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**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER APPOINTMENTS
IN THE
EAST NEW BRITAIN PROVINCE**



**NRI
The National Research Institute**

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EAST NEW BRITAIN PROVINCE**

by

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

BoM	Board of Management
NDoE	National Department of Education
NRI	National Research Institute
PARS	Payroll and Related Services
PEB	Provincial Education Board
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RoDSS	Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets
TSC	Teaching Service Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), 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's Human Resource Information and Operations Manual*. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and the provincial education boards (PEBs) are expected to comply with the relevant provisions of these laws and related policies when appointing teachers to teaching positions. However, not all PEBs comply with these laws and policies in their appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions. Some PEBs comply with some provisions, but systematically flout others. Anecdotal evidence and TSC data on teacher appointments indicated serious problems underlying the process and practice of teacher appointment at various levels of the education system of PNG.

East New Britain Province was selected to participate in the study because it is one of the provinces that has a good reputation in the appointment of teachers. Its inclusion allowed its teacher appointment process and practices to be examined. It was envisioned that, by clarifying the strengths and challenges identified in the province's teacher appointment process, other provinces that share similar experiences could learn from its experience. On the basis of the results, recommendations have been made to develop and implement appropriate interventions to improve the system.

Aims of the study

The specific aims of the study were to:

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

Methodology

East New Britain Province was one of the eight provinces selected to participate in the overall study. Two provinces from each of the four regions of PNG were included. Of the two provinces in each region, one had a good reputation for teacher appointment while the other's reputation was poor. It was intended to invite all primary and community school teachers from each of the provincial sites to participate in the study. The rationale for including all primary school teachers was

to understand how teacher appointment affects both different groups of teachers and individual teachers as well as different categories of teachers. For example, how the process of teacher appointment affects female and male teachers, urban and rural teachers, teachers in remote locations, married and single teachers, and teachers who are not local to the provinces in which they teach. This report describes the study in East New Britain Province.

Unfortunately, the method for delivering the survey forms to teachers did not yield the expected results. The surveys were left with a provincial education officer to deliver, collect and return them. This process was not done efficiently and therefore some schools in the remote areas and islands did not receive the forms. Additionally, some teachers who did receive the surveys failed to complete and return them to the provincial education officer.

Key Findings

1. *Characteristics of teachers and head teachers*

- i. There were more female teachers (67%) than male teachers (33%) serving in the community and primary schools in East New Britain Province. However, only 29% of the head teachers sampled were women.
- ii. In East New Britain Province, most of the teachers (94%) and head teachers (87%) served in rural primary and community schools. Just over half of the teachers (52%) and head teachers (55%) served in government schools while the remainder served in church schools.
- iii. The majority of teachers (77%) were older than 26 years. Similarly, a large percentage of head teachers (84%) were older than 31 years.
- iv. Almost all of the teachers (98%) had between 1 and 40 years of teaching experience.
- v. A large majority of head teachers (97%) had between 6 and 40 years of teaching experience, indicating that experienced teachers were generally appointed as head teachers in the province.
- vi. Many teachers (57%) and head teachers (46%) had served in their current schools for 3 years or less. Consequently, a significant proportion of teachers (43%) and head teachers (54%) had served in their current schools for four years or more, suggesting that many teachers were not appointed elsewhere after 3 years in their current school. Possible contributing factors included: (a) copies of the *Special Education Gazette* arrived late in the province and therefore teachers could not apply for other positions; (b) teachers renewed their tenured position and therefore stayed on in their current school; (c) teachers refused to take up assigned appointments, and (d) teachers were not encouraged to move on after 3 years of service in a school.

2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions

- i. The majority of teachers (84%) and head teachers (78%) appointed to teaching positions in community and primary schools were from East New Britain Province.
- ii. A substantial percentage of teachers (42%) and head teachers (29%) were appointed to teaching positions by applying through the *Special Education Gazette*. However, a significant percentage of the teachers (58%) and head teachers (71%) were appointed by the Provincial Education Board (PEB) through other means. Teachers cited forced appointment (teachers, 4%; head teachers, 19%), nepotism (teachers, 12%), bribery (teachers, 2%) and recommendations by the Board of Management (teachers, 2%; head teachers, 6%) among the other methods of appointment.
- iii. Despite the existence of the teacher appointment mechanisms, the data showed that anomalies were prevalent in the process. Respondents considered that a lack of transparency existed in the teacher appointment process (teachers, 23%; head teachers, 40%). Teachers were being placed in the "teaching pool", which resulted in a loss of regular income (teachers, 18%). Respondents stated they were forced to take up appointments that were not of their choice (teachers, 14%; head teachers, 10%). Respondents also thought that their interests and welfare were not considered during the appointment process (teachers, 9%; head teachers, 17%).
- iv. Some teachers agreed (teachers, 11%; head teachers, 3%) that the *Special Education Gazette* arrived late in the province and in the schools. This negatively affected teachers, especially those who wanted to apply for vacant positions for which they were eligible, for reasons of promotion or moving on.
- v. Consequences of the late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* included: (a) late confirmation of teachers' appointments; (b) late notification of teacher appointments (teachers, 81%; head teachers, 77%); and (c) the absence and minimal use of written formal notification of appointments (teachers, 2.7%; head teachers, 3.2%).
- vi. Teachers stated they were generally informed of appointments through the radio (teachers, 89%; head teachers, 74%) and personal enquiries at the provincial education office (teachers, 3%; head teachers, 7%).

3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers

- i. In the East New Britain Province, a majority of teachers (67%) and head teachers (61%) said they have never refused teaching appointments, but a notable percentage (teachers-33% and head teachers 39%) had refused an

appointment sometime in their teaching career. This data shows substantial discontentment with the teacher appointment process in this province.

- ii. A significant percentage of teachers (37%) and head teachers (61%) stated they would challenge their appointments if they viewed the appointment as unfair or unjust. These data suggest that teachers understand their rights and have the courage to challenge issues they view as unjust.
- iii. Personal issues (teachers, 32%; head teachers, 45%), forced appointments (teachers, 28%; head teachers, 27%), school locations (teachers, 18%) and eligibility and tenure issues (teachers, 10%) were the main reasons given for refusal of teaching appointments. The issue of school location was associated with personal interests, lack of basic services and security issues.
- iv. Some teachers (43%) and head teachers (26%) said they would still take up a forced appointment although discontented. Such decisions were largely influenced by the fear of losing a regular income (teachers, 83%; head teachers, 70%). Teachers who refuse to take up teaching appointments are placed in the teaching pool when no alternative positions are available; this also leads to their suspension from the payroll.
- v. Head teachers (3%) stated that their right to appeal against appointments, as stipulated under the *Teaching Services Act*, was generally ignored or not addressed efficiently by the authorities.

4. Resumption of teaching duties

- i. Teachers' and head teachers' late resumption of duties was a major issue hindering an efficient start to the new school year. Two of the major contributing factors were late confirmation of teacher appointments (22%, teachers; head teachers, 32%) and inadequate or inappropriate logistical and financial support for teachers to travel to their schools at the beginning of the school year (teachers, 52%; head teachers, 42%).
- ii. Other contributing factors to late resumption of duties included: (a) discontentment with teaching appointments offered, especially forced appointments (teachers, 6%; head teachers, 10%), (b) personal and family issues (teachers, 17%; head teachers, 3%), (c) late appointments and late notification of appointments (teachers, 22%; head teachers, 32%); and (d) weather conditions (teachers, 1%; head teachers, 10%).
- iii. In East New Britain Province, lack of accommodation was also an issue associated with late resumption of duties (teachers, 8%; head teachers, 7%). This is a legitimate reason, especially for those teachers who are expected to live in their own communities and travel long distances to their

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schools each day. Their attendance and punctuality were primarily affected by an unreliable transport system.

- iv. Teachers recommended that the PEB and the Teaching Service Commission (TSC): (a) provide logistical and financial support for teachers to travel to schools (teachers, 36%; head teachers, 32%), (b) give teachers early notification of appointments (teachers, 47%; head teachers, 52%); and (c) minimise late appointments (teachers, 3%; head teachers, 7%). They also recommended that schools provide appropriate teacher accommodation, preferably on the school grounds (teachers, 8%; head teachers, 7%).
- v. Delays in the arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* in the province and the schools had subsequent effects on other parts of the teacher appointment process. Such effects include late appointments, late formal confirmation of appointments and late resumption of duties in the new school year. The teachers (47%) and head teachers (52%) strongly recommended that early notification of appointments should be the norm in the teacher appointment process.

5. *Proposed changes to the teacher appointment process*

- i. Despite the teachers' and head teachers' generally low opinion of the appointment process, some strengths were identified. These included: (a) some received logistical support for teachers' travel to schools (teachers, 17%; head teachers, 13%); (b) serving teachers were given priority during the appointment process (teachers, 20%; head teachers, 23%); (c) some teachers were appointed on merit (teachers, 19%; head teachers, 10%); (d) teachers were able to fight for rights (teachers, 6%; head teachers, 3%); (e) many schools were fully staffed during the school year (teachers, 9%; head teachers, 13%); (f) new graduates were screened before being appointed to teaching positions (teachers, 7%; head teachers, 3%); (g) teachers could apply for teaching positions through the District Education Office (teachers, 3%); (h) some teachers were willing to teach in remote schools (head teachers, 7%); and (i) teachers and head teachers were able to retain their positions in the same school for a reasonable period of time — minimum of 3 years (head teachers, 13%).
- ii. Teachers and head teachers identified many weaknesses in the appointment process and made recommendations to improve these weaknesses:
 - teachers' interests and welfare be taken into consideration during the teacher appointment process (teachers, 33%; head teachers, 11%);
 - appoint teachers on merit (teachers, 19%; head teachers, 15%);

- strengthen logistical support for teachers' deployment to their schools (teachers, 19%; head teachers, 19%);
- consider teachers in the pool for appointment (teachers, 2%; head teachers, 15%);
- replace ineffective appointment officers (teachers, 7%; head teachers, 11%);
- schools provide accommodation (teachers, 4%; head teachers, 11%);
- send the *Special Education Gazette* to the province in a timely manner (teachers, 4%; head teachers, 7%);
- consider the reports of standard officers, boards of management, church agencies and district education officers during the appointment process (teachers, 6%; head teachers, 4%);
- formally notify teachers of their postings (teachers, 4%; head teachers, 4%); and
- consider teachers' eligibility for positions and current tenure status during the appointment process (head teachers, 4%).

Recommendations

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

Recommendation 1.1

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

2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions

Recommendation 2.1

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

Recommendation 2.2

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

Recommendation 2.3

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

Recommendation 2.4

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

Recommendation 2.5

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

Recommendation 2.6

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

Recommendation 2.7

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

Recommendation 2.8

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

Recommendation 2.9

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

Recommendation 2.10

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

Recommendation 2.11

That the PEB prepares and presents an **Annual Teacher Appointment Report** to the TSC and the National Education Board by March each year.

3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers**Recommendation 3.1**

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

Recommendation 3.2

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

Recommendation 3.3

That the PEB and the TSC abolish the 'teacher pool'.

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

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

Recommendation 4.2

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

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

Recommendation 5.1

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

Recommendation 5.2

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

6. Respect and strengthen church–government partnerships

Recommendation 6.1

That the roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoM, parents and citizen's associations, PEB members and provincial education officers.

Recommendation 6.2

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

1: INTRODUCTION

Background

The process 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 Boards (PEBs) are expected to comply with the relevant provisions of these laws and related policies when appointing teachers to teaching positions.

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

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

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

The *Gazette* should be printed and sent to the provinces in September or October each year and provinces are expected to administer and complete their teacher appointments by November. However, the provinces often fail to appoint their

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

Delays in teacher appointments are also caused by interference in the process by education agencies. In an audit of four provinces, the public sector audit team found that some education agencies were interfering in teachers' postings and appointments (Arek, 2008:2). Politicians were also causing delays in getting teachers to schools by meddling in the appointment of teachers by PEBs. Korugl, (2008) reported that four secondary schools in the Western Highlands Province faced closure due to political interference in the appointment of teachers, particularly head teachers.

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

Delays in teachers taking up their positions are also caused by the absence of an effective and efficient teacher appeals process. Teachers often challenge the decisions of the PEB if they perceive that their appointments do not follow the correct procedures; that is, the appointments are either based on merit or are according to their interests. For example, it was reported that the East New Britain Teachers Association thought that rules were being breached in the appointment of teachers to some senior teaching positions and suggested that such appointments were not made on merit (*Post-Courier*, 2005:8). In another report, the Teacher Association in East New Britain called for an investigation into the appointment of teachers in East New Britain (*Post-Courier*, 2005:4). It was suggested that some of the teacher appointments may have breached the policies of the TSC, in particular s.41 of the TSA. The spokesperson further suggested that there "were a lot of irregularities and malpractices exercised which would have a lot of negative impacts on teachers' performance, and more importantly, would affect the education of children" (*Post-Courier*. 2005:4).

Moreover, the failure of the TSC and the PEB to ensure that teachers are appointed in an effective, efficient, transparent and accountable way has contributed to perceptions that the entire process and practice is corrupt (Philemon, 2008; Tiamu, 2010). Philemon (2008) reported that the Morobe Provincial Education Board had been accused of foul play, irregularities and abnormalities in the appointment of teachers. Furthermore, the Regional Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Teachers Association, Mr. Mathew Pobaya, considered that, in the appointment of teachers, the Provincial Education Board had overlooked tenure, the reclassification of positions and the substantive position

holders, and had used appointments as a form of punishment (Philemon, 2008). The TSC was concerned about this situation and therefore cautioned the Provincial Education Advisor. The correspondence in part stated "... you have totally ignored the legitimate processes and procedures and failed to give clear advice to the Provincial Education Board on teachers' appointments under the Teaching Service Act and the Education Act" (Tiamu, 2010:6).

The above factors directly contribute to the late notification of teachers of their appointments and late resumption of their teaching duties. Other contributing factors to late resumption of duties include poor school infrastructure (e.g. teacher housing, water supply and sanitation) (Anis, 2008), bad weather (Muri, 2008) 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 whole teacher appointment and deployment process and practice. According to Kukari, *et al.* (2011), these problems are exacerbated by a lack of clarity and duplication and division in the roles and functions of the TSC and the National Education Board in teacher appointment, as stipulated under the TSA and the Education Act. This situation not only creates confusion amongst the teachers, but is also a major contributing factor to the problems with teacher appointment experienced during every school year.

East New Britain Province was identified as a well-administered province. However, the province has been challenged with the ongoing problem of teacher appointments. This has to be addressed to ensure that teacher appointments are managed effectively and are efficiently implemented. These include the appointment of teachers to senior positions and the support of teachers to isolated parts of the province, especially in the Pomio District and areas in the Gazelle District that are difficult to access. Teachers generally refuse to take up teaching positions in schools located in the most remote parts of this district because of the difficulties associated with isolation and poor government services. Also, students are absent from school because of the shortage of teachers in the remote schools in this district. Air transport is the only form of transport available, providing access only through some of the main stations in the Pomio District. Other remote schools in Pomio can be reached only by long-distance walking. Overland transport is not available to many of the schools in this district and sea transport is possible only for the schools nearest to the coast.

Aims of the study

The specific aims of the study were to:

- understand teachers' and head teachers' perceptions and experiences of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the East New Britain Province;
- identify the strengths, if any, of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province;

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- Identify the weaknesses, and the factors contributing to these weaknesses, in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province; and
- recommend appropriate strategies to improve and strengthen the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

Methodology

This study formed part of a larger study in 8 of the 20 provinces of PNG. The teacher appointment processes and practices of two provinces from each of the four regions were examined. Of the two provinces from each region, one was selected for its good reputation in managing teacher appointments while the other was selected for its poor reputation. It was intended to invite all primary and community school teachers from each of the provincial sites to participate in the study. The rationale for including all primary school teachers was to understand how teacher appointment affects both different groups of teachers and individual teachers. For example, how the process of teacher appointment affects female and male teachers, urban and rural teachers, teachers in remote locations, married and single teachers, and teachers who are not local to the provinces in which they teach. This report describes the study in East New Britain Province. East New Britain Province was selected to participate in the study because it is one of the provinces that has a good reputation in the appointment of teachers.

The purpose of the study determined the types of data needed, where the data were collected, and how the data were analysed and reported. Data was collected via surveys and focus-group interviews to capture the issues in particular localities. Questionnaires to gauge teachers' opinions of the teacher appointment process were intended for distribution to all teachers in all community and primary schools in the province. Teachers were asked to express their views on teacher appointment and to describe their experiences with the process, including the effect of the process on their personal and professional lives and the school system as a whole. The focus-group interviews were conducted with a sample of teachers.

Unfortunately, the method for delivering the survey forms was only partially successful. The surveys were left with a provincial education officer to deliver, collect and return. This process was inefficient and therefore schools in the remote areas and islands did not receive the forms. Additionally, some teachers who did receive the surveys failed to complete and return them to the provincial education officer.

Research approach

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

Sample

To understand teachers' lived experiences and their perceptions of teacher appointment in the province, it was intended to survey all community and primary school teachers and head teachers. However, it was difficult to deliver the surveys to many schools due to their remoteness and to transportation problems, particularly in the Pomio District where many of the schools are inaccessible by road. Although most of the schools in the Gazelle District are accessible by road, the infrastructure has deteriorated over time, making access challenging. These difficulties contributed to the response rates of 17% for teachers and 22% for head teachers (see Table 1).

Table 1: Teacher and head teacher population and sample

Community and primary school teachers	Population (N)	Sample (%)
Teachers	1337	226 (17)
Head teachers	143	31 (22)

Data collection

Teachers and head teachers were surveyed and focus-group interviews were conducted.

Surveys were intended for administration to all community and primary school teachers and head teachers teaching in or administering a school at the time of the study. The survey was designed to canvas teachers' and head teachers' opinions and perceptions of the process and practice for teacher appointment in the province, and the impact of the process on these two groups.

Focus-group interviews were conducted with teachers and head teachers in two urban and two rural schools. The purpose of these interviews was to understand teachers' and head teachers' lived experiences and perspectives on teacher appointment in the province, and the meaning of the process for individual teachers.

Data analysis

Data were analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software. Most data collected from the survey were qualitative, which was first categorised into meaningful themes. The questionnaires were then coded using a prepared code book, which contained the themes and a code for each theme. After coding, SPSS was used to analyse the data. Frequencies of the coded themes in the answers to each question were then generated and tabulated to interpret the data.

2: PROVINCIAL PROFILE

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

Background

East New Britain is one of the provinces in the New Guinea Islands Region of Papua New Guinea. It is located on the north-eastern part of the island of New Britain. The East New Britain Province has a population of 220 133 (National Statistical Office, 2002). The capital of the province is Kokopo, not far from the old capital of Rabaul, which was largely destroyed in the 1994 volcanic eruption. East New Britain covers a total land area of 15 816 square kilometres (6107 square miles). The provincial coastal waters spread over an area of 104 000 square metres (26 acres) (Wikipedia, 2012).

East New Britain has a dual economy: a cash economy and a subsistence-farming sector. The main crops produced for export are cocoa and copra. Tourism is a growing industry that also contributes to the provincial economy (Wikipedia, 2012).

Districts

East New Britain Province has four districts — Rabaul, Kokopo, Gazelle and Pomio — with 17 local governments and 386 wards (Wikipedia, 2011). The local governments are Central Gazelle Rural, Inland Baining Rural, Lassul Baining Rural, Livuan-Reimber Rural, Toma-Vunadidir Rural and Bitapaka Rural in the Gazelle District; Duke of York Rural, Kokopo-Vunamami Urban and Raluana Rural in the Kokopo District; Central-Inland Pomio Rural, East Pomio Rural, Melkoi Rural, Sinivit Rural and West Pomio-Mamusi Rural in the Pomio District; and Balanataman Rural, Kombiu Rural, Rabaul Urban and Watom Island Rural in the Rabaul District.

The Pomio District is the most remote district and the most challenging area in which to serve. This district remains largely undeveloped and, in many cases, community and primary school children walk long distances daily to school. Many of these schools have no road access and the cash economy is nonexistent or minimal in most areas. Some areas in the Gazelle District are also difficult to access by road. Furthermore, some teachers and students in the Rabaul and Kokoko districts travel long distances to school daily. Therefore, absenteeism is an issue in the province. As one teacher expressed, “some of us travel long distances from our village to the school. Transport is unreliable and this is made worse during rainy days because PMVs (Public Motor Vehicles) do not turn up at all so we are absent from school during raining periods and arrive late to school on fine days. This also affects the students who have to travel like us to school”. The long distances travelled daily to schools contribute to student absenteeism and poor student and teacher retention (Guy, *et al.*, 2001; Paraide, *et al.*, 2010).

Community and primary schools

In 2008, East New Britain Province had a total of 140 primary schools (NDoE, 2008), which increased to 157 primary schools in 2009. Of these, 63 were government primary schools and 94 were church agency schools (NDoE, 2009). The total student enrolment in government and church agency schools was 34 385, of which 18 123 were males and 16 262 were females. In government primary and community schools, the student enrolment was 15 424, of which 8137 were males and 7287 were females. In the church agency schools, the student enrolment was 18 961, of which 9986 were males and 8976 were females (NDoE, 2009:13). Thus, church agencies operate more community and primary schools than the government, with a larger student enrolment, and they play a major role in providing basic education in this province.

Table 2 shows that 63% of the community and primary schools in this province are run by church agencies and that 89% are located in the rural areas. Only 37% of the community and primary schools are government schools. Thus the church agencies dominate the delivery of basic education services in this province. Other data (see Table 4) show that 51% of the teacher population in this province serves in church agency schools, which suggests that many of the teachers are selected by the church agencies to teach in the church schools.

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

District	Government schools	Church agency schools	Urban schools	Rural schools
Rabaul	7	7	7	7
Kokopo	10	17	3	24
Gazelle	21	39	5	55
Pomio	14	25	n.a.	39
Total	52	88	15	125

n.a. = not applicable/no response

Source: NDoE (2008)

3: TEACHER APPOINTMENT

Characteristics of teachers and head teachers

Teachers apply for teaching and head teacher positions and are appointed to these positions in the community and primary schools by the TSC and the PEB. Both male and female teachers should be considered on merit for teaching and head teacher positions during the appointment process.

Of the 225 teacher respondents, 62 (27.3%) were men and 163 (71.8) were women, while the head teachers' sample (n=31) consisted of 22 (71%) men and 9 (29%) women. This suggests that more men (71%) than women may be appointed to head teacher positions; however, the sample is too small to confirm this assertion. Also, the total teacher population serving in community and primary schools in East New Britain Province was 1337: this includes 435 (33%) men and 902 (67%) women (NDoE, 2009). This information suggests that, although more female teachers served in this province, male teachers were preferentially appointed to head teacher positions. The study did not establish whether head teachers were appointed on merit. However, other data in this paper suggest that they were not always appointed on merit.

Teaching locations of teachers and head teachers

Primary and community school teachers serve in both rural and urban areas. The majority of the teachers (94%) and head teachers (87%) served in the rural community and primary schools in this province (see Table 3). Therefore the views presented in this report more strongly represent those of rural teachers

Table 3: Teaching locations nominated by survey respondents

Teacher type & location	N (%)
Teachers	
Urban	13 (5.7%)
Rural	214 (94.3%)
Total	227 100
Head teachers	
Urban	4 (12.9%)
Rural	27 (87.1%)
Total	31 100

Agency of primary schools in which teachers taught

Primary and community school teachers and head teachers served in both government and church agency schools (see Table 4).

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

Teachers				Head teachers		
Agency		N	%	Agency	N	%
Government		119	49.2	Government	17	54.8
Catholic		97	40.1	Catholic	11	35.5
United Church		24	9.9	United Church	n.a.	n.a.
Lutheran		1	0.4	Lutheran	3	9.7
Seventh Day Adventist		1	0.4	Seventh Day Adventist	n.a.	n.a.
Total		242	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

A significant percentage of teachers served in church schools (51% of teachers and 45% of head teachers). Teachers and head teachers believed that the communication link between the PEB and church agencies regarding teacher appointments was challenging. In some cases, the churches recommended teachers they had identified for their schools, yet the PEB appointed teachers of its own choice to these positions. As expressed by one of the teachers, “the churches recommended teachers of their choice to teaching positions in their schools but sometimes the PEB makes their own appointments to the same positions. This causes difficulties when two teachers turn up at the school and learn that they are both appointed to the same position”. This shows a lack of communication and coordination between the PEB and church agency schools on teacher appointments.

Age of teachers

The age of teachers can influence their preferences for positions. Table 5 presents the ages of the teachers and head teachers surveyed.

Table 5: Age of teachers and head teachers

Teachers			Head teachers		
Age group (years)	N	%	Age group (years)	N	%
20–25	17	7.6	20–25	n.a.	n.a.
26–30	63	28.0	26–30	2	6.5
31–35	39	17.3	31–35	1	3.1
36–40	28	12.4	36–40	7	22.6
41–45	44	19.6	41–45	7	22.6
46–50	13	5.8	46–50	8	25.8
Over 50	21	9.3	Over 50	6	19.4
Total	225	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

The age of most of the teachers (92%) was between 26 and 45 years. Also, 64% of the teachers were aged above 30 years and 36% were 30 years and below, which suggests that a smaller percentage of younger teachers were appointed to teaching positions. The data also show that 90% of the head teachers were aged above 35 years, which suggests that older teachers were generally appointed as head teachers. As such, some of these teachers may retire or need to be replaced in the near future.

Teaching experience of teachers and head teachers

Experienced teachers are assets, especially at the basic level of education, because their support of students may assist the students' learning and personal development. The professional experiences of teachers can influence the type of support they provide in the classroom to encourage student learning and a desire to stay in school and complete a basic level of education. Table 6 shows the number of years that the surveyed teachers and head teachers had taught.

Table 6: The teaching experience of teachers and head teachers

Years	Teachers		Years	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Less than 1	4	1.8	Less than 1	1	3.2
1-5	51	22.8	1-5	n.a.	n.a.
6-10	50	22.3	6-10	2	6.5
11-15	25	11.2	11-15	n.a.	n.a.
16-20	26	11.6	16-20	7	22.6
21-25	n.a.	n.a.	21-25	8	25.8
26-30	57	25.4	26-30	10	32.3
31-35	7	3.1	31-35	2	6.5
36-40	6	2.7	36-40	1	3.2
Total	224	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

The majority of teachers (98%) had some teaching experience — between 1 and 40 years. Also, the majority of head teachers (97%) were experienced teachers, indicating that experienced teachers were generally appointed to teaching and head teacher positions. These data shows that many older teachers and head teachers were serving in the community and primary schools in this province.

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

Teachers' duration of service in their current schools varied (see Table 7).

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

Years	Teachers		Years	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Less than 1	5	2.2	Less than 1	4	13.3
1–3	128	57.1	1–3	10	33.3
4–6	39	17.4	4–6	7	23.3
7–9	21	9.4	7–9	4	13.3
10–12	19	8.5	10–12	3	10.0
13–15	7	3.1	13–15	1	3.3
16–18	1	0.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
19–21	1	0.5	n.a.	1	3.3
Over 21	3	1.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total	224	100	Total	30	100

n.a. = not applicable

Many of the teachers (59%) and some head teachers (47%) had been teaching in their current school for 3 years or less. However, a significant percentage of teachers (41%) and head teachers (53%) had been teaching in their schools for more than 3 years. This is supported by data from a teachers' focus-group discussion. One female teacher said:

Some of the teachers have been in the same school for a long time and they become complacent and unproductive. Staying in the same school for a long time is ok for continuity and if the teachers are effective ... but sometimes ... we need to work in other school environments so that we can learn more from others ... and improve our support for the students ...

Another female teacher commented:

... some of these teachers have been here for donkey years ... and they do not like new changes ... they do not cooperate with some of us new ones and from other provinces to make a difference in the school ... progress or improve further ... this is difficult for some of us who want to make a change ...

Together, these data suggest that the province does not comply with the 3-year tenure policy; teachers are apparently allowed to serve more than 3 years in their current positions. This study could not establish whether these teachers had held the same position or had moved to various positions during their service in a particular school. The study was also unable to establish whether the teachers who had been in their current school for longer than 3 years had been reappointed to the school on a continuous basis or had renewed their tenure status regularly, as required.

Home provinces of teachers and head teachers

Teachers from various provinces are appointed to teaching and head teacher positions either through the *Special Education Gazette* or by the PEB. Table 8 shows the province of origin of teachers and head teachers teaching in the East New Britain Province.

Table 8: The home provinces of teachers and head teachers

Teachers			Head teachers		
Home province	N	%	Home province	N	%
East New Britain	187	83.5	East New Britain	24	77.5
New Ireland	7	3.1	New Ireland	n.a.	n.a.
Manus	6	2.5	Manus	n.a.	n.a.
West New Britain	2	0.9	West New Britain	1	3.2
Autonomous Region on Bougainville	1	0.4	Autonomous Region of Bougainville	n.a.	n.a.
East Sepik	8	3.6	East Sepik	2	6.5
Madang	5	2.2	Madang	1	3.2
Morobe	1	0.4	Morobe	n.a.	n.a.
Western Highlands	2	0.9	Western Highlands	n.a.	n.a.
Milne Bay	2	0.9	Milne Bay	n.a.	n.a.
Central	1	0.4	Central	n.a.	n.a.
Gulf	1	0.4	Gulf	1	3.2
Western	1	0.4	Western	n.a.	n.a.
Simbu	n.a.	n.a.	Simbu	1	3.2
Oro	n.a.	n.a.	Oro	1	3.2
Total	224	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

The majority of the teachers (84%) appointed to teaching positions and head teacher positions (78%) in primary and community schools were from East New Britain Province. A small proportion (teachers, 16%; head teachers, 22%) were from other provinces, which suggests that the appointing authorities preferred teachers from the local province. This practice is understandable in terms of minimising teachers' travel and logistical costs. However, it limits the opportunities for local teachers to interact professionally with teachers from other provinces. These teachers may have different perspectives on teaching culture and practices. Furthermore, the standard of local teaching may be reduced due to the limited pool of experienced, quality teachers available for appointment.

Appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions**How teachers are appointed to teaching positions**

Teachers and head teachers have had various experiences with the teacher appointment process in this province. Therefore, they have their own views and understanding of how the process operates. The respondents were asked to describe the appointment process in their own words. Their responses are presented in Table 9.

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

Teachers				Head teachers			
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%		
Through the <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	95	42.2	Through the <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	9	29.0		
By PEB	87	38.7	By PEB	14	45.2		
Through nepotism	26	11.6	Through nepotism	n.a.	n.a.		
Through bribery	5	2.2	Through bribery	n.a.	n.a.		
Forced to take up positions	8	3.6	Forced to take up positions	6	19.4		
BoM recommendation	4	1.7	BoM recommendation	2	6.4		
Total	225	100	Total	31	100		

n.a. = not applicable; PEB = Provincial Education Board; BoM = Board of Management

Many teachers (42%) and head teachers (29%) were of the view that teachers were appointed to positions through the *Special Education Gazette*. However, many others (teachers, 39%; head teachers, 45%) thought that teachers were appointed by the PEB. This quote reflects teachers' perceptions:

... with this acting appointment, teachers go to their wantoks in the education office and make special arrangements to be posted where they wish to go. So if there are vacant positions in other schools some of us are forced to fill those positions ... we want to refuse but we cannot because we do not want to be placed in the pool ... we need to support our families ... we need our salaries ... (female teacher).

These views suggest that forced appointments and nepotism are part of the teacher appointment process in this province. The data also suggest that the acting appointment process seemed to be applied in a majority of cases (teachers, 58%; head teachers, 51%) in this province. This contributed to the perception that nepotism (12%), bribery (2%) and forced appointment (4%) occur.

Advice of postings

Late resumption of teaching duties is a persistent issue in PNG community and primary schools. One reason is that teachers do not always receive information about their postings on time. Consequently, they arrive late to their schools in the new school year. The timing of teachers' notification of their posting is crucial for early preparations for relocation before the new school year begins. Respondents were asked when they were notified of their appointments (see Table 10). Only some of the teachers (19%) and head teachers (23%) received notification of their postings in late November or early December. Most (teachers, 76%; head

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teachers, 59%) claimed they received their notifications over the Christmas vacation, and some (teachers, 5%; head teachers, 17%) much later.

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

Responses		Teachers		Head teachers	
		N	%	N	%
During Christmas vacation	49	22.6	5	16.7	
January/ beginning of school year	48	22.1	3	10.0	
A few weeks before resumption week	46	21.2	n.a.	n.a.	
Late November/December	42	19.4	7	23.3	
Always very late	22	10.1	6	20.0	
At resumption/first week of school	10	4.6	5	16.7	
Total	217	100	30	100	

Late confirmation and notification of appointments contributes to late travel arrangements and logistical issues associated with relocation to new schools, which subsequently results in late resumption of duties in the new school year. The *Human Resource Policy Information and Operational Manual* (NDoE, 2001:24) stipulates that teachers must be advised of their postings before they go on vacation to allow them to make appropriate travel arrangements for timely resumption of duties. The current practice breaches this policy.

How teachers are notified of their postings

One of the consequences of the late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* is the delayed confirmation of teachers' appointments. As shown above, teachers did not generally receive confirmation of their teacher appointments before the end of the school year. Therefore, the appointing authorities had to disseminate this information during school vacation, which required other means of communication. Thus, written notification was generally abandoned as a result, according to the respondents (see Table 11).

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

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Through the radio	201	89.3	Through the radio	23	74.1
Through enquiries at provincial headquarters	2	0.9	Through enquiries at the provincial headquarters	2	6.5
Through fellow teachers	6	2.7	Through fellow teachers	1	3.2
Through friends in the street	7	3.1	Through friends in the street	n.a.	0
Written notification	7	3.1	Written notification	2	6.5
Through others who heard about the appointment	2	0.9	Through others who heard about the appointment	3	9.7
Total	225	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

Only a few of the teachers (3%) and head teachers (7%) said that they were formally informed of their teacher appointments. The majority (teachers, 89%; head teachers, 74%) were notified through the radio, some (teachers, 4%; head teachers, 10%) heard from others, while some (teachers, 1%; head teachers, 7%) learned of their appointment by enquiring at the provincial education office. These data show that written notification was rarely used to inform teachers of their appointment in this province. One respondent said:

We do not receive written notification slips like we used to more than ten years ago ... they do not write to us to tell us about our acting appointments either ... they just read them out on the radio ... (female teacher).

Another female teacher was also discontented with the method of notifying teachers of their postings:

... we do not like our names broadcast so everyone will know where we are going ... they must think of our safety ... people will be waiting for us, and may be harm us ... when they hear about where we are being posted to ... we need privacy ... we are not sure if this is professional ...

Audio communication is a breach of the TSA, which stipulates that teachers must receive written notification of their postings (NDoE, 2001:22–23).

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

A section of the application form for teacher appointment encourages teachers to state their preferences to guide decisions on appointments. Most respondents thought that their interests were not considered during teacher appointment (see Table 12).

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Yes	23	10.5	Yes	4	12.9
No	132	60.3	No	16	51.6
Sometimes	64	29.2	Sometimes	11	35.5
Total	219	100	Total	31	100

Only a small percentage of teachers (11%) and head teachers (13%) thought that their interests were considered during the appointment process. The majority (teachers, 60%; head teachers, 52%) thought that their interests were not considered at all, while some (teachers, 29%; head teachers, 36%) thought that their interests were considered only sometimes. This view was further stressed by one of the teachers:

No, they do not consider our written information ... the ones we attach to our application ... there is also a section in the form that ask for our preferences ... we write down our preferences ... interests ... reasons ... but they ignore them ... they force us to go where they think we should teach ... (female teacher).

Acceptance of appointments by teachers***Refusal of appointments by teachers and head teachers***

Some teachers and head teachers refuse to take up their appointments at the beginning of the year, especially when they perceive their appointments to be unjust. Respondents were asked if they had ever refused an appointment in their teaching career. Table 13 presents their responses.

Table 13: Refusal of appointments by teachers and head teachers

Responses	TEACHERS		HEAD TEACHERS		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Yes	70	32.7	Yes	11	39.3
No	144	67.3	No	17	60.7
Total	214	100	Total	28	100

Some teachers (33%) and head teachers (39%) have refused teaching appointments during their teaching career. However, the majority of the teachers (teachers, 67%; head teachers, 61%) had **never** refused appointments sometime in their teaching career. Teachers apparently refuse to accept their appointments because the appointments are not of their choice (see below). From the data it can be inferred that some schools may not have had teachers for part of the year, and that over 50% of the respondents were not in the schools that they were appointed to at the beginning of the school year.

Reasons for refusing appointments

Teachers and head teachers refused to take up their appointments for various reasons — personal and professional (see Table 14).

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Appointment not teachers' choice	26	31.7	Family/personal problems	5	45.4
Family/personal problems	23	28.0	Appointment not teachers' choice	3	27.3
Location of schools	15	18.3	Lack of government and other services	3	27.3
Eligibility & tenure issues	9	11.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Late appointment	6	7.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
No accommodation/toilet facilities	4	4.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Security concerns	3	3.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Lack of government & other services	2	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total	82	100	Total	100	100

n.a. = not applicable

One of the main reasons (teachers, 28%; head teachers, 45%) gave for refusing appointments was 'family and personal problems. including older children's education, family members' health care, and other issues related to older children and financial situations. Other teachers (32%) and head teachers (27%) refused teaching appointments because the appointment was not of their choice. Some teachers (18%) refused because of the locations of the schools, which was often associated with remoteness and other reasons cited (e.g. security issues and lack of government and other services (see Table 14). Thus teachers' decisions to refuse appointments appeared to be largely influenced by family and personal situations and by the manner in which they were appointed to the positions.

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

Teachers said they were sometimes forced to take up teaching appointments that were not of their choice. They dealt with forced appointments in various ways. Respondents were asked what they would do if they were given an appointment that was not of their choice. Table 15 presents their responses.

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Challenge the appointment	93	42.7	Challenge the appointment	19	61.3
Refuse to take up position	80	36.7	Still take up position	8	25.8
Still take up position	45	20.6	Refuse to take up position	4	12.9
Total	218	100	Total	31	100

Some teachers (21%) and head teachers (26%) would still take up an appointment not of their choice. Data presented elsewhere in the report show that this was because they feared being placed in the "teacher pool" if no alternative positions were available in the province. Teachers were suspended from the payroll when they were placed in the pool. As one of the teachers stated, "... we have families to support so we accept forced appointments despite our discontentment with such appointments ... because we do not like swimming in the pool ... and some fiery ones do not perform to the best of their ability because they are not happy ..." (female teacher). Some teachers (43%) and head teachers (61%) were prepared to challenge their appointment while others (teachers, (37%); head teachers, (13%) would still refuse their teaching appointments. Apparently, the majority of teachers and head teachers had the courage to challenge the authority's decision on their appointments or to refuse their appointments if they viewed them as unfair.

Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for refusing appointments

Teachers and head teachers were asked why they thought that other teachers refused their teaching appointments (see Table 16).

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

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Family and personal reasons	60	26.6	Unhappy with appointment	11	35.5
Unhappy with appointment	56	24.9	Family and personal reasons	7	22.5
Location of school	31	13.8	Location of school	6	19.4
Lack of government services	28	12.4	Lack of government services	3	9.6
Logistics and costs of getting to the school	22	9.8	Logistics and costs of getting to the school	2	6.5
Lack of accommodation	22	9.8	Lack of accommodation	2	6.5
Security concerns	6	2.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total	225	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

The most common reasons that respondents gave for other teachers' refusal of teaching appointments were dissatisfaction with the appointments; family and personal reasons; location of the schools; lack of government services; and logistics and cost of getting to the schools (see Table 16 for percentages).

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

Respondents thought that other teachers reacted to forced teacher appointment in various ways (see Table 17).

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

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Challenge appointment	83	37.2	Challenge appointment	19	63.3
Refuse to take up appointment	56	25.1	Take up appointment	8	26.7
Take up appointment	53	23.8	Refuse to take up appointment	3	10.0
Resume work late	13	5.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Seek advice from Teaching Service Commission	12	5.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Leave teaching	5	2.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Swap with another teacher	1	0.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total	223	100	Total	30	100

n.a. = not applicable

Teachers and head teachers generally agreed that if other teachers were appointed to positions that were not of their choice, many were likely to challenge the appointment; some would refuse to take up the appointment; some would accept the appointment; and a small percentage would resume work late. Teachers also thought that others would seek advice from the TSC, some would leave teaching and a further small percentage would be willing to swap positions with another teacher (see Table 17 for percentages). Thus respondents considered that teachers in this province had the courage to fight for their rights in relation to teacher appointments rather than accept forced appointments meekly.

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

The teacher appointment authorities address teachers' refusal of their appointment in various ways. Respondents were asked what the appointment authorities do when teachers refuse their teaching appointments (see Table 18).

Table 18: Perceived actions taken by the Provincial Education Board against teachers who refuse their appointments

Teachers				Head teachers		
Responses		N	%	Responses	N	%
Issue threats/put teachers off payroll		102	45.5	Place teachers in the pool	15	52.0
Place teachers in the pool		83	37.1	Issue threats/put teachers off the payroll	6	20.6
Place teachers in other positions		33	14.7	Place teachers in other positions	6	20.6
Send teachers to remote schools		6	2.7	Send teachers to remote schools	1	3.4
n.a.		n.a.	n.a.	Ignore teachers' appeals	1	3.4
Total		224	100	Total	29	100

n.a. = not applicable

Many teachers (46%) and head teachers (21%) said that they were threatened with suspension from the payroll when they refused to accept forced teaching appointments. Others (teachers, 37%; head teachers, 52%) said they were placed in the pool and consequently were suspended from the payroll. Some (teachers, 15%; head teachers, 21%) said they were placed in other positions — a positive action towards supporting teachers' interests and welfare. A few said they were forced to teach in remote schools as a consequence of their refusal to accept another appointment, and that the provincial authorities ignored some teachers' appeals against such appointments (see Table 18). The data suggest the appointing authorities take retaliatory actions against teachers and head teachers

who refuse to take up their teaching appointments, rather than seek positive alternatives to support teachers. The data also infer that the appointing authorities were indifferent to teachers' general welfare and interests and were unwilling to address these issues appropriately.

Resumption of duties by teachers

Problems associated with the resumption of duty process

Late resumption of duties by teachers is an issue faced by many schools throughout PNG. A major factor at the heart of late resumption is the non-arrival or late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* in the province and the schools. This problem then creates other issues for the appointment process that result in late resumption. Respondents were asked what problems were associated with the resumption of duty process (see Table 19).

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	N	%	
Late resumption of duties	87	40.8	Late resumption of duties	10	32.3
Inadequate logistical & financial support to travel to schools	34	15.9	Inadequate logistical and financial support to travel to schools	6	19.4
Poor organisation of appointments	31	14.6	Late notification of appointments	5	16.1
Late submission of RDF forms to HQ	22	10.3	Lack of accommodation	4	12.9
Late notification of appointments	20	9.4	Late submission of RDF forms to HQ	2	6.5
Lack of accommodation	12	5.6	Poor organisation of appointments	1	3.2
Two or more teachers resume on same position	4	2.0	Two or more teachers resume on the same position	1	3.2
Poor communication	3	1.4	Poor communication	1	3.2
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Inadequate monitoring of teachers' resumption at the beginning of the year	1	3.2
Total	213	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable; RDF = Resumption of Duty Form; HQ = headquarters

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Many teachers (41%) and head teachers (32%) reemphasised late resumption of duties as an existing problem. Problems associated with late resumption were inadequate logistical and financial support for teachers to relocate to their new school; late appointments and late notification of teachers' appointments; and teachers' inability to meet their own transfer costs. Late submission of Resumption of Duty forms (RDFs) to headquarters was also a consequence of late appointment of teachers (see Table 19).

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

Teachers resume teaching duties late for various reasons. Teachers and head teachers were asked why teachers resume work late. Some reasons given are presented in Table 20.

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Logistics & cost of getting to school	116	52.0	14	41.9
Late appointments/no notification of appointments	48	21.5	10	32.3
Family and personal reasons	38	17.0	3	9.7
Unhappy with appointments	13	5.8	3	9.7
Family & personal reasons	7	3.1	1	3.2
Lack of accommodation	1	0.5	n.a.	n.a.
Total	223	100	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

The most common factor (teachers, 52%; head teachers, 42%) identified as contributing to late resumption of teaching duties was inadequate logistical and financial support for teachers' relocation to new schools, as illustrated by these comments:

Many of us have large families ... goods and service costs are very expensive now ... we cannot afford to pay for the whole families' boat, PMV and air fares and our cargo too ... transport costs are really expensive now ... things are not free anymore ... we are not paid much every fortnight ...

what we get is not sufficient ... to be able to save up for transfer costs ...
(male teacher)

... some of us get loans ... but we have to pay those back ... and it is hard
... We have to wait until we have sufficient funds before we travel to our
schools ... (female teacher)

The data suggest that teachers were expected to pay their own transfer costs to their schools. If teachers cannot afford to pay their costs they must wait until they are able to access appropriate funding. This wait can extend beyond the start of the school year. Consequently, the teachers resume their duties late. All relocation costs to the teachers' schools should be met by the TSC and the Provincial Education Officer. The funds should be released before the school term begins so that teachers can resume work in a timely manner.

Related factors also identified were late appointment and notification of teachers' postings (teachers, 22%; head teachers, 32%). As other data in the report show, these issues resulted from the late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* in the province and schools (see tables 24 & 26). Teachers and head teachers recommended that the *Special Education Gazette* should arrive in the province and schools on time.

Family and personal reasons were again identified as contributing to late resumption of teaching duties (teachers, 17%; head teachers, 3%). These reasons can be medical, compassionate or related to children's education arrangements, as observed in a focus-group discussion:

... we also have to sort out our children's school fees ... settle them before we can go to our schools ... we have to think of our children's education too...if they are sick we need to care for them ... we also lose loved ones ... in some cases they happen at the beginning of the school year ... we have to attend to all these as well ... so we resume work late. (female teacher)

Other factors were also identified: teachers were unhappy with appointments; lack of accommodation in the schools; and weather and road conditions (see Table 20). These issues continually arise in most of the data from this study.

Other teachers' reasons for resuming their duties late

When teachers were asked to give their views on why other teachers resume their teaching duties late, they provided reasons that were similar to their own, although in slightly different proportions (see Table 21).

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

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Logistics & cost of getting to school	106	47.3	Logistics & cost of getting to school	11	35.5
Unhappy with appointment	35	15.6	Unhappy with appointment	9	29.0
Family and personal reasons	34	15.2	Late notification of teacher appointment	4	13.0
Late notification of teacher appointment	24	10.7	Family and personal reasons	3	9.7
Late appointment	19	8.5	Late appointment	3	9.7
Lack of accommodation in school	6	2.7	Lack of accommodation in school	n.a.	n.a.
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Weather and road conditions	1	3.2
Total	224	100	Total	31	100

n.a. = not applicable

The data again highlight logistics and cost of getting to school, discontentment with an appointment, family and personal reasons, late notification of appointments, late appointment, and lack of accommodation in the new school as reasons for other teachers' late resumption of teaching duties (see Table 21). The following excerpt exemplifies the challenges teachers in the province face in resuming their duties.

... when we meet with other teachers we discuss our frustrations ... like teacher appointment. They face similar problems ... they are also not happy with paying their own transfer costs ... they too cannot afford this ... family problems just like us ... late teacher appointment notifications ... no accommodation ... these affect all of us ... (male teacher)

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

Teachers were also asked to recommend strategies to address the issues associated with late resumption of duties by teachers (see Table 22).

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

Responses		Teachers		Head teachers			
		N	%	N	%		
Early notification of appointment	of	105	47.3	Early notification of appointment	of	16	51.5
PEB & TSC provide logistical support		79	35.6	PEB & TSC provide logistical support		10	32.3
Schools provide appropriate accommodation for teachers		18	8.1	Avoid/minimise late appointments		3	9.7
PEB & TSC consider teachers' personal issues during appointments		14	6.3	Schools provide appropriate accommodation for teachers		2	6.5
Avoid/minimise late appointments		6	2.7	na		n.a.	n.a.
Total		222	100	Total		31	100

PEB = Provincial Education Board; TSC = Teaching Service Commission

The most common recommendations were early notification of teacher appointments (teachers, 47%; head teachers, 52%); PEB and TSC provide logistical support (teachers, 36%; head teachers, 32%); schools provide appropriate accommodation for teachers (teachers, 8%; head teachers, 7%); PEB and TSC consider teachers' personal issues during appointments (teachers, 6%); and minimise late appointments (teachers 3%; head teachers 10%). The recommendation for appropriate teacher accommodation was a strong theme during the focus-group discussions:

In the past teachers did not live in their own communities ... like they do now ... They lived in the school grounds ... this was good because teachers did not get involved ... tangled up with family issues ... we were able to focus on our teaching ... in the village there are many distractions ... we find it hard to do extra work at night ... or on the week-end ... it is so difficult ... this affects our teaching performance ... our work ... (female teacher)

and;

... some of us have to catch two different PMVs to get to school each morning ... PMVs are not reliable because they are not many of them where I live ... It is worse during the wet seasons ... the PMVs are often late ... because of this we arrive late in school or are absent from school ... (female teacher).

Accommodation on the school grounds was an issue for schools that have limited land for expansion. The excerpts show that teachers who had to travel some distance to school each morning were late or absent from school because of transport issues. Also, teachers who live in their communities were distracted from their professional duties by community issues, which affected their productivity.

Strengths and weaknesses of the teacher appointment

Strengths of the teacher appointment process

The teachers identified strengths in the teacher appointment process according to their experiences in the province. Although teachers and head teachers were generally discontented with the teacher appointment process, they still identified some strengths (see Table 23).

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers			
	N	%	Responses	N	%	Responses
None	37	20.3	Serving teachers given priority	7	23.3	
Serving teachers given priority	36	19.8	None	4	13.3	
Some teachers appointed on merit	34	18.7	Some logistical support for teacher deployment	4	13.3	
Some logistical support for teacher deployment	30	16.5	Teachers/Head teachers retained positions for reasonable period of time (3 years minimum)	4	13.3	
Many schools are fully staffed	16	8.8	Many schools are fully staffed	4	13.3	
New graduates are screened	12	6.6	Some teachers appointed on merit	3	10.3	
Teachers able to fight for their rights	11	3.0	Some teachers willing to teach in remote schools	2	6.9	
Application through District Education Office	6	3.3	New graduates are screened	1	3.3	
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Teachers are able to fight for their rights	1	3.3	
Total	182	100	Total	30	100	

n.a. = not applicable

Some teachers (20%) and head teachers (13%) found no strengths in the teacher appointment process. However, more than three-quarters of both groups did identify some strengths in the process and practices employed by the province. Some of the strengths identified were: serving teachers given priority during the appointment process (teachers, 20%; head teachers, 23%); some teacher appointments were on merit (teachers 19%, head teachers, 10%); and some logistical support was provided for teachers' relocation to their schools (teachers, 17%; head teachers, 13%).

Weaknesses of the teacher appointment process

The teachers and head teachers identified more weaknesses than strengths in the teacher appointment process (see Table 24).

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	N	%	
Nepotism & corruption in teacher appointments	66	31.7	Nepotism & corruption in teacher appointments	8	27.6
Inadequate logistical & financial support	41	19.7	Inadequate logistical & financial support	5	17.2
Late notification/confirmation of postings	35	16.8	Late notification/confirmation of postings	5	17.2
Teachers' rights and interests not respected	31	14.9	Teachers' rights and interests not respected	4	13.9
Teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools	12	5.8	PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare	4	13.9
PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare	11	5.3	Teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools	1	3.2
No data to inform PEB on teacher appointments	7	3.4	Teachers occupy one position for too long	1	3.2
Teachers occupy one position for too long	3	1.4	<i>Special Education Gazette</i> late	1	3.2
<i>Special Education Gazette</i> late	2	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total	208	100	Total	29	100

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

Common weaknesses identified were nepotism/corrupt practices (teachers, 32%; head teachers, 28%); inadequate logistical and financial support (teachers, 20%; head teachers 17%); late notification/confirmation of teacher appointments (teachers, 17%; head teachers, 17%); and teachers' rights and interests not respected (teachers, 15%; head teachers 14%). Other weaknesses cited include teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote areas, the PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare, no data to inform the PEB during teacher appointments, teachers occupy one position for too long, and late arrival of the *Special Education Gazette* (see Table 24).

The teachers appeared to associate nepotism and corrupt practices with the perception that appointments were not based on merit, as indicated in this comment from a focus-group discussion:

There are many things ... not right with the appointment process ... some of us are not happy with our appointments ... teachers are not appointed on merit ... (male teacher).

The many weaknesses identified by the teachers have created negative views of the appointment process and indicate a lack of support from authorities.

How the teacher appointment process can be improved

The data presented above indicate that teachers and head teachers are concerned about the state of the process for teacher appointment in this province. They were asked for suggestions to address the weaknesses they had identified in the process (see Table 25).

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

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers				
		N	%	Responses		N	%
Consider interests/welfare appointments	teachers' during	67	33.3	Strengthen support for teachers	logistical for moving	5	18.5
Appoint teachers on merit		39	19.4	Appoint teachers on merit		4	14.8
Strengthen support for moving teachers to school	logistical	38	18.9	Consider teachers' in the pool for teacher appointments		4	14.8
Replace appointment officers	ineffective	15	7.5	Replace appointment officers	ineffective	3	11.1
Consider recommendations of standard officers, BoMs, church agencies and DEOs		11	5.5	Consider interests/welfare appointments	teachers' during	3	11.1

Table 25 (cont'd)

Teachers				Head teachers			
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%		
Send <i>Special Education Gazette</i> to provinces early	10	5.0	Schools must provide accommodation	3	11.1		
Teachers formally notified of their appointments	8	4.0	Send <i>Special Education Gazette</i> to provinces early	2	7.4		
Schools must provide accommodation	8	4.0	Consider recommendations of standard officers, BoMs, church agencies and DEOs	1	3.7		
Consider teachers in the pool for teacher appointment	3	1.5	Consider teachers' eligibility/tenure during appointments	1	3.7		
Leave teachers to serve out tenure	2	1.0	Teachers formally notified of postings	1	3.7		
Total	201	100	Total	27	100		

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

Respondents had many suggestions to improve the appointment process, which were based on their experiences with teacher appointment in this province: consider teachers' rights and interests during appointment; provide logistical and financial support for teachers' relocation to their schools; base teacher appointments on merit; consider teachers in the pool for teacher appointment; replace ineffective appointment officers; consider inspectors' reports and recommendations during teacher appointments; formally notify teachers of their postings; provide teachers' accommodation in the schools; consider teachers' eligibility and tenure status during appointments; and allow teachers to serve out their tenure in one school before they are transferred to another school (see Table 25).

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

From this study, it was clear that teachers desired changes in the teacher appointment process to benefit both themselves and, most importantly, the students they serve. The changes that teacher and head teacher respondents recommended address their perceived weaknesses in the teacher appointment process. This is reflected in their recommendations in Table 26.

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

Teachers				Head teachers			
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%		
Consider teachers' rights and interests in appointments	45	23.6	Improve process of appointing teachers	8	27.6		
Eliminate corrupt practices in teacher appointments	25	13.2	Consider teachers' rights and interests in appointments	6	20.8		
Teachers finance their own transfers to their new schools	22	11.5	Improve method of notifying teachers of postings	4	13.8		
Improve timing of teacher appointments	22	11.5	Apply teacher tenure policy	2	7.0		
Replace ineffective appointment officers	17	9.0	Teachers finance their own transfer costs to their schools	2	7.0		
Rotate teacher appointments to remote schools	11	5.8	Eliminate corrupt practices in teacher appointments	2	7.0		
Provide incentives for teachers in remote schools	10	5.3	Replace ineffective appointment officers	1	3.4		
Engage honest and reliable people to make appointments	10	5.3	Build capacity of education officers at the Provincial Education Office	1	3.4		
Improve process of appointing teachers	9	4.7	Rotate teacher appointments to remote schools	1	3.4		
Improve method of notifying teachers of postings	7	3.7	Engage honest and reliable people to make appointments	1	3.4		
Apply teacher tenure policy	6	3.2	Provide incentives for teachers in remote schools	1	3.4		
Build capacity of education officers at the Provincial Education Office	6	3.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.		
Total	190	100	Total	29	100		

n.a.. = not applicable

Generally, the changes that the teachers and head teachers would like to see in the process of teacher appointment reflected their perceived weaknesses in the process and their recommendations for addressing these weaknesses (see Tables 24 and 25). Additional recommendations for changes are also shown in Table 26. These recommendations focus on the engagement of honest and reliable people to make teacher appointments and on the appointment of teachers in remote schools. It was suggested that teacher appointment in remote schools be on a rotational basis so that all teachers are given the experience of working in remote schools. They also suggested that attractive incentives be provided to teach in remote schools and to retain teachers in such schools. These recommendations highlight the underlying problems in the teacher appointment process in this province.

4: CONCLUSION

This study examined the process and practice of teacher appointment in East New Britain Province and the impact of this process, not only on teachers and head teachers, but also on the provincial education system in general. Although many teachers (20%) and some head teachers (13%) who were surveyed identified no strengths in the process and practice of teacher appointment, the majority of them saw some strengths in the process:

- Serving teachers are given priority for appointments.
- Some teachers are appointed on merit.
- Some logistical support is provided for teacher deployment to schools.
- Many schools are fully staffed.
- New graduates are screened before appointment.
- Teachers are able to fight for their rights.
- Applications are made through the District Education Office.
- Some teachers and head teachers are able to retain their positions for a reasonable period of time (maximum of 3 years).
- Some teachers are willing to teach in remote schools.

Despite these perceived strengths, there was a general perception that the process and practice of appointment to teaching and administrative positions in the province are weak and compounded by many problems:

- Nepotism occurs in the appointment process.
- The teacher appointment process lacks transparency.
- Inadequate provincial logistical and financial support are provided for deployment of teachers to schools.
- Teaching appointments are confirmed.
- Teacher postings are notified late.
- Teachers' rights, interests and capabilities are generally not respected during the appointment process.
- The PEB is not concerned about teachers' welfare.
- Teachers are not willing to teach in remote areas (for various reasons).
- Data on teachers to inform the decisions of the PEB on appointments is lacking.
- Copies of the *Special Education Gazette* generally arrive late in the province and schools.
- In some cases, teachers occupy more than one position.
- More than one teacher is appointed to a particular position.

According to the respondents, these are the main issues that contribute to a weak teacher appointment process in the province:

- Late publication and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette* to the province and schools.
- Lack of compliance by the PEB with the relevant provisions of the *Teaching Service Act, 1995*, and the policies on appointment of teachers and head teachers to teaching and administrative positions.
- Weak performance by the PEB and the TSC in their mandated roles and responsibilities in teacher appointment.
- Absence of an effective appeal mechanism.
- Heavy reliance by appointment officers and authorities on informal systems to appoint teachers and inform them of their appointments.

Vacancies in school teaching positions are advertised through the *Special Education Gazette*; teachers then apply for the positions within a specified time. However, the production and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette* continues late into the year. Consequently, the process of appointing teachers to positions begins very late, and often teachers are not notified of their postings before they begin recreational leave. Those teachers who learn of their postings after the end of the school year have little time to organise travel to their new schools for the beginning of the next school year. Therefore, they often resume their teaching duties late. Additionally, teachers who resume teaching duties late may not have completed their RoDSS and submitted them to the provincial education officer and PARS (Payroll and Related Services) at the national department to ensure uninterrupted payment of their salaries. Consequently, many teachers are removed from the payroll and are only reinstated when their RoDSS is received by PARS.

The teacher and head teacher respondents considered that the PEB and its officers sometimes appoint teachers and head teachers to positions without complying with the relevant provisions of the TSA and the Education Act. They also considered that the criteria for appointing teachers at base level and for deciding promotions and tenure of positions were not adhered to. Both teachers and head teachers firmly believed that the appointment of teachers was not based on merit; that teachers' rights, interests and capabilities were not respected; and that teachers were not well supported logistically when relocating to their schools. This noncompliance of the PEB and its officers with legal obligations in relation to the appointment and relocation of teachers is a major issue in this province.

Respect for and fair consideration of teachers' rights during the appointment process is also a pressing issue. For example, teachers were more likely to refuse than to accept teaching positions; consequently, PEB decisions on appointments are often challenged. Furthermore, appeals lodged against such appointments were generally not considered, and decisions on appeals were not communicated to teachers in a timely and efficient manner. The teachers concerned generally wait for the outcome of their appeal before they travel to their new school. Feedback on appeals is generally slow, which can result in lengthy waiting periods

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and late resumptions. This practice causes teachers to lose faith in the system and some may decide to resign from teaching or to move to another province.

The apparent culture of PEB officers operating outside the formal system of teacher appointment is of great concern. Such a practice breeds nepotism and corruption in the appointment process, as was commonly perceived by the teachers and head teachers. The widespread view amongst teachers is that many appointments are not based on merit and that teachers' interests, welfare, capabilities and rights are not given due consideration during the appointment process. The appointment of teachers outside the formal process is a common practice. These appointments are often not vetted by the PEB. Additionally, teachers who refuse their teaching appointments are threatened by PEB officers and therefore feel forced to take up appointments for fear of losing their salaries if they are placed in the teaching pool.

To improve the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province, the respondents made these recommendations:

- That the TSC and the PEB meet all relocation costs to the teachers' new schools because teachers can no longer afford this considerable expense.
- That the appointment authorities consider teachers' capabilities, interests and rights during the appointment process.
- That nepotism and other malpractices in teacher appointment be eliminated.
- That appointment and formal confirmation of appointments be completed before teachers commence recreational leave.
- That copies of the *Special Education Gazette* be distributed in the province and schools as scheduled so that the appointment process can begin on time.

The province can build on the existing strengths to improve the process and practice of teacher appointment. The province also needs to urgently address the underlying problems and the main contributing factors to ensure effective, efficient appointment practices are maintained. These practices must be informed by, and comply with, the relevant provisions of the TSA and the Education Act, and must be transparent and accountable.

5: RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Recommendation 1.1

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

2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions

Recommendation 2.1

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

Recommendation 2.2

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

Recommendation 2.3

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

Recommendation 2.4

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

Recommendation 2.5

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

Recommendation 2.6

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

Recommendation 2.7

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

Recommendation 2.8

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

Recommendation 2.9

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

Recommendation 2.10

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

Recommendation 2.11

That the PEB prepares and presents an **Annual Teacher Appointment Report** to the TSC and the National Education Board by March each year.

3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers

Recommendation 3.1

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

Recommendation 3.2

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

Recommendation 3.3

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

4. Resumption of teaching duties

Recommendation 4.1

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

Recommendation 4.2

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

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

Recommendation 5.1

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

Recommendation 5.2

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

6. Respect and strengthen church–government partnerships

Recommendation 6.1

That the roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoM, parents and citizen's associations, PEB members and provincial education officers.

Recommendation 6.2

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

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ANNEXES

Annex A

**Primary School Teachers and Head Teachers' Teacher Appointment
Questionnaire**

Instructions

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

Biographical information

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

- 7. In your own words, describe how the teachers get appointed to teaching positions in schools
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- 8. When are teachers advised of their postings?
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- 9. How do you get advised of your posting?
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- 10. Is teacher deployment done with due consideration of teachers' interest?
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Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Resumption of Teaching Duties

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

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

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

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

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Strengths and Weaknesses of Teacher Deployment

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

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

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

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

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Annex B
Focus Group Interview Questions

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

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

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

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

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

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

Theme 3: Resumption of teaching duties

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

Theme 4: Strengths and weaknesses

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

