

**CAUSES OF STAFF TURNOVER IN PRIVATE  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU CITY**

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**A management research project submitted in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree  
Master of Business Administration (MBA), School of Business,  
University of Nairobi.**

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## DECLARATION

This management project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other University.

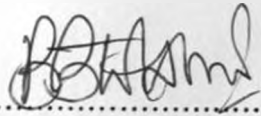
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This management project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to Brian Omondi, Marion Zindege and Michelle Achieng my family and friends.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to all people who contributed to the success of this research. May God bless you all. I am particularly thankful to my supervisor Mr. George Omondi for his continued support and tireless efforts in supervising me through the research project. My appreciation also goes to my respondents who willingly gave all the information needed for the research. Last but not least I would like in no uncertain terms to appreciate the financial and moral support given by my dear wife Marcyline Mchao and my friend Nixon Oswe.

## ABSTRACT

This research project presents results of the causes and rates of staff turnover in private secondary schools in Kisumu City. In carrying out the research an interview guide was used to collect primary data from the respondents who were the principals of these schools. Lack of job security was cited by most respondents as a major cause of increased staff turnover in these schools. The perception of lack of job security was aggravated by the fact that employees were not allowed to register with trade unions. Low staff compensation also featured prominently as a cause of staff turnover as most respondents cited that these schools did not compensate the staff within the minimum government wage guideline like in the public sector. Other causes of turnover adversely mentioned by respondents were lack of opportunity for career development, existence of greener pastures elsewhere and poor employee employee and employee management relationship. The findings of the study was that staff turnover of the teaching staff was 26% which was more than the acceptable rate of between 10 – 15% and that for non teaching staff was 11% which is normal as it is within the acceptable standards.

From the findings of the study it was recommended that the management of these schools allow the staffs register as members of trade union. The general public should be sensitized on the role the private secondary schools play as co educational partners with the public secondary schools hence the need to appreciate the staff in these schools. It was also recommended that the staff in these schools be compensated within the minimum government wage guidelines to counter act the phenomenon of staff turnover. Finally it was suggested that to provide a better understanding of education in the private sector, a similar study be carried out in the primary school sector and private tertiary institutions to come up with a holistic generalization of causes of staff turnover in the private education sector. The staffs that have left employment also need to be studied since they would be objective in giving out information.

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Human resource is the life blood of an organization, procurement of human resource in an organization is therefore an intricate affair which not only consumes the organization's time but also financial resources that would otherwise be used in other alternative economically viable ventures. Human resourcing is basically concerned with an organization obtaining and retaining the human capital it needs and employs them productively. Acquisition and maintenance of competent human resource is therefore a key part of human resource management. Armstrong (2004) emphasizes the need for human resource maintenance that matches or integrates the organization's business strategies and resourcing strategies thereby enhancing the organization to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

The integration of business and staff maintenance strategies is based on the understanding of the direction in which the organization is going and the resulting human resource needs in relation to the projected activity levels. The business strategies and the staff maintenance strategies must be unified into an appropriate structure in order to achieve corporate success by instituting mechanisms aimed at maintaining the competent staff. Jones and Wright (1992) observed that after a successful employee recruitment and selection procedure, an organization should enhance retention of competent staff while at the same time encouraging ineffective ones to leave the firm. The mechanisms that must be put in place to retain and maintain competent staff includes establishing sound compensation policies, promotions, renewal of contracts and providing opportunities for career development must be done since the significance of maintenance of competent staff cannot be gainsaid. Maintenance of competent staff helps the organization operationalise its corporate business goals and also enhances the attainment of corporate success hence is fundamental.

## 1.2 Staff turnover

Staff turnover has both negative and positive attributes hence is a normal organization functioning. Flippo (1984) observes that staff turnover is the movement into and out of an organization by the workforce. High staff turnover rates may be dysfunctional to the organization (Armstrong 2004). Loss of competent staff increase pressure in the remaining employees leading to serious operational difficulties (Dessler 2004). The staff turnover inherent costs form a greater chunk of a business total operation costs. Mungumi (2002) enumerated costs and consequences of high staff turnover rates as loss of competent human resource, hiring costs involving time and facilities for recruitment, interviewing and examining a replacement, scrap and waste rates which climb when new employees are involved, overtime pay resulting from excessive number of separations causing trouble in meeting contract delivery dates and training costs involving time of supervisors, personnel department and trainees. High accident rates by new employees, lack of utilization of production equipment during hiring interval and training period, loss of production in the interval between separation of the old employees and replacement, administration cost of adding and replacing from payroll, decreased commitment in the remaining employees and loss of competent staff with outstanding capabilities. Cascio (1982) observes that high levels of turnover skyrockets costs and new staff take time in a desperate bid to learn and cope up with the organization culture, systems and processes.

Empirical studies by Mobley et al (1979), Griffeth et al (2000), Kimosop (2007) and Wanous (1980) identified the following as the causes of staff turnover:- job satisfaction emerged consistently as a major cause of staff turnover as employees who feel satisfied remain with the organization as those who perceive the situation differently opt for alternative organizations. The United Kingdom Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2004) suggests that unsuccessful recruitment and selection procedures causes turnover as people so acquired resign or are dismissed in the first few months of employment. Labour market conditions and economic conditions also cause staff turnover for example where there is unemployment people don't quit jobs and vice versa (Mobley et al 1979). Wages and compensation also proves to be a major determinant of staff turnover, employers who give a higher relative pay have lower turnovers (Martin, 2003). Training and

career development retains employees consequent upon being trained, developed and considered for upward mobility. Training and career development perceived as much-ado-about nothing can cause staff turnover (Martin, 2003). Other causes of staff turnover are job attitudes unionization and personal characteristics of the employees. Staff turnover rates and causes must be carefully considered determined and monitored if the organization is to maintain and retain competent staff and in the final analysis achieve corporate success and desired competitive advantage.

Quantitative measurements of staff turnover rates must take precedence. Rate according to this study is an index that shows ratio of left staff divided by the average employees within a specific period of time. The United Kingdom chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2004) expounds on the merits of both quantitative and qualitative information that otherwise enable an organization gain an in-depth understanding of staff turnover. The significance of staff turnover rate analysis is to provide a graphical illustration of turbulence within the organization (Dessler 2008). In determining the rate of staff turnover various methods are adopted. Stability index which is an indication about the extent to which experienced employees are retained is one of the methods. Arise in stability index indicates the organization's retention of experienced staff. A lower index shows loss of experienced competent staff, Wastage and survival rate measurement method which is a relationship between number of leavers against length of service and survival rate that represents the number of people who stay in service against length of service providing a measure of retention. Length of service analysis which is basically the time period each employee has served an organization or employer is also another turnover rate measurement. Cohort analysis method of staff turnover measurement method which is the leaving rates of a group of employees who join the organization at the same time. It helps to understand staff turnover associated costs of recruitment, induction and training. Last but not least is the staff turnover index method of rate measurement which is just a ratio of employees who leave in a specified period to the average number of employees during the same period. The study adopted staff turnover index method since for comparison of turnover across the schools data for determination of staff turnover was available in the records of the private schools.

### **1.3 Private Secondary Schools in Kisumu City**

Private secondary schools are self sustaining business entities which are basically started with a profit motive. They realize this profitability by adding more value to the learner's achievement per unit cost of investment by the same learner. Kisumu city comprises of three districts namely, Kisumu East District, Kisumu West District and Kisumu North District. There are twenty (20) private secondary schools in Kisumu city (see Appendix II). These private secondary schools in Kisumu city are categorized into two groups, those that offer the Kenyan Eight four four (8.4.4) that is four years in secondary schools and those that offer the British system of education that is four years in ordinary secondary level and two years in advanced secondary level. These schools compete favourably with the public secondary school for the same pool of students. These schools being private business entities do not submit their periodic staffing returns to the Ministry of education offices like their public secondary schools counterparts which do this on a monthly basis. Nevertheless administrative records with the principals of these private secondary schools in Kisumu city depicted the staffing position standing at two hundred and twenty eight (228) teachers and one hundred and fifteen (115) non teaching staff as at March 2010 (see appendix III).

### 1.3 Statement of the problem

Human resource is a key contributor to corporate performance. It interprets and operationalizes strategic business plans of an organization and enhances the firm's competitive advantage (Dessler, 2008). It is therefore a business imperative to maintain staff with requisite skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes that would otherwise implement and operationalize the strategic corporate goals and in the final analysis makes the organization achieve corporate success and enhance sustainable competitive advantage.

The success of private secondary schools is profitability which they realize by adding more value to student achievement per unit cost of student's investment. Management of these schools should strive to minimize costs as much as possible to enhance profitability. Staff turnover forms a greater chunk of an organization's operational costs (Armstrong, 2004). (CIPD, 2004) notes that there are direct costs involving training and development, opportunity cost of time spent by managers in training and development as well as attendant loss of performance. High staff turnover is costly (Price, 1997), therefore one of the main preoccupations of the management of organization is to ensure effective maintenance of staff through instituting periodic quantitative and qualitative measures to monitor the gravity of staff turnover. Staff turnover rate of between 10-15% is acceptable (Armstrong, 2004). An organization needs to know the causes and rates of turnover so as to determine the appropriate steps to reduce the rate (Freeman, 1980).

A number of studies had been carried out on staff turnover. Griffith et al (2000) generalized causes of turnover as job satisfaction, organization commitment and labour market conditions. Wanous (1980) dealt casually with other causes of turnover and only gave lack of realistic job preview an in depth analysis. In Kenya, the following studies only confirmed the aforementioned and none of them addressed either new causes of staff turnover or staff turnover rates. The studies included staff turnover in private security firms in Kenya (Kimosop, 2007). Employees perception of factors that influence labour turnover in the micro-finance institutions in Kenya (Mungumi, 2000) and labour turnover in state corporations in Kenya (Oroni, 2006) all which are unpublished MBA projects University of Nairobi. No similar study had been done and this study sought to fill the knowledge gap.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were to;

- a) To determine the causes of staff turnover in private secondary schools in Kisumu city.
- b) To establish the rate of staff turnover in private secondary schools in Kisumu city.

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The findings of this research was to be of importance to the human resource management in the private secondary schools. It was to provide them with an in depth understanding of staff turnover. The finding of the research was also to help human resource managers in private secondary schools to plan for human resource requirements.

The findings of this study was to add wealth of knowledge for the academic community hence stimulate further research with regards to staff turnover in other sectors of the economy other than the education sector.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Maintenance of human resources

Human resourcing is basically concerned with ensuring that the organization obtains and retains the human capital it needs. Human resource planning is based on the belief that people are the organizations most strategic resource. It therefore determines the human resources required for the organization to achieve its strategic goals.

Human resourcing which is matching of human resources to the organizations business needs Dessler (2008) observes that human resource management is formulating and executing human resource policies that produce competences and behaviours the company needs to achieve strategic aims. For sound organization planning and success the founders of an organization formulates the organization's vision from where the mission statement is derived. The next step involves formulation of goals which define projected changes in the scale and types of activities carried out by the organization and human resource planning interprets them in qualitative and quantitative terms. Implicit therefore is that organization strategic planning and human resource planning should be unified into an appropriate structure. The phenomenon of labour turnover may in no uncertain terms jeopardize this structure and this therefore calls for proper turnover analysis and forecasting because failure to do so may lead to far reaching repercussions to the organization since excessively high turnover may be dysfunctional for the organization (Armstrong, 2004). An organization must know the current levels of staff turnover before it can decide whether steps need to be taken to reduce this rate (Freeman, 1980).

## **2.2 Causes of staff turnover**

Staff turnover as defined earlier is the movement into and out of the organization by employees. Staff turnovers are caused by either push or pull factors (Flippo 1984). Push factors are turnover by reasons related to the job in question for example lack of job satisfaction, poor working conditions amongst others whereas pull factors are reasons unrelated to the job for example an employee joining a spouse. Price (2002) classifies turnover causes into two categories as either involuntary or voluntary causes. Voluntary refers to turnover by choice of the employee due to negative attributes of the job whereas involuntary include natural attrition causes like death, retirement and sickness amongst others.

Griffeth et al (2000) analyzed 800 turnover studies carried out on staff turnover and came out with the following generalizations of causes of staff turnover as, labour market conditions, organization commitment, job satisfaction and others. Mobley (1982) observed that staff turnover was inversely proportional to variables of job satisfaction, job content, job commitment, individual characteristics of age and tenure otherwise the following is an in-depth analysis of the causes of staff turnover.

Lack of job satisfaction is a major cause of staff turnover. Job satisfaction is an attitude about how people feel about their jobs. It is an effective reaction to a job that results from employee comparison of actual job outcomes and the expected. Turnover studies and job satisfaction depict a relationship. Mobley (1982) study depicted job satisfaction consistent negative relationship with staff turnover. Griffeth et al (2000) generalization of the 800 turnover studies found out that job satisfaction was a major cause of staff turnover. However Kimosop (2007) asserts that lack of job satisfaction causes only 13% of staff turnover cases. Employees therefore tend to stay in an organization where they perceive there is job satisfaction; alternatively they leave to employers that provide job satisfying conditions. In employer employee relationship, there is an inherent psychological contract which should be satisfying to the employee without which the employee can leave employment.

Employee compensation causes staff turnover considerably. Organization or employers should ensure that employees are not dissatisfied with the pay lest they leave employment. Kimosop (2007) findings about the causes of staff turnover by percentages showed that salaries as a cause had the highest percentage that was 29% against lack of career prospects



9%, misconduct 6%, sickness 11%, long working hours 4%, poor working conditions 11%, job satisfaction 18% amongst others. Griffeth et al (2000) considered a sound compensation policy as a sign of employee appreciation. Mungumi (2000) observes that employee perception that alternative employers offer better remuneration culminates into turnover by the same employee and vice versa. Price (1997) asserts that lack of a sound compensation for employees is a motive underlying staff turnover.

Mobley et al (1979) observed that job attitudes were consistently related to employee turnover. Job attitudes are based on employee value systems. This is with regard to extrinsic and intrinsic inclinations of the employee. Extrinsic oriented employee's value material rewards for example money whereas intrinsic ones prefer non material rewards like complements, praises and others. Griffeth et al (2000) emphasize that attitudes and perception about variables like job satisfaction can cause staff turnover.

Recruitment and selection procedures devoid of realistic job preview RJP, where the prospective employee is enlightened on both the positive and negative attributes of the job in question may be disastrous. This is because it leads to recruitment and selection of employees who are not suited for the job. Wanous (1980) asserts that realistic job preview reduces staff turnover without lowering acceptance rate. UK Chartered Institute of Personnel and development (CIPD 2004) cautions that employers should not raise expectations during recruitment stage.

Griffeth et al (2000) observe that symptoms of poor supervisor worker or worker worker relationship include employee lateness, absenteeism and in the final analysis staff turnover. Price (1997) also observes that distributive justice and employee autonomy in the workplace reduces employee turnover considerably. Porter and Steers (1973) advocate for flatter organizational structures which are less bureaucratic as vertical structures cause staff turnover because they are autocratic and dictatorial in nature. Poor supervisor worker, and poor worker worker relationship is therefore a major cause of staff turnover.

Lack of employee representation by a trade union which can articulate issues about employee welfare can cause staff turnover. Unionism is associated with lower staff turnover rates (Martin 2003). Lower turnover rates result from the ability of the union to secure better working conditions making jobs attractive hence leading to employees staying in the job. Employers who do not accept employees to be members of trade unions put such employees in an awkward situation because the employees feel hopeless and insecure and this causes them to leave employment to alternative outfits which provide for this.

Employee characteristics based on age, education, gender and tenure contribute to staff turnover. The age of an employee with a particular organization determines whether an employee can leave employment or not. Employees who have stayed in the service for a longer time with the same employer tend to develop loyalty to the employer and are therefore less likely to quit employment. Workers feel a strong sense of loyalty to the paternalistic organizations (Yoder and Staudohar, 1982). It is also important to note that the duration of time an employee has been with the same organization or employer determines the benefits that such an employee has accrued with that particular organization and it therefore follows that such an employee is less likely to quit for fear of losing the accumulated benefits. Freeman (1980) observes that turnover decreases with increasing age. Younger employees thus have a higher propensity to leave employment since they have little or no family obligations to fulfill. Kimosop (2007) findings also indicate that employees of age 35 years and above have a 40% chance of leaving employment as compared to 60% for employees below 35 years. Oroni (2005) observes that female employees may leave jobs due to family commitments like resigning to take care of a young family. The probability of educated employees to quit employment stands at 91% (Kimosop 2007).

The labour market conditions as in the forces of demand and supply as far as labour is concerned considerably causes staff turnover. Employee perception of high demand of labour in the job market is a signal of turnover. Griffith et al (2000) observes that there is a direct proportionality between perceived alternatives elsewhere outside the organization and the actual turnover. When unemployment levels rise people may not have alternative employment elsewhere and thus can ill afford to give up jobs (Singh and Nzuve 1992).

Previous research findings by Freeman (1980), Mobley et al (1979) argue that staff turnover is related to certain industrial, economic and demographic variables. Martin (2003) observes that economic trends have a strong correlation with staff turnover. Periods of economic inflation result to lower turnover rates. It is also worth to note that at during the same period of economic inflation is when most employers downsize their workforce.

Lack of job redesign in an organization can cause turnover. It is imperative for an organization to evaluate all its jobs. Job redesign entails identifying all the tasks and activities in a job with a view to matching this with the appropriate human resource (Dessler 2008). In a nutshell it is matching of the job incumbent characteristics with the job. There must be a perfect match between the job incumbent and the tasks and activities within the job otherwise lack of this can cause staff turnover as the employees would look for better opportunities elsewhere (Gans and Zhou, 2002)

Lack of training and career development in an organization causes staff turnover. Training modifies knowledge, skills and attitudes of the employees to achieve effective performance. Career development aims at making an employee use fullest potential, face expanded challenges, have greater responsibilities and increased autonomy. Training enhances the prospect of an employee finding more job opportunities elsewhere. This is particularly in training which is multi skilled (Martin, 2003). On the contrary, employees remain in an organization which enhances their training and career development and considers them for upward mobility (Dessler 2008). Kimosop (2007) asserts that further studies and opportunities for career development must be carefully looked into for the organization to retain and maintain employees or else this would be tantamount to staff turnover.

The human resource managers should undertake to carry out exit interviews which is the interview carried out by the management with the leaving staff (Armstrong, 2008). It should aim at eliciting opinions on any specific reasons for dissatisfaction or unhappiness so that where the complaints are genuine something is done (Dessler, 2008). Organizations typically obtain qualitative information on turnover through exit interviews. However it is important to appreciate the reasons people give for their resignations (Gans and Zhou, 2002). Exit

interviews are conducted a short time after employees hand in their notice for resignation. At this stage confidentiality should be enhanced.

### **2.3 Rate of staff turnover**

Staff turnover in an organization is tantamount to that organization not achieving its corporate goals and success therefore there is an urgent need for such organizations to ensure the management of human resource geared towards retention of competent staff. This can only be achieved when mechanisms are put in place to determine and monitor the rate of staff turnover. The rate as earlier mentioned refers to the index that shows the ratio of staff that leave the organization to the average number of employees within a specific period of time.

The analysis of the staff turnover rates helps in forecasting demand and supply of labour so that calculations can be made on the number of people lost who may have to be replaced (Dessler, 2008). This analysis and the reasons why employees leave provide information that will indicate whether any action is required to improve retention (Armstrong 2004). It can also probe further investigation to establish the underlying causes and identify remedies. The need to add additional employees would be difficult to predict without staff turnover rate analysis (Gans and Zhou 2002). The significance of this rate as earlier stated is to provide a graphical illustration of the turbulence within the organization. High rates of attrition can destabilize a business and demotivate those who are left in an attempt to maintain output.

Staff turnover rate is determined using methods like, staff turnover index, survival rate and Length of service analysis.

#### **2.3.1 Labour turnover index**

This is a ratio of number of employees in an organization who leave service against the average number of employees in the organization during the same period expressed as a percentage

$$\text{Labour turnover index} = \frac{\text{Number of leavers in a specified period usually 1 year} \times 100}{\text{Average number of employees during the same period}}$$

The higher the figure for the index the higher the staff turnover rate hence is a signal for corrective surgery. This method allows for comparison of staff turnover across firms and therefore became the most ideal for this study.

### **2.3.2 Half (½) life index**

Defined as the time taken for a group or cohort of starters to reduce half its original size through wastage (Armstrong, 2008). Comparisons can then be made for successive entry years or between different groups of employees in order to show where action may have to be taken to counter undesirable wastage trend (Ibid). Half life survival rate is the time that elapses before fifty percent (50%) of a particular group or cohort of workers who begin work at the same time leave the organization. Half life survival rate may be compared for different departments and age groups in order to ascertain the staying power of each employee (Bennet, 1997). Cohort analysis as a method of measuring staff turnover is similar with half life index method as it analyses all the employees employed by the organization as a group. A cohort is defined as a homogeneous group of people (Torrington, 2005). The cohort analysis methodology tracks what happens as some people leave a group with similar characteristic who all joined the organization at the same time.

### **2.3.3 Stability index**

Is an improvement of the turnover index which shows the extent to which experienced employees are being retained. The stability of a particular category or a whole group of employees in an organization can be calculated. It is calculated as the number of employees with one year service or more as a percentage of the number of people employed a year ago.

$$\text{Stability index} = \frac{\text{Number of employees with 1 year service or more} \times 100}{\text{Number employed a year ago}}$$

The index provides an indication that employee's longevity in the employment tends to employee's loyalty hence continuity in the service Armstrong (2004). Arise in the figure for

stability index depicts improvement in retention of experienced staff and vice versa. The employees feel a strong sense of loyalty to the paternalistic organizations or employers and have a low propensity to leave employment (Gans and Zhou, 2002). Freeman (1980) observed that turnover decreases with increasing age. This is attributed to the fact that the higher the length of the service an employee has been with the organization the more the benefits such an employee has accumulated hence cannot leave employment as this would be tantamount to the employee in question losing the benefits. It is also worth to note that the longer the duration of service for an employee with a particular organization, the more the psychological attachment developed by the employee with the organization (Mobley, 1982). This kind of emotional attachment would otherwise lead to an employee prolonging the stay in service with the same employer.

### 2.3.4 Length of the service analysis

This method involves the analysis of employees who leave service by categorization. It is the service period per employer served by the employee. The objective for doing so is to identify the extent to which new recruits leave employment (Armstrong, 2008). Bennet (1997) observes that the length of service analysis shows the distribution of leavers per occupation and department with respect to specified time period. Length of service analysis as a method of measuring labour turnover is straight forward and informative (Cole, 2002). Length of service analysis can be illustrated as below

**Table 1.1 Length of service analysis:-**

Occupation	Less than 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 months to 1 yr	1 to 2 yrs	3 to 5 yrs	More than 5yrs	Tot No leaving	Average No. leaving	Index labour turnover
skilled									
semi-skilled									
unskilled									
TOTAL									

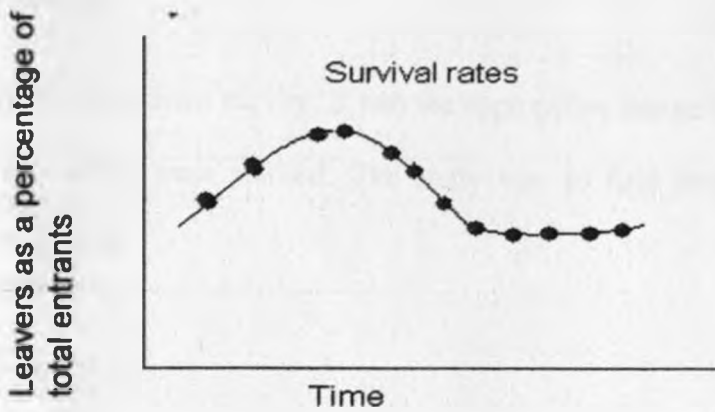
Source: Armstrong M. (1999): A handbook of Human resource management (pp 803)

From the forgoing illustration, if the distribution of employees leaving with respect to the different occupations and departments that is skilled, semi skilled and unskilled in the earlier months for example after three months is higher than that of those who have stayed longer in the service then it depicts employee retention strategies measures the organization has adopted that has otherwise retained the employees. It also implies that the organization has lost majority of newly employed staff maybe due to poor recruitment and selection procedures (Wanous, 1980).

### **2.3.5 Survival rates**

This is a graphical analysis of staff turnover rate whereby the number who stays in an organization is plotted against the length of service providing a measure of retention. A characteristic turnover pattern shows a high level of new starters at the beginning who then decreases with length of service (Armstrong, 2004). The tendency for some employees to leave the organization is greatest during their early weeks with the organization (Bennet, 1997). It is often instructive to compare survival rates in different departments or different employee categories like age groups or occupations for example skilled, semi skilled and unskilled. Firstly the figures for leavers in each of the aforementioned categories are obtained for each successive time period. For every successive time period a proportion for leavers as a percentage of entrance is calculated and the results tabulated hence later graphically represented by a curve as shown below

**Figure 1.1 Survival rate**



**Source:** Armstrong M. (2004). A handbook of human resource management practice page 376

Each group or category has its information tabulated as illustrated and graphically represented so that in the final analysis the organization has all curves for different survival rates with respect to the different groups or categories of employees. Low survival rates prompt action by the organization especially when the cost of recruitment and induction are taken into consideration (Torrington, 2005).



# CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Research Design

This was a descriptive census survey. It was the appropriate design for this study because all the units in the population were studied. The study was to find facts and familiarize with the situation on the ground.

## 3.2 Population

The population of the study was all the twenty private secondary schools in Kisumu City (Provincial Director of Education, Nyanza Office as at March 2010) (Appendix 1).

## 3.3 Data Collection

Data was collected using personal interviews with the aid of an interview guide (Appendix II). The respondents were the principals of the private secondary schools Kisumu City. The principals exercise administrative authority in these schools. They conduct exit interviews with the staff who leave service and therefore had information about causes and rates of staff turnover in these schools.

## 3.4 Data analysis

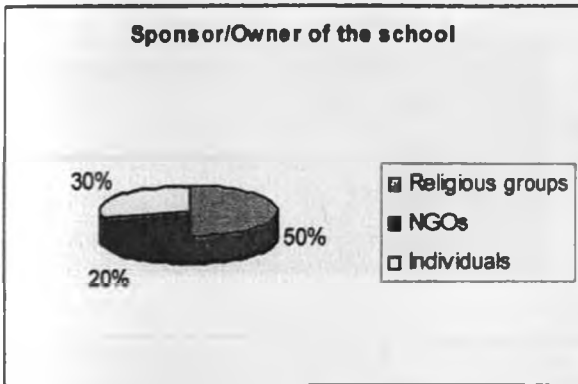
Data was conducted using descriptive statistics. Frequency tables, Pie charts and bar graphs were used to describe occurrences and distribution of the characteristics of the phenomenon under study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Demographic Details

#### 4.1.1 Owner/sponsor of the school

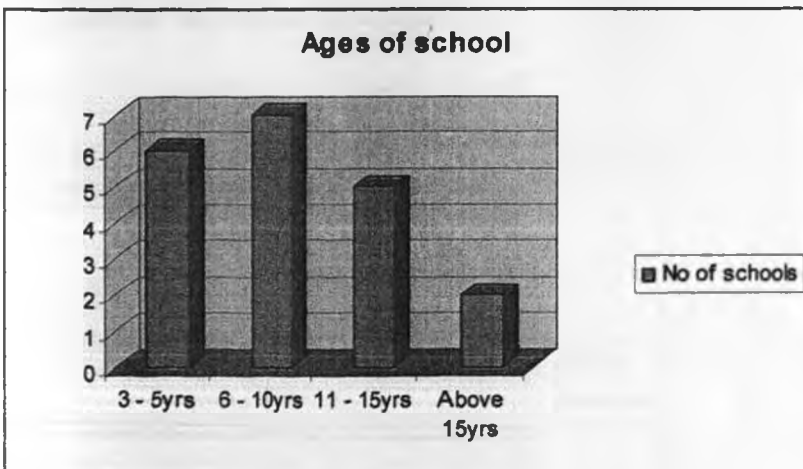
Figure 4.1 Owner/sponsor of the school



Majority of these schools are sponsored by religious groups 50% followed by individuals at 30% and NGOs at 20%.

#### 4.1.2 Age of the schools

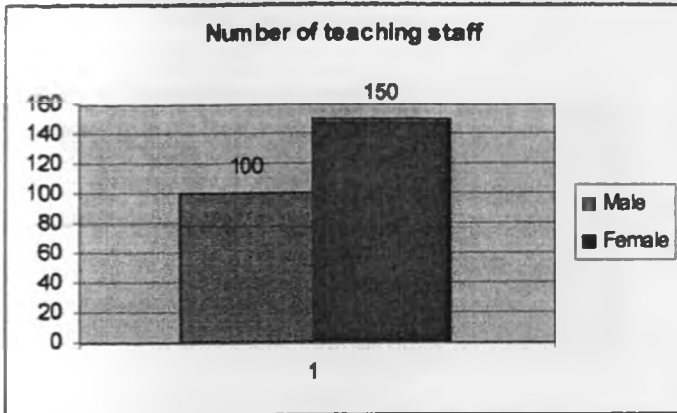
Figure 4.2 Age of the school



It was thus shown that 6 schools were established 3-5 years ago while the rest 5 years and above. It therefore means that a majority of the schools have been in operation for more than 5 years.

#### 4.1.3 Number of teaching staff

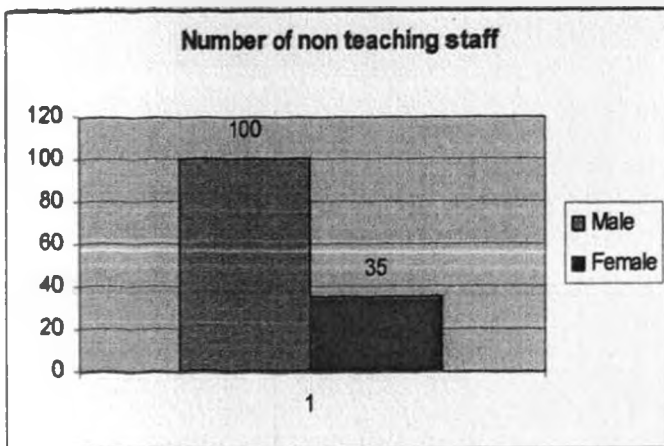
Figure 4.3 Number of teaching staff



The total number of teaching staff in these schools stood at two hundred and fifty (250) out of which 150 were females and 100 were males which showed that this schools were dominated by females.

#### 4.2.4 Number of non teaching staff

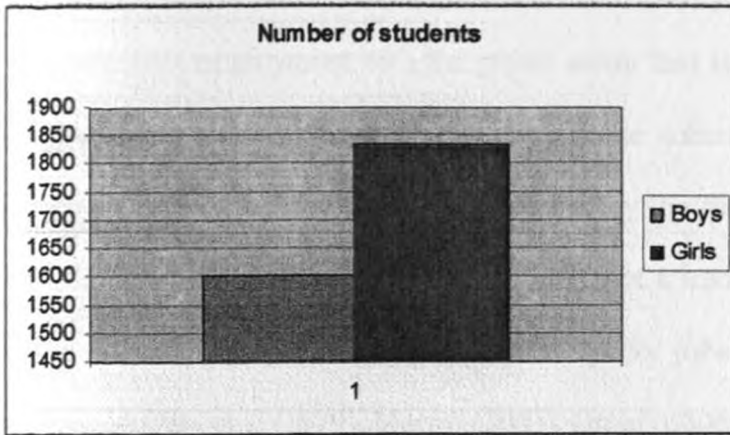
Figure 4.4 Number of non teaching staff



Non teaching staff was a male domain since out of the 135 non teaching staff only 35 were females.

#### 4.2.5 Number of students

Figure 4.5 Number of students



The total number of students was three thousand four hundred and thirty six (3436) with the enrolment higher in girls than in boys that is one thousand eight hundred and thirty four (1834) against one thousand six hundred and two (1602).

### 4.3 Causes of staff turnover

The findings revealed that lack of job security was a major cause of staff turnover. Eighteen out of the twenty respondents interviewed observed that most staff particularly the teaching staff perceives employment with the public sector that is by teachers' service commission to provide better security of tenure than the private schools. The respondents added that the perception of lack of job security is worsened by the fact that the staff in these schools are not allowed to register with trade union. Without a trade union to articulate issues of their welfare, these employees feel insecure and opt for jobs elsewhere which provide for these aspects. Mobley et al (1979), Martin (2003), Oroni (2006) and Kimosop (2007) observed that lack of unionism in an organization was associated with employee perception of job insecurity hence employee turnover. The findings of this study about job security as a cause of staff turnover therefore conforms with the findings of the previous studies.

Low compensation of staff also featured prominently as a cause of staff turnover. Fifteen (15) out of twenty (20) respondents sighted low compensation as a cause of staff turnover. They observed that remuneration of these employees was not commensurate with their education level. They cited that there was an average pay package offered to these employees independent of variables of education levels experienced and length of service. Griffeth et al (2000) analysis of 800 turnover studies found out that poor employee compensation was a major cause of staff turnover. Kimosop (2007) asserted that twenty nine percent (29%) of staff turnover cases was because of low employee compensation. Gans and Zhou (2002) also observed that poor employee compensation was the cause for the many turnover cases. The

finding of this study about the relationship between employee compensation and staff turnover is therefore in conformity with the findings of the studies hitherto.

Search for greener pastures was also a cause to reckon with. Out of the twenty (20) respondents fifteen (15) cited greener pastures elsewhere as a cause of turnover. They observed that most of the teaching staff in these schools are drawn from diverse professions other than teaching therefore when lucrative employment opportunities with regards to these professions exist in the labour market such employees leave.

Poor working relationships were also observed by the respondents as a major contributor to staff turnover. Fourteen out of the twenty respondents cited it as a major cause of staff turnover. The respondents attributed the poor working relationships to the bureaucratic nature of these schools and also the variabilities of the staff for example with respect to education whereby some staff don't appreciate and respect others especially when there is a perceptions of unequal education levels considering that the staff in these schools comprise of school leavers, diploma teachers, graduate teachers and post graduate teachers. Major causes of staff turnover according to analysis of 800 turnover studies by Griffeth et al (2000) and Mobley et al (1979) however unlike this study did not cite poor work relationships as one of the major causes of staff turnover.

Another cause of staff turnover in these schools was lack of opportunity for career growth. Twelve out of twenty respondents observed that employee training and career development calls for huge financial outlays and these schools being private business entities with the ultimate goal of profit maximization cannot afford. The staff therefore looks for alternative

employment that provides for opportunities for career growth and development. Training and career growth make employees use fullest potential and face expanded challenges hence such employees are less likely to leave employment (Martin, 2003). The findings of this study however revealed that this state of affair was majorly causing staff turnover in the teaching staff which is comprised of more educated personnel.

Lack of job satisfaction was also observed as a cause of turnover. As earlier mentioned the employees are drawn from diverse professions for example engineering, agriculture, which are not related to teaching. Such employees are not professionally trained as teachers and therefore don't derive any satisfaction from the job and once they get jobs that they are trained for they quit employment. Nine (9) out of twenty (20) respondents cited lack of job satisfaction as a cause of staff turnover. Mobley (1982), Martin (2003), Freeman (1980) and Griffeth et al (2000) studies depicted job satisfaction consistent negative relationship with staff turnover which has also been confirmed by this study.

Causes of turnover like natural attrition that is normal retirements, deaths, retrenchments and health reasons alongside family problems had very minimal impact on staff turnover. From the illustration the findings of staff turnover causes by percentages was job security 18%, employee compensation 15%, greener pastures 15%, working relationships 14% and opportunity for career growth 12%. it can thus be said that majority of staff in these private secondary schools leave because of lack of job security, low compensation and lack of opportunity for career growth and development. The information can be summarized in a frequency table as follows:-

**Table 4.1 Causes of staff turnover**

<b>Causes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Compensation	15
Working conditions	10
Opportunity for career growth	12
Job security	18
Job satisfaction	9
Family problems	3
Working relationships	14
Natural attrition (normal retirements, deaths retrenchments and health grounds	2
Greener pastures	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>



#### 4.4 Rate of staff turnover

The rate of staff turnover for both the teaching and non teaching staff in these schools for the two years in question (between 2007 – 2008 and between 2008 – 2009) were arrived at classifying the rates for example the classification of the rates in the teaching staff came up with five classes. If we consider the teaching staff for instance between the year 2007 – 2008 a turnover of between 10 -15% was represented by three schools. Staff turnover rate of between 16-31% had a majority of schools that is 12 out of the 20 schools. During the same period 2 schools had a staff turnover rate of between 32-37%. One (1) school had a turnover rate of 47% which is in the class 44-49%. The foregoing result was tabulated using frequency distribution tables shown in this chapter which depicted these classes against the corresponding number of schools. Mid marks for each calculated whereby for example to get a mid mark 12.5 during the same time for the class 10-15%, the lower limit which is 10 was added to the upper limit which was 15 and the sum divided by 2. This was done for all the classes. Each mid mark denoted by letter (x) was multiplied by its corresponding number of schools denoted by letter (f) to get the total which was denoted by (fx). The sum total of the (fx) was divided by the total of (f) to get a figure which represents the average rate of staff turnover for the particular period. For example the rate 25% of staff turnover for teaching staff during the year 2007-2008 was arrived at by dividing the sum total 516 by 20 schools.

For non teaching staff the classes were four in number, that is schools with a rate between 0-5%, 6-10%, 11-15% and 16-20% however the same procedure for arriving at the staff turnover average rate was adopted. From the analysis of the rate of staff turnover in these schools it was realized that teaching staff turnover rate for the first year (2007-2008) was 25% and that for the second year (2008-2009) was 27% translating into an average rate of staff turnover of 26% a figure which is far much higher than the acceptable turnover rate of between 10-15%. The non teaching staff on the other side had a turnover rate of 10% for the first year (2007 - 2008) and 12% for the second year (2008 - 2009) resulting to an average turnover rate of 11% which is within the acceptable turnover rate hence normal.

As indicated earlier in the literature review studies like Griffeth et al (2000), Freeman (1980), Mungumi (2000), Oroni (2006) and Kimosop (2007) observed that the employees that are more educated have a higher propensity to leave employment as compared to the less educated employees. The findings of this study clearly depicted that the average staff turnover rate for the teaching staff was higher than that of non teaching staff that is 26% for the teaching staff against 11% for the non teaching staff which conquers with the findings of the mentioned studies that the more educated employees are more likely to leave employment than the less educated employees. Teaching staff in these schools according to the respondents comprised mostly of university graduates unlike the non teaching staff which was a domain for form four school leavers.

### **Rate of staff turnover for teaching staff**

**Table 4.2 Rate of staff turnover for teaching staff during first year (2007 – 2008)**

Turnover rate (%)	Mid mark (x)	No. of schools (f)	Total (fx)
10-15	12.5	3	37.5
16-31	23.5	12	282
32-37	34.5	2	69
38-43	40.5	2	81
44-49	46.5	1	46.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>516</b>

The average rate of staff turnover =  $\frac{516}{20} = 25\%$

**Table 4.3 Rate of staff turnover for the teaching staff during second year (2008 – 2009)**

Turnover rate (%)	Mid mark (x)	No. of schools (f)	Total (fx)
10-15	12.5	2	25
16-31	23.5	11	258.5
32-37	34.5	4	138.0
38-43	40.5	2	81.0
44-49	46.5	1	46.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>549</b>

The average rate of staff turnover =  $\frac{549}{20} = 27\%$

#### **Rate of staff turnover for non teaching staff**

**Table 4.4 Rate of turnover for non teaching staff during first year (2007 – 2008)**

Turnover rate (%)	Mid mark (x)	No. of schools (f)	Total (fx)
0-5	2.5	1	2.5
6-10	8	12	96
11-15	13	5	65
16-20	18	2	36
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>199.5</b>

The average rate of staff turnover =  $\frac{199.5}{20} = 10\%$

**Table 4.5 Rate of turnover for non teaching staff during second year (2008 – 2009)**

Turnover rate (%)	Mid mark (x)	No. of schools (f)	Total (fx)
0-5	2.5	3	7.5
6-10	8	14	196
11-15	13	1	13
16-20	18	2	36
TOTAL		20	252.5

The average rate of staff turnover =  $\frac{252.5}{20} = 12\%$

20

## CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Summary of findings

As reviewed earlier in the literature review staff turnover is Marjory due to the push factors (Flippo, 1984). Staff turnover was also seen to be on the decline due to employee perception of lack of alternative employment opportunities elsewhere (Freeman, 1980). However from this study it was found that despite the fact that there are fewer employment opportunities elsewhere in the labour market the staff in the private secondary schools continue to leave employment due to low compensation, lack of job security, lack of opportunity for career growth, poor working relationships and going for greener pastures.

From the study it was also found that private secondary schools in Kisumu city are sponsored by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) religions groups and individuals with religious groups taking the lion share. The study also revealed that only a few schools that is three (3) out of the twenty (20) private secondary schools have been in existence for three (3) years. The majority of the schools have been in the existence for a period running to more than 3 years.

The study established the number of teaching staff as two hundred and fifty (250) and that of non teaching staff as one hundred and thirty five (135). The number of students in those private secondary schools was three thousand four hundred and thirty six (3436) Translating into teacher student ratio of one teacher for every fourteen students (1:14).

From the study it was found that staff turnover rate was higher in the teaching staff than in the non teaching staff that is 26% and 11% respectively. It is worth to note that this staff turnover rate for the teaching staff is higher than the minimum acceptable rate of between 10-15% (Armstrong, 2004). Typically teaching staff in secondary schools is mainly comprised of university graduates hence have a university degree. This is unlike the non teaching staff which comprises of mostly school leavers. Kimosop (2007) observed that employees that are more educated and who have attained university degree are more likely to leave employment at 91%. Most of the members of non teaching staff have been in these schools for a much longer period than the teaching staff. Some of the members of the non teaching staff have worked in those schools from the inception of the schools. Griffeth et al (2000) observed that the age of employees with a particular organization is inversely proportional to their

turnover. It follows therefore that the higher the age of an employee with an employer the lower the likelihood of such an employee to leave employment.

The analysis of 800 turnover studies by Griffeth et al (2000) observed that the general causes of staff turnover were job satisfaction organization commitment labour market conditions and employee personal individual characteristics. This study however discovered other emerging new causes of staff turnover which included job security (18% ), greener pastures (15% ), low compensation (15%), working relationships (14%), and lack of opportunity for career growth (12%).

This study adversely realized that lack of employee representation by way of a trade union created a perception of insecurity making employees to leave service. Trade unions are known to articulate issues affecting employees before the employers. Literature review hitherto showed that unionism is associated with lower staff turnover as it is a symbol of job security (Martin, 2003). Job security therefore as a cause of staff turnover appeared consistently in this study. It was established that the employees in this school are not registered with any trade union.

Lack of opportunities for career growth caused a considerable staff turnover. According to the earlier literature review training modifies knowledge, skills and attitudes of the employees to achieve effective performance. Career development aims at making employees use fullest potential, face expanded challenges, have greater responsibilities and increased autonomy (Martin, 2003). The staffs who have left did that most probably to look for alternative outfits that would provide for career development.

A poor working relationship amongst the employees and fellow employees or with their superiors or management was also a cause of staff turnover. This can be attributed to lack of distributive justice and employee autonomy in the work place (Price, 1997). Porter and Steer (1973) observed that organizational structures which were vertical and bureaucratic sets a negative precedence hence contributes to staff turnover.

The study also confirmed earlier studies and findings of Griffeth et al (2000), Wanous (1980) and Kimosop (2007) that low compensation was a major cause of staff turnover. It was realized that the employees in these private secondary schools earn below the minimum government wage guidelines as most of the employees particularly the teaching staff that leave employment to join teachers service commission (TSC) which provide a perceived higher compensation than the private secondary schools. Teachers in private secondary schools see public secondary schools run by the teacher's service commission as greener pastures.

## 5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that the staff turnover rate for the teaching staff in private secondary schools is (26%) which is more than the acceptable staff turnover rate of between 10 – 15%. However the staff turnover rate for the non teaching staff is normal as it is within the acceptable rate. It can also be said that staff turnover in private secondary schools is caused by the following; lack of job security was cited by most respondents as a major cause of increased staff turnover in these schools. This was aggravated by the fact that the employees are not allowed to register with trade unions which can otherwise advocate for the improvement of their welfare. This makes the staff in these schools feel insecure hence leave employment.

Low compensation was also a major cause of staff turnover. The fact that most of these schools pay employees below the minimum wage guidelines as per the government requirements make the staff work with the knowledge that they are underpaid hence they are demotivated. The staff in these schools perceives employment with the public sector by the Teachers Service Commission and the public Service Commission in general to provide better remuneration as they abide by the government minimum wage guideline.

The respondents also stated that lack of representation of the staff by the unions or put in the other way, employees not allowed to belong to a trade union make the staff feel insecure hence opt for establishments outside the schools that provide for this aspect. The respondents also stated categorically that the private secondary schools were profit ventures whose ultimate goal was profit maximization and would therefore do very little if none to enhance employee career growth as that was a costly affair.

Poor working relationship amongst employees themselves or employees with the management frustrates employees which in the final analysis make the employees quit employment.



Lack of opportunity for career growth. Twelve out of twenty respondents observed that employee training and career development calls for huge financial outlays and these schools being private business entities with the ultimate goal of profit maximization cannot afford. The staff therefore looks for alternative employment that provides for opportunities for career growth and development.

Lack of job satisfaction was also a cause of turnover. The employees are drawn from diverse professions for example engineering, agriculture, which are not related to teaching. Such employees are not professionally trained as teachers and therefore don't derive any satisfaction from the job and once they get jobs that they are trained for they quit employment. The management of this school have been addressing the issue of the shortage of staff by recruiting unemployed professionals in other fields other than education whereby once recruited such employees burn out hence quit employment when opportunities exist elsewhere.

#### 5.4 Recommendations

After the study of the findings the following were recommended in the management of staff turnover in private secondary schools; that staff in these schools be allowed by the management to register with the trade union to represent them by articulating their grievances before the employers. The management should stop being skeptical and look at this issue positively.

With regards to employee compensation these staff should be well compensated as an indicator of the school management appreciation of employee's contribution and abilities. The staff, that is both the teaching and non teaching should be paid a salary at least within the minimum government requirement. The prospective staff should also be subjected to realistic job preview during the recruitment and selection process. This is a select instrument that allows the would be employees to acquire both the positive and negative information about the employer. This is known to reduce turnover rate with the newly recruited without actually lowering the acceptance rates. Lack of realistic job preview is known to raise the would be employees' expectations about the employer.

Poor employee employee, employee management relationship can be alleviated by reconfiguration of linear work schedules into team based systems which enhance social ties amongst the staff.

Another recommendation is human resource planning. Human resource planning has become of necessity to many organizations given that the labour market condition is dynamic making it complicated to plan for man power. There is therefore a need for careful forecasting of human resource by knowing the appropriate number of staff that will be required in the future and likely numbers to leave employment. All these are only possible if the management of these schools undertake proper human resource planning.

The government should sensitize the general public on the role the private secondary schools play as co-educational partners with the public sector. This way the teaching and non-teaching staff in these schools will feel appreciated and motivated to even perform their duties more diligently.

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### **5.5. Suggestions for further research**

This study only targeted staff of the private secondary schools. To provide a better understanding of the education in the private sector it is recommended that a similar study be carried out in the primary school sector and private tertiary institutions to come up with a holistic generalization of causes of staff turnover in the private education sector.

Secondly it is also recommended that the staffs that have left employment be studied since they would be objective in giving information without fear of being intimidated and victimized by the management of these schools.

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## APPENDIX I

### PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU CITY

1. Dr Elhefni secondary school
2. Covenant High school
3. Highway High school
4. Christ church school
5. Kisumu Adventist school
6. Nyanza Christian secondary
7. Shady Gardens academy
8. Muslim mixed secondary
9. Liberty secondary
10. St. Patrick's academy
11. Kisumu Senior academy
12. Jalaram academy
13. Oasis of hope secondary school
14. St. Joseph's secondary
15. Salem High school
16. Jan's academy
17. St. Gabriel's seminary
18. Our Lady of Grace secondary
19. Brea burn school
20. Vispa Emmanuel school

(Source: Provincial Director of Education Nyanza Province Office, 2010)



## APENDIX II

### STAFFING OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU CITY

School	Number of teachers	Non teaching staff
1. Dr Elhefni secondary school	11	5
2. Covenant High school	10	6
3. Highway High school	16	10
4. Christ church school	12	5
5. Kisumu Adventist school	8	3
6. Nyanza Christian secondary	10	6
7. Shady Gardens academy	9	4
8. Muslim mixed secondary	17	8
9. Liberty secondary	18	5
10. St. Patrick's academy	7	3
11. Kisumu Senior academy	25	11
12. Jalaram academy	27	12
13. Oasis of hope secondary school	6	3
14. St. Joseph's secondary	7	3
15. Salem High school	10	4
16. Jans academy	12	7
17. St. Gabriel's seminary	8	3
18. Our Lady of Grace secondary	12	6
19. Breaburn school	15	7
20. Vispa Emmanuel school	8	4

(Source: Offices of the principals of private secondary schools in Kisumu city, 2009)

**APPENDIX III**  
**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**SECTION I (DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)**

Owner/Sponsor of the school

Age of the school

Number of teaching staff

Number of non teaching staff

Number of students

**SECTION II (CAUSES OF STAFF TURNOVER)**

**Which of the factors below are causes of staff turnover in your school? (Tick where appropriate) Explain how each applies to staff turnover.**

- i.** Compensation
- ii.** Working conditions
- iii.** Opportunity for career growth
- iv.** Job security
- v.** Job satisfaction
- vi.** Family problem
- vii.** Working relationship
- viii.** Natural attrition – normal retirement, deaths, retrenchment, health grounds.
- ix.** Greener pastures and others
- x.** Others, please suggest and explain \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION III (RATE OF STAFF TURNOVER)**

**1. How many teachers in your school left employment between the years 2007 to 2008 and 2008 to 2009?**

**2. What was the average number of teachers in your school during the same period?**

Calculation of staff turnover index

Staff turnover index =  $\frac{\text{(Number of leavers in one year x 100)}}{\text{Actual number of employees as at 26}^{\text{th}}$  November of each year)

(Actual number of employees as at 26<sup>th</sup> November of each year)

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**

**APPENDIX IV**  
**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

Date 5<sup>th</sup> October 2010

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

The bearer of this letter ..... Mr. Jared Otieno Otieno

REGISTRATION NO: D61/70450/2008

The above named student is in the Master of Business Administration degree programme. As part of requirements for the course, he is expected to carry out a study on **Causes of Staff turnover in Private Secondary Schools in Kisumu City.**

He has identified your organization for that purpose. This is to kindly request your assistance to enable him complete the study.

The exercise is strictly for academic purposes and a copy of the final paper will be availed to your organization on request.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated

Thanking you in advance.

Sincerely,

**MR. ALEX JALEHA**

**COORDINATOR, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, KISUMU CAMPUS**