

Strategies for Enhancing Participation of Female Teachers in Management of Public Primary Schools

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Abstract

Worldwide, women representation in management and leadership positions is marginal. Despite immense academic advancement by women, few of them do advance to management positions. In Kenya, women make up a critical portion of human resource base. However, they are grossly underrepresented at leadership positions. This situation is reflected in school leadership positions as well, including headship of schools. Unless the gender gaps in management and leadership positions are addressed, the talent of high skilled women would be underutilized and there might be a reproduction of gender inequality across generations. The purpose of this study was therefore to explore the strategies that could improve the participation of female teachers in management of public primary schools. The objective of the study was to suggest possible strategies that can be used to enhance the deployment of female teachers to headship positions in primary schools in Kenya. This study was conducted in Nambale Sub-county. Descriptive survey design was used in this study. Out of a study population of 519, respondents comprising 45 head teachers, 45 deputy head teachers, 427 teachers drawn from 45 public primary schools in Nambale Sub-County, the Sub-County Director of Education (SCDE) and the Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standard Officer (SCQASO) (Nambale Sub-County), stratified sampling technique was employed to select 35 head teachers, 35 deputy head teachers and 196 teachers. Saturated sampling was used to select the SCDE and the SCQASO. Therefore, a sample size of 268 respondents, representing 52 % of the study population, was used in this study. Structured questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis guide were used as instruments of data collection. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Findings from the study revealed that although there is equal opportunity policy where teachers to be deployment to school headship positions are identified through interviews, selection criteria was not clear. The affirmative action policies did not discriminate on basis of gender but it is essentially gender neutral in practice. Based on these findings, the study proposed that the Teachers Service Commission should come up with clear and precise deployment policies expressed in writing so that their compliance can easily be checked, Ministry of Education should design a formalized mentoring system to help female teachers develop self-esteem and aggressive managerial personalities of present and future leaders and create suitable female role models in leadership to serve as exhibit of successful and effective female leadership.

Keywords: strategies, female teachers, deployment, headship positions

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