Abstract

In the recent past, Kenyans has witnessed debates and threats of lawsuits in relation to selection and placement of form one students in various categories of secondary schools. Owners of private schools, some teachers and parents have been very vocal against the criteria and process applied in the selection and placement exercise. They have described the exercise as unfair and demoralizing to both hard-working students and dedicated teachers. On the other hand, the government has explained its position as one informed by ensuring equity for all. In an effort to enhance equitable distribution of educational resources in the country, the Kenyan government has progressively elevated county secondary schools to national schools which traditionally have admitted students with very high KCPE scores. Currently, there are 150 national secondary schools in the country distributed in all counties. Some are better endowed than others in terms of human and physical resources and learning materials than others hence the unhealthy competition. This paper attempts to unpack the intricacies surrounding the debate on form one selection and placement.

Key words: Selection criteria, placement, form one, national secondary schools, equity, private schools