



RETENTION OF TEACHERS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

Teachers' retention in schools has been necessary because it enhances academic attainment. The gist of this study was to evaluate the effect of teachers' retention on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. The study was guided by Education Production Function Theory (EPFT), Theory of Constraint (TOC) and Social Exchange Theory (SET). The target population was 268 public secondary Schools, 1500 teachers, 268 principals and one (1) County staffing officer. The sample size of 30% of the population was deemed to be adequate. The sampling techniques were simple random sampling, stratified sampling and systematic sampling. Data collection procedures were done with the help of administering questionnaires to respondents, document analysis and interview schedules were the major principal instruments used. The validity of the research instruments was assessed with the help of two research supervisors from Kisii University. The reliability of the index of 0.7 for teachers and 0.89 for principals was obtained using a test-retest approach. Data presentation was done with the help of tables, graphs and pie charts. A mixed research method was used. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used for data analysis. Findings revealed that 38 (9.3%) teachers had left on promotion, 240 (59%) voluntarily and 129 involuntarily (31.7%). The study revealed, therefore, that most teachers (over 66%) either left voluntarily or on promotion. The study recommended that since most teachers either left voluntarily or on promotion, this was their right, while others were retained to ensure stability without interference through uncalled-for transfers, which enhanced students' academic achievement. The study was undertaken by ensuring that ethical considerations for research were put into

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perspective, such as informed consent from participants and non-usage of unethical language as a means to obtain data from respondents.

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1. Introduction

In every learning institution, retention and continuity of learning have been accepted. Scholars like Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) observed that academic achievement at any point is a cumulative function of current instructors and prior family, community and school preparation experiences. The study postulated that the entire process would require complete family, community, and school histories, and as such, data is rare if ever available. Comparatively, in Pakistan, research done by Goldhaber and Hansen (2009) found that responses from male and female head teachers explained that many problems ensued in every respect as a result of teachers' transfers on the overall school performance. The schools' efficiency falls low as schools face high dropout rates; they suffer poor results, and this causes a decrease in the quality of education. Consequently, some students migrate to other schools in pursuit of quality education.

African states have also adopted varied approaches as incentives to promoting teacher retention, such as posting qualified teachers in pairs, and this is aimed at helping female teachers to feel safe and have a greater sense of control over their deployment. According to Acheampong and Gyasi (2019), a hardship allowance above the basic salary for teachers working in hard-to-reach areas like in Uganda was given to teachers (Mulkeen, 2005). Studies done by Acheampong and Gyasi (2019) used a population of 1100 participants to gather information on teachers' transfers. The current study used 1769 as the target population to fill the research gap.

Notwithstanding the efforts to increase teacher retention, teacher mobility is still dominant in many parts of Kenya, particularly in the rural areas. Transfer demands by teachers, principally in the Western part of the country, still persist way beyond the countrywide average of 5% (Ariko & Simatwa, 2011; Ombuya *et al.*, 2012). It is perceived that at the policy level, from where these motivations are planned, it is difficult to envisage micro-management of schools as policies are more disposed to tackle general and local issues. As of 2013, there was a shortage of 80,000 teachers in both primary and secondary schools in Kenya (Paulaa & Gr̄infelde, 2018, citing TSC, 2013). In secondary schools alone, the shortage stood at 20,000 teachers, which made the Board of Management of various schools resort to hiring teachers on board while, at the same time, TSC embarked on a rationalization program that was aimed at moving teachers from overstaffed schools to schools that were seen to have huge deficits. Similarly, a bonding policy has been put in place since 2001 aimed at restricting teachers' transfers before serving a prescribed period in a particular institution (Yambo & Tuitoek, 2014). However, though teachers' transfers may be well intended, some transfers may be maliciously initiated by the principals. This comes as a result of the principals having personal

differences with the teachers and as such, recommend the transfers of some teachers to even hardship areas as a punishment. According to Ariko and Simatwa (2011), the number of transfers (movement frequency), years of service (comparative stability) and the feeling towards transfers are mixed subjects at the stage of a career. An employee in a very initial career phase, whose main objective is to exploit information on the institute and the job specifically, can likely be forced to react differently to an involuntary transfer compared to one with numerous years of experience.

The mandate to hire, fire, promote, and transfer teachers is among the core functions of TSC. Therefore, TSC has been implementing teachers' transfers as a way of achieving equitable distribution, meeting the demands of teachers as well as punishment. However, the undertaking of transfers has varied from school to school and region to region, with some requests for transfers being effected, others denied, and others done against the wish of teachers (Okoth & Yambo, 2022). All in all, the overall objective of transfers' acceptance or denial has been to ensure the effectiveness of students' performance by ensuring equitable distribution of teachers as well as maintenance of teacher stability. From the literature review done on the influence of transfers on academic achievement in Kakamega County, there are glaring gaps which this study has undertaken to research. The gaps are revealed when the following questions are asked that require answers. It is important to note that previous literature reviews have not adequately tried to answer these questions. The questions that needed to be addressed were; what are the extent of teachers' transfers in public secondary schools in Kakamega County? What are the natures of these transfers? Are they solicited, promoted or forced? Are there cases of denied transfers? What factors motivate the teachers to ask for transfers? To what extent have transfers influenced the academic achievement of learners? Addressing these questions is deemed important in providing insights on issues of teachers' transfers and students' academic achievement in Kakamega County and the effect of teachers' transfers on students' academic achievement generally in Kenya and Kakamega County in particular, and this is the gap the current research intends to fill. Table 1 shows KCSE performance by gender for three consecutive years in Kenya from 2017 to 2019.

Generally, over the last three years, the number of candidates achieving a mean grade of C+ and above, the minimum entry into a university course, has been decreasing, more so in 2017 and 2018 in the whole country. In 2018, only 14 percent of the candidates scored C+ and above, and the trends in performance by gender are similar. For instance, only 16 percent and 12 percent of boys and girls, respectively, scored C+ and above in 2018. However, more boys than girls attained mean grade E. Several factors contributed to the achievement of the results.

Table 1: KCSE Performances by Gender of the Period 2017 to 2019 Kenya

KCSE Grade	2017			2018			2019		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
A	61	81	142	114	201	315	271	360	631
A-	901	1806	2707	1239	2181	3420	2172	3625	5797
B+	2748	4487	7235	3119	5181	8300	5144	8223	13367
B	4879	7517	12396	6400	10105	16505	9805	14689	24494
B-	7713	11459	19172	10690	15682	26372	14978	20402	35380
C+	11973	15755	27728	15780	20326	36106	21439	24732	46171
C+ and above	28275	41105	69380	37342	53676	91018	53809	72031	125840
C	18868	21454	40322	24161	25943	50104	32119	31042	63161
C-	29767	31162	60929	35763	35751	71514	43113	40330	83443
D+	42865	45474	88339	48296	48696	96992	51864	49937	101801
D	66958	68513	135471	75519	73004	148523	69845	67979	137824
D-	91344	88017	179361	84205	81387	165592	16229	76181	152410
E	17191	18353	35544	14088	16833	30921	12944	16393	29337

Source: Kenya National Examination Council (2020).

According to Allen (2005), grades are valid measures of academic achievement in classroom learning, while Onyara (2013) on school-based factors influencing students' academic performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Teso South District and Yambo and Tuitoek (2015), on contributions of school-based socio-economic factors on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Eldoret West Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County do bring out the influence of teachers' transfers on students' academic achievement. Probably, the transfer of teachers left, right, and centre could be a key factor in this low number of candidates achieving mean grades C+ and above and many candidates scoring mean grade E, and this is what the current study undertook to establish to fill the gap.

Table 2: KCSE Performance in a Sample of the Sub Counties of Kakamega

Sub-county	KCSE Entry	C+ and Above Mean Grade	Mean Score 2018	Mean Score 2019	Deviation
Kakamega Central	50603	108	5.431	4.701	+0.73
Kakamega South	40721	190	4.604	4.300	-0.304
Kakamega North	61720	186	4.961	4.836	-0.125
Lugari	7301	215	6.001	4.93	-1.081
Likuyani	6722	304	6.351	5.801	-0.55
Mumias	6243	370	5.771	5.403	-0.368

Source: Staffing office Kakamega County (2020).

Table 2 shows a sample of six sub-counties of Kakamega in KCSE performances in 2018 – 2019. A look at the deviation column indicates a trend of consistent negative deviation. This shows that not many students make it to the university. Several factors could be attributed to the declining KCSE performance in the county. While Rockoff (2014) believes that a teacher has a significant impact on an individual's student academic achievement but does not delve deep to show the impact of teacher transfers on the same

students whenever they happen to the academic achievement of the students in schools and this is the gap exactly this current study endeavoured to undertake to fill the gap. For students to realize good academic achievement, be it in the KCSE examination, the stability of the teachers in schools is paramount, and cases of transfer should be minimally low. This is not the case currently in Kakamega County. Table 3 shows the transfer of teachers in Kakamega County from 2013 – 2018.

Table 3: Transfer of Teachers 2013 – 2018 Kakamega County

Year	No of Transfers	%
2013	113	7.5
2014	150	10
2015	140	9.3
2016	110	7.3
2017	90	6
2018	145	9.6

Source: Staffing office Kakamega County.

The transfer rates in this County are way above the national recommendation of below 5% annually. This high rate of transfers definitely has a high influence on academic performance among students.

2. Statement of the Problem

Teachers' retention in schools, plus their level of experience and commitment to teachers, bring out expected quality academic achievement if not hampered by their transfers. Personnel transfer, intra-system transfer and promotion, frequent transfer as well as transfers without replacement cause understaffing in any educational institution. Transfers within schools in Kenya have intensified lately, more so with the freeze in teacher employment. These transfers among the schools have led to mixed outcomes, both favorable and unfavorable. Performance of schools in the KCSE examination in Kakamega County has been quite varied but generally ranging in performance from 2.025 to 8.25 in terms of mean scores in which the majority of the schools register a mean score of less than 5.00 in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). This performance has been generally low on a 12-scale perception index used to grade KCSE. Though there may be many causes for low performance, one of the issues that has emerged is the frequent transfer of teachers. Records at Kakamega County's education office indicate that between 2013 and 2015, a total of 403 teachers had been moved on transfer in Kakamega County. Kakamega County contributed to the poor academic achievement of students in the country, as reflected in Tables 2 and 3, respectively. Though a number of studies have been done on the effects of teachers' transfers on students' academic performance, gaps have been identified as the studies were mainly one-sided, as they only concentrated on teacher transfers and not teacher retention. However, this study is different as it evaluated the effect of teachers' retention on students' academic

achievement in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. Similarly, among the studies that had been carried out, none had been undertaken in Kakamega County, and this was the gap that this study intended to fill.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Contribution of Retention of Teachers on Students' Academic Achievement

Retention of teachers in schools assists in the continuity of programs but also enhances incompetency should there be such practices. Farzan, Muhammad, Memon and Lodhi (2012) established that most teachers and head teachers claimed that teachers' transfers affected their efficiency and competency in several ways (Nyanjom & Yambo, 2021). They claimed that teacher transfers affected teachers' efficiency and competency in several ways and so the current study intended to discover the contribution of retention of teachers on students' academic achievements to fill the gap. Firstly, it affected individual performances when teachers were transferred from their current stations to new schools as the teachers had to face many issues like distance, transport, socio-cultural issues and delays in delivery of the salary. Secondly, when teachers are transferred from the schools, there are many problems that damage efficiency, and hence, they fail to achieve desired outcomes, and they are marked as low-efficiency teachers. As teachers have their own entity by having the required knowledge and skills, by devotion to their jobs, by using the methodologies, the learning/ teaching process moves in circles due to the frequent transfers because when teachers are replaced by other teachers during the session, the learning process is suspended for some time (Young, 2018).

Involuntary teacher transfers positively affect efficiency as they impose few resource costs. Studies done by Kim and Sun (2020) and Shengnan and Hallinger (2020) indicated that teachers influenced students' learning more than other school-based factors; hence, their sudden transfer without proper replacement strategies normally threw the school administration out of balance and caused eventual administrative problems. Those who are most effective are likely to leave the schools that need them most (Allensworth *et al.*, 2021). On average, teachers with strong academic backgrounds are approved to higher income schools with better student achievement if they do not leave the profession altogether. Research done by Martin (2018) suggests that when novice teachers are typically replaced by even newer teachers, students take more time to get used to them. Consequently, this sometimes causes students to go on a rampage as they meet various demands. There is an exception to the rule that promising teachers leave high-poverty schools to work in schools in urban areas.

As for Aydeniz, and Gürçay (2018), teaching is an art that entails a progressive process comprising a multifaceted set of skills, a number of which can only be well refined on uninterrupted job involvement, making the effect of teachers' transfers on educational development to be comparable to attrition. The research done by Cook (2018), stated that teachers' mobility and attrition could have very serious repercussions for schools with high levels of loss or transfer as it normally affects the smooth running

of administrative programs, for instance, when a guidance and counselling teacher has been transferred, the school administration, has an obligation of sourcing for a suitable replacement hence possess administrative challenges in the meantime. When high volumes of transfers or attritions occur, schools are more unlikely to fill gaps left by experienced or reputable teachers who are not as qualified, which consequently brings administrative problems both to students and to schools in general. Every teacher is unique to the other on the basis of attitude, personality, and abilities and in commitment to the vocation and the cause. There are different levels of knowledge among teachers, with some having extensive initial knowledge while others having limited knowledge. Some teachers could choose to use the top-down methodology in their instruction, while others wish to follow the bottom-up methodology in the classroom (Kassens-Noor *et al.* (2020). Due to this variation, the transfer of the teachers may lead to the exposure of students to new teachers as a replacement, which is likely to bring new approaches to teaching. However, frequent changes in teachers during sessions are likely to be harmful to academia. Affirming the negative effects of transfers of workers from an organization and a sponsor, Aura, Hassan, and Hamari (2021) observed that there is a possibility of transfers being disastrous to an organization in the event of experienced workers leaving the organization with replacement being novice workers (Odindo & Yambo, 2024). Teachers' transfers and low students' academic achievements have been identified as two critical issues that have been derailing the tapping of the benefits of schooling in enhancing national development. This situation has been traced to the inability to recruit and retain more competent teachers (Pitso, 2018).

Scholars like Chen (2019) indicated that teachers influenced students' learning more than other school-based factors; hence, their sudden transfer without proper replacement strategies normally threw the school administration out of balance and caused eventual administrative problems. Those who are most effective are likely to leave the schools that need them most (Allensworth *et al.*, 2009). On average, teachers with strong academic backgrounds are approved to move to higher-income schools with better student achievement if they do not leave the profession altogether. Research done by Boyd *et al.* (2020) suggests that when typically, novice teachers are replaced by even newer teachers' students take more time to get used to them and consequently, this sometimes causes students to go into rampage as they make various demands. There was an exception to the rule that promising teachers leave high-poverty schools to work in schools in urban areas. According to Klein, Young, and Böse (2021), high-performing schools are renowned for the steadiness and stability of teaching. This means that cases of teacher transfers are minimal. This implies that transfers could be disruptive on syllabus coverage, situation that could be reflected in negative students' achievement.

According to Burkhoff (2015), most teachers and head teachers claim that transfers affect teacher's efficiency and competency in two ways. Firstly, it affects individual performance when teachers are transferred from their current stations to new schools as the teachers have to face many issues like distance, transport, socio-cultural issues and delays in delivery of the salary. Secondly, when teachers are transferred from the schools,

there are many problems that damage efficiency, and hence they fail to achieve desired outcomes and are marked as low-efficiency teachers.

In the USA, Boyd *et al.* (2009) prescribed that high rates of transfers in the USA made it difficult for schools to attract and develop effective teachers and as a result, income and minority students who attended the so-called hard-to-staff school were routinely taught by the least experienced least effective teachers. Consequently, problematic teacher turnover persisted in public schools that serve low-income communities, making sustained improvement an extraordinary challenge (Allensworth *et al.*, 2021). Curbing the constant churn of teachers is necessary if students are to receive the teachers they deserve. Teachers' transfers have emerged as a significant problem affecting school performance and students' achievement. Some scholars, like Farzan *et al.* (2012), did a study that sought teacher's views on the effects of transfers on their delivery. Most teachers and head teachers claimed that transfers affected teacher's efficiency and competency in two ways. Firstly, they affected individual performance when a teacher was transferred from his current station to a new school as the teacher had to face many issues like distance, transport, socio-cultural issues and delays in delivery of the salary. Secondly, when a teacher is transferred from the school, many problems damage efficiency; hence, the teacher fails to achieve desired outcomes and is regarded as an efficient teacher.

Realizing the importance of teachers' stability in students' academic achievement, a number of countries have adopted various strategies to enhance teachers' retention. For instance, the United States has adopted strategies of reducing school size to improve learning, setting in alongside other useful enticements (Feng, 2005; Yambo, 2012).

According to Steinfeld (2020), student performance declined as teachers' absences increased, with absence being traced to issues such as involuntary transfers. Some researchers like Grissom, Loeb and Nakashima (2014) undertook a study titled *Strategic Involuntary Teacher Transfers and Teacher Performance: Examining Equity and Efficiency*. The study came up with the following model.

$$Y_{tsy} = \beta_0 + (IT)_{ty} \beta_1 + (IT)_{ty} \beta_2 + T_{tsy} \beta_3 + T_{sy} \beta_4 + \gamma_y + \alpha_{tsy}$$

The model hypothesized that teacher *t*'s non-appearance *Y* in schools in year *y* as a utility of ever being unwillingly moved (IT) and an interface with the post-transfer period (IT × P). The key constant of attention is β_2 . The model contained controls for teacher (T) and school (S) features, plus year-fixed effects (γ_y) as well as random error terms (α_{tsy}). The results indicated that, on average, teachers who were reluctantly moved were absent between 1.6 and 2 days above teachers in similar or identical school settings. These averages were offset with results indicating that the same teachers had coefficients 1.2 and 1.6 days less absence prior to the transfer period. This was a clear indicator that involuntary transfers led to an increase in absenteeism.

Some African countries have done it differently in terms of teacher retention. For example, the country of Mozambique adopted a structure of monetary advantages for

teachers who lived in rural settings as well as teachers who taught in shifts. Lesotho has a uniform windfall reward monthly to teachers who operate in mountainous and other hardship zones, while Uganda has an extraneous allowance of 20 percent on teachers' basic salary added to teachers who work in 'hard-to-reach' areas (Du Plessis and Mestry, 2019).

As a way of containing teacher mobility Umadi (2019) called on school administrators to create a supportive environment as a way of increasing switching costs to teachers where they could find transfers less tempting and Badrianto and Ekhsan (2020), while writing on supportive work environment observed that an environment where there was administrative support, reassuring supervision and encouragement made it difficult for the employees to think of leaving. Therefore, students' performance on teachers' transfers could be negatively affected in two ways: replacement of teachers transferred who were naughty, inexperienced, least capable, non-serious teachers and when experienced, proficient, devoted, prompt, caring teachers were moved from schools.

According to Sichilima and Chipindi (2020), transfers done without replacement have the ability to trigger disruptive effects on an organization due to staff deficiency that ends up compromising the ability of an organization to produce quality output. According to Griffin, Dodds and Rovegono (1996), teachers could easily quit the teaching profession even without notice on seeing an opening in other professions where there were possibilities of earning higher salaries. This position was supported by Onsomu (2014) that teachers' transfers have disruptive effects associated with established teamwork and costs associated with a replacement for the vacant positions? The costs could be traced to recruitment, selection, preparation and growth and disruption of developed group clusters, a situation that may lead to possible demoralization of the remaining members.

In Kenya, the unplanned and unexpected transfers of teachers without immediate replacement can end up making the schools recruit teachers under Board of Management terms, a situation that may make the schools incur unexpected financial obligations that could have gone towards the improvement of school teaching and learning resources but is a way of retaining teachers in the profession. Besides the above measures, Kenya has embraced bonding as a policy which confines freshly recruited teachers from relocating before the end of the five-year period, a policy that has been put in place since 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2020).

4. Research Methodology

The design employed in this study is a descriptive survey. According to Best and Khan (2002), descriptive research design is advantageous as it enables the collection of large amounts of data within a relatively short time in an economic way. The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. According to the Ministry of Education (2014), the County had 268 public secondary schools spread over 12 Sub-

counties, with the number of teachers employed by TSC standing at more than 1500 teachers. Therefore, the target population was 268 public secondary schools, 1500 teachers, 268 principals and one (1) County staffing officer, making the total target population of respondents to be 1769. The researcher targeted principals of secondary schools, teachers and TSC County staffing officers as the main target population.

4.1 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), a sample size of 30% of the population is adequate for the study, and the bigger the sample, the better.

Table 4: Sample Size Distribution

Respondents	Target Population	Sample	Sampling Technique	Sample
Principals	268	80	30 %	80
Teachers	1500	450	30 %	450
County Staffing Officer	1	1	Purposive	1
Total	1769	531		531

According to Amin (2004), a large sample should be a function of the variation in the population parameters under study and the procession needed by the researcher. The schools were first stratified into national, county and sub-county. There was one (1) national school, 22 county schools and 245 sub-county schools. Eighty (80) schools, 30% of which were involved in the study. According to Cohen-Vogel and Osborne (2007), a sample of 10 percent can be used in the study when dealing with a large target population. The schools involved in the sample were selected proportionately. The sample was, therefore 1 national school, 9 county schools and 70 sub-county schools. Proportionate sampling was meant to give schools of each category equal representation. All the principals of the sampled schools and the county staffing officer were purposively and proportionately involved in the study. Purposive sampling was meant to enable the researcher to use cases that could have relevant information to answer research questions in order to enable the researcher to meet the objectives of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The principals and regional staffing officers were in administrative positions and as such, they were found to have relevant information on the issues relating to teachers' transfers and, therefore, were purposively sampled. According to this study, the sample for teacher respondents was determined using a 30% size of the population as advised by Bloomberg and Volpe (2008).

4.2 Instruments for Data Collection

In this study, the instruments included administering questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis guides.

4.3 Validity of Research Instruments

The instruments were given to research specialists who are the supervisors in the Department of Educational Administration who gauged the appropriateness and representativeness of questions on the study objectives.

4.4 Reliability of Research Instruments

The correlation of test re-test was calculated where values of -1 and 1 indicated perfect correlation while correlation of values closer to '0' showed there were no relationships between the variables. Correlation which showed that there was no relationship between the variables, was 0.72 for teachers. Since the value of the correlation coefficient obtained was 0.89 for principals, the instruments were considered reliable for use in this study (Saunders *et al.*, 2003).

4.5 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher first sought from the Kisii University, Department of Educational Administration, Planning and Economics a letter of introduction. The researcher then proceeded to apply online for a permit to undertake research from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), an institution charged with the responsibility of granting research permits in Kenya. A copy of the research permit was given to the county director of education of Kakamega County, from whom further permission was obtained. The researcher collected data with the help of two research assistants. The research assistants were taken through the instruments with the aim of familiarizing them with how the research was to be undertaken. The researcher and research assistants then moved to various sampled stations for an acquaintance tour aimed at briefing management of the proposed research and setting dates for undertaking the study.

5. Findings

5.1 Evaluation of the contribution of retention of teachers on students' academic achievement in Kakamega County

The objective of the study was to establish the contribution of retention of teachers to students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Kakamega County.

The study further sought teachers' views on whether teachers' transfers could be initiated by the principals of schools, and their responses are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Teachers' responses on whether transfers could be initiated by the principals

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
SA	225	55.4	55.4	55.4
A	181	44.6	44.6	44.6
Total	406	100	100	100

According to Table 5 all teacher respondents (100%) were in agreement that some transfers could be initiated by the principals. It was, therefore, according to Grissom (2011), unlikely that principals would initiate transfers of more productive teachers because teachers who could be transferred were likely to be, therefore, those who were less productive, an indicator that little value was likely (Ojera & Yambo (2014). According to Allensworth, Cashdollar and Mazao (2021), within schools that transferred at least one teacher, involuntarily transferred teachers tended to be somewhat lower in value-added in Mathematics and to have been absent more often in the year preceding the transfer. They also tended to be more experienced than other teachers, suggesting that schools used the transfer policy to remove less productive teachers who were unlikely to leave otherwise. In these new schools, transferred teachers continued to achieve worse than the average teacher in value-added in both math and reading, with particularly low scores in Mathematics. Given the effect of the nature of transfers on performance, the study sought the nature of transfers that had taken place in study institutions. The findings are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Teachers' Responses on the Nature of Transfers

Nature of Transfer	Frequency	Percentage
Promotion	38	9.29
Voluntary	240	59.02
Involuntary	129	31.69
Total	406	100

Table 6 revealed that 17(9.3%) teachers had left on promotion, 240(59%) voluntarily and 129 involuntarily (31.7%). The study revealed, therefore, that the majority of teachers (over 66%) either left voluntarily or on promotion. This was a positive score as it was an indicator of employees' level of job satisfaction, which was a good pointer of teacher stability. Teacher stability has a positive influence on students' academic achievement (Omulama & Yambo, 2023). According to Borman and Dowling (2008), teaching is an art that entails a progressive process comprising a multifaceted set of skills, a number of which can only be well refined on uninterrupted job involvement, making the effect of teachers' transfers on educational development to be comparable to attrition. Affirming the same position, Imazeki (2005) stated that teachers' mobility and attrition could have very serious repercussions for schools with high levels of loss or transfer as it normally affected the smooth running of administrative programs, for instance, when a guidance and counselling teacher has been transferred, the school administration has an obligation of sourcing for a suitable replacement and in the process, this produces administrative challenges and in the teaching process.

The study also sought to establish from principals the nature of transfers that had taken place in their schools in the previous three years. Their responses are shown in Figure 1.

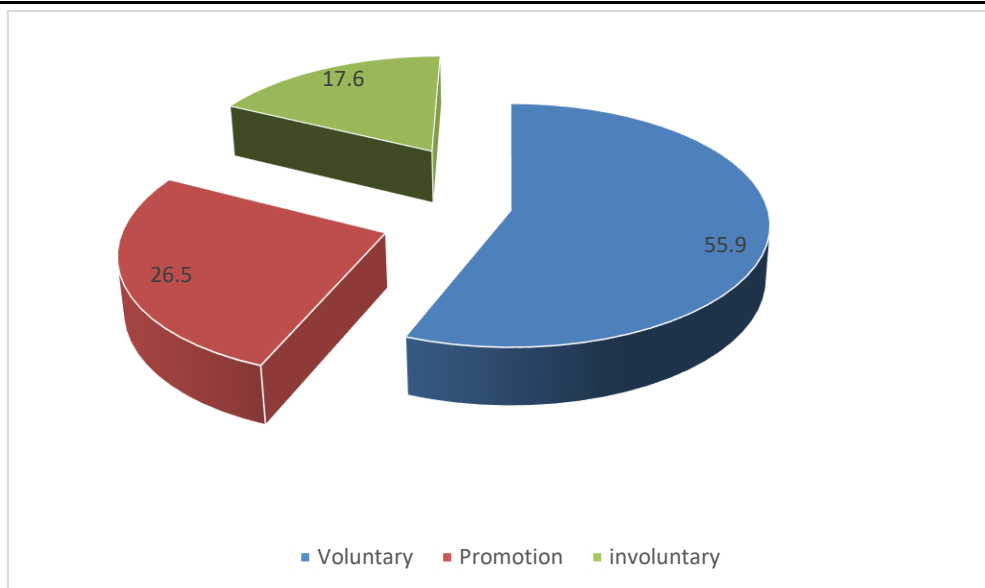


Figure 1: Principals' Responses on the Nature of Transfer

From Figure 1, the majority of teachers (over 55%) were transferred voluntarily. Overall, over twenty-six percent of teachers (26%) were either transferred on promotion or voluntarily (over 17%). These findings were in agreement with findings obtained through an interview with the county staffing officer, who said that the transfer of teachers was based on request and promotion. Some teachers may have valid reasons, such as medical grounds distance from their own family, and so their requests sometimes are granted. Also, transfers of teachers who may have sought promotion are granted. However, such teachers are only posted to schools where vacancies may exist, and as such, they may not have a choice of where they may have to be posted. The fact that it is a promotion is good enough motivation. Involuntary transfers are also there; however, they are minimal, and they are mainly done where there is overstaffing in a school in a particular department.

On the basis of findings from Table 6 and Figure 1, most teachers were transferred in view of benefits to the affected teachers. This is a commendable move for TSC as voluntary placement of teachers on the basis of choice and request or promotion is likely to be translated into a high level of commitment for teachers, a situation that is likely to be reflected in high academic achievement by students. According to Ingersoll (2001), social factors may trigger teacher transfers or the need for transfer. This is a form of mobility where teachers do not necessarily change jobs but move to areas of relative affluence where they can work together with their peers and, to an extent, their families. When teachers are posted away from home, loyalty could be torn between families and duty, and this was likely to be reflected in the frequency of absence from school, a situation that may end up hurting students' academic achievement.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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