

**THE NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
DISCUSSION PAPER NO. 133**



TEACHER APPOINTMENT IN THE EAST SEPIK PROVINCE



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TEACHER APPOINTMENT IN THE EAST SEPIK PROVINCE

by

**Arnold Kukari, Patricia Paraide, Kapa Kelep-Malpo, Sebastian Mugup, and
Wilson Pes**

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First published in January 2012

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NRI Discussion Paper No. 133

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ISBN 9980 75 208 4
National Library Service of Papua New Guinea

ABCDE 20165432

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge the National Department of Education for giving its permission for the study to be carried out in selected provinces. Provincial Education Advisors' approval and support for the study to be carried out in the province is also acknowledged. We would like to especially thank the community and primary school teachers and the head teachers who completed and returned the survey instruments, and participated in the focus group interviews.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BoM	Board of Management
NDoE	National Department of Education
NRI	National Research Institute
PARS	Payroll and Related Services
PEB	Provincial Education Board
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RoDSS	Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets
TSA	<i>Teaching Service Act, 1995</i>
TSC	Teaching Service Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The process for appointing teachers to teaching positions in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is outlined in the *Teaching Service Act 1995* (consolidated to No. 20 of 1995) (TSA), the *Education Act 1983* (consolidated to No. 13 of 1995), and the *Teaching Service Commission Human Resource Information and Operations Manual*. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and the Provincial Education Board (PEB) are expected to comply with the relevant provisions of these laws and related policies when appointing teachers to teaching positions. However, not all PEBs comply with these laws and policies in their appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions. Some PEBs comply with some provisions, but systematically flout others. Anecdotal evidence and TSC data on teacher appointments indicated serious problems underlying the process and practice of teacher appointment at various levels of the education system of PNG.

East Sepik Province was identified as one of many provinces with a poor reputation in teacher appointments. Therefore, this study examined the process and practice of teacher appointment in this province to identify possible contributory factors. On the basis of the results, recommendations have been made to develop and implement appropriate interventions to improve the system.

Aims of the Study

The specific aims of the study were to:

- understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers and head teachers of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the East Sepik Province;
- identify the strengths, if any, of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province;
- identify the weaknesses, and the factors contributing to these weaknesses, in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province; and
- recommend appropriate strategies to improve and strengthen the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

Methodology

This study formed part of a larger study in eight of the 20 provinces of PNG. The teacher appointment processes and practices of two provinces from each of the four regions were examined. The provinces were selected on the basis of their reputations in teacher appointments. Of the two provinces from each region, one was selected for its good reputation in managing teacher appointment, and the other was selected for its poor reputation. East and West Sepik Provinces were selected from the Momase Region; East Sepik Province has a poor reputation in teacher appointment, while West Sepik Province has a good reputation. This study examined the practice and processes of teacher appointment in the East Sepik Province.

To examine teachers' lived experiences and perceptions of teacher appointment in the province, all teachers and head teachers teaching in community and primary schools at the time of the study were intended for survey. In addition, teachers in two urban and two rural schools were interviewed about their views on teacher appointment in the province, and its personal impact on them and on other teachers.

Unfortunately, the method of delivering surveys to schools did not yield the desired results. Although surveys were delivered to schools accessible by road, delivering surveys to very remote schools was difficult. Surveys for remote schools were left with the zone or cluster leaders to distribute, collect and send to NRI. Compliance with this request was poor, and many teachers did not receive their survey forms. Also, many teachers did not complete and return their surveys. This combination of factors produced a poor response rate.

Key Findings

1. Characteristics of teachers and head teachers

- i. About 81% of the teachers teaching in community and primary schools in the province were from the East Sepik Province. More than half of the teachers (58%) were between the ages of 25 and 40 years, 92% were teaching in rural schools, and the majority (71%) were teaching in nongovernment schools. More than half of the teachers (60%) had between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience, and 59% of them had been teaching in their current schools between 1 and 3 years.
- ii. About 86% of the head teachers were from the East Sepik Province. Most head teachers (69%) were over 40 years old, which indicates that the majority of community and primary schools were headed by older and more experienced teachers. The majority (60.5%) of head teachers were heading nongovernment schools, 93% were heading rural schools and 86% were men. A large proportion (65%) of the head teachers had between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience.
- iii. In sum, teachers are more likely to be appointed to a teaching position if they come from the East Sepik Province, have between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience and are between 25 and 40 years old. A teacher is more likely to be appointed as a head teacher if the teacher is a man, comes from the East Sepik Province, has between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience, and is over 40 years of age.

2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions

- i. A significant proportion (over 40%) of teachers and head teachers could see no strengths in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province. The remainder of teachers and head teachers were able to identify a number of strengths. The main strengths identified were: giving

preference to serving teachers in appointments; some teachers are appointed on merit; teachers are able to fight for their rights; and many schools are fully staffed.

- ii. The processes and practices of teacher appointment in the province were generally viewed as weak. The five main contributing factors identified are interrelated: failure by the TSC to print and distribute the *Special Education Gazette* to the province in a timely manner; noncompliance by the PEB with the provisions of teacher appointment in the TSA and related policies; failure by the PEB and the TSC to effectively and efficiently carry out their mandated roles and responsibilities in teacher appointment; lack of an effective and efficient appeals mechanism; and reliance by the PEB and its appointing officers on informal appointment processes.
- iii. Many teachers and head teachers said that teachers and head teachers were appointed through the *Special Education Gazette*, and they recognise that the PEB is the appointing authority in the province. However, a proportion of teachers (22%) and head teachers (9%) considered that appointments were made through nepotism and bribery, suggesting that corruption is embedded in the appointment process.
- iv. Data on the appointment of teachers suggested that the province was generally complying with the relevant provisions of the TSA. However, the apparent trend of teachers being appointed to teaching positions outside the required provisions of the TSA has allowed nepotism and corruption to infiltrate the appointment process and practice.
- v. Teachers and head teachers identified practices that are symptomatic of corruption in the process of teacher appointment: lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment of teachers; poor handling of teachers' appeals; forcing teachers to take up teaching positions for which they had not applied; placing teachers in the 'pool'; and teachers staying in one position for too long.
- vi. Generally, teachers and head teachers believed that teacher appointment in the province could be improved by being transparent and accountable, based on merit, and administered effectively and efficiently.

3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers

- i. Just over half of the teachers and head teachers had refused appointments during their careers. Forcing teachers to take up positions for which they had not applied, lack of an appeals process, nepotism and bribery in the appointment of teachers, lack of consideration of teachers' interests and welfare, and the late notification of postings all influence whether teachers and head teachers decide to refuse positions offered.

- ii. Appointments not according to teachers' preferences, family and personal reasons, and the location of schools were the main reasons that teachers gave for refusing appointments. Lack of basic services, security concerns, late appointments and eligibility and tenure issues were other reasons nominated. Head teachers were also concerned about these factors to a greater or lesser degree.
- iii. About 44% of teachers and head teachers said they would challenge appointments not according to their choice. However, because the appeals process is dysfunctional, the appellants normally wait in vain to receive the outcomes of their appeals. They may then refuse the appointment, settle for the offered position or a position in another school for fear of losing their pay, or even leave the profession.
- iv. If they refused appointments, teachers considered that the PEB often issued threats to put them off the payroll, placed teachers in other positions or put them in the 'pool' (which effectively means they are put off the payroll). Thus, the PEB was more inclined to use punitive measures to address teachers' refusal of appointments than to use the formal appeal processes stipulated under the TSA.

4. Resumption of teaching duties

- i. Late resumption of teaching duties by teachers and head teachers is a major problem underlying the resumption of duty process.
- ii. Apart from poor transport infrastructure, the rest of the factors nominated as contributing to late resumption of duties were related to the failure of the TSC and the PEB to effectively and prudently carry out their mandated functions in teacher appointment.
- iii. The logistics and costs of getting to schools, discontentment with teaching positions offered, personal and family reasons, late appointment and late notification of appointments were the main reasons given by teachers for resuming their duties late. Weather and road conditions and no accommodation at schools, although mentioned, were not considered major reasons for late resumption of duties.
- iv. Improving the logistics of getting to schools, appointing and notifying teachers early, and fairly considering teachers' welfare and interests when appointing teachers were the most common recommendations made by the teachers and head teachers to improve the current poor state of teachers' resumption of duties.
- v. Strong relationships exist between the late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* and the late appointment and notification of teachers; the lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment process; the poor

logistical support; the late resumption of duties by teachers; and the late submission of Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets to payroll services.

5. Proposed changes to the teacher appointment process

- i. The most common changes proposed by teachers and head teachers were: financing teachers' transfer costs to schools; replacing unprofessional and dishonest appointment officers; considering teachers' rights and interests in appointments; eliminating corrupt practices; providing incentives to teach in remote schools; and improving the efficiency of the notification process.

Recommendations

1. Printing and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette*

Recommendation 1.1

That the PEB initiates and fosters a dialogue with the TSC to develop and implement a time-bound **action plan** that ensures that the *Special Education Gazette* is printed and distributed to the provinces by the end of June each year.

2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions

Recommendation 2.1

That the PEB and the TSC develop and implement a time-bound **teacher appointment action plan** with clear deliverables for every calendar year.

Recommendation 2.2

That the PEB comply with all the relevant provisions of the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* in the appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions in the province.

Recommendation 2.3

That the TSC and the PEB eliminate nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers by ensuring all appointments are made through a duly constituted PEB meeting.

Recommendation 2.4

That the PEB effectively addresses nepotism and corruption by taking disciplinary action against officers who engage in such activities, who fail to comply with the relevant provisions of the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* and who fail to perform their responsibilities as described in the **teachers appointment and logistics action plans**.

Recommendation 2.5

That the PEB institute a confidential and a non-punitive process through which teachers, head teachers, BoM, PEB members, and parents and citizens can report cases of nepotism or corruption in the process and practice of teacher appointment.

Recommendation 2.6

That the PEB develops and communicates to all teachers, school agencies, BoM, parents and citizens, standard officers, district education advisors, church education secretaries and local leaders, the criteria for appointing teachers to teaching and head teacher positions.

Recommendation 2.7

That the PEB ensures that teachers and head teachers are appointed to teaching positions and administrative positions with due consideration for their personal welfare and interests; eligibility for promotion; rights of tenure; and potential risks to themselves and their families.

Recommendation 2.8

That the PEB, in collaboration with the TSC, develops and maintains a **database** of all current teaching positions in the province, the teachers occupying the positions (and their particulars), the vacant positions, and the movement of positions from school to school.

Recommendation 2.9

That the PEB considers, on merit, all recommendations for teacher appointments from church agency personnel, standard officers and the BoM.

Recommendation 2.10

That the TSC provides increased financial incentives for teachers in remote schools, and that these incentives are paid on a fortnightly basis as part of teachers' salaries.

Recommendation 2.11

That the PEB prepares and presents an **Annual Teacher Appointment Report** to the TSC and the NEB.

3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers

Recommendation 3.1

That the PEB develops and implements an effective, transparent and time-bound **appeals process and an action plan**, if none currently exists. This process must state clearly when appeals will be received, the length of appeal hearings, and when and how the outcomes will be communicated to appellants.

Recommendation 3.2

That the PEB establishes an **Appeals Board** of non-PEB members. The board and members should have clear roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation 3.3

That the PEB and the TSC abolish the ‘teachers’ pool’.

4. Resumption of teaching duties

Recommendation 4.1

That the PEB develops and puts in place a time-bound **logistics action plan** that includes all required activities, including travel costs and arrangements for teachers transferring to new positions, monitoring of teachers resumption of duty in schools, completing and submitting RoDSS, and reporting on the resumption of duty by teachers to the PEB. The person(s) responsible for each activity and the required timeframe for completion must be clearly identified for monitoring and accountability purposes.

Recommendation 4.2

That the PEB budgets yearly for teachers’ travel costs and mobilises all resources necessary to effectively implement the logistics action plan. All funds must be acquitted and reported in the **Annual Teacher Appointment Report**, which must be submitted to the TSC and the PEB for ratification by March every year.

5. Amendment of the *Teaching Service Act 1995* and the *Education Act 1995*

Recommendation 5.1

That the TSC and the PEB amend the *Teaching Service Act 1995* and the *Education Act 1995* to include mandatory provisions for the PEB to develop and implement time-bound teacher appointment, logistics, and appeals action plans, and to produce an Annual Teacher Appointments Report for the TSC and the PEB by March each year.

Recommendation 5.2

That the TSC amends the *Teaching Service Act* 1995 to include provisions that allow implementing officers to be held accountable by the PEB if they fail to carry out their responsibilities as stipulated in the teacher appointment, logistics, and appeals action plans.

6. Respect and strengthen church–government partnerships

Recommendation 6.1

That the roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers to teaching positions be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoM, Parents and Citizens associations, PEB members, and all Provincial Education Officers.

Recommendation 6.2

That the PEB duly consider the views and recommendations of church agencies on teacher appointments.

1: INTRODUCTION

Background

The process for appointing teachers to teaching positions in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is outlined in the *Teaching Service Act* 1995 (consolidated to No. 20 of 1995), the *Education Act* 1983 (Consolidated to No. 13 of 1995), and the *Teaching Service Commission Human Resource Information and Operations Manual*. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and the Provincial Education Board (PEB) are expected to comply with the relevant provisions of these laws and related policies when appointing teachers to teaching positions.

For this purpose, the TSC should prepare, print and dispatch the *Special Education Gazette* to the provinces and all educational institutions in a timely manner. The *Gazette* contains vacant teaching positions in all educational institutions under the National Department of Education (NDoE) mandate. Teachers apply for teaching positions, and the PEB, in consultation with head teachers, the Boards of Management, the Boards of Governors and church agencies, processes the applications and should notify teachers of the outcome before they take their recreational leave. The PEB should effectively manage the movement of teachers to schools to ensure that they resume their duties on time and submit their Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets (RoDSS), and to ensure continuous payment of the teachers' salaries.

Unfortunately, the TSC and some PEBs have not always met these obligations, which has created and perpetuated a multitude of problems. These issues continue to reduce teachers' motivation and commitment to their teaching duties, the quality of student learning and children's access to, and participation in, schooling. The Public Sector Reform Management Team highlighted this problem in its audit of the administration of Eastern Highlands, Morobe, West New Britain and Milne Bay Provinces, in 2008. The team, amongst other findings, noted a lack of compliance by some provinces with the *Teaching Service Act*, 1995 (TSA) and related policies in the appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions (Arek, 2008).

The noncompliance with the TSA and the *Education Act* and related policies in the appointment of teachers is a common practice amongst the PEBs and, to some extent, the TSC. This noncompliance is a major contributing factor to the host of problems experienced in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions. These problems include delays (delay factors), late resumption of duties (resumption factors), and corruption (corruption factors). The continued failure of the TSC to print and deliver the *Special Education Gazette* to the provinces in a timely manner causes problems with teacher appointments.

The *Gazette* should be printed and sent to the provinces in September or October each year, and provinces are expected to administer and complete their teacher

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appointments by November. However, the provinces often fail to appoint their teachers by November and delay the process until December, or later. Teacher appointments are often finalised in December or, in many cases, just before the start of the school year.

Interference in the appointment of teachers by education agencies also causes delays in teacher appointments. Arek, (2008:2) in her report on the audit of four provinces, noted that the public sector audit team found “most education agencies were interfering in teachers’ postings and appointments”. Politicians were also causing delays in getting teachers to schools by meddling with the appointment of teachers by PEBs. Korugl (2008) reported that four secondary schools in the Western Highlands Province faced closure due to political interference in the appointment of teachers, particularly head teachers.

In addition, communities were also increasingly involved in the appointment of teachers. Examples include the appointment of the principals of Dregerhafen Technical and Grace Memorial Secondary schools in the Morobe Province, and Hagen Park Secondary School in the Western Highlands Province. Gumuno (2008a) reported that locals welded the gates of Mt. Hagen Secondary School, which prevented teachers from gaining entry to begin the school year. Locals wanted the substantive school principal to remain at the school and requested the PEB to rescind the decision to transfer him to another school.

The absence of an effective and efficient process for teacher appeals also causes delays in teachers taking up their positions. Teachers often challenge the decisions of the PEB if they perceive that their appointments do not follow the correct procedures, either on merit or according to their interests. For example, about 600 teachers in the Enga Province were unhappy with their postings because they believed that “their postings had been muddled up and not done according to the teachers’ requests and choices” (Lari, 2008:4).

In most provinces, lengthy delays in notifying teachers of the outcomes of their appeals often occur. In other cases, teachers wait in vain for an outcome, and therefore many decide to leave teaching or look for teaching positions in other provinces. Even when appeals are upheld, teachers often start their school years very late. When serving teachers decide to leave, schools to which these teachers were appointed either have no or fewer teachers. In such cases, provinces resort to appointing unqualified teachers (Muri, 2008) or recruit teachers from other provinces to fill the vacancies (Gumar, 2011; Kivia, 2011).

Moreover, the failure of the TSC and the PEB to ensure effective, efficient, transparent and accountable teacher appointments contributes to perceptions that the entire process and practice of teacher appointments is corrupt (Philemon, 2010; Tiamu, 2010). Philemon (2010:4) reported that the Morobe Provincial Education Board “has been accused of foul play, irregularities and abnormalities in the appointment of teachers ...” Further, Philemon reported that the Regional

Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Teachers Association, Mr. Mathew Pobaya, claimed, “the Provincial Education Board had overlooked the tenure appointment of teachers, the reclassification of their positions, the substantive position holders and used appointments as a form of punishment”. The TSC was concerned about this situation and, in a letter to the Provincial Education Adviser, stated “... you have totally ignored the legitimate processes and procedures and failed to give clear advice to the Provincial Education Board on teachers’ appointments under the *Teaching Service Act* and the *Education Act*” (Tiamu, 2010:6).

The above factors contribute directly to the late notification of appointments to teachers, and the late resumption of their teaching duties. Other contributing factors to late resumption of duties include poor school infrastructure (e.g. teacher housing, water supply and sanitation) (Anis, 2008; Gumar, 2008), bad weather (Manuk, 2008) and disputes over land on which the schools are situated.

The problems highlighted here have been the norm over the last decade and permeate the whole process and practice of teacher appointment and deployment. These problems, according to Kukari, *et. al.* (2011), are worsened by a lack of clarity, duplication and division within the TSC and within the National Education Board’s role in teacher appointments stipulated under the *Teaching Service Act*, 1995 and the *Education Act*, 1995. This situation creates confusion amongst teachers and is a major contributing factor to the problems with teacher appointments experienced every school year.

East Sepik Province was identified as one of many provinces with a poor reputation in teacher appointments. This reputation is characterised by claims of corruption in the process of teacher appointments, late appointments, late notification of teachers of appointments, late resumption of duties by teachers, and late submission of Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets (RoDSS) to Payroll and Related Services (PARS) for the processing of teachers’ salaries.

Aims of the Study

The specific aims of the study were to:

- understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers and head teachers of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province;
- identify the strengths, if any, of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province;
- identify the weaknesses, and the factors contributing to these weaknesses, in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province; and
- recommend appropriate strategies to improve and strengthen the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

Methodology

This study formed part of a larger study in 8 of the 20 provinces of PNG. The teacher appointment processes and practices of two provinces from each of the

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four regions were examined. The provinces were selected on the basis of their reputations in teacher appointment. Of the two provinces from each region, one was selected for its good reputation in managing teacher appointments, and the other was selected for its poor reputation. East and West Sepik Provinces were selected from the Momase Region; East Sepik Province has a poor reputation in teacher appointment, while West Sepik Province has a good reputation. This study examined the practice and processes of teacher appointment in the East Sepik Province.

Research approach

A case study design was used to plan the study and collect the data. This design was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the process and practice of teacher appointment and the meaning of the process for community and primary school teachers and head teachers in the province. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Triangulation of methods improved the reliability and validity of the data.

Sample

To examine teachers' lived experiences and perceptions of teacher appointment in the province, all teachers and head teachers teaching in community and primary schools at the time of the study were intended for survey, but only a small proportion actually completed the survey (see Table 1). In addition, teachers in two urban and two rural schools were interviewed about their views on teacher appointment in the province and its personal impact on them and on other teachers.

Table 1: Teacher and head teacher population and sample

Community and primary school teachers	Population (N)	Sample (%)
Teachers	1367	250 (18)
Head teachers	253	43 (17)

Data collection

All community and primary school teachers were intended for survey with a questionnaire on teacher appointment, with a response rate of 18 percent. Head teachers of all community and primary schools were intended to be given the same questionnaire (17% response). Many questionnaires were not distributed, completed and returned because of the remoteness of many schools in some parts of the Ambunti-Drekikir, Wewak, Yangoru-Saussia and Wosera-Gawi districts. Survey forms for remote schools were left with the zone or cluster leaders to distribute, collect and send to NRI. Unfortunately, many survey forms were not received by teachers. This low level of support by the Provincial Education Office (PEO) in administering, collecting and sending the questionnaires to NRI was a major contributing factor to the poor response rate. In addition, many teachers who

received questionnaires failed to complete and return them, which is possibly a reflection of teachers' poor attitude towards research.

Focus group interviews were also conducted with teachers and head teachers in two urban and two rural schools.

Data analysis

Qualitative data from the survey was categorised into meaningful themes. The surveys were then coded using a prepared code book, which contained the themes and a code for each theme. Once coding was completed, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software was used to analyse the data. Frequencies of the coded themes in the answers to each question and variable were then generated and interpreted.

2: PROVINCIAL PROFILE

This profile provides a provincial and district context for the study to help understand the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

Background

East Sepik Province is one of the four provinces of the Momase region of PNG. The province shares a common boundary with the West Sepik, Madang, Enga and Southern Highlands Provinces. The physical geography consists of mountains, rivers (including the Sepik River, one of the biggest rivers in PNG), plains, savannah grasslands and thick forests. An abundance of fertile land is used for a variety of purposes. The province contains some of the most remote and challenging areas in PNG, which have remained isolated from the outside world for decades. The delivery of services to these places, particularly along the Sepik River at the intersection between the West Sepik, Madang, Enga and Southern Highlands Provinces, and the outlying islands presents major challenges. For example, public servants often lack motivation and willingness to serve in these remote places. These areas remain underdeveloped and almost all have no education coverage. Children in these areas therefore do not attend school, and have little likelihood of ever going to school. Although transport infrastructure is satisfactory, travel to these remote places from Wewak, Maprik or Angoram is quite expensive.

The province has established elementary schools, community and primary schools, high and secondary schools, vocational centres, and flexible and open distance education centres to provide opportunities for educational access at all levels of the education system, particularly at the basic education level. By 2008, the province had established 273 elementary schools, 48 community schools, 197 primary schools, 11 provincial high schools, 4 secondary schools, and 9 vocational centres (National Research Institute, 2010).

Districts

East Sepik Province is divided into six districts: Wewak, Angoram, Yangoru-Saussia, Wosera-Gawi, Ambunti-Drekikir and Maprik. Except for Wewak and Maprik, the other districts remain underdeveloped. These districts have poor basic services because of law-and-order problems and lack of transparency and accountability by elected leaders in delivering basic services. Most parts of the Ambunti-Drekikir and Angoram districts are inaccessible by road due to geographical terrain and swamps. In the Wewak district, the outer islands are often neglected because of access difficulties. In the Yangoru-Saussia and Maprik districts, some local-level government council areas are also inaccessible by road. Thus, the decisions of public servants, including teachers, to work in these districts are often influenced by factors such as poor transport infrastructure, lack of government services, and imposing geographical terrain.

Community and Primary Schools

The province has a total of 250 schools (53 community schools and 197 primary schools) throughout the four districts, which are either run by the government or church agencies. More community and primary schools are run by the church agencies than by the government (see Table 2). A partnership to provide basic education is growing between the churches and the government. This partnership should include consultation about the appointment of teachers to teaching positions.

Ten of the schools are classified as urban schools and 240 are classified as rural schools by the NDoE (see Table 2). Thus, over 90% of teachers in the province teach in rural schools. This distribution mix presents a challenge for the PEB when appointing teachers to teaching and head teacher positions, because many positions are in very remote schools with difficult access.

Table 2: The distribution of community and primary schools in East Sepik Province

District	Government schools	Church agency schools	Urban schools	Rural schools
Angoram	30	33	1	62
Ambunti-Drekikir	20	27	1	46
Wewak	16	30	6	40
Yangoru-Saussia	15	20	1	34
Wosera-Gawi	8	22	0	30
Maprik	16	13	1	28
Total	105	145	10	240

Note: Three schools were not classified under any of the districts

3: TEACHER APPOINTMENT

Characteristics of Teachers and Head Teachers

Of the 250 teacher respondents, 114 (46%) were men and 136, (54%) were women, while the head teachers' sample (n = 40) consisted of 37 (86%) men and 6, (14%) women. The authors consider that the number of men and women in the teachers' sample reflects more the attitudes of male and female teachers towards the completion of surveys, rather than actual proportions. Although the sample of head teachers was small, its composition largely reflects the dominance of men in head teachers' positions in the province, and the bias against the appointment of women.

Teaching locations of teachers and head teachers

Head teachers and teachers were asked to indicate the location of their school as either an urban or a rural school (see Table 3). This data agrees with the official classification of community and primary schools in the province (see Table 2). Thus, most of the views expressed by respondents about the appointment of teachers in the province are those of rural teachers.

Table 3: Teaching locations nominated by survey respondents

Teacher type & location	n (%)
Teachers	
Urban	20 (8%)
Rural	230 (92%)
Total	250
Head teachers	
Urban	3 (7%)
Rural	40 (93%)
Total	43

Agency of primary schools in which teachers taught

Both government and church agencies play an important role in the appointment of teachers. Each agency participates in the appointment of teachers to teaching positions, which affects the effectiveness, efficiency, location and type of appointments. Most of the teachers (71%) and head teachers (61%) were employed in church agency schools (see Table 4). The data reflects the fact that 58% of community and primary schools are owned by church agencies. Most of these schools are located in rural, and remote areas of the province which are difficult to access.

Table 4: Agency of community and primary schools in which teachers and head teacher respondents taught

Teachers			Head teachers		
Agency	N	%	Agency	N	%
Government	72	29.0	Government	17	39.5
Catholic	67	27.0	Lutheran/Evangelical	14	32.6
Assembly of God	27	10.8	Catholic	10	23.2
Anglican	7	2.8	Anglican	2	4.7
Seventh Day Adventist	5	2.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
United Church	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Other	71	28.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	250	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable

Age of teachers

The ages of teachers influence their choice of positions. Most of the teachers in community and primary schools in the province were below 40 years of age (see Table 5), and so may be married with young children. This factor is a major consideration in teachers' decisions about appointments. In contrast, most (69%) of the schools were headed by older teachers. The head teachers may also be married with children. In the province, older and more experienced teachers are given preference for head teacher positions. These head teachers are usually men, over 40 years of age, married, and from the East Sepik Province (see Tables 5 and 8).

Table 5: Age of teacher and head teacher respondents

Teachers			Head teachers		
Age group	N	%	Age group	N	%
20 or less	1	0.4	20 or less	n.a	n.a
20–25	38	15.5	20–25	1	2.3
26–30	59	24.0	26–30	1	2.3
31–35	37	15.0	31–35	2	5.0
36–40	47	19.1	36–40	9	21.4
41–45	34	14.0	41–45	8	19.0
46–50	12	5.0	46–50	8	19.0
Over 50	18	7.0	Over 50	13	31.0
Total	246	100	Total	42	100

n.a = not applicable

Teaching experience of teachers and head teachers

The survey also captured the teachers' and the head teachers' teaching experience. About one-third of teachers had less than 10 years of experience and only a small percentage (7.2%) had more than 30 years of experience (see Table 6). In contrast, most of the head teachers (65.1%) had between 11 and 30 years teaching experience. Thus, both age and experience affect appointments to teaching. Especially for head teachers, more experience is related to the likelihood of appointment.

Table 6: The teaching experience of teachers and head teachers

Years	Teachers		Years	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
5 yrs or less	10	4.0	5 yrs or less	2	4.6
6–10	73	29.2	6–10	3	7.0
11–15	39	15.6	11–15	3	7.0
16–20	25	10.0	16–20	5	11.6
21–25	35	14.0	21–25	11	25.6
26–30	50	20.0	26–30	9	20.9
31–35	17	6.8	31–35	10	23.3
Over 35	1	0.4	Over 35	n.a	n.a
Total	250	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable

Number of years of experience of teachers and head teachers at their current schools

The number of years that teachers teach in particular schools is a good indicator of tenure positions and turnover of teaching staff. Fifty-nine percent of the teachers and 41.9% of the head teachers had been teaching in their current schools for 1–3 years. Most of the other teachers had been teaching in their current schools for more than three years, but 18.6% of head teachers had been at their schools less than a year (see Table 7).

The data suggest that while the province may be complying somewhat with tenure provisions in the TSA, it was also willing to keep some teachers and head teachers longer than three years in the same school. This apparent contradiction and lack of consistency in the application of tenure regulations also contributes to the perceptions amongst teachers of corruption and lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment process.

Table 7: Number of years of experience of teachers and head teachers at their current schools

Years	Teachers		Years	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Less than 1 year	14	5.7	Less than 1 yr	8	18.6
1–3	146	59.0	1–3	18	41.9
4–6	46	18.7	4–6	9	20.9
7–9	15	6.1	7–9	5	11.6
10–12	13	5.3	10–12	1	2.3
13–15	5	2.0	13–15	2	4.7
16–18	2	1.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
19–21	2	1.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Over 21	3	1.2	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	246	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable

Home provinces of teachers and head teachers

Teachers and head teachers were asked to specify their home provinces to ascertain the origins of community and primary school teachers teaching in the province. Most teachers (81.1%) and head teachers (86.2%) in community and primary schools were from the East Sepik Province (Table 8), while a small proportion were from almost all the other provinces of PNG. The lack of basic services in the remote communities of most districts, the swampy Sepik Plains and rugged, mountainous terrain may deter teachers from other provinces. Also, the provincial education administration may find it easier to recruit teachers from the home province.

Table 8: The home provinces of teachers and head teachers

Home province	Teachers		Home province	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
East Sepik	202	81.1	East Sepik	37	86.2
Sandaun	11	4.4	East New Britain	1	2.3
East New Britain	5	2.0	Manus	1	2.3
Western	4	1.6	Sandaun	1	2.3
New Ireland	3	1.2	Madang	1	2.3
Madang	3	1.2	Morobe	1	2.3
Morobe	3	1.2	Western	1	2.3
Southern Highlands	3	1.2	n.a	n.a	n.a
Milne Bay	3	1.2	n.a	n.a	n.a
Western Highlands	2	0.8	n.a	n.a	n.a
Eastern Highlands	2	0.8	n.a	n.a	n.a
Gulf	2	0.8	n.a	n.a	n.a
Manus	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Autonomous Region of Bougainville	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Simbu	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a

Table 8 (continued)

Teachers			Head teachers		
Home province	N	%	Home province	N	%
Enga	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Central	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Oro	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	249	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable

Appointment of Teachers to Teaching and Head Teacher Positions

How teachers are appointed to teaching positions

Community and primary school teachers and head teachers were asked to describe in their own words how teachers were appointed to teaching positions. About 50% of the teachers and 35% of head teachers were of the view that teachers were appointed through the *Special Education Gazette* (see Table 9). Another 24% of teachers and 39.5% of head teachers said teachers were appointed by the PEB, some (9.3%) based on recommendations from the BoM, according to the head teachers. For example, one teacher said, “Teachers apply for schools ... through the vacancy gazette ... and get appointed to teaching positions by the PEB”.

These data suggest that the province is using correct procedures in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions. However, the process of appointing teachers to teaching and head teacher positions is not totally transparent and accountable: 22% of teachers and 9.3% of head teachers stated that teachers were appointed through nepotism and bribery (see Table 9). One of the teachers said, “Teachers get appointed mostly through bribery and whom you know or through the *wantok* system mostly practiced in PNG”.

Some teachers (2.4%) and head teachers (7%) thought that teachers were often forced to take up positions for which they had not applied (see Table 9). Thus, some teacher appointments appear to be made outside the formal procedures. This apparent reliance on informal procedures by the PEO entrenches corruption in teacher appointment in the province.

Table 9: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of teacher appointment

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Through the <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	122	49.6	By PEB	17	39.5
By PEB	59	24.0	Through the <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	15	34.9
Through nepotism	35	14.0	Through nepotism	4	9.3

Table 9 (continued)

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Through bribery	20	8.0	BoM recommendation	4	9.3
Forced to take up positions	6	2.4	Forced to take up positions	3	7.0
BoM recommendation	n.a	n.a	Through bribery	n.a	n.a
Other	4	2.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	246	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable; BoM = Boards of Management

Advice of postings

Late resumption of teaching duties by teachers is a persistent problem, which is often caused by, amongst other factors, the late notification of teachers of their appointments for the following school year. The earliest time at which teachers can be advised of their postings for the following year to ensure they resume their duties on time is late November or December. However, this rarely appears to occur, because a total of 80.3% of teachers and 88.4% of head teachers said that notification of appointments was late to varying degrees (see Table 10). Teacher postings are often finalised while teachers are on holidays and they learn about their postings on their return, or the postings are delayed and finalised at the beginning of the school year.

Table 10: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers about advice of postings

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
January/beginning of school year	80	33.6	January/beginning of school year	12	27.9
Late November/December	47	19.7	At resumption/first week of school	11	25.6
A few weeks before resumption week	44	18.5	During Christmas vacation	10	23.3
Always very late	33	13.9	Late November/December	5	11.6
During Christmas vacation	28	11.8	Always very late	3	7.0
At resumption/first week of school	6	2.5	A few weeks before resumption week	2	4.6
Total	238	100	Total	43	100

Teachers must wait for their postings to be confirmed before moving to their new schools. One teacher said, “Teachers were normally advised of their postings very late ... about a week before the commencement of the school year. Teachers must be advised two or three weeks before the commencement of the school year so that teachers know in advance and get themselves ready to take up their positions”.

The late notification of appointments often leads to other problems, such as the late submission of RoDSS, rushed implementation of curricula, and poor quality of learning.

How teachers are notified of their postings

Teachers and head teachers said that they were notified of their postings mainly through informal means. A large proportion of teachers (76.5%) and head teachers (86%) stated that they were informed of their teaching appointments through the radio (see Table 11). Most of the remaining teachers and head teachers learned about their postings by a variety of informal means: by enquiring at the provincial headquarters; from their fellow teachers; through friends on the street or others who had heard about their appointment (see Table 11). Only 2.4% of teachers and 2.3% of head teachers indicated that they received written notification.

The late processing of teacher appointments is a major contributing factor to the informal way that most teachers are notified of their appointments. One of the teachers said she learned about her posting: “Not through a formal notification but I had to travel to the provincial headquarters to see the posting list myself”.

Table 11: How teachers and head teachers are notified of their appointments

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Through the radio	189	76.5	Through the radio	37	86.0
Through enquiries at provincial headquarters	34	13.7	Through enquiries at the provincial headquarters	2	4.7
Through fellow teachers	9	3.6	Through others who heard about their appointment	2	4.7
Through friends on the street	6	2.4	Written notification	1	2.3
Written notification	6	2.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Through others who heard about the appointment	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Other	2	1.0	Other	1	2.3
Total	247	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable

Consideration of the interests of teachers and head teachers in the appointment process

A section of the application form for teacher appointment encourages teachers to state their preferences to guide decisions on appointments. Some teachers also write additional letters to express their interest in and support their choice of teaching positions. The majority of teachers and head teachers felt that their interests were either not considered at all in appointment decisions, or were only considered sometimes. Only 12.7% of the teachers and 14% of the head teachers believed that teachers' interests were always considered in the appointment of teachers to teaching positions (see Table 12). Teachers were particularly concerned about this lack of consideration: "No because we are not posted to where we applied to teach. They never consider our special motives such as wife/husband working with other departments" (male teacher).

This inconsistency in the consideration of teachers' interests in the appointment process is likely to contribute to the protests by teachers over their postings, the refusal by teachers to take up the awarded positions, the late resumption of duties, and even teachers leaving the profession.

Table 12: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of the consideration of their interests in the appointment process

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Yes	31	12.7	Yes	6	14
No	131	53.7	No	31	72
Sometimes	82	33.6	Sometimes	6	14
Total	244	100	Total	43	100

Acceptance of Appointments by Teachers

Refusal of appointments by teachers and head teachers

Not all teachers accept the positions they are offered. Just over half of the teachers and head teachers indicated that they have refused teaching appointments during their careers (see Table 13). The PEB and the TSC should be concerned about the large proportion of teachers and head teachers who refuse their appointments, because it implies that teachers and head teachers are increasingly becoming dissatisfied with the appointment process. Factors that affect the refusal of appointments may include: teachers being forced to take up teaching positions for which they had not applied; teacher appeals not being considered; nepotism and bribery in the appointment of teachers; teachers' welfare and interests not being considered; and late notification of postings (see below).

Table 13: Refusal of appointments by teachers and head teachers

Responses	TEACHERS		HEAD TEACHERS		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Yes	124	52	Yes	22	51.2
No	113	48	No	21	48.8
Total	237	100	Total	43	100

Reasons for refusing appointments

Teachers and head teachers who at sometime in their teaching career refused to take up their teaching appointments were asked to give the reasons for their refusal. Many teachers (41.6%) and head teachers (44%) refused to take up their teaching appointments on the grounds that the appointments were not according to their choice (see Table 14). The interviews also revealed that this was the most common reason for teachers refusing to take up their appointments. For example, one of the teachers said:

I refused to take up the position because I did not apply for the position which I was asked to take up. They should consider my application. If they are forcing us to take up positions then why do we have to waste our time applying for positions?

Another 21.2% of teachers and 28% of head teachers indicated that they refused their appointments because their family and personal problems were not considered in the appointment process: 'I have been posted to a school where I have not applied for and my own kids have no classes to attend at that particular school' (male teacher).

Location of schools was given by 14.4% of the teachers as the reason for refusing their appointment, but only 4% of the head teachers indicated that this was a contributing factor to their decisions (see Table 14). Location was particularly important for female teachers, as this comment illustrates: "Because the school I was posted to was too far for me and too, I am a female and there were also problems with the teaching position so I refused".

Location of the school is closely linked to security concerns, lack of government or other services, and lack of accommodation and toilet facilities. In total, 13% of the teachers and 12% of the head teachers revealed that these were the reasons for refusing their appointments. Only a small percentage of teachers (8.3%) refused their appointments due either to eligibility and tenure issues or late appointment. For the head teachers, issues of eligibility and tenure for teachers was the third most common reason for refusal of appointment; the prestige and the privileges attached to these administrative positions are desirable, and aspiring head teachers value job security.

The most common reasons that teachers refuse appointments — appointments not consistent with teachers' choices, family and personal issues, and the location of schools — are related to other reasons given (i.e. security concerns, lack of basic services, and eligibility and tenure issues). However, these issues that are important to teachers are not acknowledged and adequately addressed during the teacher appointment process.

Table 14: The reasons given by teachers and head teachers for refusing appointments

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Appointment not teachers' choice	55	41.6	Appointment not teachers' choice	11	44
Family/personal problems	28	21.2	Family/personal Problems	7	28
Location of schools	19	14.4	Eligibility& tenure issues	2	8
Security concerns	9	7.0	Lack of government & other services	2	8
Eligibility& tenure issues	7	5.3	Security concerns	1	4
Lack of government & other services	6	4.5	Location of schools	1	4
Late appointment	4	3.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
No accommodation/toilet facilities	2	1.5	n.a	n.a	n.a
Other	2	1.5	Other	1	4
Total	132	100	Total	25	100

n.a = not applicable

Actions taken by teachers and head teachers if appointments are not according to their choice

About 45% of teachers and head teachers stated that they would challenge an appointment that was not of their choice (see Table 15). Usually, they appeal against the decision of the PEB. However, as noted earlier, appeals are often not heard by the PEB and appellants lack outcomes from their appeals. Therefore, some teachers (35.7%) and head teachers (34.9%) refuse to take up the positions awarded by the PEB (see Table 15). For example, one of the male teachers said, "I would not take it and request for another school. If my request is unsuccessful, I'll go on leave without pay". However, a smaller proportion of the teachers and

head teachers said they would still take up the position (see Table 15), because teachers and head teachers do not want to be put in the 'pool', which means suspension from the payroll: "I would take up the position if not I may be affected, especially my salary" (female teacher).

Thus, many teachers and head teachers were following the correct procedures to appeal the decisions of the appointing authorities if they viewed their appointment to be unjust. However, a significant percentage was willing to take matters into their own hands by simply refusing to take up their positions. For example, one female teacher said: "If the appointment is not according to my choice I will go back to the Appointment Officer and get the refusal form and fill it out and refuse that appointment".

Teachers refused to take up their appointments because they viewed the appeal process of the PEB as nonexistent in the province. More teachers may resort to this action if the appeal process is not improved. Respondents who still accepted forced appointments may be frightened of losing a secured income for their families if they are placed in the pool. Such teachers are not likely to be fully committed to their teaching or students' learning, as confirmed in the interviews. For example, one female teacher said, "I will go where I have been appointed to but will not perform my duties to the best of my ability". Another female teacher said, "I would take up the appointment given but will not perform to the standard they expect".

Table 15: Actions taken by teachers and head teachers when appointments are not according to their choice

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Challenge the appointment	111	44.6	Challenge the appointment	19	44.2
Refuse to take up position	89	35.7	Refuse to take up position	15	34.9
Still take up position	47	18.9	Still take up position	9	20.9
Other	2	0.8	Other	-	
Total	249	100	Total	43	100

Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for refusing appointments

Teachers and head teachers were asked why they thought other teachers refused their appointments. The most common reasons given were teacher dissatisfaction with the appointment, location of the school, and family and personal reasons (see Table 16):

Teachers refuse their appointments because there are no classes for their children in the school they are appointed to, physical disabilities or health reasons which require them to be closer to health services,

spouses' work commitments, and for in-service education opportunities they want to be closer to university centres. (male teacher)

Other reasons given by both teachers and head teachers (in different proportions) were: lack of government services; logistics and costs of getting to schools; and lack of accommodation (see Table 16). Teachers' choices and refusals of appointments are often informed by all these factors, particularly family and personal interests. The absence of logistic support services and accommodation were not major reasons given for refusing appointments (see Table 16), although this was a factor for some teachers: "I would have to decide by looking at the condition of the school. If my required conditions are met, I will be willing to take up the position or appointment" (female teacher).

Table 16: Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for refusing their appointments

Teachers		Head teachers			
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Unhappy with appointment	91	37.0	Unhappy with appointment	15	34.9
Location of school	56	22.7	Location of school	9	20.9
Family & personal reasons	46	18.6	Family & personal reasons	8	18.6
Logistics and costs of getting to the school	23	9.3	Lack of government services	6	14.0
Lack of services	18	7.2	Logistics and costs of getting to the school	4	9.3
Lack of accommodation	7	2.8	Lack of accommodation	1	2.3
Security concerns	6	2.4	Security concerns	n.a	n.a.
Total	247	100	Total	43	100

n.a. = not applicable

Perceptions of actions taken by other teachers when appointments are not of their choice

Teachers and head teachers were asked to give the kinds of actions that they thought other teachers take when offered appointments were not of their choice. Teachers and head teachers agreed that the most common actions taken by teachers were to challenge their appointments by appeal and to refuse to accept their appointments (see Table 17). Some of the head teachers (7.1%) and teachers (9.5%) thought teachers would still take up their appointments despite their dissatisfaction with the positions offered. The motivations for and the results of these actions are similar to those nominated by the teachers themselves:

Instead of refusing and being penalized by the TSC, teachers just submit to the authority but most do not fully participate or even actively carry out their duties and what is expected of them (Male teacher).

Other actions nominated by teachers were: leave teaching; seek advice from the TSC; and, swap with another teacher. Head teachers nominated: resume work late; frequently absent from school; and, swap with another teacher (see Table 17). Thus, the teachers and head teachers considered that a large percentage of teachers either challenge their appointments or resort to other actions to protest appointments not according of their choice. Again, it appears that many teachers are using informal ways to challenge their appointments. The dysfunctional appeals process is likely to be the main contributing factor to this practice.

Table 17: Perceived actions of other teachers when appointments are not of their choice

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Challenge appointment	103	42.4	Refuse to take up appointment	15	36.0
Refuse to take up appointment	62	25.5	Challenge appointment	11	26.0
Resume work late	25	10.3	Leave teaching	6	14.3
Take up appointment	23	9.5	Take up appointment	3	7.1
Leave teaching	14	5.8	Resume work late	3	7.1
Seek advice from Teaching Service Commission	13	5.3	Frequently absent from school	3	7.1
Swap with another teacher	3	1.2	Swap with another teacher	1	2.4
Total	243	100	Total	42	100

Actions taken by the appointing authority against teachers who refuse their appointments

When teachers refuse to accept positions for which they have not applied, the PEB reacts in various ways to compel the teachers to accept the positions. Many teachers (49.6%) and some head teachers (14.6%) considered that the PEB often issues threats to remove teachers from the payroll (see Table 18). If teachers do not respond and remain defiant, teachers said that the PEB often penalises these teachers by placing them in the pool. One teacher said, "Teachers are threatened with actions such as stopping their fortnightly pays or that they will be reported to TSC recommending greater penalties".

Teachers and head teachers also said that the PEB places teachers who are unhappy with their appointments in other teaching positions, sends them to remote schools or gives the teachers an acting appointment elsewhere. Teachers and head teachers differed in how often they thought these actions were taken (see Table 18). Overall, however, they agreed that the PEB was more inclined to use punitive measures to address teachers' refusal of appointments, rather than use the formal appeal processes stipulated under the TSA.

Table 18: Perceived actions taken by the PEB against teachers who refuse their appointments

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	N	%	
Issue threats/put teachers off payroll	117	49.6	Place teachers in the pool	22	54.0
Place teachers in other positions	61	25.8	Issue threats/put teachers off the payroll	6	14.6
Place teachers in the pool	49	20.8	Place teachers in other positions	5	12.0
Send teachers to remote schools	5	2.1	Send teachers to remote schools	3	7.3
n.a	n.a	n.a	Give acting appointment elsewhere	3	7.3
n.a	n.a	n.a	Give late teaching appointment	1	2.4
n.a	n.a	n.a	Ignore teachers' appeals	1	2.4
Other	4	1.7	Other	n.a	n.a
Total	236	100	Total	41	100

n.a = not applicable

Resumption of Duties by Teachers

Problems associated with the resumption of duty process

Late resumption of duties by teachers is a problem deeply embedded in the teacher appointment process. Many teachers (26.5%) and head teachers (40.5%) identified this as the most common problem associated with the resumption of duty process (see Table 19). One male teacher said:

Teachers do not arrive on time, especially in rural schools and also there are always problems with teachers' movement to schools. Most of the time it takes time to notify them of their postings by the Provincial Head Quarters and this delay their travel to schools and cause them to resume their duties late.

Other problems nominated were: inadequate logistical and financial support for teachers to travel to their schools; late notification of appointments; poor

organisation of appointments; two or more teachers appointed to the same position; lack of monitoring of teachers' resumption of duties; lack of accommodation; and, poor communication by authorities (see Table 19). These factors not only contribute to the late resumption of teaching duties by teachers, they also directly contribute to the late submission of RoDSS to PARS, which then often results in hundreds of teachers being put off the payroll annually. Except for the lack of accommodation, all the other problems associated with the resumption of duty process are triggered by the late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* (which contains the teaching vacancies), the failure by the PEB and the TSC to effectively and efficiently perform their mandated roles and responsibilities in the process of teacher appointment, and the lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment process.

Table 19: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of the problems associated with the resumption of duty process

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Late resumption of duties	62	26.5	Late resumption of duties	17	40.5
Late submission of RoDSS to PARS	62	26.5	Inadequate logistical and financial support to travel to schools	8	19.0
Inadequate logistical & financial support to travel to schools	29	12.0	Late notification of appointments	7	16.7
Late notification of appointments	24	10.2	Poor organization of appointments	5	12.0
Poor organization of appointments	22	9.4	Two or more teachers appointed to same position	2	4.7
Two or more teachers appointed to same position	18	8.0	Poor communication	2	4.7
Lack of accommodation	11	5.0	Inadequate monitoring of teachers' resumption of duties	1	2.4
Poor communication	5	2.0	Lack of accommodation	n.a	n.a
Other	1	0.4	Other	n.a	n.a
Total	234	100	Total	42	100

n.a = not applicable; RoDSS = Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets; PARS = Payroll and Related Services

Reasons given by teachers and head teachers for resuming their duties late

Late resumption of teaching duties is a recurring problem. Teachers and head teachers were asked to identify the factors that would contribute to their late resumption of teaching duties. The most common contributing factor identified by 45% of the teachers and 53.5% of the head teachers was the logistics and the costs of getting to their appointed schools. Late appointment and notification of

postings are related contributing factors identified by a combined total of 35.1% of the teachers and 23.3% of the head teachers (see Table 20). One female teacher explained: “Because teachers are advised of their postings one week before school starts and also they refuse to take up the teaching positions given”.

Other less frequently nominated factors contributing to late resumption of duties were: dissatisfaction with appointment; family and personal reasons; weather and road conditions; and no accommodation at the school (see Table 20). Apart from poor weather and road conditions and, to some extent, lack of teacher accommodation, the reasons given for resuming duties late are caused by the failure of the PEB and the TSC to effectively and prudently carry out their mandated roles and responsibilities in teacher appointment.

Table 20: Reasons given by teachers and head teachers for late resumption of duties

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers			
	N	%	Responses	N	%	
Logistics & cost of getting to school	110	45.0	Logistics & cost of getting to school	23	53.5	
Late appointment	44	18.1	Late appointment	6	14.0	
Late/no notification of appointment	41	17.0	Unhappy with appointment	5	11.6	
Unhappy with appointment	25	10.0	Late/no notification of appointment	4	9.3	
Family & personal reasons	14	5.8	Weather & road conditions	4	9.3	
Weather & road conditions	5	2.1	Family and personal reasons	1	2.3	
No accommodation in school	4	2.0	No accommodation in school	n.a	n.a	
Total	243	100	Total	43	100	

n.a = not applicable

Other teachers' reasons for resuming their duties late

When asked to give their views on why other teachers resumed their teaching duties late, teachers and head teachers nominated reasons similar to their own reasons, although in slightly different proportions (see Table 21). Again, however, the logistics and costs of getting to their schools was the most common reason given (see Table 21). One male teacher said:

Some teachers' homes are too remote to look for transport to transport themselves to the schools and some had no postings so they have to hunt around for vacant positions and, if available, they will resume duties late.

As above, the failure of the PEB and the TSC to carry out their roles and responsibilities causes most of these problems.

Table 21: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of why other teachers resume their duties late

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Logistics & cost of getting to school	104	42.0	Logistics & cost of getting to school	25	59.5
Unhappy with appointment	43	17.4	Late appointment	9	21.4
Late appointment	38	15.4	Unhappy with appointment	4	9.5
Late/no notification of appointment	29	12.0	Weather/road conditions	2	5.0
Family and personal reasons	28	11.0	Family & personal reasons	1	2.3
No accommodation in school	2	1.0	No accommodation in school	n.a	n.a
Other	3	1.2	Other	1	2.3
Total	247	100	Total	42	100

n.a = not applicable

Strategies recommended by teachers and head teachers to ensure that teachers resume their duties on time

Teachers most commonly (55.4%) recommended the strategy of notifying teachers of their appointments early to address the problem of late resumption of duties. In descending order of nomination, other strategies were: that the PEB and the TSC provide logistical and financial support for teachers to travel to their schools (31%); avoiding and minimising late appointments (7.7%); that the PEB and TSC consider personal and family issues during appointments (4.7%); and that schools provide teacher accommodation (0.8%), (see Table 22).

Head teachers recommended the same strategies, but cited the provision of logistical support as the primary strategy (see Table 22). The data suggest that teachers and head teachers consider that the problem of late resumption of duties can be addressed if the PEB and the TSC target and effectively address the core problems of teacher appointment, including the printing and dissemination of the *Special Education Gazette* to the province and the schools, timely appointment and notification of teachers of their appointments, effective planning and implementation of logistics of moving teachers to schools, and efficient handling of teachers' RoDSS.

Table 22: Strategies recommended by teachers and head teachers to ensure that teachers resume their duties on time

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Early notification of appointment	129	55.4	PEB & TSC provide logistical support	19	44.2
PEB & TSC provide logistical support	72	31.0	Early notification of appointment	15	35.0
Avoid/minimize late appointments	18	7.7	Schools provide appropriate accommodation for teachers	5	11.6
PEB & TSC consider teachers' personal issues during appointments	11	4.7	Avoid/minimize late appointments	2	4.6
Schools provide appropriate accommodation for teachers	2	0.8	PEB & TSC consider teachers' personal issues during appointment	1	2.3
Other	1	0.4	Other	1	2.3
Total	233	100	Total	43	100

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Teacher Appointment Process

Strengths of the teacher appointment process

Of the 176 teachers who responded, 42% saw no strengths in the teacher appointment process. However, the rest of the respondents identified some strengths in the appointment process. These strengths were: serving teachers are given priority; many schools are fully staffed; some teachers are appointed on merit; teachers are able to fight for their rights; logistical support is given for teacher deployment; application can be made through the District Education Office; and, new graduates are screened (see Table 23).

A similar proportion of head teachers (43%) saw no strengths in the appointment process. The other head teachers nominated similar strengths to those nominated by the teachers. However, 2.8% of the head teachers thought an extra strength was that some teachers are willing to teach in remote schools (see Table 23).

Therefore, while a majority of teachers and the head teachers saw some strengths in the way teachers are appointed to teaching positions in the province, a large proportion of teachers were dissatisfied with the process. Thus, teacher appointment in the province is, in large part, viewed as dysfunctional, which has significant impacts on individual teachers and head teachers.

Table 23: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of strengths in the teacher appointment process

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
None	74	42.0	None	15	43.0
Serving teachers given priority	22	13.0	Serving teachers given priority	5	14.3
Many schools are fully staffed	18	10.0	Many schools are fully staffed	4	11.4
Some teachers appointed on merit	18	10.0	Some teachers appointed on merit	2	5.7
Teachers able to fight for their rights	15	9.0	Application through District Education Office	2	5.7
Logistical support for teacher deployment	13	7.4	Logistical support for teacher deployment	2	5.7
Application through District Education Office	8	4.0	New graduates are screened	2	5.7
New graduates are screened	4	2.3	Some teachers willing to teach in remote schools	1	2.8
Other	4	2.3	Other	2	5.7
Total	176	100	Total	35	100

Weaknesses of the teacher appointment process

Both teachers and head teachers identified nepotism and corruption; inadequate logistical and financial support; and late notification of appointments as important weaknesses in the process and practice of teacher appointment. They also identified a number of other weaknesses (see Table 24). The weaknesses identified emphasise that teachers and head teachers perceive that the appointment practices and processes are subject to nepotism and corruption. They also believe that the poor practices largely result from the inability of the PEB and the TSC to carry out their mandated roles and responsibilities and to comply with the provisions of the TSA, the *Education Act*, and related policies pertaining to the appointment of teachers.

Table 24: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of the weaknesses in the teacher appointment process

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Nepotism & corruption in teacher appointments	51	23.0	Inadequate logistical & financial support	14	32.5
Inadequate logistical & financial support	45	20.4	Nepotism & corruption in teacher appointments	9	21.0
Late notification of teachers' appointments	37	16.7	Late notification of teachers' appointments	8	18.6
PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare	22	10.0	Late arrival of <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	4	9.3
Teachers' rights and interests not respected	20	9.0	Teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools	3	7.0
Teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools	13	6.0	Teachers' rights and interests not respected	3	7.0
Late arrival of <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	12	5.4	Teachers occupy one position for too long	1	2.3
No data to inform PEB on teacher appointments	8	3.6	No data to inform PEB on teacher appointments	1	2.3
Teachers occupy one position for too long	8	3.6	n.a	n.a	n.a
Teachers occupy more than one position	5	2.3	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	221	100	Total	43	100

n.a = not applicable; PEB = Provincial Education Board

How the teacher appointment process can be improved

Teachers and head teachers were obviously concerned about the poor state of teacher appointment in the province. They rated replacement of ineffective appointment officers, improving logistical and financial support for teachers assuming new appointments, and consideration of teachers' interests, welfare, eligibility and tenure as priorities to improve the appointment process in the province (see Table 25). These themes consistently arose during the study as major problems underpinning teacher appointment and the resumption of teaching duties by teachers. Other strategies recommended by teachers and head teachers relate to the availability of the *Special Education Gazette*, appointment of teachers on merit, consideration of teachers in the pool for appointment, consideration of recommendations by Standard Officers, BoMs, church agencies and District Education Officers during appointments, and formal notification of appointments (see Table 25). The poor state of teacher appointment in the province is unlikely to improve unless the PEB and the TSC implement such strategies.

Table 25: Suggestions of teachers and head teachers to improve the teacher appointment process

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Replace ineffective appointment officers	43	19.0	Strengthen logistical support for moving teachers to school	16	38.0
Consider teachers' interests/welfare during appointments	41	18.2	Replace ineffective appointment officers	10	24.0
Strengthen logistical support for moving teachers to school	41	18.2	Consider teachers' eligibility/tenure during appointments	4	9.5
Send <i>Special Education Gazette</i> to provinces early	40	18.0	Appoint teachers on merit	3	7.1
Appoint teachers on merit	38	17.0	Consider recommendations of Standard Officers, BoMs, church agencies and DEOs	3	7.1
Consider teachers' in the pool for appointment	9	4.0	Send <i>Special Education Gazette</i> to provinces early	3	7.1
Consider recommendations of Standard Officers, BoMs, church agencies and DEOs	5	2.2	Teachers formally notified of their appointments	2	4.8
Teachers formally notified of their appointments	4	2.0	Consider teachers' interests/welfare during appointments	1	2.4
Teachers should serve out their tenure	2	1.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Schools must provide accommodation	1	0.4	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	225	100	Total	42	100

n.a = not applicable; BoM = Boards of Management; DEO = District Education Officer

Changes teachers and head teachers would like to see in the present process and practice of teacher appointment

Generally, changes that the head teacher and teacher respondents would like to see in the process of teacher appointment both address the weaknesses they perceived in the system and mirror the suggestions they made for improvements to the process (see Table 26). Further changes nominated were to provide incentives to teach in remote schools, implement a tenure policy, and build the capacity of education officers (see Table 26). These recommendations provide an insight into

the underlying problems in the process of teacher appointment in the province. They also reflect the desire of teachers and head teachers for changes in the process of appointment to teaching and administrative positions, to benefit both themselves and their students.

Table 26: Recommendations by teachers and head teachers for changes in the teacher appointment process

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Replace unprofessional and dishonest appointment officers	37	19.0	Financing of teachers' transfer costs to schools	14	35.0
Financing of teachers' transfer costs to schools	36	18.0	Consider teachers' rights and interests in appointments	8	20.0
Improve teacher appointment process	30	15.1	Improve teacher appointment process	6	15.0
Provide incentives for remote school teachers	24	12.1	Replace unprofessional and dishonest appointment officers	5	12.5
Consider teachers' rights and interests in appointments	21	10.6	Eliminate corrupt practices	3	7.5
Eliminate corrupt practices	20	10.1	Improve the method of notifying teachers of their appointments	3	7.5
Improve the timing of teacher appointment	15	7.6	Implement teacher tenure policy	1	2.5
Appointment of teachers to teach in remote schools	8	4.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Build education officers' capacity	3	1.5	n.a	n.a	n.a
Improve the method of notifying teachers of their appointments	2	1.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Implement teacher tenure policy	2	1.0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Total	198	100	Total	40	100

n.a. = not applicable

4: CONCLUSION

This study examined the process and practice of teacher appointment in the East Sepik Province, and their impacts on teachers and head teachers in particular, and the provincial education system in general. A large proportion (over 40%) of teachers and head teachers who were surveyed saw no strengths in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province. The strengths of the process and practice of teacher appointment as identified by some of the respondents include:

- preference being given to teachers from the province and serving teachers when appointments are made to teaching and head teacher positions;
- logistical support for teacher deployment ;
- teachers able to fight for their rights;
- some teachers appointed on merit;
- full staffing in most schools in all locations;
- applications can be lodged through the District Education Office;
- screening of new graduates; and
- some teachers willing to teach in remote schools.

Despite these strengths perceived by some respondents, overall, the respondents viewed the process and practice of appointing teachers to teaching and administrative positions in the province as weak and confounded by a multitude of problems. These problems include:

- late printing and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette* by the TSC to the province and the schools;
- late appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions;
- late notification of teachers and head teachers of their appointments for the next school year;
- late resumption of teaching duties by teachers and head teachers;
- late submission of RoDSS to payroll services;
- appointment of teachers through bribery and nepotism;
- poor logistical support for teachers transferring to new positions;
- lack of an effective appeal mechanism for teachers;
- abuse of the 'teaching pool';
- not considering teachers' interests and welfare in teacher appointments;
- forcing teachers to take up positions for which they had not applied; and
- using teacher appointment as a form of punishment.

The main factors perceived as contributing to the problems of teacher appointment in the province are:

- late publication and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette* to the province and the schools;

- lack of compliance by the PEB with the relevant provisions of the *Teaching Service Act, 1995*, the *National Education Act, 1995*, and policies on the appointment of teachers and head teachers to teaching and administrative positions;
- poor performance by the PEB and the TSC of their mandated roles and responsibilities in teacher appointment;
- absence of an effective appeals mechanism; and
- reliance on informal systems by appointing officers, in appointing and informing teachers of their teaching positions.

The *Special Education Gazette*, which contains vacancies for teaching positions in the national education system, continues to be printed and sent to the provinces very late in the year. Therefore, the process of appointing teachers to teaching positions starts very late. Consequently, teachers are not notified of their postings before going on recreational leave. Teachers then arrive at their schools and resume their teaching duties late. Moreover, because teachers begin their duties one or two weeks into the school year, their RoDSS are often not completed and submitted to the PEO and PARS at the national department to allow continuation of their salaries. As a result, many teachers are removed from the payroll and are only reinstated when their resumption of duty summaries are received by PARS.

Participants also considered that the PEB and its officers sometimes appointed teachers and head teachers to positions without complying with the relevant provisions of the TSA and the *Education Act*, and that the criteria for appointing teachers to base level, promotional and tenure positions were not followed. Teachers and head teachers' asserted that the appointment of teachers was not based on merit, that teachers' interests and rights were overlooked, and that teachers were not supported in the logistics of travelling to their schools. This noncompliance by the PEB and its officers with legal obligations relating to the appointment and relocation of teachers is a major problem.

Furthermore, teachers were more likely to refuse the teaching positions offered if they had not chosen the position, and often challenged the decision of the PEB. However, appeals lodged were often not considered, and decisions on appeals were not communicated to them in a timely and efficient manner. Many teachers often wait for the outcome of their appeals before they travel to the new schools. Often, feedback from the PEB takes weeks, causing many to lose faith in the system. Eventually, teachers may decide to leave the service or move to another province.

The practice of PEB officers apparently operating outside the formal system for teacher appointments is of great concern. This practice directly contributes to nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers, an increasing perception amongst teachers and head teachers. Teachers perceived that many appointments were not merit based, and that teachers' interests, welfare and rights were often not given due consideration in the appointment process. Appointment of

teachers outside of the formal process is a common practice. These appointments are often not vetted by the PEB. In addition, teachers who refused their appointments were often threatened by the PEB officers, and either forced to take up the appointments in fear of losing their salaries or put into the pool.

To help improve the appointment process and practice in the province, teachers and head teachers recommended that:

- the TSC and the PEB meet all transfer costs because teachers can no longer afford this exercise;
- the appointment authorities consider teachers' capabilities, interests and rights in the appointment process;
- nepotism and other malpractices in teacher appointment are eliminated;
- appointments and formal confirmations of appointments be completed before teachers go on leave; and
- the *Special Education Gazette* is sent to the province and the schools as scheduled for the appointment process to begin without delay.

While the province can build on some strengths to improve the process and practice of teacher appointment, the underlying problems and the main contributing factors must be addressed to ensure good appointment practices. These practices must be informed by, and comply with, the relevant provisions of the TSA and the *Education Act*, and must be transparent and accountable.

5: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Printing and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette*

Recommendation 1.1

That the PEB initiates and fosters a dialogue with the TSC to develop and implement a time-bound **action plan** that ensures the *Special Education Gazette* is printed and distributed to the provinces by the end of June each year.

2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions

Recommendation 2.1

That the PEB and the TSC develop and implement a time-bound **teacher appointment action plan** with clear deliverables for every calendar year.

Recommendation 2.2

That the PEB comply with all the relevant provisions of the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* in the appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions in the province.

Recommendation 2.3

That the TSC and the PEB eliminate nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers by ensuring all appointments are made through a duly constituted PEB meeting.

Recommendation 2.4

That the PEB effectively addresses nepotism and corruption by taking disciplinary action against officers who engage in such activities, who fail to comply with the relevant provisions of the *Teaching Service Act, 1995*, and who fail to perform their responsibilities as described in the **teachers appointment and logistics action plans**.

Recommendation 2.5

That the PEB institute a confidential and a non-punitive process through which teachers, head teachers, BoM, PEB members, and parents and citizens can report cases of nepotism or corruption in the process and practice of teacher appointment.

Recommendation 2.6

That the PEB develops and communicates to all teachers, school agencies, BoM, parents and citizens, standard officers, district education advisers, church education secretaries and local leaders, the criteria for appointing teachers to teaching and head teacher positions.

Recommendation 2.7

That the PEB ensures that teachers and head teachers are appointed to teaching positions and administrative positions with due consideration for their personal welfare and interests; eligibility for promotion; rights of tenure; and potential risks to themselves and their families.

Recommendation 2.8

That the PEB, in collaboration with the TSC, develops and maintains a **database** of all current teaching positions in the province, the teachers occupying the positions (and their particulars), the vacant positions, and the movement of positions from school to school.

Recommendation 2.9

That the PEB considers, on merit, all recommendations for teacher appointments from church agency personnel, standard officers and the BoM.

Recommendation 2.10

That the TSC provides increased financial incentives for teachers in remote schools, and that these incentives are paid on a fortnightly basis as part of teachers' salaries.

Recommendation 2.11

That the PEB prepares and presents an **Annual Teacher Appointment Report** to the TSC and the NEB.

3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers

Recommendation 3.1

That the PEB develops and implements an effective, transparent and time-bound **appeals process and an action plan**, if none currently exists. This process must state clearly when appeals will be received, the length of appeal hearings, and when and how the outcomes will be communicated to appellants.

Recommendation 3.2

That the PEB establishes an **Appeals Board** of non-PEB members. The board and members should have clear roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation 3.3

That the PEB and the TSC abolish the ‘teachers’ pool’.

4. Resumption of teaching duties**Recommendation 4.1**

That the PEB develops and puts in place a time-bound **logistics action plan** that includes all required activities, including travel costs and arrangements for teachers transferring to new positions, monitoring of teachers resumption of duty in schools, completing and submitting RoDSS, and reporting on the resumption of duty by teachers to the PEB. The person(s) responsible for each activity and the required timeframe for completion must be clearly identified for monitoring and accountability purposes.

Recommendation 4.2

That the PEB budgets yearly for teachers’ travel costs and mobilises all resources necessary to effectively implement the logistics action plan. All funds must be acquitted and reported in the **Annual Teacher Appointment Report**, which must be submitted to the TSC and the PEB for ratification by March every year.

5. Amendment of the *Teaching Service Act 1995* and the *Education Act 1995***Recommendation 5.1**

That the TSC and the PEB amend the *Teaching Service Act 1995* and the *Education Act 1995* to include mandatory provisions for the PEB to develop and implement time-bound teacher appointment, logistics, and appeals action plans, and to produce an Annual Teacher Appointments Report for the TSC and the PEB by March each year.

Recommendation 5.2

That the TSC amends the *Teaching Service Act 1995* to include provisions that allow implementing officers to be held accountable by the PEB if they fail to carry out their responsibilities as stipulated in the teacher appointment, logistics, and appeals action plans.

6. Respect and strengthen church-government partnerships

Recommendation 6.1

That the roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers to teaching positions be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoM, Parents and Citizens associations, PEB members, and all Provincial Education Officers.

Recommendation 6.2

That the PEB duly considers the views and recommendations of church agencies on teacher appointments.

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ANNEXES

Annex A

Primary School Teachers and Head Teachers' Teacher Appointment Questionnaire

Instructions

This questionnaire is designed to allow you to give us your views and share your experiences of teacher deployment **in the Province you are teaching**. Specifically, we want to know YOUR views and experiences of how teacher deployment works, how it affects teachers and schools, and how it could be improved to make it more effective and efficient.

Biographical Information

- 1. Gender: 2. Age: 3. Number of teaching years:
.....
- 4. Number of years teaching in current school:
.....
- 5. Number of schools in which you have taught: 6. Home Province:
.....

Appointment of Teachers

- 7. In your own words, describe how the teachers get appointed to teaching positions in schools
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.....
.....
- 8. When are teachers advised of their postings?
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.....
- 9. How do you get advised of your posting?
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.....

10. Is teacher deployment done with due consideration of teachers' interest?

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.....

Acceptance of Teaching Appointments by Teachers

11. Have you refused to take up your teaching appointment at anytime in your teaching career? If yes answer question 14.

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12. Why did you refuse to take up your posting?

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.....

13. What would you do if the appointment you are given is not according to your choice?

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.....

14. Why do you think teachers refuse to take up their teaching appointments? Give as many reasons as you can.

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15. What do teachers do when they are not given the positions they apply for?

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16. What do the appointing authorities in the Province do when teachers refuse to take up their teaching appointments?

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.....

Resumption of Teaching Duties

17. What might stop you from resuming your teaching duties on time?

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18. Why do you think some teachers do not resume duties on time?

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19. What do you think should be done to ensure teachers start the school year on time?

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20. What problems exist with the resumption of duty process?

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Strengths and Weaknesses of Teacher Deployment

21. What are the strengths, if any, of teacher appointment in the Province?

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22. What are the weaknesses, if any, of teacher appointment in the Province?

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23. How can the above weaknesses be addressed to improve teacher appoint in the Province?

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24. If you could change one thing about the present practice of teacher deployment, what would that be?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Annex B
Focus-Group Interview Questions

**Appointment of Teachers to Teaching and Head Teacher Positions in
Community and Primary Schools**

Instructions: The questions should be used as a guide. It is important to focus on the actual experiences of the participants of the teacher appointment process and practice in the province.

Theme 1: Appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions

1. How would you describe the process of teacher appointment in the province?
2. Is teacher appointment done with due consideration of teachers' interests?
3. How has teacher appointment process and practice in the province affected you personally?
4. How can the teacher appointment process be improved?

Theme 2: Acceptance of teaching and head teacher appointments by teachers and head teachers

1. Has any one of you refused to take up your teaching or head teacher appointment any time in your teaching career? Why?
2. What would you do if the appointment you are given is not according to your choice?
3. Why do you think teachers and head teachers refuse to take up their postings?

Theme 3: Resumption of teaching duties

1. What might stop you from resuming duties on time?
2. Why do you think some teachers and head teachers do not resume their duties on time?
3. What do you think should be done to ensure teachers and head teachers resume duties on time?

Theme 4: Strengths and weaknesses

1. What are the strengths of teacher appointment in the province?
2. What are the weaknesses of teacher appointment in the province?
3. How can the weakness of teacher appointment in the province be addressed to improve teacher deployment in the province?

