

Effects of staffing policies on public secondary school teachers' distribution in Kenya

The success of any policy lies in its effective implementation. Staffing policies for teachers are meant to ensure sufficient teaching force that is equitably distributed in all public schools. Despite various staffing policies put by Ministry of Education (MOE) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC), in Kenya many schools are still understaffed and the available teachers are not equitably distributed. Homa-Bay County is currently understaffed by 1046 teachers spread across the six Sub-Counties despite regularly recruiting teachers as per the TSC policies. The deficit and inequitable distribution of teachers is therefore not due to non-employment but rather, due to challenges in the implementation of staffing policies. The existence of deficit and inequitable distribution of teachers despite regular recruitment suggest a problem in the staffing policies and its implementation, and therefore warranted this research. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of teachers staffing policies on public secondary school teacher distribution in Homa-Bay County. The objectives of the study were to; examine the staffing policies for teachers in Kenya, determine the extent of implementation of the staffing policies in Homa-Bay County, examine challenges influencing implementation of staffing policies, and to assess various measures being put in place to mitigate the situation. A conceptual framework was developed focusing on factors influencing implementation of staffing policies. The study used Combined perspective of Agency and Expectancy theory. The study employed ex-post facto research design with a study population of 283 head teachers of public secondary schools, 2318 teachers, 6 Sub-County Directors of Education and 1 TSC County Director of Education. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 30% of teachers and head teachers from the Sub Counties owing to the large number. Saturated sampling method was also used to sample the Sub-County and County TSC Director of Education. Questionnaires, interview and document analysis formed instruments for data collection. Validity of instruments was ensured by academic experts in the Department of Educational Curriculum and Management of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. Reliability of instruments was established through a pilot study in 10% of the schools outside the sample and weaknesses noted corrected before preparing the final copy. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequency counts, mean and percentages. Qualitative data were transcribed and coded into themes and sub themes and analyzed using thematic analysis as they emerge based on research objectives. The study found out that various staffing policies have been in use in Homa-Bay county, namely, supply and demand driven staffing policies. It found out that these policies have been implemented as required although with certain limitations. The study found out that various strategies have been put in place to cope with the various challenges. The findings of this is significant in that; it helps teachers to be psychologically prepared for the field of work and not get shocked upon posting. It has also exposed to the Country Government challenges facing schools in their staffing programme. Finally, the finding of the study is useful in redesigning staffing policies under the new constitution of devolution and it also outline various considerations to be made during implementation of policies. The study has also contributed to knowledge on teacher management, policy formulation and implementation. The study recommend that research be conducted on methods of streamlining and strengthening decentralized teacher recruitment policy and on the impact of factors influencing implementation of staffing policies on students academic performance in Homa-Bay County.