009; Gaziel, 2008). Liontos (1994) as cited in Hammad and Norris (2009; 60) has identified four basic assumptions upon school –based decisions are based: Those who are closest to the action are more able to make the best educational decision; members of the school community should be given more control over policies that are likely to affect their schools; those responsible for implementing decisions should be involved in making those decisions and there are more chances for change to be successful when those implementing it feel a 'sense of ownership' for the implementation process.

The school- based or site-based decision-making or management notion is rooted in the industrial model- which shows positive outcome of involving factory workers in changing their work roles (Gaziel, 2008). Hence policy makers came to believe that there was a need for school responsibility-bearers and education receivers to share in school- level decision-making (Gaziel, 2008). Gaziel (2008) has identified three views or approaches regarding the



emergence of the school-based decision-making, e.g. functional, political and professional approaches. Gaziel (2008) further argues that despite different approaches to the emergence of the SBM, greater freedom from the effects of centralised bureaucracy, hierarchy and administrative rules would serve the interests of schools (p.20-21).

## **UNDERSTANDING DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS**

Review of literature increasingly shows uneven or unbalanced distribution of teachers at different levels and areas in various countries in the world. There is serious distribution inequality of quality teachers in schools in both developed and developing countries (Alliance for Recruitment education, 2008). The situation is influenced by teachers' qualifications, performance of the school; geographical location of the school either rural or urban and supply of teachers (Mulkeen et al., 2004; Alliance for excellent Education, 2008; Mobegi and Ondigi, 2011; Beesley et al., 2008). Other factors include teacher preparation, high attrition and difficulties in attracting teachers to hard- to- reach areas and lack of teachers in specific subject areas such as mathematics, physics, and music, among others. Moore et al. (2008) observe that in a large number of developing countries around the world the projected demand of quality teachers exceeds the projected supply especially for the expanding secondary education. Coleman and Campbell- Stephens (2010) also report that in England apart from South East the proportion of ethnic pupils exceed the proportion of black minority ethnic (BME). Coleman and Campbell- Stephens (2010) further note that despite London having the largest proportion of BME, the gap between the proportion of BME pupils and the proportion of MBE teacher is large, for instance, Inner London is 37% while Outer London is 24%. Basit and santoro (2011) based on the studies conducted in Britain, Australia and United States, report that 'minority ethnic teachers who share similar cultural backgrounds to their students are well positioned to act as role model and thus contribute to raising the educational and career aspiration of these students'. School in rural areas especially semi-arid areas lack sufficient number of qualified teachers because a majority of the teachers want to work in or around urban areas (Mobegi and Ondigi, 2011; Mulkeen et al., 2004). Rural geographical locations are associated with extremely poor, hash and/ or expensive. At times teachers may not feel comfortable and/or secure with the local ethnicity, custom, traditions or language (Mulkeen et al., 2004). Mulkeen et al., (2004) also cite unsuitable teacher accommodation, deprived areas and danger of diseases prevalent in



rural areas e.g. in Ghana. Such conditions are likely to be unpopular and therefore less attractive to qualified and experienced teachers. Some governments have tried to attract qualified teachers to rural areas through the use of financial incentives (financial incentive include hardship allowance, travel allowance and subsidised housing) and non-monetary incentives (special study leave, better in-service training or enhanced promotion opportunities) (Mulkeen et al., 2004; Aloo et al., 2011; Kipsoi and Sang, 2008). Alliance for excellent Education (2008) reports that in the United States, lower-quality teachers serve students of colour. Also students in high poverty, high-minority and low performing schools are more likely to have inexperienced and unqualified teachers compared to students in other schools (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) also reports that the United States has a greater problem with out-of-field teaching compared to other developed countries. In Kenya national schools have higher quality teachers and others resources relative to provincial and districts schools (Oketch and Somerset, 2010; Glennerster et al., 2011). Luschei and Carnoy (2010) also report that in the United States evidence shows that 'qualified teachers are more concentrated in school economically advantaged and higher achieving students'. (Mobegi and Ondigi (2011) argue that distorted distribution of teachers in Kenya is a function of unplanned recruitment of teachers. This further could be the case of supply driven policy rather than a demand driven one. Wadesango et al. (2012) therefore argue that:

If school based teacher recruitment exercise was effectively implemented it would lead to an even distribution of teachers, good retention of teachers and efficiency in recruitment of teachers'. On the contrary if it was not effectively implemented it would lead to poor distribution of teachers.

## **STUDY CONTEXT**

Based on the new constitution (2010), the provincial administration that comprised of the province, district, division, location and sub-location have been restructured such that the eight provinces (Central, Coast, Eastern, Nairobi, North Eastern, Nyanza, Rift valley and Western) have been replaced by 47 counties. The county constitutes the second level governance after the national (Soft Kenya, n.d). The numbers of counties are based on the number of districts created under the Provinces and Districts Act of 1992 (Tisa, n.d). Therefore according to Wikipedia (2012), counties of Kenya are geographical units for



devolved government based on the 2010 constitution of Kenya. Nyamira County therefore is located in Nyanza and constitute 3 constituents (Kitutu Masaba, West Mugirango and North Mugirango Borabu). The county is also made up of three districts namely, Manga, Nyamira and Borabu (Kenya Open Data project, 2011). After next years (2013) general election a county government will replace the provincial and local government administration system which has been in existence since independence (Omari, 2011). Nyamira district, part of Nyamira County has been noted for its poor performance in mathematics (Yara and Wanjohi, 2011). They observe that a student's performance in mathematics is underpinned by the type of school he or she attends, because some schools have qualified and experienced mathematics teachers and good learning environment than others. And this is true for other subjects as well. There are 143 secondary schools in Nyamira County with a total student population of 49,800.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study reported in this article was conducted to increase knowledge and understanding about the complex nature of the challenges that confront school principals as they execute their roles and responsibilities, specifically recruitment of teachers. The data will contribute to building a knowledge base for understanding the nature of the issues and challenges linked to recruitment of secondary teachers. The study involved eighty one secondary schools which were purposively sampled from which eighty one principals were obtained for the study. Initially one hundred schools were sampled and contacted but in the end only eighty one responded representing a response rate of 81%

Prior to data collection, the researchers sampled and contacted school heads and invited them through a letter to take part in the study. In the letter the researchers introduced themselves, described the purpose of the study, explained what the participants were expected to do, indicated that they had a choice to opt out of the study at any time without any negative consequences on their part, assured them confidentiality and therefore undertook to keep their personal details strictly confidential and use them only for the purpose of research. At the end of the letter, participants were requested to sign a declaration of informed consent form in which they confirmed their understanding of the content of the letter, the purpose and nature of study and their voluntary participation in the same, explaining what was expected of them. Questionnaires were delivered to one



hundred principals but only eighty one completed questionnaires were returned. The study is quantitative in nature and employed a survey technique to collect data. Questionnaires were used as the main tool for collecting data. Questionnaire format consisted of closed, open-ended and rating scale items. This was necessary to diversity responses as well as reduces what Watson and Coombes (2009) in Onderi and Makori (2012) call 'question fatigue'. The first part of the questionnaire collected demographic or background information including gender, years in headship, headships, school size, school setting whether rural or urban, whether mixed or single sex, denominational orientation, relationship with PTA and BOG and secondary school tier whether national, provincial or district. The open-ended section offered the respondents an opportunity to make a comment, expand or clarify some information on their responses and thus help the researchers gain some insight in their perspectives on challenges affecting their roles and responsibilities in educational institutions. The open-ended comments or responses yielded qualitative data which was analysed into themes. The resulting quantitative data was analysed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) for obtaining descriptive data.

## **RESULTS**

### ***Participants' characteristics***

The participants were mainly secondary school principals and were 81 in number. Seventy per cent (70%, n=81) of them were males while thirty per cent (30%, n=81) were females. This perhaps suggests something about females' representation in the educational leadership or decisions making positions. Just fewer than two-fifths (37%, n=81) had been in principalship position for less than five years, a third between five and ten years and a further a third over ten years. Combining those that had between five and ten years of headship experience and those that had over ten years gives sixty three per cent, thus suggesting that a significant number of principals had substantial leadership and/or management experience in secondary schools. Just over forty per cent (42%, n=81) were in their first headship, just fewer than forty per cent (38%, n=81) in their second headship and just over ten per cent (12%, n=81) in their third headship. So combining those who were in their second headship, those in their third headship and those beyond third headship gives fifty eight per cent, suggesting that over half of them had significant experience of working in more than one secondary school. Just over forty per cent (42%, n=81) worked in small



secondary schools, just over forty per cent (43%, n=81) in medium school, just over ten per cent (11%, n=81) in large school and just fewer than five per cent (4%, n=81) in mega secondary school. Just over eighty per cent (83%, n=81) worked in secondary schools which were located in rural settings. Just fewer than ninety per cent (89%, n=89) worked in public schools. Just fewer than seventy per cent (68%, n=81) worked in a faith or church related schools. Just over sixty per cent (64%, n=81) of the schools were district schools, just fewer than thirty per cent (27%, n=81) were provincial and just fewer than ten per cent (9%, n=81) were national schools. Just under half (46%, n=81) were mixed schools, just over twenty per cent (21%, n=81) were mixed day, just fewer than twenty per cent (15%, n=81) girls boarding and just fewer than ten (7%, n=81) were boys boarding. A majority (90%, n=81) of the principals rated their relationship with PTA as good or excellent. Also A majority of them (85%, n=81) rated their relation with BOG as good or excellent.

### **Recruitment of staff**

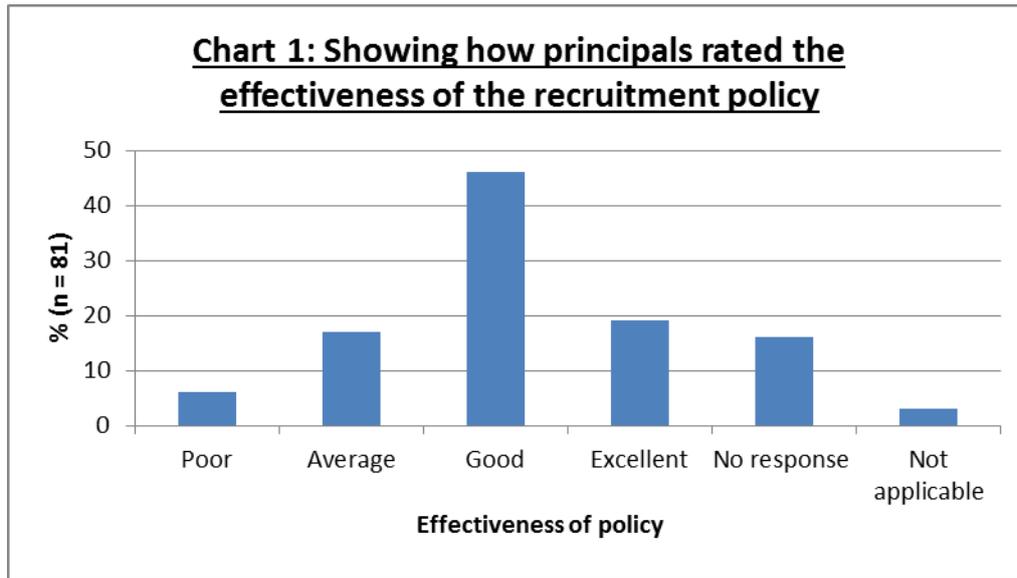
Four related questions were posed to the respondents regarding recruitment of staff:

- Are you satisfied with the way the school recruits staff? ;
- Does the school have a staff recruitment policy? ;
- How do you rate the staff recruitment policy? ;
- What are some of the issues related to the recruitment of staff?

On analysis 75 per cent (n=81) indicated that they were satisfied with the way the school recruited teachers and a similar percentage also indicated that their schools had a staff recruitment policy. On the effectiveness of the recruitment policy, just under 50 (n=81) per cent indicated that the policy was good. A further 19 (n=81) per cent indicated that the policy was excellent. The rest of their responses are illustrated on chart1 below:



**Chart1: Showing how principals rated the effectiveness of the recruitment policy**



The fourth question was: What are some issues associated with the recruitment of staff? 76 comments were made in relation to the issues and challenges associated with recruitment of staff. The issues identified relates to the practice and/or conduct of BOG in relation to recruitment of staff. They include corruption; Nepotism; negative influence; BOG paid less attention to qualifications than clanism and BOG want their own people regardless of qualification or competence.

Chart 1 above shows the percentages of those who rated the policy as poor, average, good and excellent. Further analysis shows that those who rated the policy as poor made three negative comments; average made eight negative comments; good made thirty one comments (thirty negative and one positive) and Excellent made 14 comments (thirteen negative and one positive). Twenty one indicate that their school did not have staff recruitment policy but still made a significant amount of negative comments about teacher recruitment exercise in their respective schools. This seems to suggest that although some schools did not have a staff recruitment framework the principals felt that things were not right. The negative comments relates to the practice, conduct and/or behaviour of BOG. The numbers in brackets represents the amount of people who made the statement (s).

*Those who rated the policy as poor (made 3 negative comments):-*

- Results in ineffective staffing (1)
- BOG negative influence (1)
- Less focus on qualification than clanism (1)



*Those who rated the policy as average (made 8 negative comments):*

- Corruption by BOG (1)
- Nepotism (1)
- Less focus on qualification than clanism (1)
- BOG negative influence (2)
- BOGs want their own people regardless qualification or qualification (3).

*Those who rated the policy as good (made 31 comments):*

- Nepotism by BOG (7)
- Corruption by BOG (3)
- Less focus on qualification than clanism (7)
- BOGs want their own people regardless of qualification or competence (6)
- BOG negative influence (3)
- Results in ineffective staff (4)
- No issue

*Those who rated the policy as excellent (made 14 comments):*

- Nepotism by BOG (4)
- BOGs wants their own people regardless of qualification or competence (4)
- Corruption by BOG (2)
- Less focus on qualification than clanism (3)
- No issue (1)

Interestingly, a majority of the comments were made by those who rated the policy positively or favourably (good or excellent). Fifteen of the respondents rated the policy as good and made no further comments on issues and challenges facing the recruitment policy. Also seven rated the policy as excellent and never made any comments on issues and challenges facing the policy. On the contrary others have rated the policy as good or excellent but again have made a significant number of negative comments against the recruitment policy. Those whose school had no recruitment policy also made eighteen comments (seventeen negative and one positive) as follows:

- No comment (1)
- BOGs wants their own people regardless qualification or competence (6)
- Nepotism by BOG (5)



- BOG negative influence (2)
- Results in ineffective influence (2)
- Less focus on qualification than clanism (3)
- Corruption (1)

The fact that negative comments are made by a majority of the respondents including those who rated it positively this raises some serious concerns regarding the effectiveness of the recruitment policy in the participating schools. And for those who did not have recruitment policy to be able to make such comments suggests that something was wrong with the way teachers were recruited in certain schools. BOGs have been identified as a serious risk factor.

## **DISCUSSION**

Review of literature has demonstrated that shortage of high-qualified and experienced teachers is a serious phenomenon affecting both developing and developed countries, although developing countries are much more disadvantaged. In developing countries, especially in the SSA region, the shortage is fuelled by the recent shift of policy priority to include expansion of secondary education, for instance, Kenya introduced free secondary education in January 2008. Shortage of teachers is not limited to SSA countries alone but to other regions such as Asia, Pacific, United States and Europe as well, among others. Shortage is observed across all levels of education (Central Teaching Council of Wales, 2001; Paton, 2012, 2013; Derbyshire, 2011; Rhodes et al., 2008). In 2001 Kenya decentralised recruitment of public secondary school teachers and the policy became school-based, demand led rather than supply led. In that way schools became involved in the recruitment of teachers. In that way it is assumed that closer match between teachers and the school needs would be met (Liu and Johnson, 2006). It is also assumed that through effective and transparent school-based teacher recruitment process the right quantity and quality of teacher as well as a fair distribution of teachers is achieved. This study set out to investigate issues and challenges facing the recruitment of secondary school teachers in a County in Kenya. In order to achieve that, four related questions were posed to the respondents regarding recruitment of secondary teacher.



Are you satisfied with the way the school recruits staff; Does the school have a staff recruitment policy? How do you rate the recruitment policy? What are some of the issues and challenges related to the recruitment of staff?

On analysis the result shows that 3 out of 4 principals indicated that they were satisfied with the way the school recruited staff and that school had a staff recruitment policy. Half of the principals indicated that the policy was good and a further 19 indicated that the policy was excellent. In other words they are saying that policy is effective. However, further analysis reveals that even those who praised the recruitment policy made negative comments about it and especially in reference to the conduct and practice of BOG's e.g. corruption, nepotism, negative influence and clanism. BOGs want their own people regardless of qualification or competence. Also BOG paid less attention to qualification than clanism. The study findings resonate with other studies e.g. Kipsoi and Sang (2008); Stidder, (2002); Aloo et al., (2011); Nduta, (2011) and Wadesango et al., (2012). Such practices may yield teachers who do not much the teaching and learning needs of the school. They may yield teachers who are not well qualified for the positions they are hired for and therefore undermine the provision of quality of education endeavours. Luschei and Carnoy (2010), report that teacher quality matters for student success. Mastekaasa (2011) also underscores the importance of teacher quality arguing that it has become a centrepiece for both public debate and in academic research. Therefore in order to recruit quality teachers- closely matching the teacher to the school position, recruitment policies and practices should be transparent and sound.

## **CONCLUSION**

The nature of the sample (purposeful in nature) of this study limits its wider generalisability. However generalisation of the findings can apply to all schools that took part in the study. The study has yielded very important information related to issues and challenges affecting the recruitment of secondary schools teachers among the participating schools. The findings heavily implicate BOGs as a risk factor in the teachers' recruitment process. Their practices, conduct and/ behaviours may result in ineffective teaching staff and therefore undermine the school-based teacher recruitment process. The findings include: BOG paid less attention on qualification of teacher than clanism; they wants their own people regardless of qualification or competence; corruption, nepotism and also BOG having a negative influence of the recruitment process. Such practices and behaviours are likely undermine the



effectiveness of the teacher recruitment policy, for instance, by bringing teachers into schools and classes who do not match the needs of the schools and the children at large.

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