

## **Gender Bias in the Recommendation and Appointment of Teachers to Administrative Positions in Mixed Secondary Schools in Nyandarua Central Sub-County Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*Many women have been employed in Kenya as teachers by the Teachers Service Commission. In spite of this large number (45) of female teachers in the teaching profession in Nyandarua Central sub-county, there is concern because very few of them are involved in the secondary school administration especially in mixed secondary schools. In Nyandarua Central Sub-county for instance, out of the fifteen principals in the mixed secondary schools only three are female. This study sought to find out if gender bias influenced the recommendation for appointment and the actual appointment of teachers to administrative positions in mixed secondary schools. The study was conducted in Nyandarua Central Sub-County. Female teachers and secondary school principals were targeted in the study. The study adopted descriptive research design. Using a self administered questionnaire data was collected from the respondents. A pilot study was conducted in two schools in the sub-county to measure the validity of research instruments. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis. The study found out that female teachers held only 25% of administrative positions in mixed secondary schools in the sub-county. The study established that principals play a major role in the recommendation and appointment of teachers in to the administrative positions. They recommend the teachers they deem fit for the appointments. The study found out that female teachers were less aggressive than their male counterparts in seeking administrative positions in mixed secondary schools. The study found out that family responsibilities hindered female teachers from applying for administrative positions in mixed secondary schools. The study concluded that there is a gender gap in secondary school administration. The researcher recommended a fairer balance in the appointment of teachers to the administrative positions and in recommending of teachers for appointment to positions of administration in all schools and particularly in mixed secondary schools.*

### **Introduction**

There is a gender gap in educational administration globally and particularly in Kenya. For example an investigation by United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2000) showed that although the number of women employed in the education sector is relatively high, they are under-represented in educational management in most countries of the world. The scenario in Kenya is more so the same. It is on this strength that this study aimed at investigating some of the factors that seem to affect the distribution of administrative posts among the female and male teachers. Currently, incumbent Principals play a major role in determining who gets promoted in school administration and as such gender bias in recommendation and appointment of teachers to administrative positions was selected for this study. Nyandarua Central Sub-county has fifteen public mixed secondary schools. Out of those only three are headed by female principals. The figure below shows the distribution of principals in Nyandarua Central as from the year 2010.

**Table 1.1: Distribution of Principals According to Gender**

Year	No of schools	Male	Female
2010	13	11	2
2011	14	12	2
2012	14	12	2
2013	15	12	3

Source: DQASO statistical returns Nyandarua Central District

This being the situation in Nyandarua Central Sub-county efforts were made to establish if there is gender bias in the appointment of teachers into administrative positions in mixed secondary schools.

## ***Literature Review***

### **Concept of Administration**

Administration and management have been used interchangeably by different authors. Okumbe (1998), defines management as that process which involves designing, developing and effecting organizational objectives and resources so as to achieve the predetermined organizational goals. Management determines both the ‘‘means’’ and the ‘‘end’’ in an organization. Administration on the other hand is the process of acquiring and allocating resources for the achievement of the organizational goals. Countries worldwide have different systems of managing their education. Despite the differences the basic aim of management of education in all these countries is to design, develop and effect education objectives and resources so as to achieve the predetermined educational goals (Okumbe, 1998).

In the late 1990s a survey was carried out on all female secondary school headteachers in England and Wales and it was established that men dominated in headship in secondary education with 70 percent of the total leadership positions. One major finding that emerged from the research was the continued discrimination of women in senior management positions in education.

Theories of leadership and management have often been based on assumptions derived from the male discourse (Blackmore, 1989, shakes haft, 1989).but in relatively recent years the female manager in education has been studied in her own right. (Adler, Laney & Parker,1993).

### **Career Development**

(Okumbe, 1998) notes in his book ‘educational management’ that there is a strong indication that most teachers in both primary and secondary schools in developing countries have been conscripted into the teaching profession due to their inability to gain entry into other professions .In developing countries there are two lots of teachers, those who chose the profession for intrinsic reasons and those who for reasons beyond their control have found themselves in the profession. Therefore, the main issue in human resource development for teachers is that a good proportion of them enter the teaching profession with low morale.

In view of the above, education administrators should endeavor to ensure that all teachers in the profession whether by choice or default, are provided with an environment which is professionally motivating and satisfying. The teaching environment should provide hope and assurance through and appropriate career structure. Unless sound human resources development strategies are put in place at the work place then there will be ineffectiveness and dissatisfaction among workers. Career development refers to a sequence of positions, job or occupation that one person engages in during his or her working life. Career in this context does not imply success or failure, indeed it is a series of lifelong events experiences as noted by (Okumbe,1998) includes the series of promotion that one undergoes in an organization for instance the education system.

(Schein,1978). identifies five primary career anchors, which are factors that cause people to seek certain types of work. Strictly present among others is the managerial competence where workers enjoy the exercise of power. Schein further notes that for an adaptable career development plan both job analysis and job description need to be done thoroughly. While the former involves setting out the academic abilities performing a certain job, the latter refers to a written statement of what a job holder does, how it is done and why it is done. In this respect, then job description defines the scope of responsibility of the employee.

(Okumbe, 1998) notes that both job analysis and job description are important tools for both promotion and transfer of employees. He further notes that a well designed job description helps educational managers to decide when a worker is due for promotion on the basis of his or her job performances or when his or her experience can be utilized elsewhere.

For the purpose of this study according to the T.S.C code of regulation, chapter five (section 41) teachers are supposed to apply for promotion. However this has not been working for the last two or so decades instead teachers have been promoted on merit in most cases. As stipulated by the code chapter 5(section 42) only those individuals who have displayed exceptional ability as teachers in the performance of their duties warrant promotion. Interesting enough the power of the Principal pen is very instrumental on deciding who gets the promotion since it is them who make the recommendations that are used in rating the aspirant. Given this scenario, this study takes the Principal of a secondary school as key player in determining who gets promotion among his or her members of staff.

### **Cultural/Gender Roles and Their Effect on Female Administration in Secondary Schools**

The culture of a society provides the framework within which its members must operate and the standards to which they must conform, values, ideology and image form much of the context in which the socialization process shapes occupational and family life. (Esteyn, 1971) said that depending on their social class, voice and sex, specific types of work are encouraged, tolerated or tabooed. In nearly all societies, men and women, boys and girls have different status and play different roles. They behave differently, dress differently and have different attitudes and interests. Contrary to the traditionally held belief that these differences between male and female behaviour are biologically or genetically determined, recent research has revealed that they were to a large extent socially constructed or based on the concept of gender (UNESCO, 2000).

The report further noted that it was now generally accepted that the future of the African continent depended on the establishment of a new relationship between sexes in the overall economic process, hence the concept of cultural adjustment. Cultural adjustment applied to all social-cultural value which govern the very notion of the relationship between men and women in society. This can be affected mainly by making men and women aware of the loss to society caused by discrimination on the basis of sex.

In the context of the continuing feminization of the teaching profession, barriers to equal opportunity and treatment of women still need to be addressed. The present study sought to find out whether there is gender bias in appointment and recommendation of teachers to administrative positions in mixed secondary schools in Nyandarua central Sub-county.

(Events, 1994) assert that women choices tend to be determined by gender ascribed roles that limited their access to potential career posts. He said that gender stereotypes derived from the division of labour came to constitute normative beliefs to which people tend to confirm or are induced to conform. This cultural force of sex-role stereotyping resulted in double blindness of women in management position. Management attributes traditionally associated with men such as authoritative, decisive, controlling and unemotional are often more respected by potential employers in management than a more decentralized approach to administration which involved the manager as a facilitator of a shared decision making process.

There was an attempt by (Brown, 1996) to explain women lack of advancement in education management in the development world and in Africa, particularly in Kenya. He suggested that women were hindered by both internal and external barriers that prevented them from advancing. Effects of socialization and sex stereotyping hindered them while externally the organizational structure, low visibility and dead-end jobs. Brown then highlighted a number of strategies which could help women in Uganda overcome these barriers such as sensitization programmes and affirmative action by the government to put equal opportunity on the Ugandan national agenda. The situation in Kenya was not different from that of Uganda where women were hindered internally by socialization and sex stereotyping and externally by organizational structure. The way forward for women in Kenya to overcome these barriers and contribute effectively in the education management is through sensitization programmes and affirmative action by the government of Kenya. A study made by (Ondera,1992) on leadership in Kakamega secondary school, “a focus on women leadership”, concluded that teachers prefer male principal’s because they have been culturally socialized to accept men as more rational and conscious than their female counterparts.

In the study men were rated to be better decision-makers than women. It was further noted that both male and female teachers find it difficult to respond positively to women leadership in school due to their socialization. This study investigated the gender bias towards appointment of teachers into administrative positions.

Research findings indicated that female principal's are subjected to a number of related pressures compared to their male counterparts, (Bird, 1979) analyzed the dual-career of women who have to cope with a career of both administration and family and concluded that women of such caliber are committed, independent, secure, sensitive and self-confident. This concludes that women ought to be given equal opportunities in administration with their male counterparts.

### **Marital Status in Relation to Female Administration**

For many years women's time and energy have been stolen from them by economic and cultural system that have allocated them child care and the daily maintenance functions of cooking, cleaning and shopping. On an individual level, a woman is seriously handicapped in her attempt to have an impact outside her home and family due to double burden of labour. Women perform a disproportionately large share of home chores which interfere with their access to high administrative ranks (Minas, 1992).

(Surrerote, 1991) asserts that women are unsuitable for executive posts which require frequent travels and which could compel them to sacrifice their children and families as a whole. It was further pointed out that women occupational life is interrupted by marriage and maternity. In her research Surrerote found out that young women on being employed are assumed to be undependable as they eventually drop work after few years to get married. In Kenya young unmarried women are seen as less capable leaders. This trend has manifested itself in the management of secondary schools where sponsors insist on the appointment of married women to the post of headteachers. The society expects marriage to be the norm and tend to be positive towards married headteachers. Parents have confidence in married headmistress for the simple reasons that they are better role models for the student than unmarried ones (Ondera, 1992).

### **Methodology**

The study employed descriptive survey design employing quantitative approach. The rationale behind the adoption of this approach is based on the fact that it best explores the variable involved in the study (Gojendra, 1981). support this view. He pointed out that description depicts the present position of a given situation and that it goes beyond mere collection and tabulation of data. Gojendra further states that description is ideal for this research as it involves a certain amount of interpretation of the meaning or significance of what is being described.

The target population in this research was fifteen principals in the public secondary schools in Nyandarua Central sub-county and forty five female teachers in the secondary schools in the sub-county. The rationale behind this is because this research investigated the gender bias towards the appointment of teachers in mixed Secondary schools in Nyandarua Central Sub-county and its impact on post recommendations and appointments.

All principals and all female teachers were included in the study since they were only 15 and 45 respectively. Questionnaires were used to collect data that was used to draw conclusions. Questionnaires had been selected for use in the study as they are less costly and less time was used to collect the data. These questionnaires were delivered through drop and pick method. A letter to highlight the purpose of the study as well as assuring the respondent's confidentiality accompanied the questionnaires.

The split half method was used to establish internal consistency. This involved splitting the instrument into two, one half of even numbered items and the other of odd numbered items. These correlated results provided the internal consistency of one half, the degree to which the two halves of the tests were equivalent or consistent in term of items. The coefficient was obtained through the Pearson product moment formula. To obtain the full reliability of the instruments, the Spearman Brown Prophecy formula was used. (Tuckman, 1978).

$$Re = \frac{2r}{1+r}$$

Where

Re= final reliability

r=reliability coefficient for half of the instrument

The reliability correlation lied between zero (0) and one (1). When the reliability correlation is close to 1 the higher the reliability of the instrument, while close to 0 it is said to be unreliable. The reliability correlation was 0.86 hence closer to 1 and so the instruments were reliable.

Questionnaires were physically delivered to the sampled group by the research assistant. The respondents were given two weeks to respond to them. After the two weeks the research assistant collected the filled questionnaire for analysis. The researcher scrutinized the filled questionnaire.

The researcher used quantitative techniques in analyzing data. Descriptive analysis used included mean, frequencies and percentages. The organized data was interpreted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate frequencies (f) and percentages (%) which was used in the analysis.

### **Results and Discussions**

Twelve principals and twenty five female teachers responded to the questionnaire. They filled and returned their questionnaires, constituting 80% and 55% response respectively. Data analysis was done through statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and percentages were used to display the results which were presented in tables.

**Table 2: Distribution of the Principals by Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	9	75
Female	3	25

From the findings on the gender of the respondents, the study found that 75% of the respondents were male while 25% of the respondents were female. This shows that majority of teachers in the capacity of principal in the Sub county were male. Male principals had the likelihood of recommending male teachers for administrative positions so female teachers were left out in the administrative positions in the sub county.

**Table 3: Principals Distribution by Age**

<b>Age (Years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
30-39	1	8.3
40-49	7	58.3
>50	4	33.3)

From the findings of the study 58.3% of the respondents indicated their age to be between 40-49 years, 33.3% of the respondents were above 50 years while 8.3% of the respondents pointed out that they were aged between 30-39. The findings shows that majority of the respondents being over 40 years have served in the teaching profession for a long period.

**Table 4: Duration of the Respondents as Principals**

<b>Duration (years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<3	2	16.7
4 - 7	1	8.3
8 – 11	6	50.0
12 – 15	2	16.7
>16	1	8.3

From the findings of the study 50.0% the respondents had served as principals for a period of 8-11 years. 16.7% of the respondents had served for 3 years and 12-15 years respectively. The study shows that 66.7% of the respondents have served as principals for 8 years and over. This long period of service as principals gives the respondents time to work with both gender and hence they are able to access whether female teachers are able to perform administrative duties and so they can give them a chance to perform administrative duties and might even recommend them to TSC for promotion into administrative posts.

**Table 5: Principals' Professional Qualifications**

Duration (years)	Frequency	Percentage
Graduate	9	75.0
B.A (PGDE)	1	8.3
G.A.T (I,II and III) S/P,C/P	1	8.3
M.E.D	1	8.3

As concerns the professional qualifications of the respondents the study found out that 76% of the respondents were B.Ed Holders, 9% were BA (PGDE) holders while 8% were Graduate II holders while 7% were holders of Masters' degree.

The professional qualifications shows that respondents were all graduates from University and hence have managerial skills required to manage human resources including female teachers.

**Table 6: Education Administrative Sessions Attended by Principals**

Educative Sessions	Frequency (percentage)		
	1 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 10
Seminars	2(16.67)	3(25.0)	7(58.33)
Workshops	0(0)	7(58.33)	5(41.67)
In-service Training	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)

Source (Author, 2014)

From the findings on administrative sessions attended by the respondents the study found out that of the respondents attended seminars and workshops as shown by 10 and 12 respondents respectively. The seminars enabled the respondents to gain administrative skills which made them impartial in recommending and appointing teachers into administrative positions.

**Table 7: Certificate Awarded after Training**

Awarded	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	90.1
No	1	9.01

The study found out that 90.1% respondents were awarded certificates for the seminars they attended. The administrative seminars and workshops certificates were evidence that the respondents attend the said seminars.

**Table 8: Principals Feeling and Opinion Concerning Involvement of Female Teachers in Administrative Roles in Mixed Secondary Schools**

	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Females Teachers are good Administrators	4(33.33)	0(0)	1(8.33)	2(16.67)	5(41.67)
Males are more aggressive than Female Teachers	0(0)	2(16.67)	0(0)	4(33.33)	4(33.33)
Policy adjustments necessary	1(8.33)	1(8.33)	1(8.33)	5(41.67)	4(33.33)
Female teachers to deputize males	0(0)	2(16.67)	0(0)	7(58.33)	3(25.00)
Consultation in Decision Making	1(8.33)	0(0)	1(8.33)	7(58.33)	3(25.00)
Equality in Demanding Posts	0(0)	3(25.00)	0(0)	4(33.33)	5(41.67)
Better Administrators in Girl Schools	2(16.67)	3(25.00)	1(8.33)	2(16.67)	4(33.33)

From the findings on the respondents feeling and opinion concerning involvement of female teachers in administrative roles in mixed secondary schools the study found out that majority of the respondents agreed that female teachers are less aggressive than male teachers as shown by 67% respondents agreeing.

Majority of the respondents indicated that in schools where men were principals female teachers should deputize them as shown by 58.33% respondents agreeing. It was also evident from the study that policy adjustment is necessary which will give female teachers equal opportunities as their male counterparts in administrative posts of secondary schools.

According to the findings of the study the respondents agreed that female teachers are good administrators as indicated 16.67% of the respondents strongly agreeing and 41.67% of respondents agreeing.

The respondents agreed that there need be consultations by the person in office when making decisions concerning involvement of female teachers in administrative roles in mixed secondary schools. This is shown by 58.33% of the respondents agreeing. The study also found out that female teachers should equally demand for administrative posts in mixed secondary schools as indicated by 33.333% and 41.67% of the respondents, this is only possible if female teaches apply for these posts and attend interviews when called upon by the Teachers Service Commission.

The findings of the study also indicated that female teachers are good administrators in girls schools. In conclusion the findings indicated that the respondents would involve female teachers in the administration of mixed secondary schools.

**Table 9: Principals Attitude towards Gender Balance in Mixed Secondary Schools**

Principals' Attitude	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Good in Mixed School Administration	1(8.33)	0(0)	0(0)	8(66.67)	3(25.00)
Less Aggressive than Male Teachers	2(16.67)	2(16.67)	0(0)	7(58.33)	1(8.33)
Family Commitment a Barrier	0	0	4(33.3)	5(41.67)	3(25.00)
Poor as MSS Head Teachers	5(41.67)	5(41.67)	1(8.33)	0(0)	1(8.33)
MSS Administration a Security Problem	2(16.67)	6(50.00)	1(8.33)	2(16.67)	1(8.33)
MSS Administration Failed in the Past	5(41.67)	6(50.00)	1(8.33)	0(0)	0(0)
Absenteeism more than Male Teachers	1(8.33)	6(50.00)	2(16.67)	3(25.00)	0(0)
Male students disrespectful	2(16.67)	8(66.67)	1(8.33)	1(8.33)	0(0)
MSS Administration Avoidance	0(0)	3(25.00)	0(0)	7(58.33)	2(16.67)
MSS Traditionally under Male Head Teachers	0(0)	2(16.67)	0(0)	8(66.67)	2(16.67)
Unable to Fulfill the Difficult MSS Administration	2(16.67)	5(41.67)	1(8.33)	2(16.67)	1(8.33)
Should be given MSS Administrative Chances	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	7(58.33)	5(41.67)

On respondents level of agreement towards gender balance in mixed secondary schools the study found out that respondents agreed that female teachers are less aggressive when compared to their male counterparts. This is shown by 58.33% of the respondents. Respondents agreed that traditionally mixed schools were headed by male principals, this is shown by 66.67% of the respondents. The respondents agreed that female teachers should be given a chance in the administration of mixed secondary schools. The respondents disagreed that mixed secondary schools have challenges which female teachers are not able to tackle as shown by 50% and 16.67% disagreeing. They also agreed that family commitments hinder female teachers from applying for administrative posts in the sub county as shown by 66.67% of the respondents agreeing.

The respondents' level of agreement towards gender balance can be deduced from the fact that the three female principals in the district are competing favourably with their male counterparts.

From the findings of the study the respondents agreed that female teachers are also good in administration of mixed secondary schools. This is indicated by 91.67% of the respondents agreeing.

The study also found out that mixed secondary school administration does not pose any societal threat to female teachers when they are administrators. This is indicated by 66.67% of the respondents disagreeing with this concept. The respondents also disagreed that students in mixed secondary schools are disrespectful to female teachers as indicated by 83.34% of the respondents disagreeing.

**Table 10: Distribution of Teachers in Administrative Roles With Regard to Gender in Years**

Frequency (%)	2014		2013		2012		2011		2010		2009		2008	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Principal	8 72.2	3 27.8	9 83.4	2 18.2	7 70.0	3 30.0	8 72.2	3 27.8	8 72.2	3 27.8	9 75.0	3 25.0	8 66.7	4 33.3
Deputy Principal	7 63.6	4 36.4	7 63.6	4 36.4	6 60.0	4 40.0	8 72.2	3 27.8	9 75.0	3 75.0	8 66.7	4 33.3	9 75.0	3 75.0
Guidance and Counseling	3 75.0	9 75.0	4 33.3	8 67.7	4 30.8	9 69.2	2 15.4	11 84.6	2 16.7	10 83.3	3 23.1	10 76.9	2 16.7	10 83.3
Career master	10 83.3	2 16.7	9 75.0	3 25.0	10 83.3	2 16.7	10 83.3	2 16.7	10 100	0 0.0	10 83.3	2 16.7	11 91.7	1 8.3
Boarding master/ Mistress	2 50.0	3 60.0	2 40.0	3 60.0	2 40.0	3 60.0	2 40.0	3 60.0						
Game master/ Mistress	10 100	0 0.0	11 91.7	1 8.3	10 83.3	2 16.7	11 84.6	2 15.4	11 84.6	2 15.4	11 84.6	2 15.4	11 84.6	2 15.4
Class teacher	12 50.0													

On the annual distribution of teachers into administration roles with regard to gender, the study found out that from year 2008 to present 75% of the principals and deputy principals were male. Female teachers occupied 25% the positions of principals and deputy principals respectively. According to TSC policy for one to qualify to be a principal one must serve as a deputy principal for three years. So majority of those who will qualify to be principals in the sub county are male teachers having held 75% of the positions of Deputy Principals. The study also reviewed that male teachers held 83.33% of the positions of career masters and games masters respectively leaving female teachers with only 16.67% of the positions Class teachers and boarding masters/mistress positions are held equally by both sexes according to the study. The study found out that the only administrative role dominated by female teachers is that of guidance and counseling. Female teachers are given this role since they are seen to be sympathetic to student issues.

The study found out that male teachers are more aggressive than female teachers in seeking administrative positions of secondary schools. The study revealed that many of the schools in the Sub-county were headed by male teachers as shown by 75% of the respondents indicating that they were male. Family commitments are a barrier to female teachers appointment to administrative positions as shown by 9 respondents out of 12 agreeing. The participants indicated that secondary schools do not pose any security threat to female teachers this is shown by eight respondents disagreeing. The study found out that female teachers if given opportunity of administration and if they apply for the same can perform equally well as shown by twelve respondents agreeing.

The participants indicated that administrative positions of career masters and games masters are male dominated as they are held by eleven male teachers out of twelve teachers. Administrative post of guidance and counseling is dominated by female teachers as they are held by ten female teachers out of twelve teachers. Administrative role of class teachers is shared equally between both genders.

It also came out well from the findings that incumbent principals influence the appointment of teachers to administrative positions in secondary schools.

The research showed that 73% of female teachers do not apply for administrative positions.

### **Conclusions**

The study established that there is no gender equity in the appointment of teachers to administrative positions as indicated by 88% of the female teachers

The study established that there is gender disparity in the appointment of teachers to administrative positions.

The study found out that 75% of the Deputy Principals in the sub county were male and so the probability of them becoming principals is higher than that of female teachers who comprise only 25% of the Deputy principals.

Based on the analysis of the study, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations

- (i) TSC should ensure that there is gender balance in the appointment of teachers into the administrative positions in the sub-county.
- (ii) Sitting principals should encourage female teachers to apply for administrative positions.
- (iii) Gender should not be a consideration in the recommendation of teachers for appointment to positions of headship in secondary schools.

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