

The Intricacy of Leadership Promotion in Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe

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Abstract: *The main purpose of the study was to analyse The Intricacy of Leadership Promotion in Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe. This research followed a case study research design rooted in qualitative research approach. This research was a quest to answer the following questions: What professional qualifications, experiences and merits of appointee or applicant are sufficient for the suitability of a headship post in secondary school? How are differential promotion criteria being used in the promotion of secondary school heads? What other possible "criteria factors" or yardsticks are considered by the appointment committee during the appointment and promotion processes of an applicant or appointee as head? The target group was 30 districts from 3 provinces from whom the researchers selected a sample to obtain data. Samples of sixty (60) The target population of sixty was divided into three layers or strata. The first stratum consisted of six district officials including the District Education Officer. The second layer comprised of lead/senior teachers and heads who had attempted to climb up the promotion ladder but in vain. The third layer consisted of teachers who had attained senior teacher grade. At one point and the other, there could be a combination of stratified sampling and purposive sampling so as to make things work. The study used observations, document analysis and interviews in the gathering of information. Respondents were asked to provide information on their perceptions and general know how on the promotion process. The collected data were presented in form of descriptive analysis. The research recommended that The District Education Officers (D.E.O) should have detailed scrutiny on applications with negative promotion write-ups before these are forwarded to the regional office, Heads of schools are advised to collect vacancy announcement circulars as soon as these are published so that potential applicants can do so before it is too late and Heads are advised to remove that office inertia which is a major blow in most of our schools especially the rural ones. Heads are advised to make more leaders before*

their terms of office. That is to say, a leader should aspire to inspire before he/she expires.

Key words: *intricacy, leadership promotion, criterion, secondary schools*

Introduction

Whilst several researches worldwide have concentrated on gender and occupational segregation and discrimination, little seems to have to be done or not done on factors considered before an individual is promoted or appointed to a certain higher position. In both the less economically developed countries several researchers have been published, but revolving on gender disparities. Whilst the promotion ladder for teachers seem to concentrate on the individuals professional qualifications, experience and maybe gender in some instances, other factors which seem to play an important role on this topic are: religion, friendship, family history in leadership, relationship to the bosses at regional offices, love relationships, marital status, "labels on potential appointees," locally-based fellows and the ability to buy the promotion or appointment.

There seem to be a wide range of dubious factors used in determining promotions and appointments. Although promotions processes seem to utilize certain criteria in determining the promotions, qualifications, experience and maybe assessment of teaching, the other factors i have stated above seem to be the main ones used in determining promotions.

Although, there are certain appointment and promotions procedures followed by the promotion committee, there seem to exist other factors or criteria utilized in the appointment and promotions of school heads in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

Several experienced, highly and professionally qualified personnel and very aged have provided several Ministries with required services, but have been given limited appointments and promotions. Other factors or criteria seem to be used in the

promotion process. Lots of dubious processes and procedures are being used in determining promotions or appointments. This wide gap need to be closed through a detailed and refined research within secondary schools administrations.

In Hong Kong, women in management are consciously or unconsciously discriminated, women have been devalued and under recognized; their credibility as authority figures has been undermined; college educated women are under-utilized and under paid their presence at the top has been resented and resisted. Generally, women are not so much psychologically handicapped for management positions as inhibited by recruitment, hiring and promotion policies. They are seemed as not being “good enough” to make it to the top.

Sex roles and norms have been visible in Chinese society. Men are typically raised to be aggressive and independent while women are raised more social and dependent. Traditional Chinese values emphasize the sexual division of labor both at home and at work. A woman primary duty is in the home and a man's is at the workplace. Child-rearing, home-making and domestic organizing are a women's primary responsibilities. Married women may work, but only to supplement the male bread winner's income. The “Women as Managers Scale”(WAMS) was used to determine attitudes towards women as managers. The measure consists of 21 items. One-half favorably and the other half of the items are worded unfavorably. The possible scores ranges from 21 (highly unfavorable attitude) to 147 (highly favorable). Split half reliability for the scale was 0, 67. The mean total score obtained from the present study was 105, 4(SD=12, 8).

It appears that attitudes towards women in the workforce are quiet positive. The results do not support the view that women lack drive and motivation for management. No evidence of sex difference was found in terms of achievement, ability, terms of performance, or of other related skills. The majority of the respondents agreed with the following statements:

- Men and women should be given equal opportunities for participation in management programs.
- Women have the capability to acquire the necessary skills to be successful managers.
- It is acceptable for women to compete with men for top executive positions.
- Women possess the self-confidence required of a good leader.

Factor analysis yielded three factors: feminine barrier; general acceptance of females as managers;

capability. The reliability coefficients of the subscales varied from 0,58 to 0,79.

From the table in the article presented by, Irene Hau-SiuChow(30), the following personal characteristics required for upper management are given. The characteristics which are gender based are; personal and empathy, emotional stability, consistency and objectivity, analytical ability attention to detail decisiveness, creativity loyalty and interest in people. All the above characteristics are criteria utilized in the appointment and promotion of leaders and managers. These criteria or factors are: religion of a candidate, friendship to those who are up the ladder, family history in leadership, relationship to the bosses at district/regional offices, love relationships, marital status, labels leveled on potential appointees, locally based fellows, the ability to purchase the promotion or appointment office, the offspring of a rich business person popularity and political affiliation of a candidate (applicant).

Most researches have been carried out on a gender disparities revolving on differential appointments and promotions. It seems little or no research has been carried out on current differential promotions criteria utilized in the promotion of school heads. In Zimbabwe and elsewhere, in front of the promotions Committee, are the following factors or criteria not looked at or considered: the religious background of the candidate, the political background, marital status, whether one drinks beer or not, “the who knows you” at the higher offices, the “prima facie” cases for promotion and the social stratum to which the potential candidate belongs? From facial point of view, it appears as though the promotions committee, the regional office and Head office will be looking at the experiences, qualifications and merits of the potential candidates, yet other current differential promotions criteria seem to be utilizing in the appointment and promotions of both Primary and Secondary school heads (administrators).

Addressing a gathering of teachers who packed the Bulawayo City Hall on Friday, where they were celebrating World Teachers Day under theme ‘Invest in teachers; Invest in the future; Dokora said the promotions will not be a sail through’ but would be by merit.

“There will be consideration for promotion of people who have worked for about four to eight years. We also cannot be having people who have been acting in positions for more than two years, they should get those positions (sic)”, Dokora said, The Zimbabwean Mail, 04/10/2014.

“We are also saying, if deputy head has been in that position, he is eligible for promotion and the school head in a position for two years, he/she can be eligible for promotions to a principle director, but unfortunately there were only five principal directors and we have restructured to add two more even though I had hoped we would have eight,” he said. (The same article).

Vast experience in the teaching profession has shown me that, most male and female teachers who obtain appointments and promotions quickly, have a strong background in religions such as Christianity. Usually people who belong to the Roman Catholic, Methodist, Anglican Church and Reformed church in Zimbabwe get promotions very early. Unlike their counterparts, those religious figures that belong to the traditional churches such as Zion, Apostolic Missions and other minor groupings, get promoted after those from major church denominations. Worse still, to a teacher who believes in traditional spirits the promotion ladder becomes challenging.

Amongst the males and females themselves, there exist differential promotions based on “who knows you” at the district level, provincial or head office. Often than not, candidates whose family history, of educational leadership is known at the province, get promotions early.

A candidate who is related to any one member who is working in one of the higher offices is likely to be appointed or promoted to the next higher ladder.

An appointee whose records of teaching are very smart, but does not go to church and drinks his/her beer will not get any form of appointment or promotion. A candidate who is not known by the district office, regional and head office, will have huddles to climb up the promotional ladder. A district or provincial office frequenter’s probabilities of being promoted are higher. A school-locally based fellow, besides having vast experience and the necessary qualifications, has the highest probability of being appointed or promoted to higher offices. All what I have written above is not based on empirical evidence. This is the purpose of this topic. The researchers need to fill in the missing gap.

A cross examination of the promotion ladder of lecturers at both college and university might open another gap for research. It appears there is an appointment and promotion discrimination, based on gender, race, religion and relationships. For the purpose of the research, the researchers will stick to the appointment and promotion discrimination based on religion, friendship, family history in leadership, marital status, relationship to bosses,

social stratification, ability to buy the promotion and political affiliation of the applicants. The “prima facie” cases of the potential appointees and applicants should be closely looked into.

Several researches on appointment and promotion based on gender discrimination have been carried out in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, America and Australia including Africa. However, little or no research has been carried out to find out discrepancies and discrimination of promotions between the males themselves and the women themselves. Why is it that, some males get appointments faster than other males? Why is it that, some females obtain appointments and promotions faster than other females? Is it that, the appointment committee is strictly looking at the professional qualifications, experiences and meritocracy of the potential applicants? Do these offices together with the Appointment and Promotions committee not go beyond the normal appointment procedures? A wide gap based on nature and type of variables used in the criteria utilized in the appointment and promotion of school heads (administrators) exist. This is the main focus of this research.

Whilst, it is a true fact that the Appointment Committee working hand in gloves with the Head Office uses certain criteria and follow certain procedures in the appointment and promotion of school heads as administrators, certain salient and silent factors seem to be overally controlling the promotion procedures and processes. Male graduates from the same university or college and having completed their degree programs or diplomas in the same year get appointed or promoted differently. The degree programs and classes will be the same, likewise, the diplomas or certificates almost identical. In the same veins, female graduates from the same college or university, doing similar programs and courses and completing at the same time, obtain appointments and promotions at different times. What causes this discrepancy? The qualifications and job experiences are the same and probably what might make a difference is mentocracy. The question of gender discrimination on appointment and promotions has received adequate treatment in both the less economically developed countries (L.E.D.Cs) and the more economically developed countries (M.E.D.Cs). What remains as a gap is the inclusion of variables such as religion, friendship, family history in leadership(educational) marital status, relationship, social stratification, the buying of posts, political backgrounds and the “prima facie” cases attached to the potential appointees or applicants.

Experience has shown that male teachers with similar qualifications and experience have received differential appointments and promotions in Zimbabwe. Likewise, female teachers with similar qualifications and experience have received different treatments as far as appointment or promotion to administrative offices is concerned.

At school level, if a substantive head or deputy transfers to another school, certain individuals are chosen to occupy that vacant post. There will be several qualified teachers with similar qualifications and experience, but not suitable for the post of head or deputy, but just for acting whilst waiting for another head or deputy. Very often than not, there are certain individuals who are always appointed to act. All aspects being equal, what additional factors or criteria are being utilized in the appointment of school heads?

Quite a number of satellite secondary schools have been established in Zimbabwe. These schools do not necessarily need to be headed by a substantive head or deputy because of the low enrolment figures there. As such, the heads of the mother schools are tasked to appoint an acting head. Given a large school with a staff complement totaling approximately 45 teachers with almost similar if not identical staff qualifications and experiences, what criteria are utilized in the appointment of the acting head at local levels? Observations and experience has shown that, less qualified and experienced teachers are often appointed. These observations need to be substantiated by empirical research which is the focus of this research. This research was a quest to answer the following questions:

1. What professional qualifications, experiences and merits of appointee or applicant are sufficient for the suitability of a headship post in secondary school?
2. How are differential promotion criteria being used in the promotion of secondary school heads?
3. What other possible "criteria factors" or yardsticks are considered by the appointment committee during the appointment and promotion processes of an applicant or appointee as head?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

RESEARCH DESIGN

This topic on criteria utilized in the promotion and appointment of secondary school heads fits under the qualitative research paradigm. According to the article written by Chisaka (2013) in Action Research, "the education phenomenon alongside other social phenomena is being rocked by rapid and unpredictable changes due to influences of

globalization. The education practitioners are therefore required to continuously improve on the practices by engaging themselves in social research since their work is primarily social...". The researcher has used the qualitative research since this has the natural setting as the direct source of data. It is concerned with life as it is lived; moment to moment course of events (Chisaka, 2013:9). Professor Chisaka goes on to say that, the researchers seek an understanding of the lived experiences in real situations. Researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context.

According to Chisaka (2013), phenomenology requires the researcher to describe vividly or thickly the experiences lived by the participants by using their own words. This is what exactly this researcher underwent in conducting this research work. The researcher was interested in the emic (insider's viewpoints) perspective of the situation (Chisaka, 2006; Hoberg, 2001). Our research did not allow me to use the hermeneutics and ethnography theoretical frameworks. According to Higgs and Smith cited in Chisaka (2013:9), hermeneutics is the science of understanding, the art of interpretation and a science of communication. The researcher is expected to systematically analyze and interpret data and communicate the findings comprehensively. Hoberg cited in the same article by Chisaka (2013:9) defines ethnography as the study of a group's (class') culture.

The researcher has partially used ethnography because when you look at other criteria utilized by the promotions committee to appoint school heads besides the overtly known criteria of experience, qualifications and merits, we are dealing with the culture of a particular group of people with its own distinctive characteristics. According to Neuman cited in an article by Chisaka (2013:9), the aim of ethnography is to capture, interpret and explain specific aspects of life of a particular group.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A total of sixty highly qualified personnel from the three provinces of Manicaland, Midlands and Masvingo provinces in Zimbabwe with the general feelings, lived experiences and viewpoints of the people in the district concerning criteria utilized in the promotion and appointment of secondary school heads. The target population of sixty was divided into three layers or strata. The first stratum consisted of six district officials including the District Education Officer. The second layer comprised of lead/senior teachers and heads who had attempted to climb up the promotion ladder but in vain. The third layer consisted of teachers who

had attained senior teacher grade. At one point and the other, there could be a combination of stratified sampling and purposive sampling so as to make things work. According to Oyedele (2011), dividing a heterogeneous population into sub-populations, each of which is internally heterogeneous, measurements will vary little from unit to unit, and a more precise estimate can be obtained from any stratum. This therefore means that, the responses on criteria utilized in the promotion of heads vary from senior teachers, lead/heads and district officials.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

OBSERVATION

Since 2005, when we joined Manicaland province, we have been observing promotion trends and patterns. We have been secretly observing how the staffing officers working together with the District Education Officers handle cases of promotion and appointment of school heads. Even before joining Manicaland province, we have been observing the staffing processes and promotion procedures. Now, combining my experiences outside the district (EXOD) and experiences inside the district (EXID), certain patterns have emerged during the processes of staffing, especially relief teachers, promotion of both deputy heads and heads. The researcher has been a complete observer since entry into the public service in 1992.

According to Halcom's counsel, described in Chisaka's article (2013:10), the complete observer has little or no interaction with those being studied. Observation notes should be both descriptive and analytical or reflective. As observers, we have been writing thick descriptions of the events that happened. This is supported by Mamvuto (2011) cited in Chisaka's article (2013:11). Mamvuto (2011) argues that the researcher should give a word-picture of the setting, people, actions and interactions that were observed.

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH THE D.E.O, HR MANAGER, PROMOTION COMMITTEE AND EDUCATION INSPECTORS (PUBLIC SERVICE)

The researchers chose sixty members from the district office for a questionnaire interview including the DEOs. This was done because when posts are advertised, the officers at the district have input towards promotion of school heads. The head of the school from which the potential applicant works, first of all writes the promotion write-up. Secondly, the DEO also writes the promotion write up until a final recommendation is given by the Provincial Education Director (PED) and Head Office. The researcher found it necessary to interview the responsible authorities at the district.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH SENIOR TEACHERS, LEAD TEACHERS AND HEADS/DEPUTY

For the research to be a success, the focus group was used. At all of the forty high schools selected, sixty participants were chosen. The sixty participants were from senior teachers only, lead teachers who might have attempted to apply for deputy head posts, deputy heads plus senior teachers or a combination of all of the above. I was controlling the group discussion, probing here and there so that all the data could be gathered. Matiure (2011) cited in Chisaka's article (2013:12), supports the use of focus groups.

Focus group discussion can be defined as the group discussion in which six to twelve people talk about things of special relevance to a study under the guidance of a researcher who plays the role of moderator. "Some (focus group discussions) can be an observation group that comes to discuss views and observations (Matiure, 2011:4) cited in Chisaka (2013:12).

Since most school administrators and teachers were very busy running external examinations, the researcher used the informal group situation and the largely unstructured nature of the questions asked for the focus group discussions encouraged the participants to disclose their behavior and attitudes they might not disclose during individual interviews. Hoberg (2001), supports that participants tend to feel more comfortable and more secure in the presence of people who seem to have similar opinions and views than in the company of an individual interviewer. Ferreira and Puth, (1988) cited in an article by Chisaka (2013:12), add that during the focus group discussions, the participant may comment on the responses of other participants, ask other participants some questions or respond to comments by others, including the interviewer.

Before the discussions, as a researcher, we created an atmosphere of trust, friendliness and openness to all and had a purposeful small talk with the participants. We advised the participants about how the discussions and questionnaire would be carried out. To ensure that my discussions flowed well, we kept on encouraging all members to speak. This is supported by Chisaka (2013:12). These scholars advised the researchers to ask participants some follow-up questions or probes. A probe is used to elicit additional information when participants make vague comments or simply say "I agree". Under such cases, we kept on probing.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

As part of the data gathering process, we collected various texts from the Head and District Offices. According to Neuman (1997), the text is anything written, visual or spoken that serves as medium for

communication. Text includes newspapers, books, official documents, video clips, musical lyrics, photographs and artifacts.

When these documents are studied and analyzed for the purpose of scientific research, the method of document analysis as a data generation method becomes operative, De Vosetal, cited in Chisaka (2013:12). Document analysis could both be a

primary and a secondary data collection method. The researcher used the following documents I to V as secondary sources. These are; Circular Ref: 1/d5/MID, Mutare District Promotion Write-up, Ref: G/8/1 (Appointment of 91X Heads) and Ministry Notification of Unsatisfactory, Performance of Duties/Extension of Probationary Period.

Parameters/features given less weight during promotion	Marital status Religion Politics Health status	-single fathers -single mothers -well behaved vs. ill-behaved -not relevant -civil servants are apolitical -applicants with medical reports only
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Result and Discussion

Research Findings From Senior Teachers From Focus Group Discussions Held With Some Lead Teachers Who Had Been Previously Invited For Promotion Interviews, But Were Not Successful

The following results were obtained from four high schools A, B, C and D all being in different districts of Manicaland. Letters and figures R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 and R6 stand for the respondents for school A, and R7 to R12 for respondents in school B, R12 to R18 for school C and R19 to R24 for school D. **In**, stand for a question or probe question asked by the researcher. The order in which the different questions and respondents came in has been maintained. In all the questions for the discussion are fifteen. In this presentation, the order of high schools is also maintained.

Findings at high school A

In: What do you think are the main reasons from your failure to be promoted/appointed as substantive head or deputy?

R1: still young. (age category for the lady was (25-30) and married)

R2: don't know, (age category for the lady was (30-35) and married)

R3: in0-experienced and lack of post requirements, (age category for the lady was (40-45) and married)

R4: selection criteria leaves a lot to be desired, (age category for the lady was (45-50) and a B.Ed holder)

R5: information is not disseminated in time. (Age category for the lady was (40-45) and married and a B.Ed holder)

R6: the method of selection used (40-45) years

In: what do you mean? Can you please elaborate?

R6: not transparent

In: why were other applicants with similar qualifications, experience and merits successful.

R1: experience and age factors contributed

In: can you please answer the question asked?

R1: a little bit older than me

R2: sheer lucky

R3: adequate experience and knowledgeable about post requirements

R4: possibly because they got circulars well in time from those in relevant positions. Some were however lucky.

R5: they are able to get the required information well in time and able to meet the due dates.

R6: the satisfy some special requirements

In: besides professional qualifications, experience and merits, what other explanatory variables are put into consideration before an applicant is successful?

R1: leadership qualities, ability to work whatever environment.

R2: don't know

R3: good communication skill

R4: history of professionalism, relations with higher offices

R5: presentation and mannerism of applicant

In: what do you mean madam?

R5: professional attire and self introduction

R6: to be in an acting deputy position

In: is the existence of love affairs between the applicant and those responsible for promotions not of importance during the promotion exercise?

R1: no

In: why?

R1: because the promotions are done by a team of different views

R2: yes

R3: to some extent, it is

R4: to a larger extent for the majority of cases.

R5: it depends, but sometimes it is true depending on the people concerned.

R6: no, it is not important

In: Does religion such as Christianity play/no play important role towards the promotion/appointment of a teacher to headship?

R1: no

In: why?

R1: there is no strong link between the two aspects

R2: it does not play any important role towards the appointment. In most cases this serves in Christian schools. This agrees with circular Ref: 1/D5/MID

R3: it contributes especially in church schools where churches are the responsible authority

R4: is of no significance but can be important where those responsible for promotion share the same religion with the applicant

R5: yes it is true to Christian/mission schools. It is applicable. R5 agrees with R2

R6: I don't know

In: is the marital status of the appointee/applicant not considered during the promotion exercise?

R1: no

R2: it is considered, because some teachers do not want to be separated from their families. There is a lot of dignity within a married head. This respondent agrees with Kaufmann (2008) and Woodfield (2007)

R3: not important

R4: in the case of females, oh yes, those who are unmarried stand the greatest chance of being promoted

R5: its regarded especially to chapter 37, married couples

R6: no, it is not considered.

In: does the political affiliation of an applicant not contribute to his/her promotions?

R1; It does because the nation wants patriotic, visionary and missionary heads

R2: it contributes a lot because a head can mislead the whole community or school

R3: it does contribute depending on who is related to the applicant.

R4: it does. R4 agrees with R1, R2 and R3.

R5: N/A

R6: I agree with R1, R2, R3, and R4 and disagree with R5

In: is the health status of an applicant such as HIV/AIDS or mental instability not considered during the promotion exercise?

R1: no. because this will have psychological effects on the applicant.

In: so what?

R1: the HIV/AIDS applicant should not be affected psychologically

R2: if known, it should be considered

R3: it is essential since; mental health is a pre-requisite to job performance.

R4: I agree with R3

R5: I agree with R3 and R4

R6: I don't know

In: does the concept of 'chana chatete' or close relative have an influence towards the promotion of teachers to headship?

R1: it does

R2: it has a great influence

R3: this cannot be ruled out, because blood is thicker than water

R4: it has

R5: it is true

R6: to a minor extend

In: can an applicant/ appointee buy a vacant head post from a district/regional or head office?

R1: most probably

R2: yes, it is possible

R3: it can happen depending on how corrupt the DEO or PED is

R4: it does

R5: yes, it sometimes does

R6: it was done

In: identify the most important 3 forms or types of misconduct which lead to one not to be appointed/promoted to any office

R1: teacher pupil love affairs, different perceptions on the ruling party, and absence from duty

R2: mismanagement of funds, love affairs with a minor and insolvency

R3: financial embezzlement, improper association and fraud

R4: improper association, abuse of leave and incompetency

R5: reimbursement of funds, teacher-pupil love affairs, and absenteeism from duty without good cause

R6: improper association, embezzlement of funds and fraud

In: why are some female counterparts promoted earlier than their male counterparts?

R1: having love relations with those in higher positions.

R2: don't know

R3: to balance the gender question since more men are in higher posts

R4: because they are females (abuse of gender equality phenomenon) because some are attractive and ever smiling

In: can you explain this point

R4: there can be love relations with top officials. Not always, but in some cases

R5: familiarity to the boss in higher office

R6: they satisfy the special requirements like being in acting head posts for several years yet acting posts are arbitrarily found

In: Why are some male counterparts promoted earlier than their female counterparts?

R1: they satisfy special requirements

In: which special requirements do you have in mind?

R1: dignified, respectful, respect and love to God, and generally patriotic in nature

R2: they are prominent ZANU supporters

R3: they are committed

R4: academic excellence and good communication skills

R5: so many factors are at play

R6: have relatives in higher education offices:

In: does the district office recruit candidates with the highest academic qualifications as relief teachers?

R1: yes

R2: yes

R3: this depends on the availability of candidates, in some cases no, because of nepotism.

R4: one can have the best qualifications; but cannot be considered if not known

R5: I agree with R1 and R2

R6: at times, but they are given unnecessary pressure by politicians

In: what do you mean?

R6: sir, you know what I mean you are an adult.

Research findings from schools B, C, and D showed the same pattern. Making use of the four high schools, main themes, sub-themes and excerpts have emerged.

An analysis of the focus group discussions in the four high schools yielded the following themes sub-themes and the supporting excerpts;

Theme	Sub-theme	Excerpts
Relationship	Love affairs	-Rumor say so at times, but with no proof -to a certain extent this has an effect in the decision making at the end -some believe in that but what should matter is to choose a competent leader -it depends but sometimes it is very true depending on the people concerned
	Friendship	-corruption -nepotism -some applicants are not known or do not have friends in higher offices
Relationships	Close relatives e.g. nephew or niece e.t.c.	-this is so but no clear cut connections can be established -it is so hidden, you cannot discern -some supervisors consider that while others do not - great influence This cannot be ruled out blood is thicker than water
Religion	Christianity	-Plays a role especially in mission schools and other institutions -one might have the same religion with one responsible for promotions hence his/her promotion might be made possible -it has to some extent, with links to Pentecostal churches, apostolic churches playing a major role -the roman catholic schools prefer catholic heads e.g. Marist Brothers Mission in Nyanga District, where the church is the responsible authority
Governance	Politics	-it contributes a lot -contributes much -Contributes so well -a head can mislead the entire community -the nation needs a head , who is visionary, missionary and knows the client charter -yes, this was confirmed by one district administrator in 2008
Variables	Explanatory variables	-dignity -leadership skills -social behavior -areas in which one works e.g. marginalized areas -relationship with the senior officials

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -one should be known by one of the panel/ and political affiliations -professional discipline -have not been charged or regarded as a cause of concern -has the applicant once held a position of responsibility -dress code plus presentation and area of origin
Variables	Explanatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Showing interest -recommendation by head of station weighs heavily on the outcome of the interview -maturity -some interests such as coaching in soccer, athletics including membership to professional bodies
Marital status	Married, single, divorced, separated e.t.c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -sometimes -females have a higher chance -not considered, for some people might have decided not to get married in their lives. Not a factor, but maturity is important
Health status	HIV/AIDS e.t.c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No problem in HIV/AIDS applicants, but mental stability affects job performance -should not be considered because that should be private to the individual -no, that will be sort of segregation of individual
Fraud	Corruption, nepotism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some supervisors consider that whilst others do not -regionalism is a problem in Zimbabwe and promotions may follow regional lines-this has been rumored with some figures mentioned, but no proof can be established

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

DISCUSSION ON DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICIALS

From the responses given by the education district officials on question one, there was clear evidence that quite a number of characteristics are put into consideration before a teacher is promoted. These characteristics include honest, hard working, initiative, self driven and ability to work under pressure among others. Professional qualifications, experience and merits were cited as the most common and most important characteristics. These findings agree with one of the most prominent scholar’s findings, Das (2010). Studies carried out in America on promotions by Woodfield (2007) and Kaufmann (2008), showed almost the same characteristics. Although some of the characteristics are looked into during promotions, professional qualifications, merits and experience seem to override the other factors. Surprisingly, there are quite a large number of teachers who have the necessary qualifications, experience and merits in the district who have never been invited for promotion interviews. Mature, strong team-building applicants with management and administrative leadership are lying idle in the district.

From the district officials’ findings, it is clear that hardworking, innovation and creativity, marking experience as a teacher for at least two years and maturity are expected. However, some teachers in Manicaland, Masvingo and Midlands provinces have all these, but other features/characteristics seem to control the promotion of teachers. They include integrity, progressive records of professional achievement, no pending misconduct, to mention but a few. This means that, within a given district, a teacher can be very senior, highly qualified, but if he/she has pending issues, promotion/appointment will not be granted. From the records or findings provided at the district, it appears as though there is promotion action or activities, yet, the findings from the thirty lead teachers and twenty four senior teachers unearth unprofessionalism within the district. Other factors such as senior teacher having acted as deputy head or supports a particular party emerged. Can all the senior teachers at a particular station act at once? It is obvious that some will not, but still need promotion.

From the findings, there is unanimous agreement that marital status is of no significance during promotion. However, at times, circulars come specifying the marital status of applicants. Moreover, in the Zimbabwean context, we do not expect ubuntu to be taught from a spinster head or bachelor head. A married head is more dignified.

Still on that note, it does not necessarily mean that, if a head is married, he/she cannot abuse school pupils. This depends on the individual. This is in line with Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000.

There was almost 100% agreement from the six district education officials that the religious background of an individual is of no significance. Observation and experience in the district and outside the district have shown that religious figures are promoted faster or earlier than non church going applicants. Besides this being true to church-related institutions, it is also true even a school belongs to the rural council. The promotion committee has faith in people who respect and fear God. These findings agree with Document 1, Circular Ref: 1/DS/MID, 31 January, 2013: which reads; all applicants for posts in church, farm and mine run schools must submit recommendations from responsible authorities. Church/farm/mine schools wishing to recommend applicants for promotion should recommend at least three names in preference order for every post.

Fifty percent of the district education officials agreed that the health status of an applicant is put into consideration. The other 50% was against the idea. Now, is it sensible for the appointment or promotion committee to promote a person who is likely to perish after a year or a mentally deranged figure? This discussion can only be rounded off by the following excerpts from question 6 directed to the education officials. One officer said;

No, because we are not medical practitioners who know about the health status of applicant.

The second said;

When documents are available from the doctor.

The third said;

Yes, because some people are chronically ill, hence they need special treatment.

My personal feeling is that, health status should be considered. An HIV/AIDS officer may abuse minors. Likewise, a mentally deranged officer can spend the next ten years or more in office and an energetic officer can die at any given moment. 'Being ill is not death' it is God alone who knows the calendar.

In 2009, first term, as part of my observation, I experienced a very nasty happening at the district office. A certain district education officer X, who was HIV positive, had the following words to exchange with a young female teacher;

Female teacher (Y); "Sir, my salary has been delayed for more than two months"

Officer (X); "if you fail to satisfy what I told you, you will not get that money. Go wherever you want"

The young girl cried loudly in such a manner that the whole corridor was filled with noise. The young girl went to the next office where was a senior

officer expecting help. The senior officer (V) replied as follows;

"Young girl I do not know your arrangement with Mr. (X). Go back and be served" the young woman went back to the officer weeping. Now, if these are some of the operations done by HIV/AIDS officers, should the health status of applicants not put into consideration? Now that office (X) is diseased. What is the fate of the remaining abused young female teacher?

81% of the district education officials agreed that applicants with 'prima facie' cases are given special attention. However, observation and experience have shown that teachers with certain 'labels' attached to them are rarely promoted. A 'label' on a teacher is like a stain of blood on a white shirt. This stain is very difficult to remove. Hence, the promotion ladder for such a teacher is difficult. This is supported by a research carried out in Britain by Woodfield (2007), entitled Promotion Ladder in Harvard Medical School.

From the district education officials, it was clear that an applicant with a record of misconduct was not promoted. The 50% who said 'no' cited reasons clearance first of misconduct. The 50% who said 'yes' cited cases whereby the teacher's act of misconduct to be cleared first or a charge preferred before promotion. Observation and experience have shown that people who are charged in most cases will not be promoted easily. This becomes difficult, Woodfield (2007).

The district education officials had a 100% agreement that it is the Head Office which gives the final decision in promotion. This is not true. The head of the station, the DEO, and the promotion office hide the finger of the Head Office. It is the head of the station who comments on the suitability of the teacher for the post. Every application is accompanied by a promotion write-up from the head. This argument is supported by Oyedele and Chikwature (2016) who argue that the if a staff member is secure at his work station then he or she becomes more efficient at work.

If the assessment of members' experience in relation to competencies required for the post assessment of member's suitability to the post and summary evaluation of member's suitability are positive from the head of station, then the teacher will be promoted. If a head of station gives a negative report or assessment, the next offices will also be negative to the applicant. This agrees with a popular leadership saying which goes as follows; "it is the people at the grassroots who know the applicant or person better than those at the top-offices".

The district education officials had a 100% agreement that records of unsuccessful applicants and the reasons for their unsuccessfulness are kept. This is meant for future consideration. But why is it

that the unsuccessful applicants are not given replies. That raises eye-brows concerning the safe keeping of such records.

The six education officers gave different responses. R1 stuck to the Official Secrecy act. R4 and R5 demonstrated lack of knowledge of their jobs. R2, R3 and R4 provided typical samples. The response provided by R2 was quite comforting and promising in future. The applicant could re-apply in the next advertisement. R3 was less comforting, but however, was encouraging in the future. R4 was also comforting and providing areas for future improvement. The age category for R2 and R3 who provided mature answers was 50-55⁺ hence showed knowledge of office work. Age category for R4 was 25-30, but providing the required information. This shows that although the officer is still young; he has thorough knowledge of his job. Very competent. The responses given by R2, R3 and R4 are positive on the grades scale 1 to 2 e.g. communicative, encouraging and openness.

DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS WITH LEAD TEACHERS /SENIOR TEACHERS

From question 1, table 1, the following trends have emerged; a total frequency of 3 has been recorded on A (suspected of being in love with school pupils). The highest frequency of 27 on G, (do not apply for vacant posts). A frequency of 19, on B, (unknown by district, provincial and head office officials). A frequency of 2, on C, (heavy drinking and smoking). The lowest frequency of 1 was recorded on D and J, a case of being stubborn. A frequency of 0 was recorded on I (very young in age), which was irrelevant to the question. E (does not belong to any church denomination) had a total frequency of 2, F (have certain 'labels' laid on them) had a total frequency of 9, H (do not have the necessary qualifications) had a total frequency of 24, and K /other had a total frequency of 2. The other reasons which were specified by the respondents which led senior teachers to have delayed promotions were; (a) senior teachers apply and go on to fail interviews and (b) the system is not fair and transparent.

From table 1, a total figure of 27 on G (do not apply for vacant posts) and a total of 24 on H (do not have the necessary qualifications) agree with recent researches which have been carried out in the different parts of the world. If a teacher does not have the necessary academic and professional qualifications, he/she cannot be promoted. This is supported by prominent scholars such as Odden (2011), Woodfield (2007), Kaufmann (2008) and Das (2010). The issue of promotions in relation to professional qualifications was addressed by the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Dr. Lazarus Dokora in 2014 when he was addressing a gathering of teachers who packed the Bulawayo

City Hall. The Minister also referred to merits and experience, brought up by the six education officials at Mutare District (St Noah College).

A total frequency of 27 on G (do not apply for vacant posts) is supported by Halliday (1999) and Woodfield (2007), who argue that teachers do not apply for vacant posts because they need to be closer to their families and involved in other forms of commitment. From the findings on the table, one can argue that, if a teacher is being suspected of being in love with minors, unknown by the district, provincial, and head office officials, is involved in heavy smoking and drinking, have certain 'labels' and stubborn, he/she cannot be promoted early. Worse still, if the teacher does not have the necessary academic and professional qualifications and does not apply for the vacant posts, no promotion will come on a silver plate.

A frequency of 2 on E (does not belong to any church denomination) and a frequency of 9 on F (have certain 'labels' laid on them) suggests that the promotion ladder for such a teacher is higher. A frequency of 1 for both C and D appear small, yet these explanatory variables have a great influence on the promotion of a member. Whilst one or more people can argue that lead teachers are invited at the regional office for interviews and they go there and fail, still others can claim that the system is not far and transparent.

From question 2, the following patterns and arguments can be forwarded. A high figure of 19 on agreeing strongly indicates that quite a large number of teachers do not apply for advertised posts. This could be due to pressure at home or other commitments. On the females' side, this could be due extra pressure in domestic duties such as child rearing and other responsibilities. This argument is supported by two distinguished scholars, namely; Woodfield(2007) and Kaufmann (2008). A figure of 15 on agreeing strongly indicates that a large population of senior teachers does not have the necessary academic and professional qualifications, yet still they quest for promotions to higher offices. A large figure of 11 demonstrates that if a teacher does not have relatives there will be late or prolonged promotion.

If a teacher does not have friends in higher offices, promotion is delayed. This is shown by an occurrence of figure 6 agreeing strongly. Although a figure of 1 is recorded on the table, family history in education leadership is very crucial. Q and R recorded 7 and 5 respectively. This means that if a teacher was involved in any case of misconduct and is attached to certain 'labels', such a teacher will not be promoted. Contrary to the results provided by the district education officials' interview concerning the contribution of religion to promotion, lead teachers agreed strongly that the

church a person goes can act as a catalyst to one's promotion. This is evidenced by a total figure of 4 agreeing to this. A total figure of fifteen agreeing indicates that politics has a strong influence on promotion of senior teachers to headship. This is supported by one of the extracts taken from the 24 focus group discussions taken carried at the four high schools A, B, C and D. the extract reads;

Yes, politics contributes to promotion. This was confirmed by one District Administrator in 2008.

A figure of 5 agreed that the origin of an applicant has an influence to promotion. This is evidenced by one of the focus group extracts;

Regionalism is a problem in Zimbabwe and promotions may follow regional lines.

Large figures were recorded on P, R, U and S in terms of disagreeing strongly. The figure were as follows; 10, 12, 13 and 18 respectively. A large figure disagreed strongly on the influences of the family history in educational leadership, 'labels', foreign origin, and the influence of religion, particularly Christianity. An examination of the mentioned explanatory variables shows that this tends to control promotions. From the researcher's EXID and EXOD life experience, the church plays a major role, labels control, and family history in educational leadership either inhibit or catalyze the rate of one being promoted.

From question 3, and professional qualifications has the highest frequency of agreeing strongly, followed by merits, supporting major ruling party, followed by effective and efficient teaching and then relationships to officials at province. Promotions based on high professional qualifications, effectiveness and efficiency are supported by very popular writers like Odden (2011). A senior teacher free from "prima facie" cases such as misappropriation/embezzlement of funds, rape can get promotion early. On table 4, this has the highest agreement score of 12, followed by relationships to officials, professionalism, effectiveness and efficiency. Highly professional, effective and efficient characteristic is supported in Statutory instrument 1 of 2000.

An applicant with a long family history in educational leadership, have high professional qualifications, professional, qualified and have merits, support the ruling part and both effective and efficient can get promoted early.

An applicant with love affairs with top bosses, is related to officials, produce high pass rates, possess 1st class degree and related to district officials can also be promoted.

There is a score of 1 (agreeing strongly on stable marriage and a total frequency of 14 on disagreeing strongly). Although the marital status of an applicant seems to not to control promotion, this variable is very important. A leader should lead by example. A leader acts as a loco-parentis, so if he/she is single, the chances of abusing school children and other minors are higher. However, it does not mean that if a head is happily married, cannot abuse minors. In Manicaland Province, in 2015, a high school head abused an ordinary level orphaned pupil; the Manica post, 11-17 December 2015. This means that marital status is of no significant to promotions. There is a total score of 12 (disagreeing strongly and 2 agreeing strongly) on the contributions of the church. Seemingly minor, the religion, the question of buying beer to officials, stable marriages and buying the vacant posts can or could have affected the promotion of other teachers or workers elsewhere.

From question 4, interesting patterns or trends emerge. A total percentage of 100 on the negative side meant that the respondents were not pleased or happy on the operations of the promotion committee. The operations of the committee could be discouraging, unfriendly, non-transparent, unfair or clandestine. This means that, the promotion committee could be unfair, non-communicative or non-judgmental. In short, the negative side shows elements of a corrupt system or unfair practices.

A total score of 56% falls in the neutral category. This means that, the respondents could not provide the final decision on how best they could describe the operations. From the respondents' point of view, the operations were vague and distorted. As a result, they could not provide descriptive operations, hence giving neutrality.

The highest score was recorded on the positive side (that is scale reading 1 to 2), with scale 1 having 824% and scale 2, 602%. The total percentage being 1426%. This meant that the operation of the promotion committee was very positive on 1 note and negative on the other note. This meant that sometimes, the committee could be fair, judgmental, communicative, transparent, highly selective, friendly and accommodative. This is evidenced by

respondents R2, R3, and R4 who happen to be members of the promotions committee (group interview with the district education officials). The negative side of the scale is supported by Halliday (1999), who argue that to ensure transparent, the procedures used in making promotions, appointments should be published and followed rigorously in the filling of all teaching posts.

DISCUSSION ON FOCUSS GROUPS HELD WITH 24 (LEAD TEACHERS/DEPUTY HEADS/HEADS/VICTIMS OF PROVINCIAL INTERVIEWS AND NON-INVITED APPLICANTS).

The focus group discussion held at the 4 high schools opened almost a Pandora's Box. There were mixed reactions to the answers given in each and every question. The respondents were even prepared to crush answers provided by their colleagues even before the researcher passed on follow-up questions or probes. In each of the four groups of 6, there was almost a workshop full of activities. The answers given by the different respondents ranged from simple to complex words. Where respondents provided vague answers, the researcher could always ask a probe question. The respondents were given freedom to comment on the responses of other participants, ask other participants some questions or respond to comments by others, including the interviewer. Ferreira and Puth, (1988), cited in an article entitled The Qualitative Research Paradigm by professor Chisaka (2013; 12).

One respondent from school B had this to say in connection to the main reasons for his failure to be promoted as Deputy Head; *Qualifications and maybe the area in which I operate from, that is Masvingo Province which is looked down upon.*

The same respondents also echoed the following life words in connection to reasons which lead other applicants with similar qualifications, experience and merits to be successful; *may be because they were familiar with the interviewers or they had achieved more when they were given chances to lead.*

From the above extracts, one can argue that although qualifications are considered for promotion, the area from which the applicant is applying from is very important. There are

certain areas within a province which are despised, so if you happen to apply from there, you will not be successful. In most cases, the rural applicants are despised in favour of the urban applicants. This is evidenced by circular reference; G/8/1, 13 October 2015 Doc 3. From this document, in 2015, a total figure of 21 substantive heads were promoted in the Midlands Province. Out of these 21 applicants, only one from "little known" Gokwe North was promoted. The remaining 20 applicants had applied whilst in urban schools or schools closer to town such as Gweru and Shurugwi. Out of the 13 substantive Deputy Heads applicants in the province who were successful, no-one is from outside Gweru in the Midlands Province. The 13 promoted Deputy Heads were from other provinces. The document clearly shows the current station of the applicant and station on promotion.

From the 2nd extracts, one can strongly argue that those applicants familiar to interviewers are the urbanites and commuters who are always in contact with the urban bosses. Because of this setup, these applicants have high chances of being familiar with the questions which will be asked by the promotion panel proving the theme of relationships. From that same extract, one can argue that, most applicants who become successful will have had a chance of acting as Deputy Head or Head. This agrees with several respondents who raised the issue of lack of exposure to administrative operations.

Another respondent from high school C had this to say in connection to question 1 & 2 of the focus group discussion; *Failure is due to unpreparedness, unawareness and ignorance of the questions I will be asked about.*

The same respondent went on to say; The other applicants with similar qualifications, experience and merits were successful maybe, they may have been privately informed of the questions they were asked. Some are relatives of their superiors.

From the responses provided above, one can judge that, an applicant can fail the questions without prior-knowledge of the questions which will be asked. Disagrees with respondents in high schools A and D who argue that, senior teachers are invited for the interview at the province, but go on to fail. This would be true especially to lead teachers who will not have been given chance to act as heads.

Privately informing an applicant concerning the design of questions is surely a sign of corrupt society. The unfairness and nepotism nature in the system have been vehemently referred to by almost more than 50% of the respondents in the four high schools. The question of relatives such as nephew as again been vigorously attended to. This is supported by one of the excerpts which reads; *this cannot be ruled out. Blood is thicker than water.*

From the findings in the four high schools, one can note that selection of applicant is not fair and information is disseminated in time. Non-transparency, unfairness and the delayed dissemination of information are deliberate moves to reduce the number of applicants. If information is disseminated early, it means that those officials involved in nepotism and bribery will not have adequate time to do so. In some instances, like the 2015 advertised post, the researcher was never told. The researcher was perplexed to find a list of successful applicants. This delayed or lack of communication is supported by Halliday (1999).

In the month of October, 2015, a Chimanmani D.E.O was suspended for fraudulently positioning substantive post to Senior teachers and Heads. This is against Odden (2011)'s concept of placing the right men in the right office. Odden (2011), advocates for the selection of the best talent, not corruption at the Manicaland D.E.O.

From a political note, some applicants have been successful besides having similar qualifications, experience and merits. This is supported by one strong extract amongst a multiplicity of other comments connected to politics. The respondents had this to say; *“some have said that they are connected politically and this have been confirmed by political activists at one time at the Heads' meeting”*.

Contrary to the findings obtained from the six district officials, there is more than 70% agreement from the teacher and Heads that politics plays a pivotal role during the promotion process. Improper association and abuse of funds in the schools had 100% score. Absent from duty without good cause scored 60%. Other types of misconduct identified were general incompetence, abuse of sick leave, absenteeism, theft, alcohol consumption during working hours and insolvency. Insubordination and other acts of misconduct were rarely mentioned suggesting that teachers are not well-versed with statutory instrument 1 of 2000. Based on the finding from A, B, C and D high

schools, a senior teacher without relatives, friends is unknown by provincial officials can be promoted through sheer luck or chance.

CONCLUSION

Although the six education officials vehemently and unanimously agreed that academic and professional qualifications, merits, experience are amongst the most important criteria utilized for the promotion of lead teachers to headship, a lot needs careful attention. From the responses given by the 54 senior teachers from the four high schools there is a lot of evidence that the promotion system is not perpendicular. The road map towards promotion of school heads has several meanders and knick points. Yes, whilst the researcher agrees with the six district officials on integrity, progressive records of professional achievements in the last 12 months, strong team-building skills, self driven and ability to work under pressure, honest and a sense of maturity as major criteria utilized in the promotion of heads, the present researcher disputes that there are no other features/ characteristics which are being looked into during promotions.

A total response of more than 75% was recorded from the 30 lead teachers and 24 senior/deputy heads and heads. These senior/lead teachers and heads argued that there are other dubious variables which are being considered by the promotions committee besides the overtly known criteria of qualifications, merit and experience. These prominent featuring explanatory variables which include among others, the following; 'labels', prima facie' case, religion, political background, friendship, whether an applicant is known by the top office, love affairs and existence of relatives in higher offices. From this research, marital status, and the health status potential applicants were singled out. Although the number of respondents who referred to the above and to heavy drinking and smoking, stubborn character and divorced status was small, this can militate against promotions in Shona they say 'kamoto kamberevere kakapisa matanda makuru'. Meaning to say that although these variables seem to have less weight, they gather momentum in the final decision making process. A small cinder can ignite the entire forest or jungle environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It was indicated at the beginning of the study that the results will be of significance to a number of stakeholders such as the district education offices, the provincial offices and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE HEAD OF SCHOOLS

Heads of schools are advised to collect vacancy announcement circulars as soon as these are published so that potential applicants can do so before it is too late. Three quarters of the respondents cited late dissemination of circulars as the major blow. Heads are advised not to sit on top of circulars, although a vacancy notice might affect you, be gentlemen enough to lease that post so that it falls to the right person. Odden (2011) talks of placing the right man in the right office. Heads are advised to remove that office inertia which is a major blow in most of our schools especially the rural ones. Heads are advised to make more leaders before their terms of office. That is to say, a leader should aspire to inspire before he/she expires. This is only achieved through writing a good and comprehensive promotion write-up to his/her teachers. This is supported by a very prominent British scholar in leadership by the name, Simkins (2005).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICES

The D.E.O should have detailed scrutiny on applications with negative promotion write-ups before these are forwarded to the regional office. What this means is, if a head writes up a negative assessment of a member's suitability to the post and a summative evaluation of member's suitability, the DEO will also not provide a positive recommendation. The DEO will just stamp and sign and pass it forward or the application will not even reach the regional office. The D.E.Os are therefore, advised to tread with care on such negative write-ups.

In the leadership world, workers hate each other. Workers can bury grudges and therefore if the conflict is between the head and potential applicant, that applicant will be buried alive unless he transfers from that station. The fact that an applicant respects and fears God and the other applicant is single and takes liquor does not mean that a man of God will not abuse minors and the drunkard will spoil the kids and also has poor performance to work. No, this depends on the character, strength and maturity of the teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROVINCIAL OFFICES AND THE MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

It is essential that promotion arrangements are seen to be open to all those who are suitably qualified,

that selection for consideration is carried out in accordance with agreed procedures, that the actual appointment is made using professional criteria and that the process as a whole can stand detailed scrutiny.

A checklist should be designed which includes questions revolving on guidelines. The checklist is as follows;

1. Do guidelines exist which ensure that;
 - The vacancy exists at the level requested?
 - There is a procedure which ensures that the appointing panel knows the grade, qualifications and experience of acceptable candidates?
 - The appointing panel is provided with a priority grading for the filling of the post?
2. Has a job description been devised for each promoted grade of teacher? This has been done in Zimbabwe, but is it available to all personnel offices handling promotions?
3. Has the head or DEO been given the opportunity to provide a detailed description of the personal qualities sought for the post? (This should include such matters as disposition, aptitudes, interests as well as attainments, experience etcetera.
4. Is there a policy on advertising vacancies of all promoted grades of teachers? Is this strictly adhered to? The ministry is advised to advertise all the posts in the newspapers and then send these advertisements to all stations. This is done so that heads with inferiority complex will not conceal the circular to the teachers.
5. What background information is sought before an appointment is considered? Is it by a single reference or by a number of reports? What other evidence of suitability is considered? Who are the most able to give an unbiased opinion on the suitability of a candidate? From this last question, that is when you get answers like, 'the system is not transparent' from the respondents.
6. Have clear criteria have been established on the selection of the candidates for the appointment? Halliday cites examples as follows;
 - Who is involved in the appointment?

- Will selection be by interview?
 - If so, what form will the interview take?
 - What factors are to be taken into account before a recommendation for appointment is made?
7. Is there a defined series of steps which leads to the issue of a letter of appointment, including the arrangements for the payment of salaries and allowances?
8. What procedures exist to inform unsuccessful candidates of the outcome? In 2011, the researcher applied for the post of Deputy Head. Luckily, he was invited for the interviews at the province. Unfortunately the researcher did not receive any response up to present. What went wrong? No response, no answer from the region.

POLICY SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING PROMOTIONS

A systematic approach is necessary which;

- Is seen as fair and transparent
- Ensures that all suitably qualified and experienced candidates can apply for the vacancy
- Follows a logical published sequence of events
- Ensure equality of opportunities for all candidates
- Has procedures which ensures objectivity and avoid nepotism
- Reduces bureaucracy to the minimum; ensures that the opportunity for professional input into the selection and appointment process
- Is designed to fill vacant posts without undue delay.

PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER PROMOTION

It is important that there be clear documentation which sets up the promoted staff establishment for schools of different types and different sizes. This establishment should be strictly adhered to and be used to recognize where a vacancy for a promoted post exists.

When appointing heads, it can be of value to have the DEO prepare an appendix outlining the specific

characteristics of the vacant post and an outline of the qualities required from the applicants.

To ensure transparency, the procedures used in filling vacancies should be published and followed in making all appointments. The involvement of teacher representatives in filling promoted posts ensures that professionals have an input to the process. To make the process more efficient, consideration should be given to decentralizing the more junior promoted posts. Steps would require to be taken to ensure nepotism did not arise.

Whatever procedures are adopted, they must gain the respect of the teaching community. Without this, there will be no faith in, and commitment to the education system. To ensure that the appointment process is achieving, all that it sets out to do, a periodic review should be instituted with comments sought from all involved.

Similar researches need to be carried out in other district of Zimbabwe to see whether the pattern is the same. A gap does exist, hence need for further research.

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