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Influence of Principals' Expertise Power Utilization on Teachers' Empowerment in Public Secondary Schools in Garissa County, Kenya

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*Communication,
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Teachers' Empowerment.*

There is a global concern about the principals' power utilization. The purpose of this study was to analyse the impact of principals' power utilization on teachers' empowerment. The objective was to determine the influence of principals' expertise power utilization on teachers' empowerment. The theories used here were the Approach Inhibition of Power and the Empowerment theory. The study utilized a mixed method and the simultaneous triangulating model with a descriptive survey design. The targeted populace was 14,184 which included 41 principals, 780 teachers, 13,339 students, and 24 MoE/TSC officers. The sample was 760 which included 33 principals stratified randomly sampled, 330 teachers, and 384 students sampled using the Fisher formula. The 13 MoE/TSC officers were purposively sampled. Questionnaires for learners and teachers were used while the interviewing schedule was for MoE/TSC officers and the principals. The investigator requested specialists to analyse the validity of the tools. As for reliability, there was a test-retest technique employed. Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to find the reliability of the instruments. An alpha worth of 0.700 was attained and the instruments were termed consistent. Triangulating was used to assure credibility. In-depth interviewing was embraced to examine the dependability of non-numerical tools. Numerical facts were scrutinized in descriptive and inferential (Chi-square) statistics by means of tables, occurrences, and percent rates. Qualitative data was offered by thematic scrutiny in narrative form and verbatim citing. The study established that expertise power utilization was significant. The study concluded that expertise power influenced teacher empowerment positively. It was recommended that principals should utilize all of this power and that the government should beef up the use of this power in schools. Further research was recommended to be done on this power elsewhere using different participants.

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INTRODUCTION

The origin of the types of power dates back to the times of social psychologists John R. P. French and Bertram H. Raven who conducted a distinguished survey about power in 1959. It was stated that power had five distinct and dissimilar forms. The concept indicated how those forms of power affected peoples' leadership as well as success. The researchers analysed the complications of power and determined that there were five dynamics of power: referent, expert, legitimate, reward, and coercive. They gave a definition of power as the key foundation in attaining outcomes or submission from another person. It was said that social power and social influence were found in psychology, sociology, and political science. The first theory that French and Raven talked about was Psychological Change. They defined change at a level of generality, which included changes in behaviour, opinions, attitudes, goals, needs, and values (Kovach, 2020).

Power as a dispositional word is a capacity, a concept, but it is also hierarchical and that indicates that people are arranged in a certain order where power is not equally distributed. One of the downsides of power is that the term has been applied oftentimes by many scholars in reference to diverse concepts that are not easily understood and may cause confusion among people (Lukes, 1974, 2005; French & Raven, 1959). In addressing the controversy of the faces of power, Lukes (1974) provided a philosophical analysis of power as can be seen from the principals' power utilization point of view. Foucault (2017) theorized that the concept of power is highly controversial particularly due to

its unpredictability, omnipresent nature, instability, and reversibility. Power, however, cannot exist solitarily notwithstanding its changeable characteristics. It is neither a self-sufficient nor a self-reliant entity (Cervero, 2016).

Teacher empowerment for classroom management, just like power is one of those tricky terms as it means many different things to many people. McCreary (2017) and Eisenman *et al.* (2017) term in their views connotes the strategies and processes utilized by a teacher for the purpose of controlling the classroom as a conducive learning environment for quality instructional processes and student success. Known as one of the earliest activities that teachers acquire at the beginning of their profession, classroom management as a result of teacher empowerment is one of the most difficult things that a student teacher faces during the first days of his or her teaching career (Zabalza & Marcelo, 2014). There is a huge amount of research indicating that teacher empowerment is a daunting task even for most instructors (Pozo, 2016).

Despite the existence of various educational strategies that can be applied to classroom outcomes, the converging factor in every strategy out there is to provide a learning environment that students find conducive to improved academic achievement. According to Pozo (2016) at the University of the Balearic Islands in Spain, the commonest requisites for effective learning are consistency, trial and error, proximity, seating arrangements, routines classroom rules, and discipline among others. Effective teachers are said to possess empowerment which they apply to devise strategies that promote enhanced learning in the classroom. Various types of powers utilized

by the school managers can help attain these goals among the teachers (Marzano, & Marzano, 2019; Shellard & Protheroe, 2013; McLeod, *et al.* 2018).

This study aims to reassess principals' power utilization on teachers' empowerment to improve the performance of teachers. There is a need to probe the effect of teachers' empowerment and understand that as classroom managers, they ought to be the ones leading and guiding the students for better performance. This introductory base of argument infers that there is a basic need for teachers as human beings to be empowered fully for better outcomes. However, the fact that a teacher in this instance assumes the role of a manager in classroom interactions, he or she has a genuine need to hold or possess empowerment for the purpose of influencing the behaviour of the students under his or her charge (Weimer, 2019). The most influential framework of the bases of power is derived from the proposition of French and Raven and Vliet (2016) which accounts for the five power foundations which are legitimate, coercive, reward, expert, and referent power, among others that all form part of social powers.

McCroskey & Richmond (2017) in their work *Nonverbal Behaviour in Interpersonal Relations* averred that a certain level of social power is ever present in a teacher during his or her interactions with learners. The authors further argued that the capacity of empowerment that the teacher applies in classroom control is directly comparable to the capacity of power needed for classroom control. Empowered teachers, therefore, have the best opportunity to produce the best results as a result of their high sense of motivation.

According to Teoh *et al.* (2018) in a qualitative study carried out in Chennai, India, on teacher training in managing behaviours of male students, challenging behaviour was reported to be a common problem owing to the nonexistence of empowerment. That work clarified that teachers received inadequate training and empowerment and that the existing national training programme did not prioritize this area. The existing literature illuminated the problem of student behaviour management and the form of skills that teachers

require for the purpose of fostering their students' positive behaviour and subsequent effectiveness in classroom control. Irwin *et al.* (2017) study conducted in Ghana explored teachers' views about classroom behaviour and the part played by culture in building learners' behaviour. Teachers having been poorly empowered; could produce up to the minimum but not up to the maximum as it should have been the case. The authors further explored the preferred strategies applied by teachers as interventions in controlling misbehaviour in the learning environment.

In Senegal, Ndour *et al.* (2020) survey of school principals' knowledge power and behaviour in coping with teachers' behaviour problems in the classroom demonstrated encouraging knowledge of teachers about common disorders. UNESCO and the Regional Office for Education in Africa – BRENDA (2017) conducted a comparative study in Sub-Saharan Africa thus, in Lesotho, Liberia, the Gambia, Zanzibar, Tanzania, and Uganda on teachers' power of motivation and classroom activities and found that teachers in many of those countries were highly demotivated, which significantly affected teachers' classroom performance. The demotivation of teachers could have been known by them or they could have not been aware of it. It was the duty of the heads to make sure that they recognized the work done by their teachers. They should have utilized their different powers to empower those teachers if they expected better results.

In this country, Ouma *et al.* (2017) did an investigation in Kisumu City on the management of students' outcomes. These researchers established that students' unruliness was too much and that teachers did not have satisfactory skills of social empowerment for behaviour control. Use of mentoring programmes as strategies for improving discipline in schools in the Municipality of Eldoret, Uasin Gishu, and established that there were challenges, like lack of policy implementation framework, funding problems, and shortage of time for teachers due to increased volume of workload, hence lacking time to address issues of discipline and challenging

behaviours in students. Each of these was part of school administrators' personal power to address behaviour in the classroom managed by the teachers.

Regarding Garissa, where this study was done, Hassan (2018) in a Nairobi University investigation done among public institutions established that owing to the absence of teacher empowerment, the teachers lacked class strategies to manage outcomes. This led to poor performance in students. It was implied based on the findings that there was poor performance academically and this had been the trend for many years down the line. Unfortunately, this investigation failed to indicate any results on teachers' empowerment and performance outcomes. This work had the duty to establish and confirm if principals' power utilization had any effect on the empowerment of teachers in public schools in the county of Garissa, in the Republic of Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical Review

Heizmann (2015) and Olsson (2015) observe that a French theorist by the name Michel Foucault (2017) is the one who coined the phrase 'power knowledge'. Knowledge and high education formed part of the power and power sharing of a principal in teacher empowerment activities and is seen as the practice of sharing knowledge between the person who holds it with others in one's group of principal-teacher relationship management (Ryu et al. 2013). The quality of the relationship between principals and teachers is what matters most in terms of the empowerment of the teachers.

Foucault (2017) observed that power is derived from knowledge and thrives from knowledge. Power, on the other hand, regenerates knowledge by modifying it according to its anonymous plan. By virtue of being principals, principals are appreciated for being well-informed and possessing knowledge, especially on how to guide and empower the teachers for better productivity in classroom work. They are also perceived to be intelligent and well-prepared thus, meeting the

criteria of possessing expertise and power. Cognizant of this factor, knowledge is a symbol of power, also known as expert power (Zur, 2013). In this context, Adler (2014) viewed knowledge as psychological knowledge. Zur (2013) supports that the knowledge that a principal possesses and the resultant ability of being an influencing figure can be essential for empowering teachers, and developing them while increasing their ability to be in control, dominate, and manipulate. This could be seen in the information-sharing capabilities.

Thomas's (2014) qualitative study asserts that knowledge power, in reference to a teacher, epitomizes experiences and knowledge that a teacher commands in the classroom if the teacher has been empowered for better productivity. This refers to principals who are knowledgeable, well acquainted, and highly conversant with their "stuff" but who are at the same time well able to clearly express that knowledge to their teachers and empower them to be more productive. This category of principals, who possess knowledge power based on their knowledge and expertise, are uncommonly at ease when interacting with teachers and are able to invigorate the teaching environment by infusing invariable delight. If a principal or a leader in a different profession realizes that his or her students or followers are enthusiastic about what they do, then that affirms in such a teacher or leader the right of being a leader to his followers, or in this case the students. On the flip side, a principal who appears in the eyes of his/her teachers not to be conversant with whatever he/she is doing may find it difficult to command respect and the right to lead as the teachers may not be willing to comply with his or her directions. The principal then may not adequately empower the teachers without this expertise power. To be knowledgeable, principals had to acquire expertise training regularly as an impotent indicator.

Essentially, principals must be knowledgeable understand the content well, and know how to express it to the teachers with confidence to enable interactions and teachers' classroom

management activities done by the teachers on their behalf. Supporting feelings, Stronge & Pamela (2019), agreed that knowledge power is drawn from the expertise that a principal possesses about the content and instructional programmes as well as his or her expertise as an instructor. Compliance with teachers on principals' directions comes with ease since the teachers perceive their principals to be more experienced and knowledgeable than they are, and this can be possible only if the principals have empowered the teachers adequately.

Thus, as illustrated, expert power can easily and effectively be applied by a knowledgeable principal to the teachers who in turn can be empowered for better academic outcomes. This is substantiated by Danielsson et al. (2018) in their work in Sweden, finding out that the way in which a principal communicates applicable knowledge or appropriate strategies for obtaining knowledge has a determination of the kind of skills that teachers were looked for in every analysed class activity. Therefore, there was a correlation between the principals' expertise power and the empowerment of teachers to be able to produce better results.

The above-mentioned investigations nevertheless, experimented with science and technology apprentices and it was not known how this power could impact other results of class management like learners' behaviour, focused learning, obedience to regulations, and institutional routine. Nevertheless, Weimer (2019) added that expert power had much to do with the teachers' perception of their principal and that being seen as knowledgeable in certain areas of principals' roles increased compliance and learning performance and better productivity. A great extent of what a principal uses in empowering teachers is usually a product of expert power. What the principal communicates may not necessarily be hard ideas that have already been objectively proven. But he/she presents them with the expectation that teachers comply with them and get empowered. This kind of expectation can only be valid if in the eyes of the principals and the teachers pass as ones

who are competent and well versed, especially by possessing the communication skills needed.

The most substantial effect of expert power is the ability to modify the cognitive abilities of an individual and behaviour change only comes in as a secondary result of the initial change of one's cognitions (French & Raven, 1968). This agrees with the opinion that throughout class managing time, empowered teachers who are knowledgeable and effective are those who get to lead and foster a focused and acquiescent learning environment for an increased learning experience (Shellard & Protheroe, 2015; Marzano *et al.*, 2019). The opinion is similarly based on Thomas Gordon's (1978) class administration theory, likewise, known as Teacher Effectiveness Training, and largely emphasizes the views of what differentiates effective teaching from ineffective.

The teachers prioritize teaching and learning the students through rules and regulations, anticipating what students need and providing clear instructions as well as orienting new students as the principals empower them through their examples as good experts (McLeod et al., 2018). Investigations have likewise indicated that principals who have knowledge in balancing power and lessen misuse of power like regulating the guidelines and procedures guarantee security and fruitful teachers' communications in the classroom consequently, sustaining healthy teaching/learning activities (McLeod et al., 2018). This is supportive of the interpretation that the capacity to balance power bases in class management is a crucial factor for teachers who want to get things done (Brophy, 2016). Raven (2009) is of the view that in institutional administration, knowledge power has been defined as one that is dependent on the administrator's skills, knowledge, experiences, and proven abilities to be productive. This power is rooted in the use of the perception of expert knowledge to get the workers to comply or follow the instructions. Believing in the expert power of the principal raises a positive attitude and productive behaviour of the teachers towards their

principal thus, increasing their level of obedience and compliance (Singh, 2016). The study, however, did not divulge how expert or knowledge power could influence other aspects of teachers' classroom management, such as learning performance, focused learning, or controlling distractions.

According to Argon (2016) in a study carried out in Ankara, Turkey, expert power is seen as the highest quality power base, as it is termed as the most democratic among other types of power and the fact that one does not require a high status or to be strong, rich or poor to wield this power, which makes it the soul and core of all the other types of power. In Turkey, Aslanargun (2014) found that the perception of teachers on power dynamics used by principals differed based on the type of schools, teachers' experiences, and the subjects they taught. The study established that most schoolteachers, the more experienced category, and those who handled music, art, and physical education used more expert power than other types of power. On the other hand, teacher's perceptions differed based on their age, with older ones reporting to have used expert power more compared to younger ones.

Similarly, Emre and Kosar (2015) found that expert power and charisma, which both formed personality power, were positively related to principal expertise and knowledge. In the same manner, Abudi (2016) in a United States-based study review stated that as individuals advance in age and gain experience in a particular line of work, they become thoughtful classroom managers in those fields and begin to accumulate expert power that they utilize to help them achieve their goals. In support of this view, Schermerhorn (2005) argued that relying on expert power was likely to influence teachers' behaviours. Nonetheless, the study gave attention to the connection between principals and teachers, and more research is needed to assess the use of knowledge power by regular teachers in classroom management. However, Huber (2015) in an investigation done in Zurich, Switzerland, termed expertise as a valuable resource in teacher

management and classroom management and that expert principals and teachers play a vital role in influencing decision-making.

It was further observed that knowledge is becoming more of a foundation and orientation for human interactions than ever, noting that it guides all human interactions, interpersonal relationships, and dependencies among individuals in today's institutions. This is consistent with Thomas Gordon's theory's proposition that a quality relationship between the principals and the teachers is key to effective classroom management. This supported Maru (2013) in a Kenyan base study, which found that there was a need to equip principals with requisite skills in regular and structured programmes. The study also found that skills and experience were important components and suggested that more experienced principals should mentor newly appointed ones and teachers for better classroom management and outcomes. Being knowledgeable is a vital aspect of any educator and more so any principal. People are respected according to the level of expertise they have.

Theoretical Literature Review

Approach Inhibition Theory of Power

This theory was conceptualized by Keltner *et al.* (2016). Approach Inhibition makes a key proposition regarding the influence of power and the manner in which it is activated in an individual's mental processes. Approach Inhibition Theory is appropriate to the investigation as it is well suited to address principals' power utilization as the study's independent variable. The theory is suitable for this investigation grounded on its inference regarding the outcome of power in changing teachers' state of mind and behaviours. The theory further supports the fact that principals as managers have the power through various activities to impact teaching and learning processes. Thomas Gordon's theory, on the other hand, is pertinent for effective classroom management, which constitutes the study's dependent variable.

The theory points to a number of positive aspects in the classroom, including showing children how to take responsibility for their own mistakes and recognising the fact that teachers have the role of organizing their classes for effective learning, conducting assessments, and guiding students' outcomes. If the principals use the types of power properly, then they will be able to empower their teachers. Once the teachers are properly empowered, then there is going to be good teaching as well as learning among the students. This, obviously, must improve the academic performance of the students. Therefore, this theory was used by the investigator to implicate that the principals could use various types of powers in school administration to empower teachers.

The Empowerment Theory

The thoughts that were spinning around concepts of empowerment and empowerment theory propelled in the nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies out of anxiety for the helplessness of particular groups in community according to ideas of Stewart (2017). This is a procedure where teachers grow the capability to take charge of their own growth and solve their own difficulties. It is believed that they have the skills and knowledge to advance the conditions in which they operate. Reading Recovery teacher leaders are more highly enabled than reading recovery teachers or classroom teachers. This discovery was described as an outcome of reading recovery teacher leaders' having more chances to make decisions and grow professionally, having control over every day plans, and feeling a high level of teaching competency. Teacher empowerment consists of improved status, increased knowledge, and access to decision-making. There are dimensions such as decision-making, status, self-efficacy, autonomy, and impact. Teacher empowerment has been studied in relation to job satisfaction, participation in decision-making commitment, conflict, instructional practice, and student academic achievements. Expectations concerning teacher empowerment are first, the empowerment is most real when it is concerned with increasing teacher professionalism; second,

empowerment has at least two dimensions: organizational and classroom; third, empowering teachers has its greatest influence on student attainment when the stress is on the essential technology of teaching/learning in institutions and lastly, to be operative, teachers' empowerment from the principals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The study investigated the influence of principals' expertise power utilization on teachers' empowerment in public secondary schools in Garissa County, Kenya. Targeted population was 14,184 which included 41 principals, 780 teachers, 13,339 students and 24 MoE/TSC officers. The sample was 760 which included 33 principals stratified randomly sampled, 330 teachers, and 384 students sampled using the Fisher formula. The 13 MoE/TSC officers were purposively sampled. The study utilized a mixed method and the simultaneous triangulating model with a descriptive survey design. Questionnaires for learners and teachers were used while the interviewing schedule was for MoE/TSC officers and the principals. The researcher requested specialists to analyse the validity of the tools. As for reliability, there was a test-retest technique employed. Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to find the reliability of the instruments. An alpha worth of 0.700 was attained and the instruments were termed consistent. Triangulating was used to assure credibility. In-depth interviewing was embraced to examine the dependability of non-numerical tools. Quantitative facts were scrutinized in descriptive and inferential (Chi-square) statistics by means of tables, occurrences, and percent rates. Qualitative data was offered by thematic analysis in narrative form and verbatim citing. The study established that expertise power utilization was significant. The study concluded that expertise power influenced teacher empowerment positively. It was recommended that principals should utilize all of this power and that the government should beef up the use of this power in schools. Further research was recommended to be done on this power elsewhere using different participants.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data from the teachers was keyed in the table below and outcomes shown as seen in *Table 1*. From the table, it was acceptable that the principals' expertise power could influence and impact teachers' empowerment. This was agreed and strongly agreed by 150 (56.6 %) with 20 (7.5 %) undecided. The disagreeing side was 95 (35.8 %) which was a significant figure. This meant that expertise power had not been seen to be fully effective looking at the percentage that disagreed. However, the researcher followed the majority opinion, and it was acceptable that if the principals utilized this type of power expeditiously, there could have been a change among the public secondary schools in Garissa County.

The indicator on education among the teachers which could improve performance in subjects taught and scores was acceptable. On the agreement side, there were 205 (77.4 %) with 10 (3.8 %) undecideds. The disagreeing side was 50 (18.9 %) which was insignificant. The participants agreed that teachers were educated and thus empowered in their schools. This meant that the TSC had supplied qualified teachers in the study area though they might have not been adequate. The principals also might have increased their skills by advancing their education by pursuing master's degrees. The issue of education in expertise power had no problem as seen on the table.

The other indicator was information sharing to catapult problem-solving and time management skills among the public secondary schools in Garissa County. The agreeing side was not convincing since only 100 (37.7 %) could accept. Another 10 (3.8 %) could not decide. There was a majority of 155 (58.5 %) on the disagreement side. Consequently, sharing of information was not effective thus, hampering issues on problem solving and time management. This needed to be beefed up in schools to enable teachers' empowerment. Information was important as that was one way expertise power could work effectively. The participants seemed to say that there was a need for catapulting this indicator to

enable useful empowerment to teachers by the principals.

Expertise training was not seen in schools. Only 30 (11.3 %) could be on the agreement side with 20 (7.5 %) undecideds. The majority of 215 (81.1 %) were on the disagreement side. That was an indication that there was no regular beefing of expertise among the teachers, hence hampering their empowerment. Knowledge is said to be power. It was claimed from the qualitative data that there were no funds to carry out this exercise. The indicator of communication in schools was met with mixed feelings. There were 100 (37.7 %) on the agreement side with 30 (11.3 %) undecideds. A slight majority of 135 (50.9 %) disagreed that there was communication in schools to enhance positive interactions and relationships. The idea of communication among the teachers may not have been interpreted in the same way amongst them. It seemed that the principals were lagging in terms of communicating with the teachers. Sometimes things could have been done without the knowledge of the teachers. Conclusively, there was a need to improve on this indicator to enable teachers' empowerment.

The findings from *Table 1* had other similar findings. Thomas (2018) established that the expertise power of the principals could empower the teachers to enable them to command classroom teaching and therefore, bring about good results among the students. This could have had better productivity outcomes among the students. There was danger if the principals lacked this type of power.

The responses from students were captured and analysed as seen in *Table 2*. From the table, the students had no problem agreeing that the expertise power had influence on teachers' empowerment. This was a general question drawn from the objective. The majority of 210 (70.0 %) were in agreement as 10 (3.3 %) could not decide. There were 80 (26.7 %) who did not agree, and this percentage was not large enough for the researcher to conclude that this type of power was not influential. Expertise power was seen by the

students as paramount for the teachers' empowerment if it could be utilized properly.

Education among the teachers was acceptable. The students who agreed were 235 (78.3 %) the majority with only an insignificant 5 (1.7 %). On the disagreement side, 60 (20.0 %) were seen indicating that improvement on this indicator was welcome. The teachers seemed to have adequate

education which could be seen through their teaching. The TSC always recruited qualified teachers and that is why this indicator was acceptable. Additionally, a number of principals and teachers have taken steps to better their education by enrolling for advanced degrees in school-based education programmes which have already mushroomed among all the universities in Kenya.

Table 1: Teachers' responses in expertise power utilization on teachers' empowerment

Statements	A (1)	SA (2)	U (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
Principals' expertise power influence teachers' empowerment	100 (37.7)	50 (18.9)	20 (7.5)	55 (20.8)	40 (15.1)
There is education among teachers that enhances improved performance in subjects taught/scores	195 (73.6)	10 (3.8)	10 (3.8)	40 (15.1)	10 (3.8)
Your school has information sharing which enhances improved problem-solving and time-management skills	50 (18.9)	50 (18.9)	10 (3.8)	150 (56.6)	05 (1.9)
There is expertise training in your school which enables better teacher adherence to rules/authority	20 (7.5)	10 (3.8)	20 (7.5)	195 (73.6)	20 (7.5)
Your school has communication that enables enhanced positive interactions/relationships	80 (30.2)	20 (7.5)	30 (11.3)	100 (37.7)	35 (13.2)

Source: The researcher, 2024

However, there was an issue with the information sharing. The acceptance was 120 (40.0 %) with 10 (3.3 %) undecided. The disagreeing side was the majority of 170 (56.7 %). This indicated that there was an issue on the side of sharing information. This hampered the enhancement of improved problem-solving and time management skills. Looking at these results, there was a need to define the term sharing information and apply it among the schools. If this was not done, still the issue of empowerment of teachers would remain a cancer in the management of schools, especially on the part of the principals. This, automatically, would paralyze the efforts to achieve good academic results.

Similarly, expertise training in schools could not be seen according to the students. The number accepting was 50 (16.7 %) with 20 (6.7 %) undecided. The majority of 230 (76.7 %) did not agree. This indicated a failure in training teachers to acquire more skills in their careers. Thus, good outcomes from the teachers and the students were not expected. Refresher courses are important in updating the principals and the teachers especially

when Kenya is going to change the system of education. This means even when the competency-based curriculum is going to be implemented fully, there will be still problems in addition to the normal teething problems which come with any changes. There was a need to beef up this indicator to empower teachers.

The final indicator was on communication. This would enhance positive interactions and relationships. On the agreeing side, it was only 120 (40.0 %) which was not attractive with 10 (3.3 %) undecided. The disagreeing side had the majority of 170 (56.7 %). This indicated more efforts to improve the indicators so as to enable better results. These results send a warning as far as communication is concerned in public secondary schools in Garissa County. Thus, something has to be done and done fast to save the situation.

These findings on expertise power had a number of similarities in the literature surveyed elsewhere globally. One example was a study done in Sweden by Lidar (2018). In the study, it was established that principals' expertise power had a

great impact on teachers. This type of power, used properly, could save the principals lots of headaches in the administration of the schools. They could easily empower their teachers for

better performance. The knowledge they had in terms of communication had an impact on the way teachers performed in classroom teaching.

Table 2: Students’ responses in expertise power utilization on teachers’ empowerment

Statements	A (1)	SA (2)	U (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
Principals’ expertise power influence teachers’ empowerment	180 (60.0)	30 (10.0)	10 (3.3)	50 (16.7)	30 (10.0)
There is education among teachers that enhances improved performance in subjects taught/scores	195 (65.0)	40 (13.3)	05 (1.7)	54 (18.0)	06 (2.0)
Your school has information sharing which enhances improved problem-solving and time management skills	120 (40.0)	0 (0.0)	10 (3.3)	150 (50.0)	20 (6.7)
There is expertise training in your school which enables better teacher adherence to rules/authority	36 (12.0)	14 (4.7)	20 (6.7)	190 (63.3)	40 (13.3)
Your school has communication that enables enhanced positive interactions/relationships	115 (38.3)	05 (1.7)	10 (3.3)	150 (50.0)	20 (6.7)

Source: The researcher, 2024

Inferential Statistics Analysis

The researcher conducted a Chi-square test to determine if there was any significant relationship between the variables from the SPSS. The results

were utilized to determine if there was a significant relationship between expertise power utilization and teachers’ empowerment. This is shown in *Table 3*.

Table 3: Chi-square test in expertise power on teachers’ empowerment

Test Statistics					
Chi-Square	.000 ^a	.400 ^b	.400 ^b	.000 ^a	.000 ^a
df	4	2	2	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	1.000	.819	.819	1.000	1.000

5 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.0. b. 3 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.7. Average 0.9276

Source: The researcher, 2024

To determine the relationship between principals’ expertise power utilization and the teachers’ empowerment, the participants’ answers were keyed in SPSS in the Chi-square test. The average result was 0.9276. This outcome was greater than α value which was 0.05. The null hypothesis formulated here was: *H₀ There is no significant relationship between principals’ expertise power utilization and teachers’ empowerment.* The Chi-square calculated value was greater than the value, so there was reason to reject the null hypothesis. In this case, the average calculated value was 0.9276 which was greater than the Chi-square critical value of 0.05, and consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. From the table, the average of 0.9276 is > 0.05. The chi-square test showed that there was a significant association

between principals’ expertise power and teachers’ empowerment. So, there was a valid reason to reject this hypothesis and agree that there was a significant relationship among the said variables. This being the case then, there was a need to beef up this type of power amongst the principals in the schools.

These Chi-square findings concurred with other studies formerly done in the world on expertise power utilization. One such study was done in Ankara in the Republic of Turkey by Argon (2016). It was established that this type of power was the most democratic. It did not require one to be famous. It only required one to be highly knowledgeable to command respect among others. Indeed, it was a very useful power if only it could be rightly utilized.

Thematic Analysis

To gather information about expertise power on teachers' empowerment, education, information sharing, expertise training, and communication were examined as the indicators of the objective. Generally, it was accepted that if the principals used expertise power rightly, they could influence teachers' empowerment as one of the principals observed,

"Expertise power is very dynamic. It makes principals very authoritative as they are seen to be very knowledgeable. Higher learning was always respected by the school community. Actually, a principal with more degrees and expertise was automatically recognized and commanded respect" (PR1).

There was education among the principals as an indicator of expertise power. It seemed that many principals and teachers had gone back to school to upgrade their studies. Education was very necessary if teachers were going to be empowered. This was so as one of the principals said,

"You have more strength in empowering your teachers if you are more educated than most of them. They respect your papers and this serves as a motivation. Many of us principals have gone back to books to acquire more skills in school management. We don't take it for granted that the first degree is enough when you are leading teachers with a master's. They will soon start looking down upon you" (PR2).

On the indicator of information sharing, there seemed to be confusion. The principals did not have modern ways of communication such as SMS, WhatsApp, and emailing. Most information could be shared on the notice boards and when students were in the morning assemblies or any other assemblies in the schools. An expert like a principal has to have adequate and efficient ways of giving data and news to the school community. One principal observed,

"You need all kinds of ways of giving information to your school. You need even to meet physically with teachers and students to disseminate what you have in mind and if necessary, discuss the way forward. There must be quick and effective methods of sharing information with others in the school" (PR3).

There had been some training going on among some principals. This had not been done oftentimes. There were contemporary issues in administration that called for frequent training to update the principals on the new developments in the education sector in this country. This would keep them knowledgeable about the modern issues in school management. However, one principal was heard lamenting,

"Training and refreshing principals are very important nowadays. We are soon going to get the CBC lower secondary school students coming to our institutions yet we know very little about the CBC. Indeed, I can say that we are not getting refresher courses as we should" (PR4).

Communication among the school community members is quite vital if there is going to be a smooth running of schools. There is both upward and downward communication among the members. The principals were not communicating as they would have liked to. One principal was heard saying,

"Communication has to be two ways. It should be from one end to the other through a media. Modern technology can be used to reach people. We can use email, SMS, and even Skype. This has not been effective so to speak. It has then, hampered the status of expertise power as well as teachers' empowerment" (PR5).

Others who were interviewed on the expertise power objective were the education officers. They agreed with the fact that expertise power could impact teachers' empowerment. This was ascertained by one officer,

“The higher the principal demonstrated expertise power the better for the teachers and learners. Education is all about knowledge, attitudes, and skills which can be measurably seen among the principals” (EO1).

The first indicator was on the education of the principals. The level of education was high among the school heads. A number of them had good education having acquired even second degrees. One such officer had this to say,

“The higher the education the higher the respect a principal gets from the school community. Many principals were either experienced or earned their master’s degrees. Even teachers had gone to the extent of going back to school. This would empower teachers reverting to expertise power” (EO2).

The education officers were not satisfied that there was adequate sharing of information among the school communities. There were no good signs of this indicator even on the notice boards. One officer lamented,

“We have modern technology in place today. We expect our principals to use them. I have never witnessed emailing sent to teachers otherwise they could have been copied to me as the person in charge of education in this sub-county” (EO3).

Expertise training had been hampered by lack of funding, especially during the Covid-19 era. Principals had to bear with the government on this issue. With the new system of education approaching, the CBC, there would have been frequent training among the principals as one officer said,

“We expect to give refresher courses to teachers and principals frequently but our hands are tied financially. The government had to first battle with the outbreak of Covid-19 and funds were directed that way to save the country from the epidemic” (EO4).

Lastly, the indicator of communication was also not effective according to the officers. This had a

negative repercussion among the school communities. Failure of communication was seen in the numerous incidents of unrest in the schools in the sub-county. There was a need to beef up this indicator as an officer had this to say:

“When you see or hear of chaos in schools, you get to know that there is communication breakdown. If information is well passed and understood by the recipients, then there will be minimal problems in the institutions” (EO5).

CONCLUSIONS

Concerning the expertise power, it was concluded from the outcomes that the principals’ expertise power could influence and impact teachers’ empowerment. The indicator of education was concluded to have been seen among the schools being done well. Another indicator, information sharing, did not score well among the schools. So, it was concluded that this indicator must be addressed to empower teachers for better performance in the schools. On the indicator of expertise training, it was unfortunate that there was no evidence of it being seen among the schools. Finally, communication as an indicator was similarly lacking in the institutions. It was concluded that this indicator be improved for empowering teachers who in turn would produce better outcomes. However, those who were in agreement were a small majority of fifty percent. From the inferential statistics, it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between principals’ expertise power utilization and teachers’ empowerment. If the Chi-square calculated value was greater than the critical value then there was reason to accept that there was the relationship between the two variables. This led to rejecting the null hypotheses. Thematic analysis produced similar results. These outcomes were seen from the narratives and verbatim. They echoed the descriptive and the inferential statistics outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the researcher recommended: There is a need for principals to

properly utilize legitimate power so as to empower teachers. The Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association as stakeholders, can arrange for seminars to improve on leadership skills of the school administrators. All school principals should have expertise power for better management of schools. The Central Government through the Ministry of Education should set up funds for training school heads frequently especially now that there is a new system of education in place.

There is a need for the principals to beef up referent power for themselves since it is the way they behave that will enable their charismatic leadership. The appearance styles and personality could be cultivated by the principals themselves. The Central Government through the Ministry of Education and the universities training teachers beef up the use of legitimate power by offering short courses and refresher courses on a school-based basis. The expertise power to be given through funding from the BoMs and well-wishers and other stakeholders. An examination of the challenges facing principals in implementing legitimate power among the public secondary schools in the Republic of Kenya

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