

INFLUENCE OF STAFF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Organizations worldwide primarily exist to achieve specific goals. The study sought to examine the influence of teaching staff recruitment and selection on the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya. The resource based theory, universalistic theory and the human capital theory informed this study. The study employed mixed methods research design. The target population was the 413 secondary schools in Machakos County. The school principals were selected as units of observation. Purposive sampling was used to select six secondary schools from where the key informants in this study were drawn. This consisted of the two national, top two performing and bottom two non performing secondary schools in Machakos County. The rest of the schools were selected using stratified sampling based on the category of school where a sample size of 201 was yielded. The study used primary data that was collected using self-administered semi-structured questionnaires and interview schedules. Qualitative data collected was analysed using content analysis while for the quantitative data, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis were carried out. Both bivariate and multivariate regression analyses were conducted to determine the relationship between the study variables. The study found that human resource management practices under study namely teaching staff recruitment and selection was a significant variable that influences academic performance.

Key words; Accademic performance, human resource management, Organizational performance recruitment and selection, teaching staff, school principals.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Human resource management practices are key components of performance in almost all organizations. In any organization, the employees must be treated as a valuable asset. The organization mission will be achieved in a better way if the skills of the workers are developed. In the present competitive environment, the success of any organization depends on the caliber of their human resources and their programmes (Rehman, 2011).

The Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance is a threshold assessment used to measure a student's ability to meet performance criteria. Grades are used to measure learning or knowledge and attainment of learning objectives and acquisition of skills and competencies (York, Gibson & Rankin, 2015). Academic performance of a student is regarded as the observable and measurable behavior in a particular situation (Komba, Hizza & Jonathan, 2013). Educational institutions are mandated to use education as a tool for social transformation and the quality of a school is measured by the quality of students it produces through academic performance (Biama, 2014). The measure of academic performance can also be used to assess the teachers' effectiveness. Good schools are those that are able to groom the students well enough to achieve the set standards. This is measured by use of students' academic performance both at school level and nationally (Molokomphale, 2015).

Human Resource Management Practices

In the contemporary business world, human resource represents the most important resource and each organization strives to achieve a competitive advantage and improve organizational performance relative to competitors (Kianto, Sáenz & Aramburu, 2017). Human resource management practices refer to organizational activities directed at managing the pool of human resources and ensuring that the resources are employed towards the fulfillment of organizational goals (Tiwari & Saxena, 2012). Effective HRM practices have the potential to create organizations that are more intelligent and flexible than their competitors through the use of policies and practices that focus on hiring, developing talented staff and synergizing their contribution within the resource bundle of the organization (Saeed, Afsar, Hafeez, Khan, Tahir & Afridi, 2019). Human resource management practices are central to the improvement of the quality of services offered by organizations. Wheelen and Hunger (2013) note that employees as human resources are the most important resources within an organization that help in achieving a competitive advantage. Human resource management practices are important pillars in building and maintaining trust in employees for they shape the employment relationship between the employee and the employer (Tang, Chen, Jiang, Paille & Jia, 2011). They are aimed at improving the overall performance of employees within the organization, ultimately resulting in increased organizational performance.

Secondary Schools in Machakos County

Statistics of KCSE analysis in the last six years, indicate that majority of the secondary schools in Machakos County registered a mean score below that of the other schools of similar categories in other counties (Appendix 3). Schools in other counties of the same category post results with a higher index, for example in the national category, Friends school Kamusinga in Bungoma County in the year 2017 posted a mean of index 10.28, while Machakos School posted an index of 7.8.

KCSE Performances in 2013 -2019 in Machakos County

YEAR	TOTAL	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	C. MEAN
2019	27222	2	117	374	788	1198	1572	2274	3105	3810	5698	4930	863	3.744
2018	23856	4	53	210	531	906	1319	1751	2658	3641	5542	6158	1224	3.11
2017	23479	0	34	144	353	642	905	1414	2133	3252	5212	7620	1733	3.112
2016	21662	0	81	270	522	799	1163	1581	2144	3046	4515	6176	1365	3.29
2015	20891	12	153	437	763	1283	1808	2409	3133	3531	4118	2921	317	3.725
2014	19152	28	169	442	799	1151	1653	2179	2966	3356	3651	2470	284	4.799
2013	18416	18	171	728	998	257	1868	2381	2801	3392	2387	338	404	4.567

Source: Machakos County Director of Education Office (2020)

Despite the increasing number of candidates registered for KCSE each year, the results show a decline in quality grades and an increase in weak grades especially from 2013 to 2017. The results also show an increasing number of weak grades each year. The overall mean of the entire county has been below 5 out of the expected 12 for the period under study, and on a constant declining trend. This is of great concern to stakeholders. The percentage of candidates scoring grade C+ and above in the county has been very low. For instance, 2013 it was 27%; 2014-22.7%; 2015- 21.35%; 2016- 13.8%; 2017- 8.83% ; 2018 -12.68% and 2019-14.88%.

The performance in KCSE in Machakos county therefore implies that majority of the students cannot be admitted for the competitive degree courses. In Kenya the ministry of Education observes that education is a means for developing and enhancing the human resources that the country needs in order to achieve industrial and technological advancement (Ministry of Education, 2015). The results therefore imply that very few candidates from Machakos County fit in the top cadre. The long term implication is shortage of quality manpower nationally and in the county.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary schools in machakos county have been on the declining trend for the last 6 years. A number of factors could be attributed to declining performance trends, among them teacher management, lack of basic infrastructural facilities, lack of motivation, lack of supervision, indiscipline of students or lack of human resource management practices which are key to good performance (K'Obonyo, Busienei & Ogutu, 2013).

Objective of the Study

- i. Examine the influence of recruitment and selection of teaching staff on academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County.

Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following five research hypotheses:

- i.Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between recruitment and selection of teaching staff and academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County.

Theoretical Review

Resource Based Theory

Barney's (2007) resource-based view (RBV) theory observes that a company must have valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources to have a sustainable competitive advantage, and that these resources include everything internal to the firm. Barney (2007) listed all of the assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information and knowledge as resources. Wright and McMahan (1992) further explain what people, as resources, must have for the company to be competitive. They must give value to the organization's production processes; they must have rare skills to promote significant performance. The human capital investment must not be easily imitated. A company's human resources must not be substituted or replaced by technological alternatives. The high levels of automation in many industries and the continuing shift towards a service economy have made substitution less likely (Armstrong, 2010).

The theory argues that good human resource management practices lead to good functioning of internal organization which eventually becomes the source of creativity, innovation and successful performance of organization (Ahteela & Vanhala, 2011). Thus, the practices should be considered as a strategic issue within the learning institution. The policies, systems and practices influencing attitude, behavior and performance of employees compose the HRM practices (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright, 2007). Gujarati & Porter (2009) observes that the resource-based theory has been an imperative step in human resource management since it has given a new point of view to explain a firm's success. According to the focus on resources, an institution's success is due to joint resources and capabilities which an organization owns and makes it different from its competitors.

Among such resources and capabilities are the human resources and the crucial attributes of knowledge, skill, and talent. These resources and capabilities may constitute a source of competitive advantage (Hesketh & Fleetwood, 2008). From this point of view, the HRM practices in an organization are geared towards strengthening those significant capabilities and knowledge. Secondary schools are not exceptional and this calls for resource mobilization towards improved performance.

Wright and McMahan (1992) show the relation between strategy, HRM practices and human resource capital pool. They observe that if resources are strategic for the firm, it implies that they are scarce, valuable, specific or difficult to transfer. This is possible if the organization

implements HRM practices such as recruitment of essential employees, compensating them conveniently, training them or to develop new capabilities and motivate them through incentives. Consequently, the HRM practices are likely to affect the performance.

The resource-based view of the organization gives a new perspective to human resource management. The organization creates and implements new measures in areas such as recruitment and selection, training and career development, compensation among others (Grant, 2002). An organization will usually train its employees in order to increase productivity for this reason, an organization will only train employees in those abilities and skills that are crucial to making tasks better and faster (Grant, 2002). As far as compensation is concerned, the focus is compensating individual performance and the value created by an employee. The resource-based theory has thus made it possible to mark the importance of human resources for an enterprise because it is able to create competitive advantages.

Capabilities are another key concept within resource-based theory. Resources refer to what an organization owns, capabilities refer to what the organization can do (Mullins, 2007). Capabilities tend to arise over time as a firm takes actions that build on its strategic resources. They are important in part because they are about how organizations capture the potential value that resources offer. Capabilities are needed to bundle, to manage, and otherwise to exploit resources in a manner that provides maximum productivity.

Overall, the resource-based theory provides a useful basis for understanding the value that HRM adds to the performance of the organization. Human resource management (HRM) practices have been widely researched and accepted as playing an instrumental role in creating and sustaining organizational performance (Hesketh & Fleetwood, 2008). It is argued that the resource-based view of the firm (RBV) on human resource management generates sustainable competitive advantage through recruiting, developing and retaining exceptional human talent (Steinkellner, Czerny, & Lueger, 2010).

The resource-based theory is relevant to this study because the theory emphasized on the importance of developing and enhancing the resources that are distinctive for a competitive advantage. It relates to this study in that teachers who form part of human resources should be properly recruited and selected, trained and developed, properly remunerated and work in a healthy and safe place with the proper physical infrastructure for better performance. If this is done the academic performance is expected to improve. Universalistic Theory.

The universalistic theory was postulated by Dewar and Werbel (1979) who sought for best practices in human resource management. Several researchers have contributed to the universalistic theory such as Beh and Loo (2013), Hamid (2013) and Hughes (2002). The researchers admit that there is a linear relationship in organizational performance if certain HRM practices are implemented. They argue that some HRM practices are superior to others and therefore all organizations should assume these best practices. Hamid (2013), for example refers to the universalistic theory as the “best” practice model which is based on the assumption that there is a set of superior/best HRM practices, and that adopting them will definitely lead to superior organizational performance. If certain HRM practices are

implemented in the organization, they can guarantee increases in performance.

The 'best' HRM practices are seen through improved employee attitudes and behaviors, lower levels of absenteeism and turnover, higher levels of skills and therefore higher productivity, enhanced quality and efficiency and of course increased profitability (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2008). Therefore, all organizations will benefit and experience improved organizational performance if they will be able to identify, get committed to and implement a set of best HRM practices.

The universalistic perspective maintains that firms will see performance gains by identifying and implementing best practice irrespective of the product market situation, industry or location of the firm. It is up to the firm to decide what may be relevant in general terms and what can be adopted to fit its particular strategic and operational requirements. There are certain "best" HRM practices that contribute to increased organizational performance regardless of the strategic goals of the organization (Hughes, 2002). These are recruitment and selection, socialization, job design, training, communication, participation, career development, performance management, employee reward and job security (Maina, 2017). The universalistic approach to HRM research assumes that HRM practices contribute to worker motivation (and thereby increased productivity) as well as increased efficiency (Ichniowski, Kochan, Levine, Olson, & Strauss, 2000).

Boxal, Purcell & Wright (2007) observe that the universal human resource management practices among them, recruitment, training, reward management, job rotation and staff welfare and firm performance are related and supported by arguments from universalistic theory which suggests that people possess skills, knowledge and abilities through effective human resource management practices that provide economic value to firms. Therefore, increased productivity derived from human capital depends on the effectiveness of HRM practices in organizations.

Wayne, Musisca and Fleeson (2004) suggest that HRM practices that signal the organization's intentions to invest in employees (such as developmental experiences and training) produced higher levels of (influence) organizational commitment. In recent times, HRM has assumed new prominence because of continuing concerns about global competition, the internalization of technology and the productivity of labour through effective HRM practices (Bratton & Gold, 2017). Marques (2015) notes that the strength of universalism is its consistency and with the moral approach, there is no question about the decision to be made what is right for one should be right for all. Managers need to change the way they manage the employment relationship in order to allow the most effective utilization of human resources.

The universalistic approach does not consider that what works well in one organization will not necessary work well in another because it may not fit its strategy, technology or working practices. The theory is relevant to this study because each secondary school should have a set of best HRM practices; recruitment of teaching staff, training and development, compensation practices and safety which are the independent variables for this study. The

best practices if well managed will influence academic performance, which is the dependent variable.

Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory was developed by Samuel and Gary (1930). It is defined as the knowledge, skills, assets, and experiences that an individual has which add value to a company (mixture of human and skill). Human capital is a way to determine economic performance in a workforce and this idea of human capital itself gave rise to human capital theory (Armstrong, 2010). However, not every employee has the same value; it depends on their knowledge, skills, and assets.

The human capital theory acknowledges the values that people can contribute to an organization and regards people as assets stressing that investment by organizations in people will generate worthwhile returns (Tan, 2014). Torrington (2008) explains that human capital theory signifies the combined intelligence and experience of staff. He specifically points out that effective HRM practices are an organization's source of competitive edge. The theory has, cross-cutting significance in HRM practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, human resource planning among others that are meant to help organizations achieve their goals.

Armstrong (2010) observes that individuals generate, retain and use knowledge and skills to create intellectual capital. Their knowledge is enhanced by the interactions between themselves and this generates the additional knowledge possessed by an organization. Further, individuals generate, retain and use knowledge and skills to create intellectual capital. Throughout the investment of human capital, an individual acquires knowledge and skills that can easily be transferred to certain goods and services (Whitaker & Wilson, 2007). Shrader and Siegel (2007) note that without investments in human capital we would be left with only hard physical labour and high levels of poverty. The human capital theory has the ability to use the knowledge skill and experience to achieve results and potential for growth. The theory is relevant to the study because it is indeed the knowledge, skills and abilities of individuals that create value. This is why the focus of any organization has to be on the means of hiring, developing and rewarding. The theory contributes to the study because schools need to ensure that they have the right human resources right from recruitment if they have to produce quality results.

Each organization has to focus on the means of recruitment of the right people, training and development of the people for better results. Therefore, it informs two independent variables and suggests that when the right people with proper skills are put in place productivity is expected. When the focus is on the right means of recruiting and training the people then secondary schools can expect to produce quality grades.

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is usually captured by metrics such as sales growth or

profitability in the for-profit sector, or by outcomes such as increased productivity or lower closure rates (Bloom, Lemos, Sadun & Van Reenen, 2017). Organizational performance is generally indicated by effectiveness (whether an organization can achieve its objectives), efficiency (whether an organization uses resources properly), satisfaction of employees and customers, innovation, quality of products or services, and ability to maintain a unique human pool (Tiwari & Saxena, 2012).

Hossain and Musembi (2012) observe that the overall organizational performance depends on the extent to which human resource is utilized. Organizational performance is an indicator which measures how well an enterprise achieves its objectives. Organizational performance is concerned with among others, product or service quality, product or service innovation, employee attraction, employee retention, customer satisfaction, management/employee relation and employee relation (George, Walker & Monster, 2019).

Berberoglu (2018) observes that the effective functioning of an organization goes along way where employees perform their jobs at a satisfactory level of proficiency and also the organization provide opportunities for the continued development and training of employees not only on their jobs, but as well develop them for other jobs for which they might later be considered when all the practices are managed well. In companies where there are effective human resource management practices, employees and customers tend to be more satisfied, and the companies tend to be more innovative, have greater productivity, and develop a more favourable reputation in the community (Ray & Ray, 2011).

Performance of organizations depends on the knowledge and ability of its employees toward understanding the dynamism in the market (Ogbu, 2017). The effective functioning of any organization is best where employees perform their jobs at a satisfactory level of proficiency and also the organization provide opportunities for the continued development and training of employees not only on their jobs, but as well develop them for other jobs for which they might later be considered.

Academic performance refers to a degree or level of success or that of competency attained in some specific area related to academic work. Higher achievement opens a number of doors for the students and they can go for better lines and better jobs in all fields thereby bringing success (Mohammad & Younes, 2017). Performance in examinations can be seen as evidence that learning has taken place. Presenting evidence of learning should be an important landmark in the journey towards lifelong learning (Newman, 2015).

Examinations are generally accepted as valid measures of achievement. Student's success is generally judged by examination performance while the best criterion of performance is the sum of the student's academic performance in all the subjects taken. Academic performance of schools is linked to different circumstances and factors. In the United States of America, the factors that have been reviewed include: students' role performance (SRP) which include sex, race, school effort, extra-curricular activities, deviance and disabilities which are all important influences and have been shown to affect test scores (Kevin, 2012). Further, the type of school a child attends influences educational outcomes (Kumwenda, Cleland &

Walker, 2018). The school context tends to affect the strength of the relationship between Social Economic Status (SES) and educational outcomes.

Staff Recruitment and Selection

According to Al Khajeh (2018), the objective of HRM resourcing strategies is to obtain the right basic material in the form of workforce with the appropriate qualities, skills, knowledge and potential for future training. Performance is based on the fact that failure to recruit and select the proper employees would result in low organizational performance. Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2012) observe that recruitment is a key method of improving the performance of an organization. The right people should be placed in positions that fit them best.

The process of recruiting and selecting may come in four stages: defining recruitment, planning recruitment campaign, attracting candidates and selecting candidates. Effective recruitment and selection practices leads to positive increase in organizational performance, labour productivity, product quality, organizational innovations, and customer satisfaction. Failure to properly allocate the right employees would result in low organizational performance. Djabatay (2012) and Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma (2015) argue that proper staffing is critical for building and sustaining a competitive advantage and that recruitment and selection are essential in organizations because individuals need to be attracted on a timely basis in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications. According to Biama (2014), the objective of HRM resourcing strategies is to obtain the right basic material in the form of workforce with the appropriate qualities, skills, knowledge and potential for future training.

The recruitment and selection process should be effective enough to ensure that the right pool of personnel is attracted (Uysal & Koca, 2019). Selection is the second stage of the employment process. Selection is therefore the process of identifying the most appropriate and suitable person for a particular job. Through selection, the performance for the job is predicted. According York et al. (2015), the purpose of selection is to identify applicants to fill vacant vacancies in an organization. Here applicants are supposed to meet specific requirements related to competencies of the job and applicants must fulfill this performance requirement before they would be selected.

Organizations expect to find suitable candidates who satisfy the requirements for employment. Komba, Hizza and Jonathan (2013) observe that it is the process of obtaining applicants with the required experience, knowledge, skills, qualifications and attitude for a job vacancy. Molokomphale (2015) observes that candidates can be selected using different methods in order to assess their suitability and merit for a certain role. These methods include; individual interviews, interviewing panels, selection boards, and assessment centres. Failure to recruit and select the proper employees would result in low organizational performance. Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2012) observe that recruitment is a key method of improving the performance of an organization. The right people should be placed in positions that fit them best (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskin, 2010). Under normal circumstances, an increase in the pool of applicants will improve an employer's opportunities in selecting

exactly the right people for job vacancies.

Failure to properly allocate the right employees would result in low organizational performance. Djabatay (2012) and Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma (2015) argue that proper staffing is critical for building and sustaining a competitive advantage and that recruitment and selection are essential in organizations because individuals need to be attracted on a timely basis in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications.

Target Population

School Category	Target Population
Naitonal schools	2
Extra county	30
County	93
Sub-county	207
Private	81
Total	413

Source: Machakos Education County Office, 2019 (GOK, 2019)

Sample Size

School Category	Target Population	Proportion	Sample Size
Extra county	30	7.3	15
County	93	22.9	46
Sub-county	207	50.9	102
Private	77	18.9	38
Total	407	100.0	201

Source: Machakos Education County Office, 2019 (GOK, 2019)

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires with both open ended and closed ended questions were used to collect quantitative data. The open ended question gave the respondents a leeway to give their honest views while closed ended questionnaires were used to generate statistics in quantitative research and for ease of tabulation and analysis (Daniel & Harland, 2017).

Influence of Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff on Academic Performance

The principals' opinion on whether the practices and procedures employed in the recruitment and selection of teaching staff in their schools influenced the academic performance in their schools was also sought. It was established that a majority of the principals, 128 (84.80%), noted that the level of academic performance in their schools was influenced by the recruitment and selection of teaching staff. The rest of the principals, 23 (15.20%) held the view that teaching staff recruitment and selection did not influence the academic performance in their schools. The ways through which the recruitment and selection of teaching staff affected academic performance in the sampled schools as highlighted by these principals are outlined in Table 4.4. According to 121 (94.53%) of the principals, the selection and recruitment of competent teaching staff supported quality teaching since such teachers had adequate knowledge and skills and also had good mastery of content. Competent and experienced teachers selected on the basis of their skills were found to have good knowledge

about their subjects and hence, as noted by 109 (85.16%) of the principals, improved and timely syllabus coverage was enhanced.

The study also found that 97 (75.78%) of the principals stated that competent teaching staff displayed efficiency, dedication and good will in teaching so that students can perform. Competitively recruited staff had the confidence required to adequately guide learners, they consistently produced desirable results and also worked under minimal supervision as observed by 81 (63.28%), 68 (53.13%) and 79 (61.72%) of the principals respectively. The study further established that 75 (58.59%) of the principals believed that competitively selected and recruited teachers were hard working and self-motivated to deliver while others, 44 (34.38%) argued that teaching staff recruited following the right process conducted themselves in a morally upright way and were responsible to the society leading to enhanced academic performance.

Table 4.4: Influence of Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff on Academic Performance

Highlighted ways	Frequency	Percent
Selection of competent teachers supports quality teaching due to adequate knowledge, skills and mastery of content.	121	94.53
Selection of competent teachers led to timely syllabus coverage.	109	85.16
Efficiency, dedication and good will in teaching so that students can perform.	97	75.78
Competent teachers have the confidence to properly guide students.	81	63.28
Competitively recruited staff work under minimal supervision	79	61.72
Competitively recruited staff are hard-working and self-motivated to deliver.	75	58.59
Experienced teachers consistently produce satisfactory results.	68	53.13
Teaching staff recruited following the right process have moral conduct and are responsible to the society.	44	34.38

The above findings prove that the recruitment and selection of teaching staff affected the academic performance of the sampled secondary schools in various ways from the perspective of the principals. Schools that selected competent teachers through a competitive recruitment process reaped the benefits of quality teaching as well as improved and timely syllabus coverage which ultimately resulted to consistent remarkable academic results. Teaching staff who were competent could confidently guide students, they efficiently carried out their duties with dedication and were hard working and self-motivated to deliver. Hence, the process of recruiting and selecting teaching staff in the sampled secondary schools could not be ignored in the quest for attaining improved academic performance in these schools.

The findings of this study supported the observations by Ofori and Aryeetey (2011) that proper recruitment process led to selection of the right candidates who were able to carry out their tasks. The results were also consistent with that of Priya and Sundaram (2016) who argued that effective recruitment and selection strategy enabled an organization to maintain a committed and motivated workforce that was productive and ensured quality in the products and services offered by the organization. The study results were further aligned to the recommendations of Omisore and Okofu (2018) that the recruitment of staff that were most

qualified, disciplined and also committed was necessary for the realization of organizational objectives. The findings further agreed with the views of Selase (2018) that the productivity of a workforce depended on genuine recruitment process that was also emphasized by Wambua and Genga (2018) who argued that adherence to proper staff recruitment was a source of motivation for staff.

Key Informants Responses on Influence of Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff on Academic Performance

The responses of the key informants as to whether recruitment and selection of teaching staff influenced academic performance are also provided. Two of the KIIs (KI 1 and KI 4) noted that this HRM practice influenced academic performance. According to KI 1, their school was committed to recruiting competent and qualified teachers who had mostly obtained an undergraduate degree or a master's degree. They were keen on having hardworking teachers who could deliver quality results. In their words, this key informant argued that: -

"We do not recruit untrained teachers; we recruit mostly undergraduate and master's degree holders. We instill the spirit of hard work among teachers and even though we encourage overstay, we do not tolerate lazy teachers. We normally fire such teachers immediately." KI 1

The KI 4 on their part asserted that their school normally employed the best and individuals who were willing to work and learn. The qualifications of the recruited teachers ranged from Diploma in Education to Masters of Arts in Education. On the other hand, KI 2, KI 3 and KI 5 argued that the recruitment and selection of teaching staff may or may not influence academic performance where KI 2 observed that some recruits particularly young graduates did not show commitment in their work as they were simply looking for employment.

"Most young graduates are simply looking for employment and hence, lack commitment. They do not commit over time to assisting students. It is a myth to say that graduates will offer the best. Diploma teachers are more committed." KI 2

Noting that all teachers whether diploma holders or master's holders were qualified and that performance depended on the dedication and commitment of the teachers, KI 3 argued that;

"Diploma teachers yield better grades; they are more committed than most of those with a master's degree. We recruit as per the TSC policy of the most qualified but once on the ground, we see dedication even from the ones with least qualifications" KI 3

Echoing the sentiments of KI 3, KI 5 asserted that;

"We offer jobs to those seeking for employment. Most of the recruits hold a bachelors' degree in education but fail to deliver or do not produce quality results."

From the responses given, KI 6 believed that recruitment and selection of teaching staff did not influence academic performance in schools. According to them, they always thought they had recruited the best but unfortunately, this did not translate to good results. These findings suggested that the recruitment and selection of teaching staff by secondary schools was necessary though not sufficient to yield the academic performance desired by the schools'

management. Thus, for competent and qualified teachers to produce good results, they had to be committed and dedicated to their work.

These findings are in line with the conclusion of the study by Nyoni, Nyoni and Bonga (2017) that recruiting highly educated staff requires that managers attend to other HR issues more carefully as well. According to these authors, hiring educated staff does not necessarily result to better staff job performance since staff with higher education may become over-confident about their skills and therefore, take some tasks less seriously while those with less education may be more motivated to take advantage of their job opportunity and thus, give their all in their activities. The results were also consistent with the recommendation by Keinan and Karugu (2016) in their study on recruitment, selection and placement of teaching staff in institutions of learning that teaching certifications obtained by recruits should not be the only emphasis as most individuals with the qualifications were underperforming. Rather, interest and experience should play a major role as such people can go for on the job training to enhance their skills.

Other Aspects of Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff Practiced

The other aspects of staff recruitment and selection practiced in the sampled schools and which influenced academic performance as mentioned by the principals are presented below

Other Aspects of Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff Practiced

Recruitment and selection of teaching staff practices	Frequency	Percent
Selection based on experience	115	76.16
Direct sourcing by management instead of advertising	79	52.32
Interviewing recruits on subject content grounds	72	47.68
Consideration of recruits previous performance	67	44.37
Greater consideration of board of members (BOM) teachers	64	42.38
Consideration of the history of schools where the recruits taught	61	40.40
Recruitment based on referral networks or word of mouth	54	35.76
Involvement of HODs & subject specialists in the selection panel	50	33.11
Planned assessment and class observations	46	30.46
Consideration of non-academic experience	43	28.48
Moral conduct of recruit or discipline e.g. alcoholism	42	27.81
Selection based on needs assessment	35	23.18
Filling all the TSC advertised position as per the guidelines	30	19.87
Walk in applications	27	17.88
Talent considerations	22	14.57
Advertising vacancies widely	21	13.91
Consideration of salary demands of recruits	15	9.93
Assignment of mentor to new recruits	12	7.95
Deliberate recruitment of young and energetic teachers	7	4.64
Recruiting the best regardless of the gender	5	3.31
Faith considerations	4	2.65
Consideration of period of stay after graduation	3	1.99

The study findings presented in Table 4.5 show that 115 (76.16%) of the principals noted the selection of teaching staff based on experience, 79 (52.32%) mentioned direct sourcing of teaching by management instead of advertising, 72 (47.68%) observed that in their schools, recruits were interviewed on subject content grounds while 67 (44.37%) and 64 (42.38%) of the principals asserted that previous performance and greater consideration of BOM teachers

were some of the staff recruitment and selection practices employed in their schools respectively.

Those who reported that their schools considered the history of the schools where the recruits taught were 61 (40.40%). Approximately 54 (35.75%) of the principals indicated that recruitment in their schools was based on referral networks or word of mouth, 50 (33.11%) mentioned that departmental heads and subject specialists were involved in the selection panel, 46 (30.46%) pointed out that their schools conducted planned assessment and class observations during the selection process while 43 (28.48%) of the principals stated that consideration of non-academic experience such as attitude and performance in co-curricular activities was a part on their staff selection and recruitment practices.

About 42 (27.81%) of the principals observed that their schools scrutinized the moral conduct of recruit or discipline such as alcoholism history, 35 (23.18%) stated that staff selection was based on needs assessment, 30 (19.87%) noted that the filling of all the TSC advertised positions in their schools was undertaken as per the set guidelines while 27 (17.88%) and 22 (14.57%) of the principals argued that walk in applications and talents of recruits were considered. The findings also reveal that 21 (13.93%) of the principals reported that their schools emphasized on advertising vacancies widely, 15 (9.93%) noted the consideration of salary demands of recruits during the selection process, 12 (7.95%) underlined the assignment of mentors to new recruits, 7 (4.64%) indicated the deliberate recruitment of young and energetic teachers, 5 (3.31%) mentioned the recruitment of the best regardless of the gender while 4 (2.65%) and 3 (1.99%) of the principals pointed out that faith and period of stay after graduation considerations formed part of their staff selection and recruitment practices.

Based on these findings, it can be argued that apart from ensuring that teaching staff were selected and recruited based on their skills, qualifications, their competencies and also on merit guided by established policies, the management of the sampled schools considered several other aspects in their recruitment and selection process. The other aspects considered by these schools ranged from the selection of teaching staff based on experience, direct sourcing of teachers by management instead of advertising, interviewing recruits on subject content grounds and considering recruits' previous performance to taking in to account the recruits' talents and period of stay after graduation. Thus, it can be inferred that diverse practices characterized the recruitment and selection of teaching staff in the secondary schools considered in this study.

Ways of Improving Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff

The results presented in Table 4.6 show some of the possible ways of improving recruitment and selection of staff practices in the sampled schools as suggested by the principals. The findings demonstrate that 117 (90.73%) of the principals called for strict recruitment of teaching staff based on experience and qualification, 84 (62.25%) emphasized the need for employing more experienced teachers, 78 (51.66%) of the principals believed that experience and qualification and not years after graduation needed to be considered during the

recruitment and selection process while 63 (41.72%) and 60 (39.74%) of the principals considered proper background checks to determine performance of candidates in previous work stations and enhanced integrity and independence in the recruitment process as crucial. From the findings, 56 (37.09%) of the principals pinpointed the need for allowing longer probationary period for teachers to better understand their teaching methods, 55 (36.42%) believed that extensive advertisement of vacancies when they occur and on time was important, engaging the candidates in the entire recruitment process and not awarding marks based on certificates presented was suggested by 53 (35.10%) of the principals, 45 (29.80%) of them indicated that priority ought to be given on experience in specific subjects while equal number of principals, 44 (29.14%) suggested the allocation of more time for interviewing each candidate to make the process competitive and also hands on observation during interviews.

Other ways highlighted included the consideration of personality and role modelling, sufficient interviewing process, keeping a database of job seekers for future placement, consideration of teacher ambitions, taking into account the teachers' availability and also considering candidates who were multi-skilled and with extra courses. Adoption of the TSC manual or recruiting as per TSC and BOM guidelines/recruitment policy, the selection of a heterogeneous teaching force (communities and gender), involvement of administration in the interview process, considering KCSE grade first in teaching subjects and experience not years after graduation, avoiding nepotism as well as recruiting based on observations made during internship were measures suggested to improve the selection of the teaching staff in the sampled schools.

These findings were a pointer that there were several measures that could be taken by the management of the sampled schools to improve the process of recruiting and selecting their teaching staff in order to enhance academic performance. These improvements largely centred on the strict recruitment of the staff on the basis of their experience and qualification as a suggested by the majority of the principals.

Table 4.6: Ways of Improving Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff

Possible ways	Frequency	Percent
Strict recruitment on experience and qualification basis	117	90.73
Employment of more experienced teachers.	84	62.25
Consider experience and qualification and not years after graduation	78	51.66
Consider performance of candidates in previous work stations	63	41.72
Integrity and independence in the recruitment process	60	39.74
Allow longer probationary period for teachers	56	37.09
Extensive/timely advertisement of vacancies when they occur	55	36.42
Engage the candidates in the entire recruitment process	53	35.10
Prioritize experience in specific subjects	45	29.80
Allocation of more time for interviewing each candidate	44	29.14
Hands on observation during interview	44	29.14
Personality and role model	40	26.49
Keeping a database of job seekers for future placement	39	25.83
Consider teacher ambitions	31	20.53

Consider availability of the teacher	25	16.56
Consideration of candidates with extra skills/courses	23	15.23
Adopting the TSC manual/ recruitment policy	20	13.25
Selecting a heterogeneous teaching force	18	11.92
Avoid nepotism, embrace competence	9	5.96
Involve administration in the interview process	7	4.64
Consider K.C.S.E grade in teaching subjects	4	2.65
Recruitment based on observation made during internship	3	1.99

Model Assumptions Tests

Before estimating the different models in this study, various diagnostic tests were conducted. These tests were necessary in checking whether the assumptions of the ordinary linear regression model were met or not. This assisted in reducing the risks of obtaining biased, inefficient, and inconsistent parameter estimates. In this study, the normality test, multicollinearity test and linearity test were conducted.

Test for Normality

Parametric tests such as correlation and multiple regression analysis require that study variables have normal distributions since variables with substantial outliers can distort relationships and significance tests (Nguyen, 2019). Thus, normality tests were conducted in order to check whether the data on teaching staff recruitment and selection, teaching staff training and development, teaching staff compensation, teaching staff safety, school infrastructure as well as the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County were drawn from a normal distribution. This was necessary in order to ensure that there were no outliers that were likely to distort relationships and significance tests as this would affect the accuracy of inferences made.

The normality of the data was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The rule of the thumb was that the null-hypothesis of a normal distribution should not be rejected when the Kolmogorov-Smirnov p-values for the study variables were greater than 0.05. The results obtained as shown in Table 4.29 indicate that the data related to each of the independent variables was normally distributed as the significance values for all these cases were greater than 0.05. However, normal distribution was assumed for academic performance variable in line with the central limit theorem (CLT) which argues that methods which assume a normal distribution can be used for data that is not originally normally distributed as long as the sample used comprises of 30 observations or more.

Normality Test Results

Variable	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Recruitment and selection of teaching staff	1.450	151	0.130
Teaching staff training and development	1.245	151	0.090
Teaching staff compensation	1.347	151	0.053
Teaching staff safety	1.239	151	0.093
School infrastructure	1.032	151	0.237

Academic performance	2.055	151	0.000
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Test for Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity refers to a situation in which there is a strong association or correlation among the independent variables in a given study. When independent variables are strongly correlated, it is difficult to predict the effect that a particular independent variable has on the dependent variable (Zainodin, Noraini, & Yap, 2011). The assumption of the ordinary linear multiple regression is that the dataset does not suffer from multicollinearity, that is, the independent variables are not highly correlated with each other.

Hence, a multicollinearity test in this case was conducted to determine if the independent variables in the study namely teaching staff recruitment and selection, teaching staff training and development, teaching staff compensation as well as teaching staff safety were strongly correlated or not so that if the no multicollinearity assumption is not met, corrective actions can be undertaken. This is to ensure that the effects of each of these independent variables on the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County is determined.

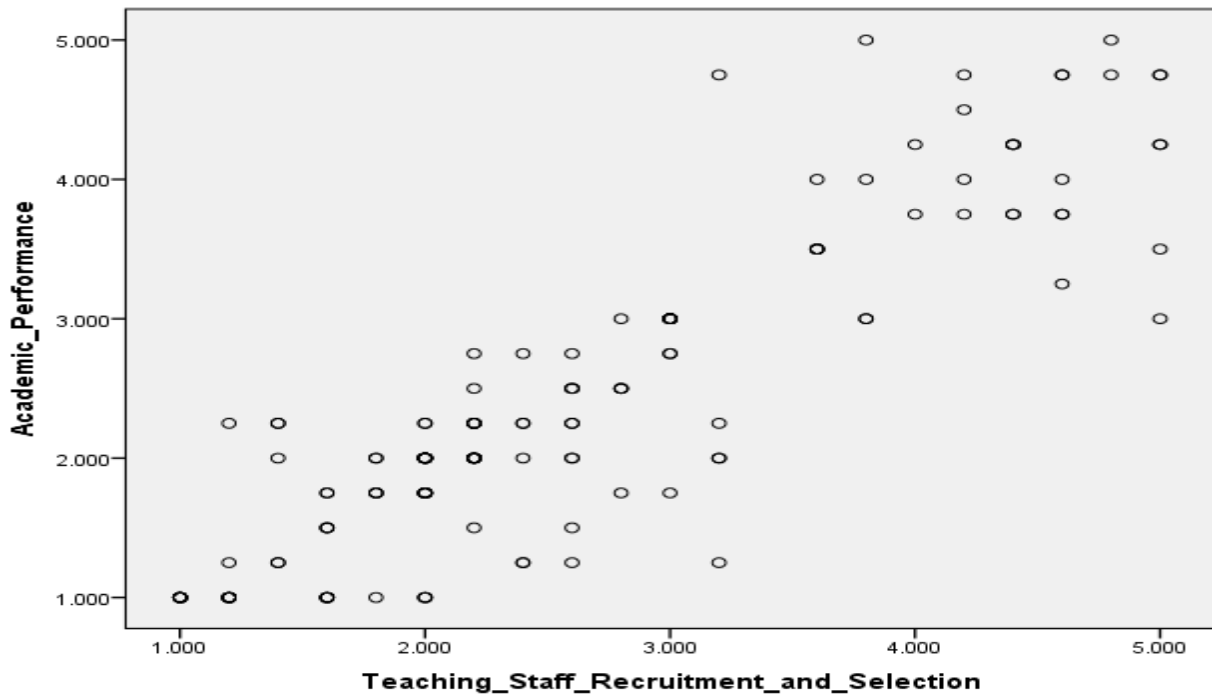
The results presented in Table 4.30 were crucial in aiding the determination as to whether the data suffered from multicollinearity issues by evaluating the VIF values. The assumption for multicollinearity is that, when the VIF value lies between 1 and 5, then there is no multicollinearity (Tamrat, 2017). Given that all the VIF values associated with each of the independent variables were less than 5, it was concluded that there was no case of multicollinearity among the independent variables in this study.

Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	VIF	1/VIF (Tolerance)
Recruitment and selection of teaching staff	2.044	0.489
Teaching staff training and development	2.193	0.456
Teaching staff compensation	1.739	0.575
Teaching staff safety	2.265	0.442

Tests of Linearity

Ordinary linear regression assumes that there is a linear relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. If the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables is not linear, the results of the regression analysis will underestimate the true relationship. Consequently, the linearity test was conducted to determine if the relationship between a given independent variable (teaching staff recruitment and selection, teaching staff training and development, teaching staff compensation as well as teaching staff safety) and the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County was linear or not. Scatter plots were used to test for linearity and to visually show whether there was a linear or curvilinear relationship between two continuous variables before carrying out the regression analysis.



Scatter Plot for the Relationship between Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff and Academic Performance

From the above scatter plot, it can be seen that there was a positive linear relationship between academic performance in secondary schools in Machakos County and the recruitment and selection of teaching staff since the data points fairly seem to follow a straight trend line going from the origin out to high x-and y-values, that is, the data points appeared to be arranged in the shape of an oval.

Influence of Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff on Academic Performance

Regression analysis was carried out to determine the nature of the relationship between the recruitment and selection of teaching staff and the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County. A bivariate linear regression model was used to quantify the influence of recruitment and selection of teaching staff in the sampled schools on their academic performance. In this case, the mean of responses for academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County for all respondents were regressed against the mean of responses for recruitment and selection of teaching staff in these schools for all the respondents as well. The following hypothesis was formulated and tested;

H₀₁: Recruitment and selection of teaching staff has no significant influence on the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County.

From the bivariate regression analysis conducted, three outputs were generated as shown below

Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff and Academic Performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate

1	.748a	0.560	0.557	0.735686		
a Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff						
ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	102.465	1	102.465	189.318	.000b
	Residual	80.644	149	0.541		
	Total	183.109	150			
a Dependent Variable: Academic Performance						
b Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff						
Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.490	0.149		3.276	0.001
	Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff	0.659	0.048	0.748	13.759	0.000
a Dependent Variable: Academic Performance						

Model Summary

The model summary results provided by the first output in Table 4.32 showed that recruitment and selection of teaching staff explained a considerable proportion of the variance in the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County. This finding is supported by the coefficient of determination or R Square of 0.560 which implied that 56.0% of the changes in the academic performance of secondary schools under study were attributed to changes in the recruitment and selection of teaching staff in these schools. The rest of the changes, 44.0%, in the academic performance of these schools were therefore, linked to other factors not considered in this study.

Goodness of Fit

The model fitness results presented as the second output in Table 4.32 were also evaluated in order to determine the significance of the model that was used to show the relationship between the recruitment and selection of teaching staff and the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County. The aim was to check whether the model fit the data used or how well it would predict a future set of observations. The calculated F statistic and its associated p value (significance value) were assessed where a p value less than 0.05 was an indication that the model was significant, otherwise insignificant. The findings obtained, therefore, showed that the model used was statistically significant in predicting the

relationship between the two study variables given ($F=189.318$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$).

Regression Coefficient

The third output in Table 4.32 showed the regression estimate (β coefficient) computed that assisted in determining if recruitment and selection of teaching staff significantly influenced the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County by observing its associated t statistic and p value. The findings demonstrated that recruitment and selection of teaching staff had a positive significant influence on the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County given ($\beta = 0.659$, $t = 13.759$, $p = .000$, $p<0.05$). These results meant that a unit improvement in the recruitment and selection of teaching staff would result to improved academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County by 0.659 units when all other factors were held constant. Given that the calculated p value was $0.000<0.05$, null hypothesis was thus rejected and an inference made that the recruitment and selection of teaching staff had a significant influence on the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County.

These findings compare with the sentiments of two of the KIIs (KI 1 and KI 4) who noted that this teaching staff recruitment and selection influenced academic performance. However, they are inconsistent with the views of KI 2, KI 3, KI 5 and KI 6 who argued that this HRM practice may not influence academic performance. With regards to previous studies, the findings were in support of the observation by Priya and Sundaram (2016) that performance improvement in organizations depended not only on well-functioning systems but also HRM strategies that resulted to the recruitment and retention of a committed and motivated workforce. The findings were also consistent with that of Kepha, Mukulu and Waititu (2015) who singled out recruitment and selection of staff as a major HRM practice that could influence organizational performance by impacting the level of employee performance in organizations. Based on the regression estimates generated, the following optimal model was fitted;

$$Y = 0.490 + 0.659 X_1$$

Where Y= Academic performance in Machakos County and X1 is Recruitment and selection of teaching staff

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Staff and Academic Performance of Schools

The study found that secondary schools in Machakos County largely laid emphasis on recruiting teaching staff who were competent and selected on merit basis. The schools also to a large extent ensured that the selection of their teaching staff was based on the skills and qualifications that the recruits had. In these schools, policies to guide the interview process in the course of recruiting their teaching staff had been established to a large extent. The schools also ensured that the notification of teaching vacancies in their schools was open for all. Generally, secondary schools in Machakos County had demonstrated commitment to recruiting qualified teaching staff who were not only competent and skilled but also deserved to be placed in those positions. This was done on the basis of established interview policies

besides ensuring that vacancies were made open for all qualified candidates.

The study also established that secondary schools in Machakos County considered other aspects of staff recruitment and selection such as the selection of teaching staff on the basis of their experience, managements' direct sourcing of teachers instead of advertising vacancies and also taking in to account recruits' performance track in previous work stations. From the findings obtained, the selection of competent and qualified teaching staff through a competitive recruitment process was perceived to influence the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County. This HRM practice was perceived to influence the academic performance of these schools in different ways such as enhancing the quality of teaching in schools and increasing teachers' confidence and efficiency in guiding students which ultimately led to improved academic results. Nonetheless, it emerged from the study that for competent and qualified teachers to produce good results, they had to be committed and dedicated in their work.

The correlation analysis results showed that recruitment and selection of teaching staff was positively and significantly associated with the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County. This association was found to be strong as confirmed by $r=.748$ and $p=0.000$. The regression analysis results ($\beta = 0.659$, $p = .000$) on the other hand confirmed that the academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County was positively and significantly influenced by the recruitment and selection of teaching staff. These findings implied that enhanced recruitment and selection of teaching staff would translate to improved academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County and vice versa. A calculated p value of 0.000 associated with the beta coefficient of recruitment and selection of teaching staff was a confirmation that this HRM practice significantly influenced the academic performance of these schools. On the basis of these findings, the null hypothesis was rejected and an inference made that recruitment and selection of teaching staff had a significant influence on academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County.

The study concluded that, secondary schools in Machakos County recruited and selected their teaching staff on a merit basis where skilled, qualified and competent staff were employed. That these schools had in place policies for guiding the process of interviewing recruits and notification of teaching vacancies was always made open for all. The study also concluded that the schools undertook other diverse actions such as the selection of teaching staff based on experience, direct sourcing of teachers by management, and also took in to account recruits' previous performance in other work stations, actions which were geared at getting the best team. The study further concluded that proper and competitive recruitment and selection of teaching staff led to improved academic performance of secondary schools in Machakos County by ensuring that schools had capable teachers who could efficiently discharge their duties to achieve set performance targets.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study only focused on recruitment and selection practices and since there are many other human resource management practices such as, work life balance, human resource

planning, talent management, employee involvement and retention which are likely to affect the academic performance of schools, a similar study can be undertaken to capture their effect. Studies that take in to account other intervening variables, discipline of the students, leadership qualities of principals, sponsorship of the schools where the sponsors are concerned about facilities can also be considered. This study was limited to secondary schools in Machakos County. Similar studies can be replicated in other counties where majority of the schools across all categories post quality results like Kiambu, Nyeri and Makueni for comparative purposes. The study further recommends for more in-depth studies that explore the various HRM practices and policies that are particular to the education sector and any emerging differences in their application in as far as the private and public sector is concerned. Studies that compare the application of HRM practices across different sectors can also be conducted so that different sectoral policies in this regard can be enhanced.

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