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

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Abstract: There is a global concern on the principals' legitimate power utilization. The drive of the study steered to analyze the impact of principals' legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment. The objective was to establish the effect of principals' legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment. Theories used here were Approach Inhibition of Power and the Empowerment Theory. The study utilized mixed method and the simultaneous triangulating model with descriptive survey design. Targeted population was 14,184 which included 41 principals, 780 teachers, 13,339 students and 24 MoE/TSC officers. Sample was 760 which included 33 principals stratified randomly sampled, 330 teachers and 384 students sampled using Fisher formular. The 13 MoE/TSC officers were purposively sampled. Questionnaires for learners and teachers were used while interviewing schedule was used for the principals. The investigator requested specialists to analyze the validity of tools. As for reliability there was test-retest technique employed. Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to find the reliability of the instruments. Alpha worth of 0.700 was attained and the instruments termed consistent. Triangulating was used to assure credibility. In-depth interviewing was embraced to examine 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 citation. The study established that problem use of legitimate power was there. It was recommended that principals should utilize legitimate power. Further research was recommended to be done on this power elsewhere with different participants.

Key Words*: Influence, Legitimate power, Power utilization, Principals' legitimate power, Teachers' empowerment*

1. Introduction

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 analyzed the complications of power and determined that there were five dynamics of power: referent, expert, legitimate, reward and coercive. They gave 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 behavior, 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 about power is that the term has been applied often times by many scholars in reference to diverse concepts that are not easily understood and may bring confusions amongst people (Lukes, 1974, 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 (2014) 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).

Research exploring the existence of power relations in the broader social context as expressed in educational dynamics, including managers' utilization, teaching and learning. Instruction and learning progressions in the classroom demonstration that existence of power is distinguished through the manner in which it is dynamically exercised, such that the boundaries of power relations between the powerless and the powerful are not expressly defined but demonstrated in a delicate and sophisticated manner. Indeed Bailey (2016) at University of Georgia explored how power plays out among the managers with the aim of helping teachers gain empowerment about the manner in which learners perceive their instructive styles. It is important for principals to note that in their everyday activities dealing with teachers and students, both at a personal level and group level keep interacting in various ways and hence the need to propel the teachers' empowerment. Those interactions may bring in power struggles. Osher, Cantor and Berg (2018) in an analysis carried out at the American Institutes for Research argue that teachers act differently in regard to the way they foment supportive and responsive relationship with the students at classroom level, where power is said to play part in the relationships. it can be understood differently by various teachers and stakeholders of education.

Modelling of power relations by the principals at the learning environment is a core component in classroom management processes and it can either bring about positive outcomes or negative outcomes depending on the way it is understood and utilized by various managers. As demonstrated by Approach Inhibition Theory, power possess capacity to influence and alter a person's psychological state. Thus, principals' power may be exercised through activities such as regulating, invoking and controlling knowledge. Principals can exercise this

mode of control by sanctioning or making decisions in regard to the type of information to provide to teachers' classroom management requisites and empowerment, teaching and management of the knowledge creation process (Shindler, 2015 & Weimer, 2014). Numerous studies emphasize on the importance of power utilization in making good teachers in classroom learning situation and where power is regarded to be in circulation. Empowering teachers can be done by the principals through various activities and practices in the schools.

Different countries such as America and Europe have designed policies to promote principal quality in teacher management requisites and empowerment as a result of power utilization by the school managers. Studies further indicate that teachers' empowerment is more important to learners' outcomes compared to other factors of education and that the best aspect of identifying effective teachers is through their performance, not by their background or experience which requires the principals to utilize their powers properly. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development – ASDC (2014) reported that power manifestation in the classroom is one of the most implicit factors about the reality of the learning situation. Studies have supported the fact that teachers have power to manage their classroom in any direction of learning so long as the managers utilize powers in the right direction. Principals' power utilization is seen a lot during the act of the teacher-student communication. The principals possess power that can change the attitude of the teachers to make them more effective in their duties, especially the classroom teaching activities among others. This can be measured by the academic performance among the students in examinations.

Power is one of those tricky terms as it means many different things to many people. McCreary (2017), Robert (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 because 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 the most instructors (Pozo, 2016).

Despite the existence of various educational strategies that can be applied in classroom outcomes, the converging factor in every strategy out there is to provide a learning environment that students find conducive for improved academic achievement.

According to Pozo (2016) at the University of the Balearic Islands in Spain, the commonest requisites for effective leaning are consistency, trial and error, proximity, seating arrangements, routine classroom rules and discipline among others. Effective teachers are said to possess empowerment with 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, 2013; Shellard & Protheroe, 2013; McLeod, et al. 2015).

Principals may influence any style or strategy intended for teacher empowerment and is likely to involve making errors here and there until what works best in supporting safe and secure learning environment is established. Nevertheless, if the teacher is empowered, his/her ability to employ balanced power in classroom management is one of the best approaches towards making students identify with the classroom rules and to appreciate them as part of the aspects for facilitating their success in learning. Irrespective of the time that teachers may spend in good lesson planning, this would not achieve anything is such as lessons are delivered in unsafe or chaotic environment so long as they are not empowered by their seniors (Baer, 2015).

Özer, Gelen and Alkan (2016) in a study carried out at Ondokuz Mayis University in Turkey, power utilization characterized the mistakes that are commonly made by teachers during classroom organization as major hindrances affecting quality of teaching and learning. This included inability to establish authority and trying to compensate such deficit through being harsh to students, applying authoritarian tendencies and seeing oneself as the source of authority. More than 45 percent of those sampled reported to have at one point planned to desert the profession due to student behavioral problems and the mounting challenges of classroom management. There is convergence on the views of many principals regarding the importance of teacher classroom management. However, from the findings of the survey just an insignificant figure of teachers had received empowerment beyond the common traditional standards, which can have counter effects in dealing with student behavior.

This study aimed at reassessing principals' legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment to improve performance of teachers. There is need to probe the effect of teachers' empowerment and by understanding 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 behavior of the students under his or her charge (Weimer, 2014). The most influential framework of the bases of power is derived from the proposition of French and Raven, 1959; 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.

In their distinctive nature, each of these powers has its uniqueness in terms of effectiveness depending on the influence of the individual holding them and the specific task at hand. According to Mohammed (2016) in Saudi Arabia, beginner teacher experienced problems due to lack of knowledge and professionalism empowerment. The study established that lack of intensive training courses and lack of empowerment resulted in problematic classroom management for beginner language teachers. One basic outlook about power in controlling the learning environment looks at the ability of a teacher to being in a somewhat position to shape the wellbeing of a student beyond the control of such student (McCroskey & Richmond, 2017). Despite this being the case generally in many situations, it is the students who on the other hand accept the teacher's social power to affect their behavior in the classroom without compulsion. (Sedova, Sedlacek & Svaricek, 2016).

McCroskey and Richmond (2017) in their work Nonverbal Behavior 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 comparative 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, Cheong and Stuart (2018) in a qualitative study carried out in Chenai, India, on teacher training in managing behaviors of male students, challenging behavior was reported to be a common problem owing to nonexistence of empowerment. That work clarified that teachers received inadequate training and empowerment and that the existing national training programme did not prioritize on this area. The existing literature illuminated on the problem of student behaviour management and the form of skills that teachers require for the purpose of fostering in their students' positive behavior and subsequent effectiveness in classroom control. Irwin, Anamuah-Mensah and Aboagye (2015) study conducted in Ghana explored about teachers' views about classroom

behavior and the part played by culture in building learners' behavior.

In Senegal, Ndour, Diop and Ndiaye (2014) 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 – BREDA (2017) conducted a comparative study in Sub-Sahara 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 Kenya, Ouma et al (2013) did an investigation in Kisumu City on the managing 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, financial 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 were parts of school administrators' personal power for addressing behaviour in classroom managing 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.

2. Literature Review

Referenced in Raven (1965) as "legal" or "assigned" power, this power base derives from the role that teachers are legally given in classroom. In the learning environment, the power is founded on the teachers' appreciation about the right their principal possesses based on their position or function, to make demands about various issues in class. Largely, in class, this power base is associated with those everyday teacher's responsibilities, such as time and routine control, control of social interactions, making decisions on what subject to be studied and so on. However, this kind of principal power may not necessarily be applicable at any other time such as when teachers and students are not in school. Based on their perception about the principals' roles, teachers anticipate that principals commanded a certain level of authority over their lives in the school environment. The principals exercise their authority over the teachers even in their classrooms in controlling the learning environment, making decisions on lesson and subject priority, assignments to be completed and the standards to be upheld for improved academic performance.

Teachers easily comply with the principals' decision if they are in agreement with descriptions about functions or roles that the principal is legitimately, based on his/her position is supposed to play. According to Raven and Bertram (2013), Zur (2013) and Prescott (2015) legitimate power or legal power denotes the personal power held by an individual over other people, owing to the positions designated to such an individual through a formal or legitimate process. Essentially, it is a form of power deriving from an individual's legal or elected position. The manager was supposed to possess leadership skills to maintain this type of power. In Kenyan situation and in Garissa County in particular, principals are amongst other leaders who have legitimate power since it has been conferred to them either by the employer and legally given them to conduct teachers' leadership and manage the teachers' activities in schools by empowering them to share their power especially in problem solving skills.

It is agreed that the principals have the power to empower teachers using this legitimate power as they are already given powers to do so by the legal bodies such as the Teachers' Service Commission. They may extend the same power through delegation. They may give teachers some of their powers legally without any question. Once this is done, teachers may feel part and parcel of the school system hence feel that they should work hard in producing better academic outcomes. The principals, in virtue of their positions, they were supposed to possess authority and control over their institutions. It is the work

of the principals to note that they are legally owners of the schools and they should utilize this power wisely to enable teachers' motivation hence good performance. They were supposed to be the key decision makers in the schools and they could care to delegate some of these powers to the teachers to empower them and in turn, get better academic outcomes.

Shindler (2015) argued that principals have a certain level of power by virtue of the positions they have as principals. In school governance, principals are placed in positions of power through their roles and functions for the purpose of managing teachers in their teaching work. So, this power is ostensibly just there by virtue of the principals' responsibility and is not necessarily earned. Instead, it is just given to them irrespective of whether they asked for it or no. Principals have this power based on their roles since no one else can perform a principal's responsibility in the school. In addition to their roles as leaders, principals are the authority sanctioned for teacher empowerment and control. Conversely, position power, unlike other forms, exists by default based on one's responsibilities and is not necessarily earned or worked for. The principals should take advantage of this power and use it to motivate teachers and empower them likewise by sharing the same power with the juniors. They may delegate some of this power to teachers thus, empowering them.

However, individuals can succeed or fail in projecting how much they deserve their roles. Such is common with substitute or newly assigned principals, who may expect and even demand to be respected, which they usually achieve. Positional power may as a matter of fact be derived from a contract, but it can be anticipated through portrayal of confidence and in a legitimate environment. Otherwise, expecting results when one is full of feelings of illegitimacy and doubtfulness about the position they hold can only result to limitation of their positional power. In the same vein, use of legitimate power has also been associated with better teachers' empowerment management and learners' conflicts in school which is imperative in the context of good learning in secondary schools. This is reaffirmed in the approach inhibition theory that power transforms peoples' behavior and that perceived power results in diverse positive outcomes.

Similarly, Riasi (2016) in Iran, established that use of legitimate power by principals has positive effect on accommodating and collaborating strategies of teachers' conflict management. This concurs with the education ministry Guyana (2013) that effective teacher empowerment entails approach that offers practical and rule-based learning environment for successful learning. However, studies have also shown that overuse of legitimate power by the principals can result to negative

effects on the teachers' empowerment. According to Aslanargun (2014) in a Turkish investigation, it was found that while legitimate power is seen to be the most preferred, overusing it can result to resistance and dissatisfaction, unless it is supported by expertise.

On the same view, Altinkurt and Yilmaz (2017) in an investigation done in Kutahya, Turkey, suggested that to realize a more encouraging classroom climate, principals should empower teachers who should rely more on reward, expert and referent power bases and less on positional powers such as coercive and legitimate power.

Principals can apply various types of power in teacher empowerment. According to Tauber (2016) on power bases, principals as managers of their schools can apply any of the forms of power, as presented by French and Raven (1959). This corroborates Stoyanova and Ivantchev (2016) in Bulgaria where principals and instructional specialty students were found to be more syncretic in combining various bases of power as opposed to applying a solitary base of power.

In legitimate power, teachers have expectations that principals have authority over them and they can share with them the same. This is due to the fact that it is the principal who determines what teachers could do, the type of duties they have to complete and the standards they are supposed to attain after empowering them. By accepting these definitions of principals' roles, the teachers get to comply with the principals' guidance even without choice. Tauber (2016) also noted that classroom discipline was a necessity for quality teaching and learning and teachers' effectiveness was determined by students' perception if teachers were well empowered by their principals. The review also divulged that mostly principals tended to overlook conscious use of legitimate power and the relative advantages associated with it.

Johnson (2016) notes that in order to effectively manage teachers' teaching process, principals needed to first establish relationships, set behavioral standards and influence on time without misusing the power they had as legal leaders because this could negatively influence teaching and learning. Thus, more research is necessary to establish how exercising authority, teacher empowerment and maintaining orderliness would impact on adhering to classroom rules and routines, or pupils' behavior in secondary schools in Garissa County. Legitimate power is sometimes associated with coercive power which gives a teacher the ability to have control over activities that take place in classroom teaching times as viewed by (Weimer, 2014). While principals' legitimate power can be an effective tool in maintaining discipline among the teachers and students in the class, its use should be limited to only serious cases of insubordination due to the intimidation factor associated

with it (George, 2018). Behavioural theorists have emphasized on lack of use of force or coercion, intimidation and other negative actions from the teachers to learners during classroom management. Once teachers have been empowered by their principals, they should avoid using force or dictatorship among the students (McLeod, 2015).

Conversely Reid and Kawash (2017) at University of Calgary in Canada, established that excessive use of anti-social powers, such as coercive and legitimate, negatively impacted on the requisites of teacher empowerment and expected outcomes such as influencing student behavior, interactions and learning performance. This is in line with Bayrak et al (2017) that principals rely less on legitimate power and coercive power compared to other bases like reward and referent power to create better teacher empowerment climate. However, Reid and Kawash (2017) study having been carried out in post-secondary settings the results may not be generalized for a secondary school setting in a county such as Garissa without caution. There was, however, need to replicate such studies in Garissa County with an anticipation of the same outcomes. The principals in the study county could have used legitimate power to empower their teachers who, in turn, would improve on the performance in the national exam. The type of power is readily available from the principals' letters of appointment by the Teachers Service Commission.

2.1 Theories

Approach Inhibition Theory of Power: this theory by Keltner and the Empowerment Theory are the two theoretical foundations upon which this study was underpinned. 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 study based on its inference regarding the outcome of power in changing teachers' state of mind and behaviors. The theory further supports the fact that principals as managers have the power to impact teaching and learning processes through various activities. Thomas Gordon's theory, on the other hand is pertinent for effective classroom management, which constitutes the studies 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 recognizes the fact that teachers have the role of organizing their classes for effective leaning, conducting assessment 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 amongst the students. Therefore, this theory was used to implicate that the principals could use various types of powers in school administration to empower teachers.

The Empowerment theory: this is a procedure whereby 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 a condition 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.

3. Methodology

Mixed method approach was applied for the study, with concurrent triangulation design being utilised as the preferred design for the purpose of cross-validation of the results. The mixed approach allowed for collection of quantitative data alongside that of qualitative information. In this respect, the researcher relied on questionnaires for the purpose of gathering quantitative data, and interviews to obtain qualitative data. The data collected was assessing the principals' power utilization on teachers 'empowerment in secondary schools. A concurrent triangulation, which is a single-phase design was applied for this study based on its practicability to implement both quantitative and qualitative methods during the same time frame. The design was preferred due to its adaptable and multifaceted nature in allowing for expansion of numerical data obtained through questionnaires on one end with non-numerical qualitative information obtained through interviews and document analysis.

For this study questionnaires were used as quantitative instruments, which were used to measure whether principals' legitimate power utilization as the dependent variable had any influence on teachers' empowerment as the independent variable indicators. The two data sets subsequently were merged by combining their two distinct results during the actual interpretation after the data collection exercise. The design was preferred for the study based on its advantage in intensifying numerical facts through the affirmation of non-numerical facts. 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 stratified randomly sampled, 330 teachers and 384 students sampled using Fisher formular. The 13 MoE/TSC officers were purposively sampled. Questionnaires for learners and teachers were used while interviewing schedule was for MoE/TSC officers and the principals. Quantitative data was 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.

4 Results and Discussion

The results were in descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and thematic analysis.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics Analysis

In this study, the researcher analyzed collected data in descriptive statistics and presented it in frequencies, tables and percentages. The data was analyzed and presented according to the study objective as it is seen underneath in the case of the first objective regarding legitimate power utilization among the principals. The data captured the indicators from the independent variables which was the principals' power utilization. The data also captured the dependent variable indicators which was teachers' empowerment. This is seen in the questionnaires whose questions balanced both independent and the dependent variables using the indicators. Frequencies and percentages were established from variables based on the five-point Likert scale seeking to examine legitimate power utilization among secondary school teachers.

The responses on this type of power were displayed in the table below for interpretation by the researcher and to be seen by the readers. This was displayed and seen in Table 1 whereby A stands for agree, SA stands for strongly agree, U stands for undecided, D stands for disagree and SD stands for strongly disagree.

Table 1: Teachers' responses in legitimate power on teachers' empowerment

	Statements	A (1)	SA (2)	U (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
A	Principals' legitimate power can influence teachers' empowerment	95	85	20	35	30
		35.8%	32.1%	7.5%	13.2%	11.3%
B	There are leadership skills in your school which influence improved performance in subjects taught/scores	150	50	05	40	20
		56.6%	18.9%	1.9%	15.1%	7.5%
C	There are problem solving skills in your school which enable improved problem solving and time management skills	40	20	50	100	55
		15.1%	7.5%	18.9%	37.7%	20.8%
D	Your school has authority and control which influences better teacher adherence to rules and authority	50	10	30	100	75
		18.9%	3.8%	11.3%	37.7%	28.3%
E	There is sound decision making which influences enhanced positive interactions/relationships	50	10	5	100	100
		18.9%	3.8%	1.9%	37.7%	37.7%

Source: The researcher, 2023

Judging from the table, legitimate power could influence teachers' empowerment as it was agreed and strongly agreed by a majority of 180 (67.9 %) with only 20 (7.5 %) undecided and the disagreeing side was 65 (24.5 %). The results indicated that the majority of teachers were in agreement that if legitimate power was used in the right direction and properly, then it could enable the school principals empower the teachers. Similarly, the indicator on leadership skills in schools could be seen from the data as 200 (75.5 %) agreed and strongly agreed with only 5 (1.9 %) undecided and those disagreeing and strongly disagreeing were 60 (22.6 %). This means leadership skills improved performance in subjects taught as well as the scores. This was a milestone to the teachers' empowerment in the schools. The participants could agree that there were strong leadership skills practiced by the principals in their schools. This meant that the teachers could have been empowered through this indicator.

Regarding the indicator on problem solving skills in the public schools, there were only 60 (22.6 %) in agreement with 50 (18.9 %) undecideds. The majority of 155 (58.5 %) were on the disagreement side. This was a clear indication that schools did not practise problem solving skills to enable teachers' empowerment. Without solving issues in schools meant a disaster on the part of the teachers and must have also affected the students' academic outcomes since the teaches were not empowered. Another indicator was authority and control to enable better teacher adherence to rules and authority. This was not seen in the schools. Responses indicated that only 60 (22.6 %) could agree and strongly agree. Another 30 (11.3 %) could not make decision. The majority of 175 (66.1 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed. The schools could not empower teachers without this indicator and thus, there was need to

improve on this matter. Schools without authority and control could not empower their teachers. Teachers without empowerment could not produce good results.

The final indicator on sound decision making to enhance positive interactions and relationship had also negative outcomes. Only 60 (22.6 %) agreed and strongly agreed with 5 (1.9 %) undecideds. There was a majority of 200 (75.5 %) who disagreed and strongly disagreed. Making proper decisions in schools could improve teachers' empowerment but this was not the case. The absence of this indicator was a testimony that decisions were not properly made. This hampered the capability of the principals in terms of teacher empowerment among the public secondary schools. There was need to improve on this study objective on legitimate power utilization to enable better schools in terms of empowering teachers. Most of the indicators were not fulfilled as it is seen from the table. In general, from the responses, there was need to apply legitimate power on the side of the principals if they were going to improve performance of the schools.

These findings from this objective were similar to many other findings by various researchers across the world. For instance, there was a study done in the Republic of Iran on legitimate power utilization. It was established that the principals' use of legitimate power had impact on the teachers. It was useful in managing conflicts among the teachers. This type of power was found to be useful if only used in the proper manner and direction (Riasi, 2016).

Responses from the students were keyed in the table below for interpretation. These responses were based on the objective indicators drawn by the researcher. Table 2 has the summary of the outcomes.

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Table 2: Students' responses in legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment

	Statements	A (1)	SA (2)	U (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
A	Principals' legitimate power can influence teachers' empowerment	240	10	20	25	05
		80.0%	3.3%	6.7%	8.3%	1.7%
B	There are leadership skills in your school which influence improved performance in subjects taught/scores	210	21	10	50	09
		70%	7.0%	3.3%	16.7%	3.0%
C	There are problem solving skills in your school which enable improved problem solving and time management skills	90	05	10	150	45
		30.0%	1.7%	3.3%	50.0%	15.0%
D	Your school has authority and control which influences better teacher adherence to rules and authority	82	10	10	190	08
		27.3%	3.3%	3.3%	63.3%	2.7%
E	There is sound decision making which influences enhanced positive interactions/relationships	75	0	0	200	25
		25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	8.3%

Source: The researcher, 2023

The fact that legitimate power influenced teachers' empowerment was not questionable. This was agreed by 250 (83.3 %) of the students. Only 20 (6.7 %) could not decide. Only 30 (10.0 %) were on the disagreement side. The results here meant that there was an agreement that among the students that legitimate power was necessary if the teachers were going to be empowered by the school principals. Consequently, leadership skills were evident as agreed and strongly agreed by a majority of 231 (77.0 %) with 10 (3.3 %) undecideds. Another 59 (19.7 %) did not agree but were though they were insignificant. The fact that teachers did not see this indicator happen could be explained in different ways. One is that the way teachers understood this indicator is not the way students understood it. Teachers have a higher level of understanding and interpretation. On the other hand, students might have interpreted this matter as the general leadership which they saw in their schools and was satisfactory; there was no complain. Finally, the teachers' might have been more critical in analyzing the leadership of their principals.

Problem solving skills could not be seen by the students, this was evident as those who agreed and strongly agreed were 95 (31.7 %) with 10 (3.3 %) undecideds. The majority

of 195 (65.0 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed. Thus, this indicator was an issue as it hampered improved problem solving and time management skills in the schools. Like their teachers, the students failed to see issues being sorted out in the right manner. There could have been poor channels of solving problems in the schools. This must have affected the way teachers worked.

Similarly, authority and control could not attract the feelings of the students. Those agreeing and strongly agreeing were 92 (30.7 %) 10 (3.3 %) undecides. The majority of 198 (66.0 %) were in total disagreement. This meant that there was neither teacher adherence to rules and authority nor teachers' empowerment according to the students. This called for improvement on this indicator to enable better schools with better performance. This indicator had similar sentiments like the ones of the teachers. Both groups agreed that there was an issue with this indicator hence hampering the empowerment of teachers among the schools.

According to the students, there was no sound decision making. This meant that there were no positive interactions and relationships in the schools. Only 75 (25.0 %) could agree to this. The majority of 225 (75.0 %) did not agree.

This was too high a percentage to be ignored. This meant that schools did not make sound decisions on matters affecting the students hence the legitimate power utilization was not seen to be working. There was agreement between the teachers and the students on this indicator. Thus, there was need to beef up this matter in the schools.

Many other researchers in legitimate power worldwide had established similar findings like these findings here in this current study. In school leadership, the heads are in positions of power by their responsibilities. They have power from the employer. The roles are not earned but given by their virtue of being heads. It was established that the principals could then empower teachers using their legitimate powers if they wished to do that (Shindler, 2015).

4.2 Inferential Statistics Analysis

The researcher conducted Chi-square test to determine if there was any significant relationship between the variables from the SPSS programme version 24. This was used particularly to examine if there was significant relationship between legitimate power utilization and teachers' empowerment. The results were seen as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Chi-square test on legitimate power utilization on empowerment of teachers

Test Statistics

Chi-Square	.600[a]	.600[a]	.600[a]	1.600[b]	.000[c]
df	3	3	3	2	4
Asymp. Sig.	**.896**	**.896**	**.896**	**.449**	**1.000**

a. 4 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.3.
b. 3 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.7.
c. 5 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.0. **Average 0.8274**

Source: The researcher, 2023

Participants' responses in principals' legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment were keyed in SPSS in the Chi-square test and the generated average result was **0.8274** for all cases. This outcome was greater than the normal α value of **0.05**. The null hypothesis formulated was: *Ho There is no significant relationship between principals' legitimate power utilization and teachers' empowerment*. Since Chi-square calculated value was greater than the critical value, then the null hypothesis was rejected. In this case, the average calculated value was 0.8274 which was greater than the Chi-square critical value of 0.05 and consequently, the null hypothesis had to be rejected. From the table, average of 0.8274 was > than 0.05. The Chi-square test showed that there was a significant relationship between principals' legitimate power utilization and teachers' empowerment. If this power was utilized properly, then, the empowerment of teachers could have been realized. It was upon the principals to know how best they could make use of this power in order to empower their teachers in the public secondary schools in Garissa County.

Principals' legitimate power was, no doubt, an essential element in managing good and desirable teachers' empowerment. The inferential statistics findings were in agreement with Bayrak, Altinkurt and Yilmaz (2017). In their research done in the Republic of Turkey, on the same view, it was suggested that to realize a more positive classroom climate, teachers had to rely more on reward, expert, and referent power bases and less on positional powers such as coercive and legitimate power. The study had positive remarks on the use of legitimate power though it should not have been the only power to be used by principals in the schools. Thus, careful use of this power was imperative if the teachers were going to be empowered. Poor use of this power, no doubt, was one of the culprits why performance was low among public secondary schools in Garissa County and hence this study in the endeavour to look for workable solutions.

4.3 Thematic Analysis

Regarding principals' legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment, the investigator prepared and organized data gathered from the field interviews. There were principals during the qualitative data collection who were thoroughly interviewed on this objective. The data was prepared and organized, reviewed and explored several times and then initial codes were created. These codes were reviewed and combined into themes. The

themes were presented in a cohesive manner as seen below in the narratives and the verbatim citations.

To gather information about legitimate power utilization on teachers' empowerment, leadership and problem-solving skills were examined. Similarly, the use of authority and control as well decision making were other indicators dealt with. Generally, it was acceptable that if the principals used legitimate power, they could influence teachers' empowerment as one of the principals observed,

> "*As heads of schools, we have the appointment power once we get promotion letters. Nobody can question our legality in the posts of headship. I believe that if this power is used properly, there would be teachers' empowerment and we would see better results from the teachers and students*" (**PR1**).

There was evidence of principals' use of skills during their management. Leadership skills were employed in most schools. This view was different from the quantitative data one reason being that the principals might have been defending themselves. However, one of the principals agreed,

> "*You cannot survive without being skillful in leadership. The promotion to this post comes along with the capabilities of the heads. One has to be a deputy and demonstrate that there are leadership elements in his work. you have to be skillful*" (**PR2**).

Regarding the problem-solving skills, the idea might have not been clear to the principals. There was a problem of the nature of problems and the modalities used to solve such problems as one principal observed,
> "*We have various issues that come about during execution of our duties. There is no accurate way of measuring our ability in handling problems of students, teachers and the support staff. The skills are complicated and for that matter, principals have their own ways of doing things. We can only say that we try our level best*" (**PR3**).

There was limited authority and control among the principals. The fact remained that they had to share power with the teachers and student leaders. Too much control would be detrimental as it might have turned to too much of dictatorship. Displaying too much authority was also harmful as one principal noted,

> "*We avoid too much control and too much authority. We may then, say that our hands are tied down. The way principals used to demonstrate power in the old days is not the same*

we can apply today. We fear too much of dictatorship among this current generation. We have to be careful the way we handle issues today" (**PR4**).

The issue of making decisions was complex. There were times principals could not decide without consulting the teachers and students' leaders. There was no way one could claim to have been successful in making sound decisions as one of the participants said,

> "*It is very difficult to claim that we have succeeded in making sound decisions. First of all, we may ask ourselves the type of decisions and to who. We have no single way of deciding on the matters affecting teachers, students and support staff. I have always tried to be consultative*" (**PR5**)

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the researcher made conclusions and recommendations as seen below.

5.1 Conclusion

The conclusions of this research were based on the findings which were found by the investigator during the data analysis. This included looking into the indicators of both independent and dependent variables. This is shown below for each objective of the study that was analyzed.

The study concluded that legitimate power could influence teachers' empowerment if applied well in the institutions. Further, it was concluded that most schools had good leadership skills applied by the principals. However, there was a conclusion that the problem-solving skills were not done well among the schools. This could have contributed to the poor performance in Garissa County. Authority and control were also not well done and so, it was concluded that these should be beefed up. There was also poor decision-making among the schools and therefore, concluding that this indicator be improved to enable better learning outcomes. Regarding the inferential statistics, it was concluded that there was significant relationship between principals' legitimate power utilization and teachers' empowerment as the Chi-square calculated value was greater than the critical value. So, this objective could not be ignored. It was concluded further that the thematic analysis of results concurred with both the descriptive and inferential statistics analyses. The final conclusion was that legitimate power was not applied effectively among the schools investigated. Most of the indicators for the legitimate power were not seen during the study. Indeed, it was only one indicator on leadership skills that could be found. therefore, there was need for the principals to exercise this power to empower the teachers. Once the

teachers were empowered, then, they could produce better results through thorough teaching and learning. This power was given to the principals by the virtue of being school heads with authority from the Government through the Teachers' Service Commission. Further conclusion was that this poor achievement in this study objective could have been a cause why most schools performed poorly in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the researcher recommended

1. The Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association as stakeholders, can arrange for seminars to improve on leadership skills of the school administrators.

2. All school principals should have expertise power for better management of schools. There is need for the principals to beef up legitimate power themselves since it is about the way they behave that will enable their charismatic leadership.

3. That 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 school-based basis.

4. The researcher recommended that the following additional areas of study established by the study be undertaken: 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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