

EFFECTS OF THE RESTRUCTURING OF TEACHER PLACEMENT ON TEACHER AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out the effects of the restructuring of teacher placement on teacher and gender distribution in public secondary schools in Nakuru County of the Republic of Kenya. This study was informed and guided by the Theory of Change and the Discrepancy Evaluation Model. The study used concurrent mixed methods research design. The study employed a combination of Inclusive Criterion, purposive, and simple random sampling techniques to select seven districts and thirty seven schools under study. The findings showed that there was equitable teacher distribution although schools experienced teacher shortages and that female teachers were under-represented (42.9%) against their male counterparts (57.1%). The study concluded that there is equity in teacher distribution but there is gender disparity. It was recommended that a thorough audit of all Secondary Schools Data Returns Forms be conducted so as to provide teachers to all needy schools regularly. The study was conducted from October 2014 up to April 2015.

Keywords: Effects, restructuring, teacher placement, teacher distribution, gender distribution

Introduction

In the recent past, there has been a lot of interest in decentralization of government functions all over the world (Obuya, 2015). Decentralization has given rise to school-based management (SBM), which is a revolutionary educational construct that serves as a key in school restructuring (de Guzman, 2006). The Republic of Kenya has not been left behind in taking governance to the people.

Since 2001, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has undertaken a number of reform initiatives in order to improve the quality of service delivery. One such outstanding reform initiative is the decentralization of teacher placement to the district and school levels - which aims at efficiency by bringing services closer to the users (TSC, 2006).

Research Problem

Since its establishment in 1967, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the main employing body for teachers in Kenya, practiced a direct and automatic employment of all trained teachers, hence utilizing the supply-driven method of recruiting teachers. This method of teacher recruitment ceased in 1998 following a government directive (TSC, 2006).

In 2001, TSC adopted a new policy of recruit-

ing teachers on the basis of demand and availability of vacancies, hence the demand-driven method of teacher recruitment. However, it was not until 2006 when a documented comprehensive policy to guide the exercise was launched with teacher placement being delegated to the Provincial Directors of Education and District/Municipal Education Officers.

The TSC Policy (2006) on decentralization of teacher placement is being implemented by schools' Board of Management (BOM) using the provided guidelines which are revised and documented every year before every recruitment exercise. The policy aims at improving efficiency in teacher recruitment. In view of the provided guidelines and the expected outcomes by TSC, this study sought to answer the following question: *What are the effects of the restructuring of teacher placement in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya in terms of: (a) Teacher distribution? (b) Gender distribution?*

Literature Review

Effects of the Restructuring of Teacher Placement on Teacher Distribution

Review of related literature and studies reveal that there are both positive and negative effects of restructuring teacher placement on teacher distribution as



presented below.

(i) Positive Effects

According to Wadesango, Machingambo, Mutekwe, Ndofirepi, and Maphosa (2012), the policy of decentralization in Zimbabwe was seen as a means of improving the delivery of services to the nation and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. Teachers are key resources in the schools. Aloo, Simatwa, and Nyangori (2011) found out that the school-based teacher placement policy had shown improvement in teacher distribution across schools. Sang and Sang (2011) also found a marked improvement in the allocation of teachers across schools.

Makori and Onderi (2013) found a noticeable attraction of more teachers to hard-to-reach or hardship schools because the supply of teachers to public secondary schools was based on the needs of the schools which address teacher shortages. According to Makori and Onderi (2013), restructuring teacher placement policy was not only intended to improve efficiency in teacher placement practices in public secondary schools in Kenya but was also intended to enhance equity in teacher distribution. Wadesango et al. (2012) argue that if teacher recruitment exercise was effectively implemented, it would lead to an even distribution of teachers. The opposite occurs when placement of teachers is not effectively implemented.

(ii) Negative effects

National High School Center (2010) found out that rural schools experience difficulty in teacher recruitment because they are far from populated areas and suffer geographic isolation. Shoraku (2008) also found out that school-based management reforms, which were introduced in the East Asian countries with intentions to reduce inequalities between urban and rural areas within a country and/or between schools, were actually widening the gap between the schools in different areas.

According to Gamage and Zajda (2009), cultural reproduction of inequality in education, especially in teacher distribution, has increased between poorer states (municipalities) and richer ones despite the many educational reforms. Aloo et al. (2011) also found out that urban schools were favored over the rural schools because teachers want to be placed in work stations with better infrastructure and to be in performing

schools rather than non-performing ones.

Wadesango et al. (2012) found out that some schools fail to attract competent, experienced and highly qualified teachers due to reasons such as: proximity of school and geographical location of the school. Many rural schools struggle to recruit teachers who have credentials in multiple subject areas. Makori and Onderi (2013) similarly found a disparity in distribution of teachers with double recruitment of teachers in some schools leading to surplus while others experienced acute shortages.

Effects of the Restructuring of Teacher Placement on Gender Distribution

Odunga (2014) reported an employment gap between males and females across counties in Kenya. A study conducted by Sang (2005) also showed that there was gender bias in restructuring teacher placement with major implications on the quality of education in Kenya. Mulkeen, Chapman, Dejaeghere, and Leu (2007) similarly found out that there were few female teachers in many secondary education systems in Sub-Saharan Africa and yet female teachers are critical to the expansion and improvement of secondary education systems.

Section 5 (3) of the Republic of Kenya (2007), also called The Employment Act, stipulates that no employer shall discriminate against an employee or prospective employee in respect of recruitment on grounds of sex. In fact the new Constitution of the Republic of Kenya (2010) is categorical that there should be no discrimination in employment along gender lines. The social pillar of Kenya Vision 2030 further provides for gender balancing in all the activities and programs of the country so as to improve the quality of life for all Kenyans. Section 57 (2) of the Republic of Kenya (2013), commonly referred to as The Basic Education Act states, "In appointing persons as members of a board of management, the nominating and appointing authority shall observe and respect... impartiality and gender equity". If the membership of Boards of Management should adhere to the two thirds gender rule, how much more the gender distribution in the teacher workforce in public secondary schools!

According to the World Bank Group (2014), female secondary school teachers had fewer percentage representations than their male counterparts in selected African countries during the period 2009-2013 as indicated below. The gaps, for example, in Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, etc. mean that there were no study reports by

the World Bank for those years. The data is shown in table 1.

Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by the Theory of Change (TOC) which provides a comprehensive picture of the early-and intermediate-term changes in a given

Table 1

Female Secondary School Teacher Representation (%)

COUNTRY	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Burundi	19	20	20	21	-
Egypt, Rep	44	-	-	-	-
Ethiopia	19	21	26	24	-
Ghana	22	-	24	25	24
Kenya	41	-	-	-	-
Nigeria	-	46	-	-	-
S. Africa	55	-	-	-	-
Rwanda	28	-	28	27	-
Tanzania	-	-	-	28	-

Source: Adapted from the World Bank Group (2014)

Scope

This study evaluated the effects of implementation of restructuring teacher placement policy on teacher distribution and gender distribution in public secondary schools in Nakuru County during the period 2001-2014. All Board of Management (BOM) placed teachers, who were finally appointed by Teachers Service Commission (TSC), were sampled for this study. All principals of the sampled schools were respondents in this study. TSC District Staffing Officers of the sampled sub-counties also participated in this study.

Research Design

This study used concurrent mixed methods research design so as to reduce biases or deficiencies caused by using only one design. According to Creswell (2009), concurrent mixed methods procedures are those in which the researcher simultaneously collects quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

Population and Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique was used to sample Nakuru to represent the 47 counties of Kenya

community that are needed to reach a long-term goal articulated by the community. This study was further guided by the Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) which looks for gaps between what the developers of a program intended and what has actually happened. Both TOC and DEM offered a pragmatic and systematic approach in conducting this study.

because it is a cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic county. The diversity in ethnic backgrounds in Nakuru would provide rich and diverse experiences from respondents, which led to substantial amount of information related to the restructuring of teacher placement in public secondary schools. Secondly, minimal related studies had been conducted at the county. Nakuru County's two districts that only had District schools were excluded in this study using the exclusion criterion research design. According to Velasco (2010), exclusion criterion makes the selection or eligibility criteria used to rule out the target population for a research study.

Out of 256 public secondary schools in Nakuru County, only 219 were well established and had Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) Code numbers. However, the other 37 schools which were not coded and were labeled 'New' were not part of the population.

Both purposive and simple random sampling was used to sample 37 public secondary schools which were distributed as follows: 4 National, 12 Extra-County and 21 Sub-County schools or 13 girls', 10 boys', and 14 mixed schools.

Respondents and Response Rate

The researcher collected data from three distinct



groups of respondents as follows:

Table 2

Groups of Respondents

	Population	Sample	Respondents	M	F
(i) Teachers	154	154	146	74	72
(ii) Principals	37	37	33	18	15
(iii) TSC District Staffing Officers	7	7	4	3	1
Total =	198	198	183	95	88

A 94.8% response rate was realized which is quite high. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2009), self-administered questionnaires in the presence of the researcher ensures a good response rate.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

This study employed the use of the researcher's self-constructed questionnaire for collecting data of all sampled teachers who were hired after the 2001 TSC policy of restructuring teacher placement. The ques-

tionnaire had closed questions on teacher and gender distribution in the restructuring of teacher placement. Self-constructed Interview Schedules comprising semi-structured, open-ended questions were used. Both face and content validity was done. Cronbach's alpha of 0.737 was obtained and established the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire. Quantitative data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Document analysis was used to analyze relevant documents.

Findings of the Study

The scale provided below shows the interpretation of the mean score used.

Mean Score	Interpretation/Evaluation
3.5-4.0	Agree/very high
2.59-3.49	Tend to Agree/high
1.5-2.49	Tend to Disagree/low
1.0-1.49	Disagree/very low

Table 3

Teacher Distribution

	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. The school-based teacher placement policy ensures equity in teacher distribution.	142	2.75	1.12
2. There are no surplus teachers in this school.	144	3.45	1.02
3. There is no teacher shortage in this school.	142	1.47	.87
4. There are no cases of double recruitment in this school.	141	3.33	1.18
Overall Mean and SD Scores	145	2.75	.56

Positive Effects on Teacher Distribution

The findings show that there is equity in teacher distribution ($M=2.75$; $SD=0.56$). Some respondents said:

P 19: "The school gets the teacher of choice depending on the subject combinations."

TSC 1: "In terms of staffing it takes care of the demand in schools. It addresses the very urgent needs when done fairly."

TSC 2: "It ensures equity in distribution because recruitment is based on demand not supply."

TSC 3: "It has affected positively. The schools give their returns to TSC who analyze it... the TSC decide who is most needy and gives the slots."

There is opportunity for every school to conduct own needs assessment on school staffing. A principal said:

P 4: "(It) Allows the school to do own Needs Assessment and get what you need leading to effective CBE (*Curriculum Based Establishment*)."

A good response from the local community is another positive effect of the restructuring of teacher placement. The local community members apply in large numbers. Some principals said:

P 3: "Community response is very good. But if they are not qualified, we will leave the ones around and take the qualified one from outside (the sub-county). (We) needed only one teacher but got about twenty applicants. Good response."

P 8: "Very good. If we have one slot, we get 30 applicants."

P 15: "Very many apply. For one vacancy, 47 applied." Applications for employment are received from all over Kenya, which is a positive effect on teacher distribution. Some principals said:

P 6: "Anybody who meets the requirements can come. Everybody who sees the advertisement can apply, for example from Kisii."

P 13: "We look for qualifications even from Busia, Bomet."

P 16: "...Even from Turkana is teaching here."

P 19: "Response is nationwide. Therefore, even from Kisii. It breaks the local dynamics. People come from everywhere else."

P 21: "Unajua (you know), when a vacancy is advertised, the community does not benefit.

They apply but don't qualify. We selected an applicant from Baringo."

P 25: "So many from everywhere else. For example, candidates from Nairobi and Lodwar got jobs."

Negative Effects on Teacher Distribution

The findings show that there is teacher shortage across schools and across subjects (*There is no teacher shortage in this school*: $M=1.47$; $SD=.87$). Some respondents said:

P 27: "There is still a shortage. We apply for more but we are not given the slots. We have five BOM staff because there is a shortage country wide."

P 1: "It (*restructuring of teacher placement*) has not met the requirements. You want eight (teachers) but you get only one."

P 6: "TSC has just assisted us with a teacher. We had asked for four but received only one teacher... There is a limited number from TSC which they can employ. They have to regulate the numbers. Come another year, we may be considered."

P 21: "*Kidogo sana (very little)*. We have about ten Board of Management (BOM) teachers; even three in one subject. Restructuring of teacher placement has helped only to a small degree. Some years we don't even get any (*teacher*). So I don't know."

P 32: "It (*restructuring*) has not really helped. We are a three stream school and yet have only twelve TSC teachers. We have a shortage of fourteen teachers. Parents Teachers Association (PTA) carries the burden of paying teacher salaries."

TSC 1: "(*There are*) feelings of dissatisfaction among the principals who do not get the required slots for teachers. They ask, "*Ni nani umepeana walimu*"? (*Whom have you given the teachers?*).

Long time delay before schools receive teacher recruitment slots was cited as another negative effect of the restructuring of teacher placement. Some principals said:

P 24: "You may end up waiting for so long. You requested but don't get a slot." There is long-time delay between



the period of selection and appointment.

P 19 said: “Basically, it really takes time, one full year process. There is recruitment in March. Then finally appointment is done in January the following year. People get frustrated. Later when you need them, you cannot find them. They have sought employment elsewhere.”

Yet another negative effect of restructuring on teacher distribution was that some candidates turned up for selection interviews but had not fully qualified. P 18 said: “TSC rejected some (*candidates*) we selected because they never completed some units.”

The findings also showed that schools received fewer teacher slots when their registration certificate

showed that they had fewer streams and yet received more stream students. TSC 2 said: “There is a setback because the registration certificate of a school would indicate that it is single stream yet they receive double stream students. They end up with few teachers.”

Another negative effect of restructuring teacher placement on teacher distribution is conducting interviews on the same date across the sub-county. Principal 24 said: “So many schools are doing interviews on the same day across the sub-county. So you might end up missing the right (*subject*) combinations.”

The findings also show that there may be cases of double recruitment of teachers in the schools (*There are no cases of double recruitment in the schools: M=3.33; SD=1.18*).

Gender Distribution

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. The recruitment process ensures that there is gender equity.	145	2.73	1.28
2. The selection process is based on qualifications regardless of gender.	145	3.74	.69
3. *Female applicants do experience gender bias during the teacher placement process.	145	1.50	.98
4. *If both male and female applicants qualify, the males are more preferred.	145	1.57	.98
Overall Means and SD Scores	145	3.35	.61

Effects on Gender Distribution

The findings show that the selection process is based on qualifications regardless of gender (M=3.74; SD=.69). Some principals supported this finding by saying:

P 4: “Gender parity is never a consideration at recruitment. Now we have two male and two female teachers. It was not by design though.”

P 19: “Gender is not a consideration. It is based only on subject combinations and merit.”

P 27: “Gender has never been an issue because when we are recruiting it is open. We do not consider gender.”

TSC 3: “You might need a female teacher but a male candidate has most marks. So you don’t get exactly what you want.

This study also found out that there is no gender bias (Female applicants do experience gender bias during the teacher placement process: M=1.50; SD=.98 and If both male and female applicants qualify, the

males are most preferred: $M=1.57$; $SD=.98$).

Table 5

Nakuru County Secondary Schools Data Returns: Teacher Distribution by Gender (2014)

Sub- County	Males	Male Rep.	Females	Female Rep.	Total
Kuresoi	167	69.6%	73	30.4%	240
Subukia	108	71.01%	44	28.9%	152
Naivasha	189	62.0%	116	38.0%	305
Njoro	175	61.4%	110	38.6%	285
Rongai	172	60.14%	114	39.9%	286
Molo	163	63.2%	95	36.8%	258
Nakuru North	225	55.6%	180	44.4%	405
Gilgil	163	62.7%	97	37.3%	260
Nakuru Town	240	38.7%	379	61.3%	619
Total=	1,602	57.1%	1,208	42.9%	2,810

Table 5 shows that there is better representation of female teachers in urban secondary schools than in those located in rural settings. Principal 20 of an urban secondary school confirmed this by saying: “It (*The restructuring*) has not met gender parity. We have more females than males. It has not helped.”

Table 5 also shows that there is gender disparity with female teachers being under-represented (42.9%) in comparison to their male counterparts (57.1%) in public secondary schools. TSC 2 said: “There are 163 male and 95 female teachers in secondary schools in Molo Sub-county. Therefore, there is a disparity...”

Discussion

The overall high rating ($M= 2.75$; $SD= 0.56$) on teacher distribution with a small overall standard deviation is an indication that there is equity in teacher distribution in public secondary schools in Nakuru county. The restructuring gives schools the opportunity to conduct own needs assessment on school staffing leading to the provision of teacher slots by TSC. The recruitment is nationwide, with very good response from the local community. Wadesango et al. (2012) argues that if teacher recruitment exercise is effectively implemented, it would lead to equity in teacher distribution. Both Aloo et al. (2011) and Sang and Sang (2011) found out a marked improvement in the alloca-

tion of teachers across schools due to the restructuring of teacher placement.

Although there was a high rating for the variable: there are no cases of double recruitment in this school ($M=3.33$; $SD=1.18$), the big standard deviation shows a lack of homogeneity in responses. It appears that there were few known cases of double recruitment in some schools. This is a negative effect of the restructuring of teacher placement on teacher distribution. Makori and Onderi (2013) similarly found double recruitment of teachers in some schools leading to acute shortages in others.

The long-time delay between the period of recruitment and appointment is a negative effect of restructuring teacher placement on teacher distribution as reported by many principals. Some recruits get frustrated and seek employment elsewhere. Stotko, Ingram, and Beaty-O’Ferrall (2007) observed that large numbers of highly qualified applicants who are willing and able to teach ended up seeking employment elsewhere because of the frustrating delays in the hiring process. Aloo et al. (2011) also found that there was unnecessary delay by TSC in posting teachers already recruited by schools.

Conducting interviews on the same day across the sub-county is a limiting factor to the candidates. It negatively affects teacher distribution because it is very difficult for a candidate to attend more than



one interview in a day. Further, the finding that some selected candidates were rejected by TSC because they had not fully qualified is an indication that interviewees graduated from some Kenyan universities with less required units, hence they had not adequately prepared for secondary education teaching. The Commission for Higher Education, currently re-named Commission for University Education, has streamlined the units which Bachelor of Education (Arts) (Commission for Higher Education, 2012a) and (Science) (Commission for Higher Education, 2012b) students should do in order to qualify for teaching.

The teachers disagreed with a very low rating ($M=1.47$; $SD=0.87$) and a relatively small standard deviation that there is no teacher shortage in the schools. There seems to be homogeneity of responses, suggesting that there were teacher shortages in the public secondary schools. Moreover, teacher respondents indicated in large numbers, in Section C of the questionnaire, that TSC should conduct a thorough audit of all Secondary Schools Returns Data Forms so as to provide teachers to needy schools regularly. Respondents were well aware that some schools are given fewer teacher slots when their registration certificates show that they have fewer streams and yet receive more stream students thereby falling short of the schools' Curriculum Based Establishment. According to Wanzala et al. (2015), an education crisis exists when schools increase the streams to cater for the large number of students because it leads to lack of adequate number of teachers.

A total of 916 teacher shortages were confirmed through documentary analysis of the Nakuru County Secondary Statistical Data (District Summary) as at May 2012. The Secondary Schools Data Returns Forms (2014) for Nakuru County also show that all schools across the sub-counties were understaffed. However, this finding on teacher shortages is not restricted to Kenya. Darling-Hammond and Berry (2012) also report that school districts across California experience teacher shortages. Abdou (2012) postulates that Sub-Saharan countries face shortages in their teaching force in secondary schools. The Development Data (2011) reports teacher shortage as a global problem. UNESCO (2014) observes that there is a global teacher shortage and that Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab States are worst hit. UNESCO (2015) attributes global teacher shortage to the Education for All programs which have led to soaring student enrolments.

The restructuring of teacher placement policy is based on qualifications regardless of gender ($M=3.74$).

The relatively small standard deviation ($SD=0.69$) is an indication of homogeneity of responses, which suggests that gender is not a consideration in restructuring teacher placement in public secondary schools in Kenya. Teachers are employed on merit. There is a high rating ($M=2.73$) that the recruitment process ensures gender equity. However, the standard deviation is big ($SD=1.28$) indicating a lack of homogeneity in responses. This finding tends to suggest that gender parity may not be an agenda of restructuring teacher placement in public secondary schools in Kenya. TSC has not considered the gender agenda in the recruitment Score Guide.

The respondents tended to disagree with low ratings ($M=1.57$; $SD=0.98$) and slightly big standard deviation that if both male and female applicants qualify, the males were more preferred and that female applicants did experience gender bias during the teacher placement process ($M=1.50$; $SD=0.98$). These findings are an indication that the restructuring of teacher placement is not gender biased, which is different from Sang's (2005) study which found out that gender bias existed in the restructuring of teacher placement in public secondary schools in Uasin Gishu District, Kenya.

Although the overall mean ($M=3.35$; $SD=0.61$) is a high rating with a small standard deviation showing homogeneity of responses that gender distribution has improved since Sang's (2005) study, the female teachers are still under-represented (42.9%) in comparison to their male counterparts (57.1%) in public secondary schools. Mulkeen et al. (2007) similarly found out that there were few female teachers in many secondary education systems in Sub-Saharan Africa. The World Bank Group (2014) also reported the under-representation of female secondary school teachers during the period 2009-2013.

Conclusions

Despite the fact that there are teacher shortages across schools, there is equity in teacher distribution. There are more female (61.3%) than male teachers (38.7%) in public urban secondary schools. There is gender disparity with female teachers being under-represented (42.9%) against their male counterparts (57.1%). However, there is no gender bias in the restructuring of teacher placement in public secondary schools in Nakuru County.

Recommendations

- (a) Conduct thorough audit of all Secondary Schools Data Returns Forms so as to provide teachers to all needy schools regularly.
- (b) Publish different interview dates for the selection panels.
- (c) Post the selected teachers to their work stations without unnecessary delay.
- (d) Adequately prepare secondary teacher education students with the required units.
- (e) Ensure that graduates have successfully completed secondary teacher education units.
- (f) Ensure equity in gender distribution across schools for mentoring purposes.

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