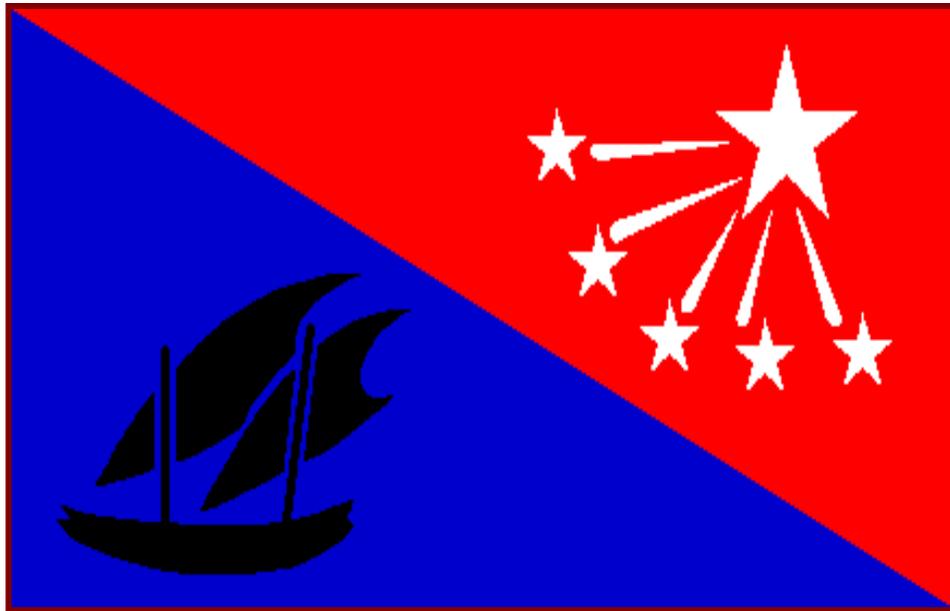


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**TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS' OF TEACHER APPOINTMENTS
IN THE CENTRAL PROVINCE**



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**The National Research Institute
Discussion Paper No. 135**



Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Appointments in the Central Province

by

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Sebastian Mugup and Wilson Pes**

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ACRONYMS

DEO	District Education Office
BoM	Board of Management
PARS	Payroll and Related Services
PEB	Provincial Education Board
PEO	Provincial Education Office
RoDSS	Resumption of Duty Summary Sheet
TSC	Teaching Service Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The process of appointing teachers to teaching positions is outlined in the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* (Consolidated to No. 20 of 1995), *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 Provincial Education Board (PEB) are expected to comply with these laws and related policies when appointing teachers to teaching and administrative positions. Yet, not all PEBs do so. Some comply only with some provisions while systematically flouting others. Anecdotal evidence and teacher appointment data from TSC indicate that there have been serious problems underlying the teacher appointment process at different levels of the Papua New Guinean education system.

Central Province was identified as one of many provinces that have a poor reputation in teacher appointments. Because of this, it was included in the study to enable its teacher appointment process to be examined so that the causes of problems could be identified and appropriate interventions developed and implemented to improve the system.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study were to understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers and head teachers regarding the teacher appointment process, identify and describe the factors that contribute to effective teacher appointment, identify problems and understand their causes, and recommend appropriate strategies to improve and strengthen teacher appointment.

Methodology

Eight of Papua New Guinea's 20 provinces were selected to participate in the study—two provinces from each of the four regions, one with a good track record in managing teacher appointments and one with a poor track record. Milne Bay and Central Provinces were selected from the Southern Region to participate in the study; Central Province had a poor reputation and Milne Bay Province had a good reputation in teacher appointment.

All community and primary school teachers and head teachers participated in the study, in order to enable an understanding of how they perceive teacher appointment in the province and its impact on different categories of teachers—male and female, rural and urban, married and single, and local and non-local. Data was collected using a survey and focus group interviews. The interviews were conducted with a sample of teachers and head teachers in four schools, two urban and two rural.

The method of delivering surveys to schools did not yield the desired results. It was difficult to deliver surveys to remote schools. These were left with zone or cluster leaders to distribute, collect, and send to the National Research Institute, but this was not done, and many surveys were not received. Many teachers also simply did not return their surveys.

Key Findings

Survey and interview responses yielded the following insights:

1. **Characteristics of teachers and head teachers:** Only 1.6 percent of the teachers in community and primary schools in the province were from the Central Province; more than half (56.7 percent) were from the Simbu Province. More than half of the teachers (62.2 percent) were between the ages of 20 and 40. They all taught in rural schools. More than half (52.2 percent) taught in church agency schools, 40.9 percent in Catholic schools. More than half (55.1 percent) had between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience, and 41.4 percent of them had been teaching in their current school for between one and three years.

Only 12 percent of the head teachers were from the Central Province; 60 percent were from the Morobe Province. Among head teachers, 72 percent were 41 years or older, which indicates that community and primary schools were headed by older and more experienced teachers. The majority (64 percent) of the head teachers were heading government schools, and all were heading rural schools. More than half (56 percent) had between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience.

In sum, teachers are more likely to be appointed to a teaching position if they come from outside the Central Province, have between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience, and are between 20 and 40 years old. They are more likely to be appointed to a head teacher's position if they are male, married, come from outside the Central Province, have between 11 and 30 years of teaching experience, and are 41 years or older.

2. **Appointment to teaching and head teacher positions:** The majority (74 percent) of both teachers and head teachers saw strengths in the teacher appointment process employed by the province. These included preference being given to serving teachers in teaching and head teacher appointments, logistical support for teacher deployment, appointment of some teachers on merit, full staffing for most schools in all locations, teachers' ability to fight for their rights, some teachers' willingness to teach in remote schools, applications being made through the District Education Office, and new graduates being screened. The identification or non identification of strengths by the teachers and head teachers reflects the uneven impact of the teacher appointment process on different teachers and categories of teachers.

Teacher appointment in the province was generally weak. There were five main interrelated contributing factors: failure by the TSC to distribute the Special Education Gazette to the province in a timely manner, non compliance by the PEB with the provisions for teacher appointment in the *TSC Act* and related policies, failure by the PEB and the TSC to effectively and efficiently carry out their mandated teacher appointment roles and responsibilities, lack of an effective and efficient appeals mechanism, and reliance by the PEB and its appointing officers on an informal process for teacher appointments.

About 62 percent of the teachers and 44 percent of head teachers indicated that teachers were appointed through the Special Education Gazette, and 24.4 percent of teachers and 52 percent of head teachers recognised that the PEB is the appointing authority in the province, yet responses suggested that nepotism and corruption remained embedded in the appointment process. Responses seemed to suggest that the province was complying with the *Teaching Service Act*. However, there is a worrying trend of teacher appointments occurring outside of the requirements of this *Act*, which has contributed to the infiltration of nepotism and corruption into the appointment process.

The appointment process in the province is perceived as corrupt. Lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment of teachers, poor handling of teachers' appeals, forcing teachers to take up teaching positions they had not applied for, placing teachers in the pool (a mechanism created to place teachers who have not been allocated a teaching or an administrative position), and having teachers stay in one position for too long were symptomatic of a dysfunctional and corrupt teacher appointment system. Teachers and head teachers believe that teacher appointment in the province will be improved if it is done in a transparent and accountable manner, in compliance with the *Teaching Service Commission Act*, based on merit, and in an effective and efficient way.

3. **Acceptance of teaching and head teacher appointments:** Teachers were more likely to refuse an appointment than head teachers. Forcing teachers to take up positions they had not applied for, lack of an appeals process, nepotism and bribery, lack of consideration of teachers' interests and welfare, and late notification of teachers of their postings have a bearing on whether or not teachers and head teachers take up the positions offered to them. Appointments not according to a teacher's preference, family and personal issues, and the location of schools were the main reasons for refusal to take up an appointment. These factors were intertwined and connected to other reasons: lack of basic services, security concerns, lack of teacher accommodation, and eligibility and tenure issues.

More than half (76 percent of head teachers and 56.7 percent of teachers) said that they would challenge an appointment if they were not happy with it. However, because the appeals process was dysfunctional, the appellants normally waited in vain for a ruling. When this happened, they settled for a teaching position in another school in fear of losing their pay. A smaller number (12 percent of the head teachers and 15.7 percent of the teachers) indicated that they would still take up a position even if it was not according to their choice. They do this because of threats by the Provincial Education Board (PEB) to put them in the pool, which effectively means that they would have been put off the payroll if they refused.

Data indicates that the PEB was less concerned with addressing teachers' refusal of teaching appointments through the use of the formal appeals process stipulated under the *TSC Act* than with the use of punitive measures.

4. **Resumption of teaching duties:** Late resumption is a major problem. Apart from poor transport infrastructure, contributing factors to this problem were related to the failure of the TSC and PEB to effectively carry out their mandated teacher appointment functions. The difficulty and cost of getting to the school, discontent with the teaching position offered, personal and family issues, lateness of the appointment or notification of the appointment, and an ineffective teacher appeals process were the main reasons given by teachers for resuming their duties late. Weather and road conditions and lack of accommodation at the school, although mentioned, were not considered as the main reasons for teachers resuming duties late. Improvement in the logistics of getting to schools, early appointment and notification, and fair consideration of teachers' interests were the most common recommendations made for improving the poor record of teachers' resumption of duties.

There is a strong relationship between the late arrival of the Special Education Gazette, late appointments and notifications, lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment process, poor logistical support, late resumption of duties by teachers, and the late submission of Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets to Payroll and Related Services (RoDSS).

5. **Proposed changes to the teacher appointment process:** The most common changes proposed by teachers and head teachers were financing of teachers' transfer costs to schools, replacement of unprofessional and dishonest appointment officers, consideration of teachers' rights and interests in appointments, elimination of corrupt practices, and provision of incentives for teaching in remote schools.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the results of this study:

1. **The *Special Education Gazette*:** PEB should work with the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) to ensure that the *Gazette* is printed and distributed to the provinces by the end of June each year.
2. **Teacher appointments:** PEB and TSC should develop and implement a time-bound teacher appointment action plan with clear deliverables for every calendar year. PEB should comply with the TSC Act in the appointment of teachers and head teachers. TSC and PEB should eliminate nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers by ensuring that all appointments are made formally and based on merit. PEB should take disciplinary action against officers who engage in nepotism and corruption or otherwise fail to comply with the *TSC Act* or perform their responsibilities, and should put in place a confidential and non punitive process for reporting nepotism or corruption in teacher appointments.

PEB should develop and publicise criteria for teacher appointments. It should ensure that teachers and head teachers are appointed with due consideration of their personal welfare and interests, eligibility for promotion, tenure rights, and potential risks to

themselves and their families. PEB and TSC should develop and maintain a data base of all teaching positions in the province, teachers and their particulars, vacant positions, and movement of positions from one school to another. PEB should consider all recommendations for teacher appointments based on merit. TSC should provide increased financial incentives to teach in remote schools. Finally, PEB should present an annual teacher appointment report to TSC and National Education Board (NEB) by March every year.

3. **Teachers' acceptance of appointments:** PEB should implement an effective and transparent appeals process, with an appeals board made up of non-PEB members with clear roles and responsibilities. The appeals procedure should state clearly when appeals will be received, for how long they will be heard, and when the outcomes will be communicated to the appellants. The teachers' pool should be abolished.
4. **Resumption of duties:** PEB should put in place a time-bound logistics action plan that includes all required activities, travel costs, and arrangements for teachers transferring to new positions, monitoring and reporting of teachers' resumption of duties, and submission of the Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets. The person(s) responsible for executing each activity and the required timeframe for its completion must be clearly identified for monitoring and accountability purposes. PEB should budget yearly for teachers' travel costs and mobilize 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 TSC and PEB for ratification by March every year.
5. **Amendments to laws:** The *Teaching Service Act* and the *Education Act* should be amended to make it mandatory for PEB to develop and implement the action plans and report recommended above. The *Teaching Service Act* should be amended to allow for implementing officers to be held accountable by the PEB if they fail to carry out the responsibilities stipulated in these plans.
6. **Strengthening church-government partnerships:** The roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers should be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, Boards of Management (BoM), parents and citizen's associations, PEB members, and provincial education officers. The PEB should give serious consideration to the recommendations of church agencies on teacher appointments.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The process of appointing teachers to teaching positions 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 these laws and related policies when making appointments to teaching positions. As part of this process, TSC is responsible for publishing the Special Education Gazette (which lists vacant teaching positions in all educational institutions under the National Department of Education mandate) to the provinces and all educational institutions in a timely manner. After teachers apply for positions, PEB—in consultation with the head teachers, Boards of Management (BoM) and Board of Governors (BoG), and church agencies—is expected to process their applications and notify them of the outcome before they take their recreational leave. The PEB is expected to effectively manage the movement of teachers to schools so that they resume their duties on time, and so that their Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets (RoDSS) will be submitted in time for them to be continuously paid their salaries.

These expectations have not been met by the TSC and some PEBs over the years, resulting in a multitude of problems that continue to have a negative impact on teachers' motivation and commitment, the quality of students' learning, and children's access to and participation in schooling. This was highlighted by the Public Sector Reform Management Team's 2008 audit of the administration of Eastern Highlands, Morobe, West New Britain and Milne Bay Provinces, which found a lack of compliance with the *TSC Act* and related policies in teacher appointments (Arek 2008).

Non compliance with the *TSC* and *Education Acts* and related policies in the appointment of teachers is a common practice amongst the PEBs and, to some extent, the TSC. This is a major contributing factor to the host of problems experienced in the appointment of teachers. These problems include delays, late resumption of duties, and corruption. Many of them are caused by the failure of TSC over the years to deliver the Special Education Gazette to the provinces in a timely manner. The Gazette has been printed and sent to the provinces in September or October each year. Provinces are expected to administer and complete their teacher appointments by November, but teacher appointments are often finalised in December or, in many cases, just before the commencement of the school year. Delays in teacher appointments are also caused by interference in the appointment of teachers by education agencies. Arek (2008:2), in her report on the audit, noted that the Public Sector Audit Team found that “most education agencies were interfering in teachers' postings and appointments”.

Politicians were also causing delays in getting teachers to schools by interfering with the work of PEBs in the appointment of teachers. 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. Communities were also increasingly

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becoming involved in the appointment of teachers. This was the case in 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 (2008) reported that local residents welded the Hagen Park Secondary School gates shut, preventing the teachers from gaining entry to begin the school year. They wanted the substantive school principal to remain at the school and asked the Provincial Education Board (PEB) to rescind its decision to transfer him to another school.

Delay in teachers taking up their positions is also caused by the absence of an effective and efficient process for appealing teacher appointments. Teachers often challenge the decisions of the PEB if they perceive that their appointments did not follow the correct procedures, were not based on merit, or did not take their interests into account. For example, Lari (2008:4) reported that about 600 teachers in the Enga Province were not happy with their postings because they believed that they “had been muddled up and not done according to the teachers’ requests and choices”. However, in most provinces, rulings on teachers’ appeals were often delayed for long periods. In other cases, teachers wait in vain, and, as a result, many decide to quit teaching or look for a teaching position in another province. If they receive a positive outcome, they often start their school year very late. When serving teachers decide to leave, schools in which they were supposed to teach end up having fewer or no 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).

The failure of TSC and PEB to ensure that teacher appointments were made in an effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable manner has contributed to perceptions that the entire teacher appointment process 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”. Philemon also 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, according to Tiamu (2010:6), wrote to the Provincial Education Adviser stating, “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*”.

These factors contribute directly to late notification of teaching appointments and late resumption of teaching duties by teachers. Other factors contributing to teachers’ late resumption of duties include poor school infrastructure, including teachers’ housing, water, and sanitation (Anis 2008; Gumar 2008), bad weather, and disputes over land on which the schools are situated.

The problems highlighted here have been the norm over the last decade or so and permeate the teacher appointment and deployment process. They are exacerbated by a lack of clarity and duplication and division in the TSC and the National Education Board’s teacher appointment roles and functions stipulated under the *Teaching Service Act* and the *Education*

Act (Kukari, *et. al.*, 2011). This situation not only creates confusion amongst teachers, but also is a main contributing factor to the teacher appointment problems experienced every school year.

Central Province was identified as one of many provinces that had a poor reputation in teacher appointments. This was characterised by claims of corruption in the appointment of teachers, late appointment and notification, late resumption of duties by teachers, and late submission of RoDSS to Payroll and Related Services (PARS) for the processing of teachers' salaries.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to understand teachers' and head teachers' perceptions and experiences of the teacher appointment process in the province, identify and describe the factors that contribute to effective teacher appointment, identify problems in the appointment process and understand their causes, and recommend strategies to improve and strengthen teacher appointment in the province.

1.3 Methodology

The purpose of the study determined the types of data needed, where they would be collected, and how they would be analysed and reported.

The case study design was used to plan and collect the data for the study. This design was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the teacher appointment process and what it meant for community and primary school teachers and head teachers in the province. A teacher survey and focused-group interviews were used to collect data about teacher appointment in each case (province) to provide an in-depth understanding of teacher appointment processes and practice. The use of these two methods of data collection enabled the data collected to be triangulated and, hence, helped to enhance the reliability and the validity of the data.

In order to make sense of teachers' experiences and perceptions of teacher appointment in the province, all community and primary school teachers and head teachers working in primary schools at the time of the study were surveyed. In addition, teachers in two urban and two rural schools were interviewed to get their views on teacher appointment in the province and its impact on them individually and on other teachers. Table 1 summarises the population and the samples on which the study was based.

Table 1: Teacher and head teacher population and sample

	Total	Sample	Sample percent of total
Teachers	1039	128	12
Head teachers	183	25	14

All community and primary school teachers were given a questionnaire, but their response rate, as indicated in the table above, was only 12 percent. All primary school head teachers were given a questionnaire as well, but only 14 percent responded. It was difficult to deliver

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questionnaires to the schools due to the remoteness of many schools in Abau, Kairuku-Hiri, and Rigo Districts. The remoteness of Goilala District did not permit the researchers to travel there and administer the surveys. The low level of support by the Provincial Education Office (PEO) in administering, collecting, and returning the questionnaires was also a major contributing factor to the poor response rate.

Data for the study was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Because the data collected from the surveys was mostly qualitative in nature, the first step was to categorise it into meaningful themes. The surveys were then coded using a prepared code book that contained the themes and a code for each theme. Once coding was completed, data was entered and analysed using SPSS. From this, frequencies for each question and variable were generated and used to prepare tables for use in the interpretation of the data.

The method of delivering surveys to schools did not yield the desired results. Although surveys were delivered to schools accessible by road, it was difficult to deliver surveys to very remote schools. Surveys for those schools were left with the zone or cluster leaders to distribute, collect and send to the National Research Institute. This was not done, and many surveys were not returned. In addition, many teachers who were given surveys to complete simply did not complete and return them.

1.4 Organisation of the Report

The following section provides the provincial and district context for the study. Next, the findings of the study relating to teacher appointment in the province are discussed. This is followed by conclusions and recommendations for action.

2 PROVINCIAL PROFILE

2.1 Central Province

Central Province is one of five provinces that make up the Southern Region of Papua New Guinea. It shares a common border with Oro, Gulf, and Milne Bay Provinces. Its physical geography comprises mountains, rivers, savannah grassland, and thick forests. It has an abundance of fertile land that can be used for a variety of purposes. It has some of the most remote and challenging places in Papua New Guinea, which have remained isolated from the outside world for decades. The delivery of services to these places, particularly in the Goilala District and the intersection between Abau District and the Milne Bay Province, continues to face major challenges, including a lack of willingness by public servants to serve in these remote places. These places have remained underdeveloped, and most have limited or no education coverage. Because of this, many school-aged children have no chance of ever going to school. Transport infrastructure in some parts of the province is very poor and often poses a major challenge for travelling and for delivery of basic services, including education.

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 its people to have access to education at all levels, particularly at the basic education level. As of 2008, the province had established 375 elementary schools, 77 community schools, 106 primary schools, 6 high schools, 5 secondary schools, and 3 vocational centres (National Research Institute 2010).

2.2 Districts

Central Province has four districts: Kairuku-Hiri, Rigo, Abau, and Goilala. Most of these districts are underdeveloped. This is due to law-and-order problems, lack of basic services, and lack of transparency and accountability by elected leaders in delivering basic services. Most parts of Abau and Rigo Districts are inaccessible by road due to the terrain and to neglect of infrastructure over the years. Goilala District is inaccessible by road. The only road from Port Moresby to Tapini has fallen into disrepair and is unusable. Most parts of the district are inaccessible by road or air. The decisions of public servants, including teachers, to work in the districts—particularly those with poor transport infrastructure, no government services, and imposing geographical terrain—are often influenced by these factors.

2.3 Number of Community and Primary Schools

The province had 77 community schools and 106 primary schools at the time of the study. Table 2 shows the number of these schools by district, location (rural or urban), and agency (government or church). Out of the total of 182 community and primary schools, Kairuku-Hiri District has the highest number (65), followed by Rigo (55), Abau (37), and Goilala (25). Government and church agencies operated about the same number of schools. This does indicate a growing partnership between the churches and the government in providing community and primary school education, which should also include consultation in appointments to teaching and administrative positions. Only one school is classified as urban based on National Department of Education definitions. This implies that over 90 percent of teachers in the province teach in rural schools. This presents a challenge for the PEB when making teaching and head teacher appointments, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach schools.

Table 2: Number of community and primary schools by district, agency, and location

District	Government schools	Church agency schools	Urban schools	Rural schools
Abau	25	12	0	37
Goilala	1	24	0	25
Kairuku-Hiri	26	40	1	65
Rigo	40	15	0	55
Total	92	91	1	182

3. TEACHER APPOINTMENT

3.1 Characteristics of Teachers and Head Teachers

3.1.1 Teachers and head teachers sample

The teachers' sample comprised 59 men and 69 women, and the head teachers' sample comprised 21 men and 4 women. The disparity in the number of men and women in the teachers' sample reflects more the attitude of teachers towards the completion of surveys than any other factor. On the other hand, the head teachers' sample reflects the dominance of men among head teachers in the province. It also reflects the province's thinking and practice in appointments to head teacher positions, which is biased against women. This means a male teacher is more likely to be appointed to a head teacher's position than a female teacher. Table 3 shows the total number of teacher and head teacher respondents and their sex.

Table 3: Respondents by sex

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Male	59	46.1	21	84
Female	69	53.9	4	16
Total	128	100	25	100

3.1.2 Teaching locations

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their school was urban or rural. The purpose for asking for this information was to help understand their experiences and perceptions of teacher appointment, particularly how the practice of teacher appointment affects them individually and as members of a defined group; that is, men or women and urban or rural teachers. As Table 4 shows, all teachers and head teachers indicated that their schools were rural. This reflects the fact that all community and primary schools in the province are classified as rural. It also means that the views expressed about the appointment of teachers in the province in this study are mainly from rural teachers.

Table 4: Teaching locations

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Urban	0	0	0	0
Rural	128	100	25	100
Total	128	100	25	100

3.1.3 School agencies

How different school agencies participate in the appointment of teachers impacts on the effectiveness and efficiency with which teacher appointments are made, the type of positions teachers are appointed to, and which schools they are appointed to (government or church agency and urban or rural). It also impacts on teachers' decisions to take up or refuse an appointment. As can be seen in Table 5, of the

127 teachers who responded, 48.8 percent indicated that they taught in a government school while the other 51.2 percent taught in a church agency school, with 40.9 percent teaching in a Catholic school. This reflects the dominant role of the Catholic Church, amongst the church agencies, in the provision of community and primary education in the province. The other 10.3 percent taught in schools operated by Lutheran/Evangelical, Seventh Day Adventist, and United Church agencies. Among head teachers, 64 percent headed government schools while 36 percent headed church agency schools. Most of the schools are located in remote and hard-to-reach areas. Teachers often refuse to teach in these schools because of lack of services, poor transport infrastructure, high cost of living, and poor support by the PEO and the community.

Table 5: Agencies operating community and primary schools

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Government	62	48.8	16	64
Catholic	52	40.9	7	28
Seventh Day Adventist	9	7.1	0	0
Lutheran/Evangelical	2	1.6	1	4
United Church	2	1.6	1	4
Total	127	100	25	100

3.1.4 Age of teachers and head teachers

A teacher's age may influence his or her decisions on the type of position to apply for and whether to accept or decline an appointment. As table 6 shows, 62.2 percent of the teachers were between the ages of 20 and 40, while 37.8 percent were 41 years or older. The data indicates that the majority of teachers in community and primary schools in the province were relatively young. What is also implied from the data is that, given their ages, teachers were more likely to be married with children. This is a major consideration in teachers' decisions when applying for and accepting or rejecting positions. On the other hand, the majority of head teachers (72 percent) were age 41 or over. This implies that community and primary schools were headed mainly by older teachers. These older head teachers, due to their age, were more likely to be married with children. In the case of teachers, this may have a bearing on their decisions to apply for and accept or reject appointments.

Table 6: Age of teachers and head teachers

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
20–25	7	5.7	0	0
26–30	25	20.5	1	4
31–35	24	19.6	2	8
36–40	20	16.4	4	16
41–45	10	8.2	5	20
46–50	17	13.9	4	16
Over 50	19	15.7	9	36
Total	122	100	25	100

In general, non-head-teacher positions are occupied by younger teachers while head teacher positions are occupied by older and more experienced teachers. This may reflect the practice in the province of giving older and more experienced teachers' preference for appointment to head teacher positions. More importantly, it can be deduced from the data presented in Tables 6 and 9 that these teachers are normally male, over 40 years of age, married, and from other provinces.

3.1.5 Teaching experience

The survey also captured the number of years respondents had been teaching. Among teachers, 23.1 percent had 10 years or less teaching experience, and a fairly small percentage (11.8 percent) had 31 years or more experience. The majority of the teachers (55.1 percent) had between 11 and 30 years of experience. Head teachers showed a similar pattern. A relatively small percentage (4 percent) had 10 years or less experience, while 40 percent had between 31 and 40 years of teaching experience. The majority (56 percent) had between 11 and 30 years experience. The data suggest that both teachers and head teachers are appointed based on the number of years of teaching experience and their age. The more experience a teacher has, the more likely it is that the teacher will be appointed to a teaching or head teacher position in the province (see Table 7).

Table 7: Teaching experience

Number of years	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
5 or less	23	18.1	0	0
6–10	19	15	1	4
11–15	19	15	6	24
16–20	23	18.1	1	4
21–30	28	22	7	28
31–40	14	11	6	24
Over 40	1	0.8	4	16
Total	127	100	25	100

3.1.6 Number of years in the same school

How many years a teacher remains in a school is a good indicator of teacher appointment, specifically as it relates to tenure, transparency, and turnover of teaching staff. In this regard, teachers and head teachers were asked to indicate how many years they had been teaching in their current school. As Table 8 shows, 41.4 percent of the teachers and 44 percent of the head teachers revealed that they had been teaching in their current schools for between one and three years. The other 58.6 percent of the teachers and 56 percent of the head teachers said that they had been teaching in their current school for more than three years. The data suggest that while the province may be complying with tenure provisions in the *TSC Act*, it also keeps some teachers and head teachers beyond three years in the same school. This apparent lack of consistency in the application of tenure regulations is also a contributing factor to teachers' perceptions of teacher appointment as corrupt and lacking in transparency and accountability.

Table 8: Time teaching in current school

Number of years	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Less than 1	7	5.5	1	4
1–3	53	41.4	11	44
4–6	27	21.1	5	20
7–9	12	9.4	2	8
10–12	14	10.9	3	12
13–15	5	3.9	1	4
16–18	4	3.1	2	8
19–21	2	1.6	0	0
More than 21	4	3.1	0	0
Total	128	100	25	100

3.1.7 Home province

Teachers and head teachers were asked to specify their home provinces to ascertain not only where they come from but, most importantly, the composition of community and primary school teachers in the province. As Table 9 shows, only 1.6 percent of the teachers and 12 percent of the head teachers were from the Central Province. The majority of teachers (56.7 percent) were from the Simbu Province, and the majority of head teachers (60 percent) were from the Morobe Province. Thus, most teachers and head teachers in community and primary schools in the province were from other provinces. This practice is unlike that of other provinces (such as East Sepik and Simbu), where more than half of the teachers and head teachers are from the province (see Kukari, *et. al.*, 2012).

This reflects the mindset and the practice of teacher appointment in the Central Province. It may also indicate that teachers from other provinces, especially the highlands provinces, find Central Province a relatively peaceful place to teach and live because it has fewer security problems and tribal conflicts. It seems that the cost of recruiting teachers and paying for their annual leave back to their home provinces is a less important consideration in the appointment of teachers than their qualifications and experience.

Table 9: Home province

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Simbu	72	56.7	0	0
Enga	9	7.1	0	0
Sandaun	6	4.7	1	4
Autonomous Region of Bougainville	6	4.7	0	0
Manus	5	3.9	1	4
Madang	4	3.1	2	8
Western Highlands	4	3.1	0	0

Table 9 (cont'd)

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Eastern Highlands	4	3.1	0	0
Milne Bay	3	2.4	0	0
New Ireland	3	2.4	0	0
East Sepik	2	1.6	1	4
Gulf	2	1.6	0	0
Western	2	1.6	1	4
Central	2	1.6	3	12
East New Britain	1	0.8	1	4
Morobe	1	0.8	15	60
Southern Highlands	1	0.8	0	0
Total	127	100	25	100

3.2 Appointment of Teachers and Head Teachers

3.2.1 Perceptions of how appointments are made

Respondents were asked to describe in their own words how teachers were appointed. About 62 percent of teachers and 44 percent of head teachers were of the view that teachers are appointed through the *Special Education Gazette*. Another 24.4 percent and 52 percent, respectively, said that teachers are appointed by the PEB. One of the teachers explained this process as follows:

Teachers fill in application forms using the Gazette and the positions in it. They send their applications to the Catholic Education Secretary. The Catholic Education Secretary considers the applications and makes recommendations to the Provincial Education Board. Recommendations are considered and endorsed by the Provincial Education Board (female teacher).

This suggests that the province is using correct teacher appointment procedures. However, the process is not totally transparent and accountable. As Table 10 shows, 8.7 percent of teachers perceived appointments to involve nepotism and bribery.

Sometimes there is bribery, nepotism and favouritism in the appointment of teachers which results in persons being appointed to positions to which they are incapable of performing (male teacher).

Moreover, 0.8 percent of teachers and 4 percent of head teachers said that teachers are often forced to take up positions they had not applied for.

Sometimes teachers are appointed through applications but most of the time without considering teachers' applications the PEB makes its own

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decisions about teachers' postings and forces them to accept these positions (male teacher).

Survey results suggest that while the province may be complying in some cases with formal teacher appointment procedures, other teacher appointments are made outside of these procedures. The reliance on informal procedures by the PEO is breeding corruption in teacher appointments.

Table 10: Perceptions of how teachers are appointed

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Through the Special Education Gazette	79	62.2	11	44
By PEB	31	24.4	13	52
Through nepotism	9	7.1	0	0
Through bribery	2	1.6	0	0
Forced to take up positions	1	0.8	1	4
Recommended by Board of Management	0	0	0	0
Other	5	3.9	0	0
Total	127	100	25	100

3.2.2 *When teachers are advised of their postings*

Late resumption of teaching duties by teachers is a persistent problem. This is often caused by, amongst other factors, the late notification of teachers of their appointments for the following school year. The participants were asked when they were informed of their postings. As table 11 shows, 20.5 percent of the teachers said that they were notified in November or December. This is the latest that teachers can be notified of their postings for the following year and still resume their duties on time. However, it seems that this is not often the case, because 79.5 percent of teachers specified that notification is always late, that is, teachers are notified of their postings after December. On the other hand, 91.3 percent of the head teachers indicated that notification of teachers of their appointments was late and never on time. This is amplified in the following narrative by one of the teachers:

Teachers are advised of their postings a week or two before the resumption of duty. This is not good enough. Teachers need to know well in advance so they can arrange transport to travel to their schools earlier before resumption of duties.

Teacher postings are either finalised while teachers are on holidays or delayed until the beginning of the school year. When this happens, teachers wait around for their postings to be confirmed before they move to their schools. This contributes to teachers resuming their duties late, which often leads to other problems such as the late submission of RoDSS, rushed implementation of curriculum, and poor teaching and quality of learning.

Table 11: Perceptions of the timing of teacher appointment notifications

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
January/beginning of school year	41	33.6	11	47.8
A few weeks before resumption	30	24.6	0	0
At resumption/first week of school	5	4.1	5	21.7
Late November/December	25	20.5	2	8.7
During Christmas vacation	9	7.4	3	13.1
Always very late	12	9.8	2	8.7
Total	122	100	23	100

3.2.3 How teachers are notified of their postings

Respondents were asked about how they were advised of their postings. As table 12 indicates, they came to know about their postings mainly through informal means. A large number (80.1 percent of teachers and 88 percent of head teachers) said that they were informed through the radio or by enquiring at the provincial headquarters. One of the teachers said:

Postings are pinned up on the notice board at the education office in Konedobu. I had to travel a long way from my school, which is located in a very remote area in the Abau District, to the education office in Konedobu to find out about my posting.

A few teachers (4 percent) learned about their postings from fellow teachers, friends in the street, those who hear about it, and through other means. In the case of head teachers, 4 percent learned about their postings from their fellow teachers. Only a small percentage of teachers (15.9 percent) and head teachers (8 percent) indicated that they received a written notification. The late processing of teacher appointments is a major reason for the province resorting to informal notification. Although radio is an effective way of getting the message to all teachers in the province, it should not replace formal written notification. The same applies to teachers learning about their appointments through enquires at the provincial headquarters.

Table 12: How teachers and head teachers are notified of their appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Through enquiries at the provincial headquarters	90	71.4	22	88
Through the radio	11	8.7	0	0
Written notification	20	15.9	0	0
By those who hear about it	1	0.8	2	8
By fellow teachers	3	2.4	1	4
Other	1	0.8	0	0
Total	126	100	25	100

3.2.4 *Consideration of teacher and head teacher interests in teacher appointment*

A section in the application form encourages teachers to state their preferences to guide decisions on their appointments. Some teachers write additional supporting letters to express their interest and support their choice of teaching positions. Yet, 50.4 percent of the teachers and 52 percent of the head teachers said their interests were not considered when decisions were made on their appointments. An additional 30.3 percent and 12 percent, respectively, said they were not considered every time. This is what one teacher said about this issue:

Appointments are done with little regard and consideration of teachers' welfare and interests. Appointments are done only on "whom you know" basis and teachers' interests are not properly considered when decisions are made on their applications. Teachers are frustrated over this and normally protest (male teacher).

Only 19.3 percent of the teachers and 36 percent of the head teachers indicated that teachers' interests were considered in their appointments (see Table 13). Responses seemed to suggest that there have been inconsistencies in the consideration of teachers' interests. This is likely to contribute to increased protest by teachers over their postings, such as refusal to take up positions, late resumption of duty, and, in the worst-case scenario, teachers quitting the profession.

Table 13: Perceptions of whether teachers' interests are considered during appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	23	19.3	9	36
No	60	50.4	13	52
Sometimes	36	30.3	3	12
Total	119	100	25	100

3.3 **Acceptance and Refusal of Appointments**

3.3.1 *Refusal of appointments*

Not all teachers accept the positions they are offered. Respondents were asked to indicate if they had ever refused to take up a teaching appointment; 50.8 percent of teachers and 40 percent of head teachers indicated that they had done so (see Table 14). The number of teachers refusing appointments will no doubt increase in the future. This should be a worry for the PEB and TSC. If the root causes are not identified and effectively addressed, it will undermine the entire teacher appointment process. Teachers and head teachers are increasingly becoming dissatisfied with the way appointments are handled. Teachers being forced to take up teaching positions they had not applied for, teacher appeals not being considered, nepotism and bribery in the appointment process, teachers' welfare and interests not being considered when appointments are made, and late notification of teacher postings, have a bearing on decisions on whether or not they take up an appointment.

Table 14: Refusal of appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Have refused	61	50.8	10	40
Have not refused	59	49.2	15	60
Total	120	100	25	100

3.3.2 Reasons for refusing appointments

Teachers and head teachers who at some point refused to take up a teaching appointment were asked to give the reasons for their refusal. The most common reasons given were appointments not being according to teacher's choice (42.2 percent) and family and personal issues (33.6 percent). This is how one teacher explained why she refused her appointment:

I refused because the house I was to occupy was in a very bad condition and besides there were no other houses besides this house. I also considered my children's education thinking that if I moved, their education would be disturbed because of the location of the school (female teacher).

These two factors are related, because teachers' applications are influenced by their family and personal circumstances. When these were not considered, they often refused to take up positions they had not applied for. The other reasons for refusal of an appointment include the location of the school (8.6 percent), lack of government services (7.8 percent), lack of accommodation (3.9 percent), security concerns (2.3 percent), and eligibility and tenure issues (1.6 percent). Head teachers gave similar reasons for refusing teaching appointments that they had not applied for. In this regard, 40 percent of the head teachers indicated that they refused to take up a position because they had not applied for it. This is what one of them said:

I refused to accept the position given to me by the PEB simply because I did not apply for that position. It was not one of my preferences so I refused it (male head teacher).

Another 24 percent of the head teachers refused appointments because of personal and family concerns, eligibility and tenure issues, or lack of government and other services in the location where they were appointed to teach. Other reasons identified by head teachers were security concerns (4 percent), location (4 percent), and lack of accommodation and toilet facilities (4 percent).

The two main contributing factors to teachers' refusal of teaching appointments appear to be appointments not consistent with teachers' choices, and family and personal issues. These factors are intertwined and related to lack of security, lack of basic services, and eligibility and tenure issues. These issues, which often come into play when teachers apply for positions, are not acknowledged or adequately addressed during the teacher appointment process.

Table 15: Reasons for refusing appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Appointment not teacher's choice	54	42.2	10	40
Family/personal problems	43	33.6	6	24
Eligibility and tenure issues	2	1.6	3	12
Location of school	11	8.6	1	4
Lack of government services	10	7.8	3	12
Lack of accommodation	5	3.9	1	4
Security concerns	3	2.3	1	4
Total	128	100	25	100

3.3.3 Actions taken when an appointment is not according to the teacher's or head teacher's choice

Respondents were asked to describe the actions they would take if an appointment was not according to their choice. Table 16 shows that 56.7 percent of teachers and 76 percent of head teachers said that they would challenge their appointments. One of them explained:

I would first consider their reasons for appointing me to a different position. If I am satisfied I will take up the position. If I disagree, I will appeal against the PEB decision and wait for them to reply before I make my decision to take up or not to take up the position (female teacher).

However, as pointed out earlier, appellants often do not get a timely response to their appeals from the PEB. Because of this, teachers and head teachers refuse to take up the positions offered to them by the PEB. This was indicated by 26.8 percent of the teachers and 12 percent of the head teachers as a course of action they would take if an appointment was not according to their choice. In contrast, 15.7 percent of the teachers and 12 percent of the head teachers said that they would still take up the position. This action is often taken because teachers and head teachers do not want to be put in the pool, which means they would be suspended from the payroll. This is amplified by the following narrative from one of the teachers:

I will take up the appointment as I know the consequences if I refuse. I will be put in the pool and that means I will be put off the pay roll. I need the salary to support my family (male teacher).

These responses show that many teachers and head teachers were following the correct procedures to challenge the appointing authorities' decisions if they viewed their appointment to be unjust. However, a small percentage was willing to take matters into their own hands by refusing to take up their positions. This is because teachers did not see the value of appealing the decisions of PEB when the appeal process is nonexistent in the province. More teachers will resort to this action in the future if the appeal process is not restored and does not serve the interests of teachers. Some respondents were most likely to accept even a forced appointment. This is because teachers are frightened of losing a secure income that their families depend on if they are placed in the pool.

Table 16: Responses to unsatisfactory appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Challenge appointment	72	56.7	19	76
Refuse to take up position	34	26.8	3	12
Take up position anyway	20	15.7	3	12
Other	1	0.8	0	0
Total	127	100	25	100

3.3.4 Other teachers and head teachers' reasons for refusing their appointments

Participants were asked about other teachers' reasons for refusing their appointments. According to their responses, the most common reasons for refusal of an appointment were dissatisfaction with the appointment (22.1 percent), family and personal reasons (22.1 percent), and the location of the school (21.2 percent). These were also revealed in the interviews with teachers. For example, one of them said:

Teachers do not want to accept the positions because these positions were not their choices. Other teachers refuse their positions because of family or personal reasons. Teachers have families and children who are going to school and want to make sure that the schools they have been posted to teach and have grades for their children (female teacher).

The above three factors are closely linked and contribute directly to teachers' refusal of appointments. When teachers apply for positions they take into consideration their family and personal circumstances, and whether or not these circumstances will be better served if they apply to teach in a particular school or location. When their expectations are not met, they often decline the position offered by the PEB. Other reasons for teachers' refusal of appointments mentioned by respondents include logistics and the cost of getting to the school (11.8 percent), lack of accommodation (11 percent), lack of government services (7.1 percent), and security concerns (4.7 percent). This is summed up in the following narrative from a male teacher:

Remote location of schools is not attractive for teachers to go. The only government service in a very remote place is a school. Who would ever think of going to a place like that? Conflicts, marriage problems, poor results of the previous year, borrowed money, store credits, political influence and tribal enemies are some of the factors that contribute to teachers' decisions to refuse their postings.

These are the factors that influenced teachers' decisions on the type and location of schools they apply to teach in. When these are not given a fair consideration by the PEB, teachers refuse to take up alternative positions offered. For the head teachers, refusal of appointments was more likely due to the location of the school (48 percent), discontent with the position offered (20 percent), family and personal reasons (12 percent), lack of government services (12 percent), and difficulty and cost of getting to the school (8 percent). A head teacher summed it up as follows:

Teachers refuse to take up their appointments for different reasons. Most of the time they refuse because appointments are not in their interest and because of

personal or family reasons such as the unavailability of grades for their children attending school, spouses working with other organisations or occupying positions that it will be difficult for them to leave and go with their husbands or wives. Security reasons, especially for female teachers, and health reasons stop teachers from accepting positions given to them by the PEB (male head teacher).

Location of the school is an important consideration when teachers apply for positions. This is because all other factors will have little consequence on the teacher's decision to accept the appointment if he or she is given the position applied for. When teachers are given positions in locations that they have not applied to go to, they protest by refusing the position (see Table 17).

Table 17: Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for refusing appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Unhappy with appointment	28	22.1	5	20
Location of school	27	21.2	12	48
Family/personal reasons	28	22.1	3	12
Difficulty and cost of getting to the school	15	11.8	2	8
Lack of services	9	7.1	3	12
Lack of accommodation	14	11	0	0
Security concerns	6	4.7	0	0
Total	127	100	25	100

3.3.5 *Actions taken by other teachers when appointment is not according to their choice*

Teachers and head teachers were asked to list the kinds of actions other teachers take when appointments they are offered are not according to their choice. As can be seen in Table 18, over half (53.1 percent) of the teachers and an even higher proportion of head teachers (79 percent) said that the most common action teachers took was to appeal their appointment. This was reinforced during interviews with the teachers. For example, one of them said:

Many teachers tend to appeal the decision of the PEB by writing a formal letter to PEB and then wait for an answer. Others write to the Teaching Service Commission if they are not happy with their appointments (female teacher).

According to 18.8 percent of the teachers and 17 percent of the head teachers, the other most common action taken by teachers is to refuse to take up their appointments. Teachers resort to this action when they have no confidence in the appeals process or receive an unsatisfactory decision on an appeal. This also often contributes to teachers' decision to resume work late. Over 6 percent of the teachers identified late resumption as an action that teachers take if the appointment was not according to their choice. Other actions highlighted by respondents included leaving the teaching profession (7 percent), seeking advice from TSC (3.9 percent), and swapping with another teacher (1.5 percent). One of the teachers elaborated:

Some teachers leave to look for other jobs, some just quit teaching and wait for next year, and others wait around and go to their schools very late (male teacher).

According to 9.4 percent of the teachers and 4 percent of the head teachers, teachers would still take up their appointments despite their dissatisfaction. This is often due to fear of losing their salary if they refuse their appointments. The responses seemed to suggest that only a very small percentage of teachers were willing to take up unsatisfactory appointments. A large percentage of teachers either challenges or resorts to other actions to protest these appointments. Of concern is that some teachers are also quitting the teaching profession if they are dissatisfied with their appointments.

Table 18: Perceptions of responses by other teachers to unsatisfactory appointments

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Challenge appointment	68	53.1	19	79
Refuse to take up appointment	24	18.8	4	17
Take up appointment	12	9.4	1	4
Leave teaching	9	7	0	0
Resume work late	8	6.3	0	0
Seek advice from Teaching Service Commission	5	3.9	0	0
Swap with another teacher	2	1.5	0	0
Total	128	100	24	100

3.3.6 Actions the appointing authority takes against teachers who refuse appointments

When teachers refuse to take up appointments they had not applied for, the PEB often reacts by taking various actions to compel them to take up the positions. Placement of teachers in the pool was given by 36 percent of the teachers and 54 percent of the head teachers as the most common action taken by PEB against teachers who refuse to take up appointments. This was supported by teachers when interviewed. One of them said: *Teachers who refuse to take up the positions given to them by the PEB are placed in the pool and left there to wait for vacant positions.*

Placement of teachers in other positions was also identified, by 27 percent of the teachers and 13 percent of the head teachers, as an action that PEB takes against teachers who refuse appointments. Other PEB actions mentioned by respondents include issuing threats and putting teachers off the payroll (24 percent), forcing teachers to take up appointments (8 percent), and sending teachers to remote schools (3 percent). Teachers see these actions as forms of punishment.

Teachers are given appointments elsewhere. They are taken off the payroll and posted to schools in very remote parts of the province or in some cases [demoted]. They make the teachers face the consequences of their decisions to refuse the appointments (head teacher).

According to the head teachers, other actions taken by the PEB against teachers who refuse their appointments include giving teachers acting appointments (8 percent), issuing threats to put teachers off the payroll (4 percent), giving late teaching appointments (4 percent), and ignoring teachers' appeals (Table 19). Responses suggest that PEB was less concerned with addressing teachers' refusal of teaching appointments through the use of the formal appeal processes stipulated under the TSC Act than with the use of punitive measures. This will not improve teacher appointment in the province but will further contribute to its poor state.

Table 19: Actions taken by the Provincial Education Board against teachers who refuse an appointment

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Place teachers in the pool	46	36	13	54
Place teachers in other positions	34	27	3	13
Force teachers to take up appointments	10	8	3	13
Issue threats/take teachers off the payroll	30	24	1	4
Give teachers acting appointments elsewhere	0	0	2	8
Send teachers to remote schools	4	3	0	0
Give late teaching appointments	0	0	1	4
Ignore teachers' appeals	0	0	1	4
Other	2	2	0	0
Total	126	100	24	100

3.4 Resumption of Duties

3.4.1 *Problems associated with the resumption-of-duty process*

Late resumption of duties by teachers is identified by 40 percent of the teachers and 24 percent of the head teachers as one of the most common problems associated with the resumption-of-duty process. Responses summarised in Table 20 seem to suggest that this is caused by late notification of appointments, poor organisation of appointments, two or more teachers being appointed to the same position, inadequate logistical support for teachers, lack of monitoring of teachers' resumption of duties, and lack of accommodation. These are summed up by the following response from one of the teachers:

The big problem is late resumption of duties by teachers every year. The majority of the teachers in this province arrive at their schools in the first week or the second week of the first term. This is because postings are very late, some had to travel long distances, no money to pay for transport, family problems, problems with appointment, clashes in positions, late notification of appointments, etc. (female teacher).

These factors contribute not only to the late resumption of teaching duties but also to the late submission of RoDSS to PARS, which often results in thousands of teachers being put off the payroll annually. Except for 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), failure by the PEB and the TSC to effectively and efficiently carry out their mandated teacher appointment roles and responsibilities, and lack of transparency and accountability in the appointment process. There is a strong relationship between these issues and the late resumption of duties by teachers.

Table 20: Perceptions of the problems associated with the resumption of duties

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Late resumption of duties	48	40	6	24
Late notification of appointment	18	15	9	36
Poor organisation of appointments	15	12.4	2	8
Inadequate logistics and financial support	11	9	5	20
Late submission of RoDSS to PARS	12	10	0	0
Two or more teachers resuming same position	12	10	1	4
Inadequate monitoring	0	0	1	4
Lack of accommodation	3	2	1	4
Poor communication	1	0.8	0	0
Other	1	0.8	0	0
Total	121	100	25	100

3.4.2 *Reasons for late resumption of duties*

Teachers and head teachers were asked to identify the factors that would contribute to their late resumption of teaching duties. The most common factor, identified by 47 percent of the teachers and 48 percent of the head teachers, is the difficulty and cost of getting to the school. Late appointment was the second most important factor, identified by 27.5 percent of the teachers and 20 percent of the head teachers. Other reasons include family and personal issues, lack of accommodation, late notification of appointment, unhappiness with the appointment, tribal conflict, and weather and road conditions. Apart from poor weather and road conditions and, to some extent, lack of accommodation, the rest of the contributing factors are caused by the failure of PEB and TSC to effectively carry out their mandated teacher appointment roles and responsibilities (see Table 21).

Table 21: Reasons for resuming duties late

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Difficulty and cost of getting to school	60	47	12	48
Late appointment	35	27.5	5	20
Family/personal reasons	17	13.4	1	4
Lack of accommodation	3	2	3	12
Late/no notification of appointment	7	5.5	2	8
Unhappy with appointment	3	2	1	4
Tribal conflicts	0	0	1	4
Weather and road conditions	2	2.6	0	0
Total	127	100	25	100

3.4.3 *Other teachers' reasons for resuming their teaching duties late*

Respondents were asked to give their views on why other teachers resumed their teaching duties late. Table 22 shows that 42.5 percent of the teachers and 52 percent of the head teachers indicated that the most common reason is the difficulty and cost of getting to the school. This is consistent with respondents' reasons for resuming their own duties late. Late appointment was identified by 25.2 percent of teachers and 20 percent of the head teachers as the second most common reason for teachers resuming their duties late. Family and personal reasons, dissatisfaction with the appointment, and late notification were identified by a combined total of 29.9 percent of the teachers and 28 percent of the head teachers as common contributing factors. Another reason, identified by 2.4 percent of the teachers, is lack of teacher accommodation. With this exception, the reasons are manifestations of the PEB and TSC's failure to effectively carry out their mandated teacher appointment functions, a failure that was remarked upon by both the teachers and the head teachers.

Table 22: Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for resuming their duties late

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Difficulty and cost of getting to school	54	42.5	13	52
Late appointment	32	25.2	5	20
Family/personal reasons	17	13.4	4	16
Unhappy with appointment	12	9.4	2	8
Late/no notification of appointment	9	7.1	1	4
No accommodation	3	2.4	0	0
Total	127	100	25	100

3.4.4 *Strategies recommended by respondents to ensure that teachers resume their duties on time*

Respondents were asked to give their views on what should be done to ensure that teachers resumed their duties on time. According to 63 percent of the teachers and 60 percent of the head teachers, the problem will be addressed if teachers are notified early of their appointments. In the view of 2 percent of the teachers and 4 percent of the head teachers, early notification can be done if late appointments are avoided. These two issues are interrelated and must be addressed simultaneously. These recommendations were also made during interviews.

All appointments should be done and teachers notified of their postings early before they go for holidays. Also, leave tickets must be given to teachers on time so teachers can go to their home provinces on time and come back on time to resume their duties (male teacher).

Even if teachers are appointed and notified early, they still have to be moved to the schools to which they have been appointed. This was not happening in the province, and both teachers and head teachers identified this as another important contributing factor to teachers resuming their duties late. Hence, 27 percent of the teachers and 32 percent of the teachers wanted to see this issue addressed by PEB and TSC to enable teachers to resume their duties on time. Other strategies recommended by teachers include consideration of teachers' interests and welfare by the PEB and TSC during appointments, and the provision of accommodation by schools (3.2 percent). Among head teachers, 4

percent were of the view that teachers' late resumption of duties can be addressed if PEB and TSC consider teachers' interests and welfare during appointments. Responses summarised in Table 23 indicate that late resumption of duties can be addressed if the PEB and the TSC effectively address the core problems of teacher appointment, including the timely dissemination of the *Special Education Gazette* to the province and the schools, timely appointment and notification of teachers, effective planning and implementation of the logistics of moving teachers to schools, and efficient handling of teachers' RoDSS.

Table 23: Strategies recommended to ensure that teachers resume their duties on time

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Early notification of appointment	79	63	15	60
PEB/TSC provide logistical support	34	27	8	32
PEB/TSC consider teachers' personal issues during appointments	5	4	1	4
Avoid/minimise late appointments	3	2	1	4
Schools provide appropriate accommodation	4	3.2	0	0
Other	1	0.8	0	0
Total	126	100	25	100

3.5 Strengths and Weaknesses of Teacher Appointment

3.5.1 Strengths of the teacher appointment process

Respondents were asked to identify the strengths of the teacher appointment process in the province. Their responses are presented in Table 24. Of the 104 teachers who responded, 26 percent saw no strengths at all. Those who did identify strengths mentioned serving teachers being given priority (22 percent), logistical support for teacher deployment (15 percent), some teachers being appointed on merit (13.5 percent), many schools being fully staffed (12.5 percent), teachers being able to fight for their rights (7 percent), application through the District Education Office (2 percent), and new graduates being screened (2 percent). Of the 23 head teacher respondents, 26 percent saw no strengths in the process. Those who did identify strengths mentioned logistical support for teacher deployment (17.4 percent), serving teachers being given priority (13 percent), some teachers being appointed on merit (13 percent), some teachers being willing to teach in remote schools (13 percent), many schools being fully staffed (9 percent), teachers being able to fight for their rights (4.3 percent), and application through DEO (4.3 percent). The responses suggest that while the majority of the teachers and the head teachers saw some strength in the way teachers are appointed to teaching positions in the province, a significant number of teachers are dissatisfied with the process. They also show that teacher appointment in the province is, in most part, dysfunctional and disproportionate in its impact on teachers.

Table 24: Perceptions of the strengths of the teacher appointment process

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
None	27	26	6	26
Serving teachers given priority	23	22	3	13
Logistical support for teacher deployment	16	15	4	17.4
Some teachers appointed on merit	14	13.5	3	13
Many schools fully staffed	13	12.5	2	9
Some teachers willing to teach in remote schools	0	0	3	13
Teachers able to fight for their rights	7	7	1	4.3
Application through DEO	2	2	1	4.3
New graduates screened	2	2	0	0
Total	104	100	23	100

3.5.2 Weaknesses of the teacher appointment process

When participants were asked to identify the weaknesses of the present teacher appointment process, the most common responses were inadequate logistical and financial support, late notification, and nepotism and corruption. This is what one of the teachers said:

Too many delays in the appointment of teachers, notifying teachers of where they will be teaching, no support for teachers travelling to schools, issuing of leave fares is always late so teachers are always late in resuming their duties and the process of dealing with teachers problems is not there due to nepotism (female teacher).

Other weaknesses mentioned were PEB's lack of concern about teachers' interests, lack of respect for teachers' rights and interests, teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools, late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette*, lack of data to inform PEB on teachers' appointments, teachers occupying one position for too long, and teachers occupying more than one position (see Table 25). In general, the weaknesses identified by both the teachers and head teachers underscore the fact that teacher appointment practices were subject to nepotism and corruption. This is mainly due to poor performance by the PEB and the TSC of their mandated teacher appointment roles and responsibilities, and noncompliance with the provisions of the *TSC Act*, the *Education Act*, and related policies pertaining to the appointment of teachers.

Table 25: Perceptions of the weaknesses of the teacher appointment process

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Inadequate logistical and financial support	33	28	9	38
Late notification	29	24.4	4	17
Nepotism/corruption	22	18.4	4	17
Teachers' rights and interests not respected	10	8.4	1	4
Teachers willing to teach in remote schools	4	3.4	2	8
Teachers occupying more than one position	6	5	2	8
PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare	5	4	1	4
PEB's lack of data on teacher appointments	3	2.5	1	4
Late arrival of <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	4	3.4	0	0
Teachers occupying one position for too long	3	2.5	0	0
Total	119	100	24	100

3.5.3 *How the teacher appointment process can be improved*

Teachers were asked to suggest strategies for improving the teacher appointment process (see Table 26). Of the 119 teachers who responded, 25.2 percent recommended that the *Special Education Gazette* should be sent to the provinces early, 22.6 percent that stronger logistical support be provided for teachers, 18.5 percent that teachers be appointed on merit, 13.4 percent that teachers' interests and welfare be considered, 6 percent that teachers be formally notified of their postings, 4.2 percent that schools provide teacher accommodation, and 3.4 percent that teachers in the pool be recommended for appointment. Consideration of recommendations by standard officers, BoMs, church agencies, and DEOs, and replacement of ineffective appointment officers, was each recommended by 2.5 percent of the teachers, and teachers serving out their tenure was recommended by 1.7 percent of the teachers. Of the 20 head teachers who responded, more than half (55 percent) would like to see logistical support for moving teachers to schools strengthened, and 15 percent recommended that teachers be appointed on merit. Teachers being formally notified of their appointments and consideration of teachers' interests and welfare during appointments were each recommended by 10 percent of teachers, and considering the recommendations of DEOs, BoMs, church agencies, and standard officers and sending of the *Special Education Gazette* to provinces early were each recommended by 5 percent of teachers. One of the teachers recommended:

Teacher appointment authorities must be strict in executing their duties according to set policies and guidelines, and eliminate corruption, bribery, and nepotism from the teacher appointment process. Teacher appointment process will improve if we address the problems that prevent it from happening properly and serve the interests of teachers. All postings must be done by all parties and these must be computerised (female teacher).

Responses summarised in Table 26 indicate that the poor state of teacher appointment in the province will not improve unless the strategies recommended by the teachers and the head teachers are implemented by the PEB and the TSC.

Table 26: Suggestions for improving the teacher appointment process

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Send <i>Special Education Gazette</i> to provinces early	30	25.2	1	5
Strengthen logistical support for moving teachers to schools	27	22.6	11	55
Appoint teachers on merit	22	18.5	3	15
Formally notify teachers of their appointments	7	6	2	10
Consider teachers' interests/welfare during appointments	16	13.4	2	10
Consider recommendations by DEO, BOM, church agency, standard officers	3	2.5	1	5
Ensure that schools provide accommodation	5	4.2	0	0
Consider teachers in the pool for appointment	4	3.4	0	0
Replace ineffective appointment officers	3	2.5	0	0
Ensure that teachers serve out their tenure	2	1.7	0	0
Total	119	100	20	100

3.5.4 Recommended changes to the teacher appointment process

Teachers and head teachers were asked to recommend changes to the teacher appointment process. Table 27 shows that 24 percent of the teachers and 27.2 percent of the head teachers would like to see a change in the financing of teachers' costs for transferring to schools. Elimination of corruption was called for by 14 percent of the teachers and 27.2 percent of the head teachers. One of the teachers elaborated:

I would like to see a change in the way teachers are appointed to positions in schools. Teachers must apply for positions in time and appointment must be made in June or somewhere there. Confirmation if teachers' appointments to positions should be announced before or straight after close of school ... in December and not wait till resumption of duty time in Term One of the new year. Corruption and nepotism must be addressed and those who practice it must be punished (male teacher).

Moreover, 13.5 percent of the teachers and 23 percent of the head teachers would like unprofessional and dishonest appointment officers to be replaced. Other changes that teachers would like to see are consideration of teachers' rights and welfare during appointments (13.5 percent), improvement in the timing of teacher appointments (12 percent), provision of incentives for teaching in remote schools (8 percent), improvement in the teacher appointment process (5.4 percent), improvement in the method of notifying teachers of their appointments (3.6 percent), appointment of teachers to remote schools (3 percent), and implementation of tenure policy (3 percent). Head teachers called for improvement of the method of notifying teachers of their appointments (13.6 percent), implementation of tenure policy (4.5 percent), and improvement in the teacher appointment process (4.5 percent). These recommendations for change not only give an insight into the underlying teacher appointment problems, they also reflect their desire for change in the process for their own benefit as well as that of their students.

Table 27: Recommendations for changes to teacher appointment practices

	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Finance teachers' transfer costs	27	24	6	27.2
Eliminate corrupt practices	16	14	6	27.2
Replace unprofessional and dishonest appointment officers	15	13.5	5	23
Consider teachers' rights and interests	15	13.5	0	0
Improve teacher appointment process	6	5.4	1	4.5
Improve method of notifying teachers of appointments	4	3.6	3	13.6
Improve timing of teacher appointments	13	12	0	0
Provide incentives to teach in remote schools	9	8	0	0
Appoint teachers to remote schools	3	3	0	0
Implement teacher tenure policy	3	3	1	4.5
Total	111	100	22	100

4 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to examine the teacher appointment process in the province, and its impact on teachers and head teachers in particular and the provincial education system in general. The majority of teachers and head teachers who participated in the study did see some strength in the teacher appointment process. This reflects the uneven impact of teacher appointment on teachers and head teachers. It also highlights the differences in the individual experiences of teacher appointment. Most teachers' and head teachers' experiences of teacher appointment were positive. But a minority had negative experiences. Despite these differences, it is important that the PEB and the TSC take action to address ongoing as well as emerging problems, and build on the strengths to improve the process of teacher appointment.

Strengths identified by the majority of teachers and head teachers include:

- priority being given to serving teachers in the appointment of teachers and head teachers;
- logistical support for teacher deployment;
- teachers' ability to fight for their rights;
- appointment of some teachers on merit;
- fully staffed schools in all locations;
- ability to lodge applications through the DEO;
- screening of new graduates; and
- some teachers' willingness to teach in remote schools.

Despite these perceived strengths, overall the process of appointing teachers to positions in schools in the province is weak and has a multitude of problems. These include:

- late printing and distribution of the Special Education Gazette;
- late appointments;
- late notification of appointments;
- late resumption of teaching duties;
- late submission of RoDSS to PARS;
- bribery and nepotism;
- poor logistical support for teachers transferring to new positions;
- lack of an effective and efficient appeals mechanism;
- abuse of the teaching pool;
- lack of consideration of teachers' interests and welfare;
- forcing of teachers to take up positions they had not applied for; and
- using teacher appointment as a form of punishment.

The following are the main contributing factors to these problems:

- late publication and distribution of the Special Education Gazette;
- noncompliance by the PEB with the TSC Act, the National Education Act, and related policies;
- poor performance by PEB and TSC of their mandated teacher appointment roles and responsibilities;
- absence of an effective and efficient appeals mechanism; and
- reliance on informal systems in appointing teachers and informing them of their appointments.

The *Special Education Gazette*, which contains vacancies for teachers and head teachers in the national education system, continues to be printed and sent to the provinces very late in the year. Because of this, the appointment process starts very late. Consequently, teachers are notified of their postings very late. This leads to teachers getting to their schools and resuming their teaching duties late. Moreover, because teachers commence their duties one or two weeks into the school year, their RoDSS are often not completed and submitted to PEO and PARS at the National Department of Education in time for them to continue to receive their salaries. Many teachers end up being removed from the payroll as a result and are only reinstated when their RoDSS are received by PARS.

Although the data from the study seemed to indicate that the province was complying with the *TSC Act* and relevant policies in the appointment of teachers, there is a prevailing practice of teachers being appointed outside of these legal and policy frameworks. The PEO officers, in most cases, were appointing teachers and head teachers without complying with the *TSC Act*. These appointments were not merit based and were done without consideration of their negative impact on the teachers and the teacher appointment process in the province. They were often not vetted by the PEB. This is a major contributing factor to the poor teacher appointment practices in the province.

Both the teachers and the head teachers perceived teacher appointment in the province as corrupt. Lack of transparency in the appointment of teachers, non consideration of teachers' interests and welfare, noncompliance with the *TSC Act* and related policies, and nepotism and bribery were the main contributing factors to teachers' and head teachers' perceptions that the teacher appointment process in the province is corrupt. These were also the main contributing factors to teachers' dissatisfaction with and protests over their appointments.

Teachers were more likely to refuse a teaching position if it was not according to their choice and to challenge the decision of the PEB. However, appeals were often not heard and decided on in an efficient manner. Teachers often wait to receive the outcome of their appeals rather than travel to schools to which they were appointed. Often they wait for weeks for feedback from the PEB. This has caused many of them to lose faith in the system and eventually leave the teaching service or move to another province.

Late resumption of duties by teachers is a persistent problem. Late appointment and notification of teachers of their appointments, poor logistical support, the failure by the PEB and TSC to carry out their mandated teacher appointment roles and responsibilities, dissatisfaction with appointments, challenges to PEB decisions by teachers, and lack of a mechanism to effectively handle teachers' appeals are the main contributing factors to teachers resuming their duties late. According to study participants, this problem can be addressed through, amongst others strategies, improvement in the logistics of getting to schools, early appointment and notification, and fair consideration of teachers' interests and welfare when their applications for positions are considered.

In order to address the teacher appointment problems in the province, the teachers and the head teacher recommended, amongst others, the following steps:

- TSC and PEB should meet all transfer costs because teachers can no longer afford them.
- The appointing authorities should consider teachers' capabilities, interests, and rights during the appointment process.
- Nepotism and other malpractices in teacher appointment should be eliminated.
- Appointments should be completed and formally confirmed before teachers go on vacation.
- The *Special Education Gazette* should be sent to the province and the schools on time so that the appointment process can begin without delay.

While there are strengths that the province can build on to improve its teacher appointment process, it must address the underlying problems and their main contributing factors in order to improve teacher appointment practices. These practices must be informed by and comply with the relevant provisions of the *TSC* and *Education Acts*, and the relevant teacher appointment policies.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Recommendation 1.1

PEB should initiate and foster a dialogue with the TSC for a time-bound action plan to ensure that the *Special Education Gazette* is printed and distributed to the provinces by the end of June each year.

2. Appointments to Teaching Positions

Recommendation 2.1

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

Recommendation 2.2

PEB should comply with all the relevant provisions of the *TSC Act* in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions in the province.

Recommendation 2.3

TSC and PEB should eliminate nepotism and corruption in teacher appointments by ensuring that all appointments are made based on merit and through a duly constituted PEB meeting.

Recommendation 2.4

PEB should effectively address nepotism and corruption by taking disciplinary action against officers who engage in such activities, who fail to comply with the relevant provisions of the *TSC Act* and who fail to perform their responsibilities as described in the teacher appointment and logistics action plans.

Recommendation 2.5

PEB should put in place a confidential and a non punitive process for teachers, head teachers, BoM, PEB members, and parents and citizens to report cases of nepotism or corruption in teacher appointments.

Recommendation 2.6

PEB should develop and communicate to all teachers, school agencies, BoM, parents and citizens, standard officers, district education advisers, church education secretaries, and local leaders, criteria for appointing teachers that apply to all positions in schools.

Recommendation 2.7

PEB should ensure that teachers and head teachers are appointed with due consideration of their personal welfare and interests, eligibility for promotional positions, tenure rights, and potential risks to themselves and their families.

Recommendation 2.8

PEB, in collaboration with TSC, should develop and maintain an up-to-date database of all teaching positions in the province, teachers occupying each position and their particulars, vacant positions, and movement of positions from one school to another.

Recommendation 2.9

PEB should consider all recommendations for teacher appointments from church agency personnel, standard officers, and BoM based on merit.

Recommendation 2.10

TSC should provide increased financial incentives for teaching in remote schools; these should be paid on a fortnightly basis.

Recommendation 2.11

PEB should prepare and present a teacher appointment report to TSC and National Education Board by March every year.

3. Acceptance of Appointments by Teachers

Recommendation 3.1

PEB should develop and implement an effective, transparent, and time-bound appeals process and an action plan, if there is currently none in place.

Recommendation 3.2

PEB should establish an appeals board comprising members from outside PEB with clear roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation 3.3

PEB should develop and implement a clear, time-bound appeals process that states when appeals will be received, how long the appeals will be heard, and when the outcomes will be communicated to the appellants.

Recommendation 3.4

PEB and TSC should abolish the teachers' pool.

4. Resumption of Duties

Recommendation 4.1

PEB should develop and put in place a time-bound logistics action plan listing all required activities, including payment of travel costs and arrangements for teachers transferring to new positions, monitoring of teachers' resumption of duty, filling in and submission of the RoDSS, and reporting on the resumption of duty by teachers to PEB. The person(s) responsible for executing each activity and the required timeframe for its completion must be clearly identified for monitoring and accountability purposes.

Recommendation 4.2

PEB should budget for teachers' travel costs yearly and mobilise 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 TSC and PEB for ratification by March every year.

5. The *Teaching Service Act, 1995* and the *Education Act, 1995*

Recommendation 5.1

The *TSC Act* and the *Education Act* should be amended to include provisions that will make it mandatory for PEB to develop and implement time-bound teacher appointment, logistics, and appeals action plans, and to produce a teacher appointments annual report for TSC and PEB by March every year.

Recommendation 5.2

The *TSC Act* should be amended to hold implementing officers accountable to the PEB if they fail to carry out their responsibilities as stipulated in the teacher appointment, logistics, and appeals action plans.

6. Church-Government Partnerships

Recommendation 6.1

The roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers should be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoM, parents and citizens associations, PEB members, and provincial education officers.

Recommendation 6.2

PEB should give due consideration to the recommendations of church agencies and take into serious consideration their views on teacher appointments.

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ANNEXES

Annex A: Survey 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 and head teacher 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 appointment done with due consideration of teachers' interests?

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Acceptance of Appointments by Teachers

11. Have you refused to take up your 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 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 appointments?

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Resumption of Duties

17. What might stop you from resuming your 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 Appointment

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 appointment in the Province?

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

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Annex B: Focus-Group Interview Questions

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 the 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 at 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 weaknesses of teacher appointment in the province be addressed to improve teacher deployment in the province?

