

Effect of Strategic Human Resource Management on Teacher Turnover in Private Secondary Schools in Nyeri County

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Abstract

The study sought to establish the effect of strategic human resource management on teacher turnover in private secondary schools in Nyeri County. The objectives of the study were to; investigate the extent to which career development opportunities affect teachers' turnover in private schools; assess the extent to which work environment in the private secondary schools on the teachers' turnover in private schools; evaluate the extent to which reward system on the teachers' turnover in private schools; examine the extent to which work-life balance policies on the teachers' turnover in private schools in Nyeri County. The study adopted a survey design to achieve the objectives. The population of the study was the school managers of the 21 private schools in Nyeri County and teachers who have previously transferred from private secondary schools in Nyeri County. The study will use 30% of the population as the sample and use stratified random sampling to pick individuals to participate in the study. Snowball sampling method was also used to reach out to teachers who had previously transferred from private schools. To collect data a close ended questionnaire was used. The data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The data was analyzed to generate frequencies, mean and percentages. Regression model was also generated to establish the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. The findings were as follows: Reward system was the most important human resource practice that affects teachers' turnover. Career development was the second important followed by working environment and the least practice that affect turnover was work-life balance.

Keywords: Human Resource, Strategic Human Resource Management, Teacher Turnover, Private Secondary Schools, Career development.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher turnover is a global challenge and, by its very nature, is an extremely complex phenomenon. It is frequently positioned as either a problem for workforce planning and resources, or as an indicator of the relatively poor quality of schooling and teacher morale. Teacher turnover reduces the quantity of teachers available to schools, potentially exacerbating localized teacher shortages. Herbert and Ramsay (2004) reveal that, there are numerous reports of high teacher turnover in several developed countries such as United States of America. According to Ingersoll (2002), in the USA, teacher shortages as a result of turnover are widely reported in many states. In addition Hanushek (2004), reports that between 16 to 20% of all teachers choose to leave the school in which they are teaching in the USA. In African countries, the phenomenon of teacher turnover is associated with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, especially in sub-Saharan countries like Zambia, Nigeria, Kenya, Central African Republic and South Africa as reported by Coombe (2002).

Private school teachers generally express less dissatisfaction with school human resource practices than do their public school counterparts (Ingersoll 2001; Holton, 2003). Consequently teacher turnover rates are higher in private schools than in public schools; According to Holton (2003), 21 percent of private school teachers had switched schools or left the teaching force since the previous school year compared with 15 percent of public school teachers (Luekens, Lyter & Fox, 2004).

The increasing importance of employee retention to organizational success has been observed to have corresponded with the rise of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) (Guthrie, 2001). As such to curb the negative employee turnover organizations develop human resource policies and strategies. Such strategy focuses on selection and recruitment, training and development, and performance management (Oakland & Oakland, 2001).

In Kenya a study conducted in Limuru revealed that the rate of teacher turnover rose from 12% in 2010 to 15% in 2011 while in 2012, the turnover rate was 20% therefore portraying a worrying trend (Waititu, 2013). The study established that a big percentage of teachers felt there was no clear professional advancement in the teaching career hence triggering teacher turnover. In addition, the study established that most of the teachers were dissatisfied with the training and development programs in the teaching profession further

contributing to teacher turnover. Moreover, the study found out that a 96% felt that the salary paid to teachers was low as compared to other professionals with equivalent qualifications hence triggering high teacher turnover.

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Private schools in Kenya have been experiencing a high teachers' turnover which is associated with poor human resource management. Poor salaries, being overworked, inadequate salaries, lack of career development among other practices have exacerbated the teachers' turnover in private schools. Such high labor turnover leads to frequent replacement of departing workers which have not only monetary costs but also affect the motivation and workplace morale of the employees who remain. It is against this background that this study seeks to establish how strategic human resource management practiced by private schools affect the teachers' turnover.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Development Opportunities

Career development is a system which is organized, formalized and it's a planned effort of achieving a balance between the individual career needs and the organization's workforce requirements (Leibowitz *et al.*, 1986). A company that wants to strengthen its bond with its employees must invest in the development of their employees (Klein & Tang, 2003; Steel *et al.*, 2002). Growth opportunities which were offered by the employers are reduced due to turnover intentions of employees because the lack of training and promotional opportunities was the main cause for high-performers to leave the company (Allen *et al.*, 2003).

Work Environment

Work environment is one of the factors that affect employee's decision to stay with the organization (Zeytinoglu & Denton, 2005). Empirically work environment have been explained in relation to employee turnover, job involvement and organizational commitment (Sjöberg & Sverke, 2000). Milory (2004) reported that people enjoy working, and strive to work in those organizations that provide positive work environment where they feel they are making a difference and where most people in the organization are proficient and pulling together to move the organization forward. Workspace designs have a profound impact on workers and tend to live with job as long as satisfied (Brillet *et al.*, 2001). According to Croasmun (2004), in order to retain old workers, the design of workplace should create environment that support workers of poor eyesight, provide tools which need less potency and apt position for aging body.

Rewards

The term reward is discussed frequently in the literature as something that the organization gives to the employees in response to their contributions and performance and also something which is desired by the employees (Agarwal, 1998). Reward according to Milory (2004), is the thing that an organization gives to the employee in response of their contribution or performance so that the employees become motivated for future positive behaviour.

A reward can be extrinsic or intrinsic it can be recognition such as naming a worker employee of the month, and at other times a reward can be a tangible incentive (Ramlall, 2003). In a corporate environment rewards can take several forms. According to (Sjöberg & Sverke, 2000), reward can include, cash bonuses, recognition awards, free merchandise and free trips. It is very important that the rewards have a lasting impression on the employee and it will continue to substantiate the employee's perception that they are valued (Silbert, 2005).

Work-life Policies

Studies have tested the impact of work and family benefits which comprise of flexible schedules, childcare assistance, parental leave, childcare information and parental leave on organization commitment (Roberson & Ellis, 2008). The studies showed that there is greater organizational commitment if employees had access to work life policies and also these employees had lower intent to renounce their profession (Grover & Crooker, 1995). Croasmun (2004) observed that in today's dynamic environment, the major concern of the management in business is Workplace flexibility. The one thing that becomes very clear is that money alone is not enough; employees are willing to trade a certain amount of money for reduced work hours in their schedules (Allen *et al.*, 2003).

Wong, *et al.*, (2001) argued that reduced work hour options should have the potential of win-win situation for both individuals and organizations, there should be a fit between the schedule the person needs and the actual number of hours worked. Distress and fatigue from excessive time on job can lead to decline in performances of the employee and also it affects the safety level (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Thus a large amount of time at work is not a good predictor of productivity and it is observed that periods of time away from work

can be extremely beneficial to the quality and productivity of a person's work.

The employee willingness to opt for reduced – hour's schedules, is not necessarily a matter of scheduling. (Allen *et al.*, 2003) explains that it involves redesigning work arrangements which leads to change in organization culture and careers where viable reduced-hours career options require simultaneous changes in the areas of compensation, assignments and promotions. So it is more cost-effective and productive for management to design the work arrangements to fit the human than it is to force the human to fit the system (Barnet & Hall, 2001).

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey design to investigate role of strategic human resources practices on the teachers' turnover in Nyeri County. The study was conducted in Nyeri County located in the central part of Kenya. The target population of the study was 21 private school managers in Nyeri County. The population was stratified according to the 6 sub counties in Nyeri County. Thirty percent (30%) of teachers in each strata will be selected through simple random sampling to form a sample size of 99 respondents. Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) recommend that 30% of the population is enough for social sciences studies. This study used a questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire was self-administered where the questionnaires were distributed and the respondents allowed some time to respond to the questions. Analysis was conducted by computing frequencies and percentages which enabled comparison of different elements of the respondents such as gender, age and number of years worked. To establish the influence of Career Development Opportunities, Working conditions, Rewards, Work-Life balance Policies and teachers' turnover, a regression model was computed. This enabled comparison of different elements of the respondents such as gender, age and number of years worked. To establish the influence of Career Development Opportunities, Working conditions, Rewards, Work-Life balance Policies and teachers' turnover, a regression model was computed as follows;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where Y is the teachers Turnover

β_0 is the Autonomous value representing the teachers' turnover that may occur when the variables under consideration in this study that is Career Development Opportunities, Working Conditions, Rewards, Work-life Balance Policies.

X_1 is Career Development Opportunities

X_2 is Working Environment

X_3 is Rewards,

X_4 is Work-life Balance Policies

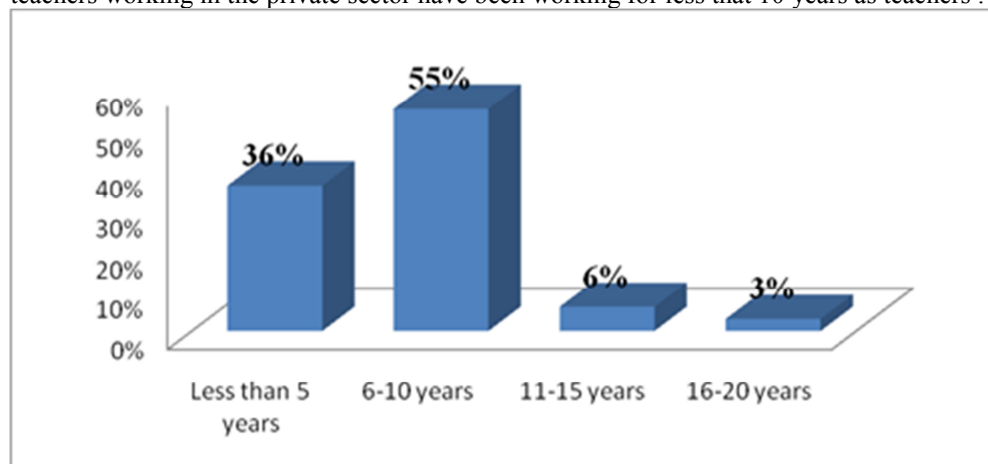
$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4 are the coefficients X_1, X_2, X_3 and X_4 they represent the change in the independent variables that results to a change in the independent variable (Teachers turnover).

ϵ is the error term which represents other factors that may lead to teachers turnover but were not captured by the study.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATATION

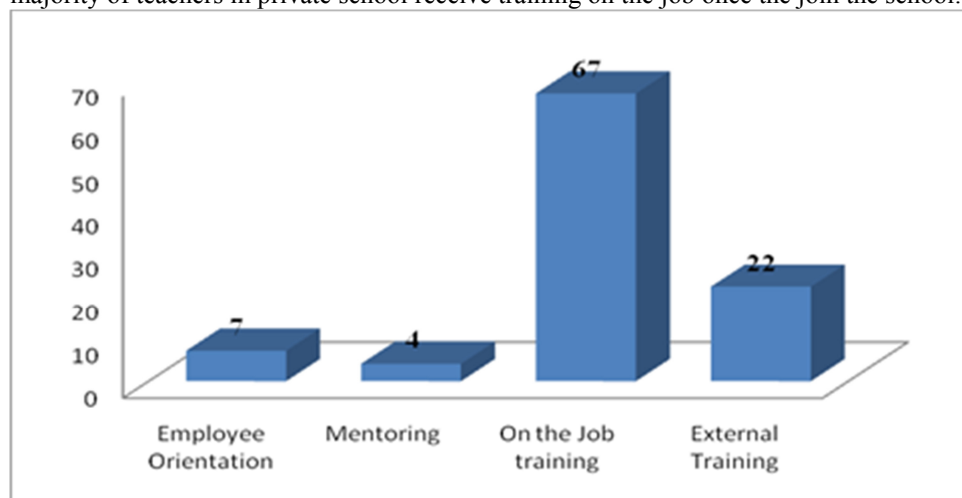
Duration worked

The respondents were required to indicate how many years they have been in the teaching career. As shown in Figure 1 55% have been in the teaching career for between 6-10 years while 36% have been in the teaching career for less than 5 years. Only 3% have worked for more than 15 years. It follows therefore that majority of teachers working in the private sector have been working for less that 10 years as teachers .



Career development opportunity

The study sought to understand the effect of career opportunity on the teachers' turnover. As Shown in Figure 2 67% of the teachers have received on job training while 22% have received external training. This implies that majority of teachers in private school receive training on the job once the join the school.

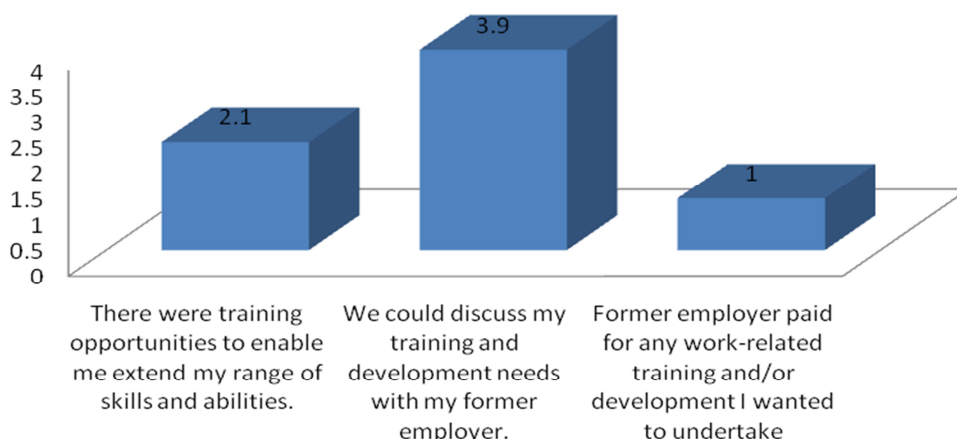


However, as shown in Table 1 the training according to 71% of the respondent rarely happens. This implies therefore that though on job training was provided to 67% of the respondents such training rarely happens. It follows therefore that teachers in private school do not get adequate training and thus have limited career development opportunity.

Frequency of training offered

Frequency of training	Frequency	%
Quarterly	0	0
Twice a year	0	0
Once a year	20	29
Rarely	50	71
None	0	0
Total	70	100

The study sought to understand how the respondents felt about career opportunities in their former school. The respondents were supposed to indicate the level of agreement with three items related to career opportunity. A composite score was then computed and mean scores presented as shown in Figure 3. The findings reveal that in the former schools that the respondent work there was opportunities to discuss training and development with the former employer. This item had the highest mean score of 3.9. The second item in terms of the mean score was provision of training opportunities to enable teachers extended their range of skills, this particular item had the second highest mean score of 2.1. However, item with least mean score was on whether former employer paid the training which had a mean score of 1.



It follows from the findings that though the teachers had opportunity to discuss on the training needs, the employer rarely implemented the discussion since the training were rarely paid for.

Work Environment

The study sought to establish the effect of work-life environment on the teachers’ turnover. As shown in Figure 4, teachers reported that co-workers were supportive which had a mean score of 3.6. Further, the teachers reported that there was relatively adequate and appropriate working tools and supervisors showed them how to improve performance, the two items had mean scores of 3.4 each. The item with the least item was whether the supervisor listened to the teachers’ job-related problems with a mean score of 3.2. The finding implies that while core-workers were supportive the supervisors rarely listened to the teachers grievances.

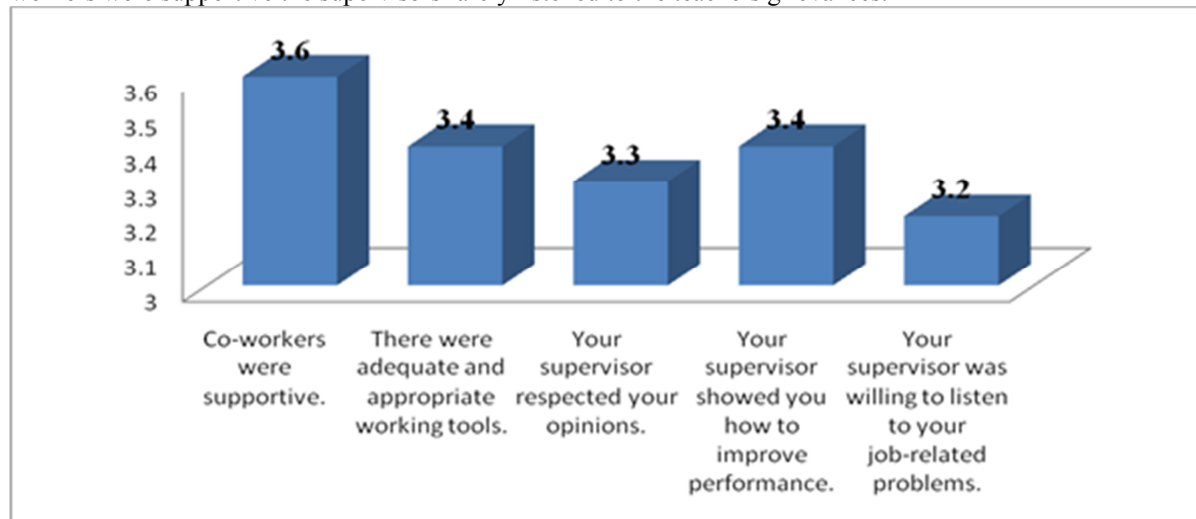
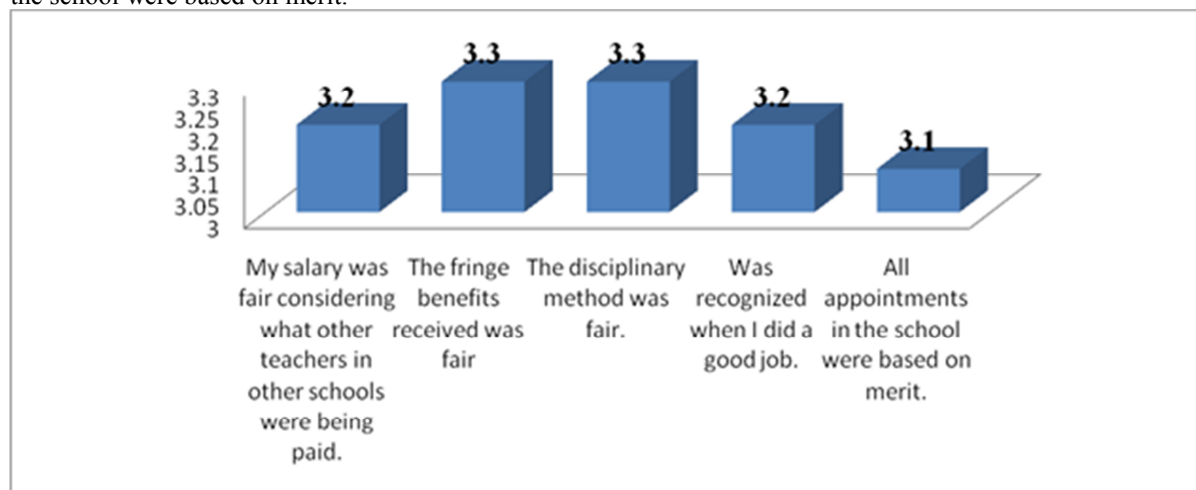


Figure 4: 2 Work environments

Reward System

As for reward system the teachers had four items related to the reward system on which to respond to. As shown in Figure 5 the items that had the highest mean scores were the fringe benefit received were fair and the disciplinary method was fair. The second item items were on salary being fair compared to other schools and recognition when a teacher did a good job, both had a mean score of 3.2. The least item was all appointments in the school were based on merit.



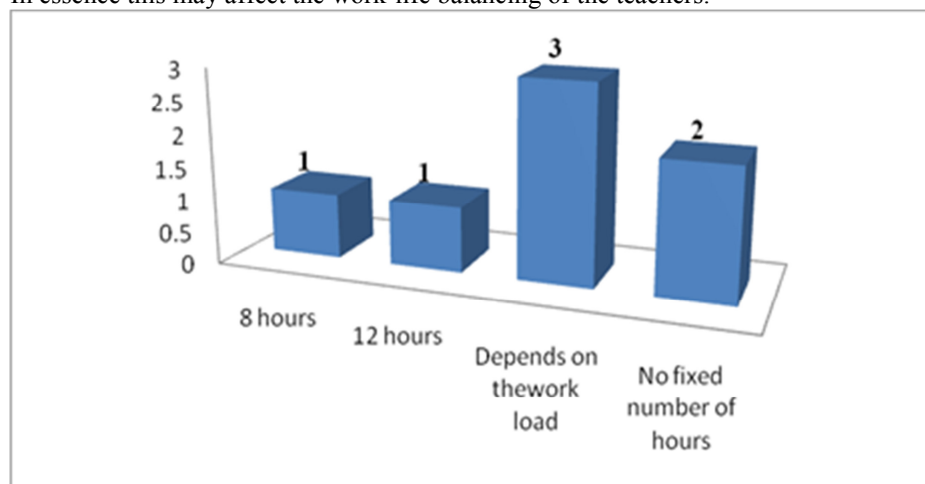
It follows from the finding that salary and appointments were the major issue in the human resource practices as far as reward system is concerned. The teachers were not satisfied with the salary offered and the appointment methods.

Work-life balance

To establish the work-life policy in private schools the study interviewed the school managers in six private schools in the County. The work-life balance was looked into in terms of working hours well fare programs and types and duration of leave given to the teachers. As in Figure 6 3 managers reported that the working hours depended on the work load of individual teacher, 2 indicated that the schools do not have fixed number of working hours while 1 manager each reported that 8 hours and 12 hours were the standard working hours in their schools.

Number of Hours Worked

As the finding reveals the working hours mostly depends on the work load while other schools do not have fixed working hours. This implies that the teachers can be in school working way beyond the recommended 8 hours. In essence this may affect the work-life balancing of the teachers.



Figure

Welfare programs

In terms of well fair programs the study established that 67% of the schools participating had well fair programs while 33% did not have well fare programs. It means therefore that most private schools do not have programs that cater for personal needs in case such needs arise.

Leaves

The school managers were required to indicate whether they give leaves to the teachers their respective schools. As shown in Table 4:3 all the school managers indicated that they offer compassionate, maternity and annual leave.

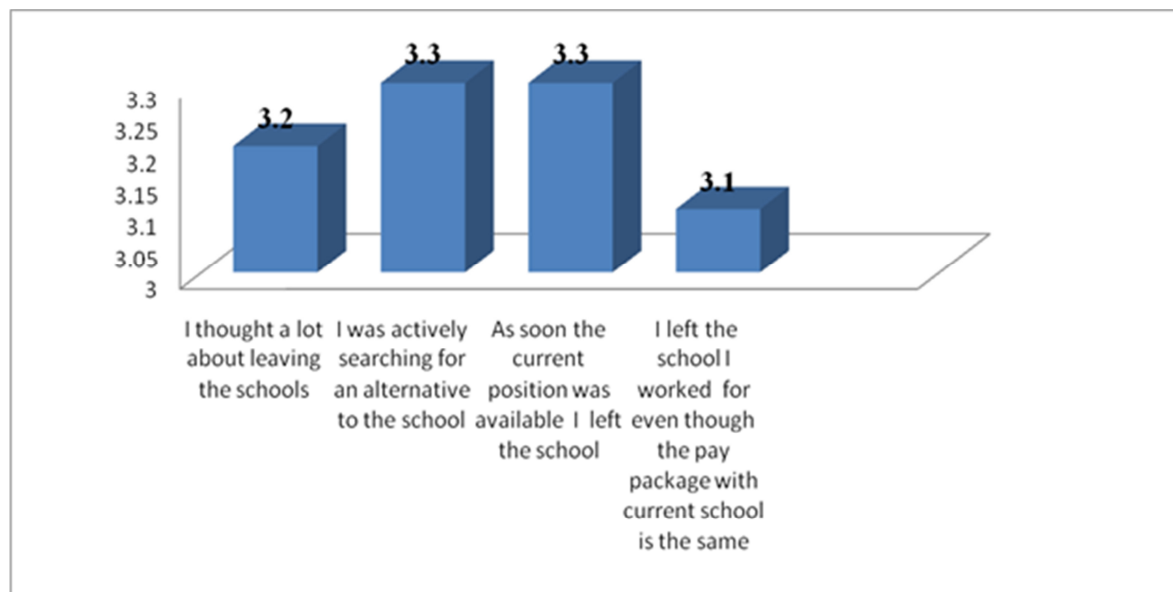
Type of leave	Duration
Compassionate leave	2 weeks
Maternity leave	90 days
Annual leave	30 days

From the findings it follows that private schools in the county provide three types of leave as required and the time allocated for each one of them is adequate. However, the working hours are not uniform and mostly depend on the work load.

Teachers Turnover

Teachers intention to leave private Schools

The teachers' turnover was measures by the number of teachers that have left the participating schools and the intention of teachers to leave the schools. As shown in Figure 4:11 the teachers participating indicated that they were actively searching for alternative and as the as the position was available they left. The two items had a mean score of 3.3 each. The teachers also indicated that before they left they had thought a lot of leaving the school they were working in. This was the second highest ranked with 3.3 mean score.



The findings show that most teachers in private schools are seeking leaving the schools they work for and are actively searching for alternatives.

The Number of Teachers leaving private schools

The study sought to establish the number of teachers leaving private schools. As shown in Table 4.5 the school managers were requested to give number of teachers who have left their respective schools. In 2012 66% of the managers indicated that 2-3 three teachers left their schools while 17% indicated that 3-4 left the schools. A further 17% indicated that 1 above teachers left their schools the same year. In 2013 50% indicated that 2-3 teachers left their schools while in 2014 33% indicated that the same number left their school.

The number of Teachers who Leave Private schools

Number of Teachers left	2012		2013		2014	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
None	0	0	0	0	1	17
1 teacher	0	0	1	17	1	17
2-3 Teachers	4	66	3	50	2	33
3-4 Teachers	1	17	1	17	1	17
Above 5 Teachers	1	17	1	17	1	17

It follows therefore that majority of private schools lose 2-3 teachers every year indicating a high turnover. This especially indicated by the fact that most teachers in private schools have been working only for few years.

Multi-regression

To establish the relationship between the independent variables of the study (career development opportunities, work-life balance, work environment and Reward) and the dependent variable (Teachers turnover), the study computed a regression model. The result shows that career development opportunities, work-life balance, work environment and Reward accounts for 95.7% of the variation of the school turnover as shown in Table 4:6

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.978 ^a	.957	.955	.523

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career development opportunities, Work-life balance, Work environment, Reward

Table 4.7 present the Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA), which provides the F test indicating whether the model is statistically significant. With a significant level of less than 0.05 the equation is significant, in this case the value is 0.000 and thus the model is statistically significant.

ANOVA analyses

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	658.743	4	164.686	601.822	.000 ^a
	Residual	29.827	109	.274		
	Total	688.570	113			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career development opportunities , Work-life balance, Work enviroment, Reward

b. Dependent Variable: Teachers Turnover

Table 4.8 shows that correlation coefficient of the model. Taking to account the β in the table model will there be as follows:

$$Y = 0.457 + 0.0124 X_1 + 0.036 X_2 + 0.067 X_3 + 0.177 X_4 + 0.176$$

Following multi-regression carried on the variables the following equation was generated

Where: Y = Level of strategic plan implementation

X₁ = Career development opportunities

X₂ = Work-life balance

X₃ = Work environment

X₄ = Reward

Correlation Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.457	.176		3.101	.002
	Work enviroment	.067	.019	.207	3.524	.001
	Reward	.177	.023	.462	7.760	.000
	Work-life balance	.036	.013	.132	2.685	.008
	Career development opportunities	.124	.023	.217	3.777	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers Turnover

The findings show that Reward system has a correlation coefficient of 0.177 and significance level of 0.000. Since the required significant level is less than 0.05 it can be concluded that reward system had a statistical association with teachers turn over. Career development opportunities had correlation coefficient of 0.124 and a significance level of 0.000, work-life balance 0.036 and significant level of 0.008 while work environment had a coefficient correlation of 0.067 and a significance level of 0.001.

Since all the four variables had a significance level of less than 0.05 it implies that they all had a statistical association with the Teachers turnover. However, the magnitude of influence on the teachers' turnover differs between the variable. Reward system of private secondary schools had the highest influence on teachers' turnover since it had the highest correlation coefficient of 0.177, the second variable was career development opportunity with 0.124, the third was work-environment 0.067 while work-life balance had the least influence on the teachers' turnover with 0.036.

The findings correspond with Klein & Tang (2003) that Career development opportunities strengthen the bond between employees and employer therefore organizations must invest in the development of their

employees. The work environment was found to have the second least influence on the teachers' turnover compared to Career development work-life balance and reward system. This corresponds with earlier findings by Milory (2004) who reported that people strive to work in those organizations that provide positive work environment where they feel they are making a difference and where most people in the organization are proficient and pulling together to move the organization forward. Work-life policies were the least important strategic human resource practices that influence the teachers' turnover. Past study by Roberson & Ellis (2008) shows that work and family benefits which comprise of parental leave among others have a positive impact on employees' organization commitment. However as Ostroff & Bowen, (2000) found out distress and fatigue from excessive time on job can lead to decline in performances of the employee and also it affects the safety level.

Conclusions

Given the findings the study concludes that there is a high teacher turnover in private secondary schools due to poor human resource management. In general teachers in private school are poorly paid, lack career development opportunities and work-environment is not conducive. Though private schools offers annual, maternity and compassionate leaves this may not be adequate to retain teachers. The private schools provide enough tools, advises on performance and the colleagues are supportive. However, as the study found majority of teachers in private schools are relatively young and require a comprehensive career development opportunities to provide hope for their future career progression. Without such opportunities the teachers are bound to seek alternatives that may offer them opportunities to progress in their career.

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