

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CAREER AND ADVANCEMENT.
A SURVEY AT TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study relates to the issue of the attractiveness of teaching to the different sexes. The perceptions of women and men teachers towards teaching as a career and the issue of promotion or advancement in terms of status and monetary gain in the career were the main purposes of this study. A survey was thus conducted in two schools using questionnaires and interviews. Teaching as a career as perceived by the teachers surveyed in this study is an important aspect in their lives. The fact that teaching offers teachers a career whereby, sooner or later, some teachers would be able to move up the ladder by obtaining a promotion is indeed a source of satisfaction. There are other sources of satisfaction that teachers perceived in the pursuit of this career. Some teachers see being good classroom teachers as the main source of job satisfaction rather than thinking of being promoted. Women teachers placed greater satisfaction on economic security than men teachers, showing that they are less concerned with monetary gain or increased status in the teaching profession but rather the working conditions which suited them well, especially the holidays and working hours. Women teachers' main dissatisfactions are more related to the more professional criteria of the teaching profession such as pressure of work, pupils' discipline and size of classes. Men teachers' dissatisfactions are more related to working conditions. Men teachers' main concerns, besides the pressure at work, are the economic aspect and the promotional aspect. The study also looked at factors that favoured promotion or ought to favour promotion. Most of the respondents believed that factors such as the length of teaching experience and various aspects for getting along well with those who were the 'power brokers' in the promotion system

(such as principals, inspectors, superintendents or other people who can influence promotion), were more important in favouring a person's promotion. The respondents' views regarding factors that ought to favour promotion were quite different to those factors which they believed actually did influence promotion. The respondents placed a much greater stress on the importance of administrative ability and having a strong personality. The study also raised a number of implications regarding teachers' careers which are worthy of consideration.