



The Role of Principals' Communication on Teachers' Self-efficacy in Public Secondary Schools in Westlands Constituency - Nairobi City County, Kenya

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Abstract: This study aimed to examine how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency- Nairobi County, Kenya. The study is anchored on Maslow's Theory of Motivation. Mixed method approach with a concurrent mixed design was used. The target population was 14 public secondary schools, 14 principals, 14 deputy principals, and 322 teachers. Stratified proportionate and simple random sampling was used to select schools and teachers while purposive sampling was used for principals and deputy principals. The researcher sampled 5 schools, 5 principals, 5 deputy principals, and 98 teachers. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews guide were used for data collection. The validity and reliability of the quantitative instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha to ascertain the internal consistency. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics and results presented using tables. The qualitative data were thematically analysed. Spearman rho was used to establish the relationships between variables as well as test the null hypothesis. The researcher ensured ethics throughout the process. The study established that principals' leadership practices of communication significantly and positively influence teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools. Communication demonstrated the strongest effect ($\rho = +0.719$, $p < 0.05$), highlighting the core role of supportive dialogue in enhancing teacher confidence, competence, and effectiveness. This study recommends that the Ministry of Education should develop policies and targeted training programmes that equip school leaders with skills in effective communication and motivation and that the Ministry and relevant education authorities should develop policies that institutionalize continuous professional development for teachers.

Keywords: Principals' Leadership, Communication, Competence, Effectiveness, Motivation and Professional Development

1.1 Background of the study

Leadership is an influential process that leads to the achievement of predetermined purposes, for this reason, school leaders can never escape the salient place they occupy in the school management. As opined by Ndirangu, L. W., & Mungai, J. G. (2024), school leaders influence their followers by using their leadership ability to raise others to achieve the goal by empowering their followers not necessarily by domination but through making the best use of their efforts towards a goal. While reiterating the same idea in the education sector Winn et al. (2021) observed that second only to teaching, leadership is the most crucial element in education, and therefore,

effective leaders are the key to meaningful teacher support and development which lead to efficacious teachers.

Research confirms the indispensable role of school leadership in enhancing educational outcomes and fostering effective communication across all school levels. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO (2016) emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development for school leaders, promoting leadership standards, and establishing clear career paths for aspiring principals highlighting that effective school leadership and communication are crucial for achieving inclusive and equitable quality education. It is evident that other studies have shown the place of principals' leadership and communication in ensuring the quality of education. Nasir et al. (2022) carried out research on principal leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and commitment to students. The study confirmed that although education receives substantial government and community investment, students' academic performance and skill acquisition have not met stakeholders' expectations. This has led to discouragement among students, particularly after completing Grade 10. They observed that the moderate quality of education in the Maldives requires transformation, especially to meet the demands of industrial revolutions. School principals are positioned as key leaders capable of driving this change by fostering communication and supporting teachers, whose self-efficacy is essential for tackling complex tasks and improving student outcomes. Principal leadership, strengthened by clear communication, is central to enhancing teacher self-efficacy, which in turn impacts overall educational quality.

A separate study was conducted by Kara et al. (2022) in Turkey to investigate teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, communication, and classroom practices and their impact on student performance and learning. This study aimed to highlight the mediating role of teacher self-efficacy and effective communication in the relationship between students' perceptions of learning experiences and teachers' perceptions of 21st-century skills efficacy. The research results revealed that teacher self-efficacy has a full mediating effect between students' perceptions of learning experience and teachers' perceptions of 21st-century skills competence. In other words, students' perceptions of learning experience are significant predictors of teacher self-efficacy. Moreover, the study also revealed that teachers' professional autonomy and communication significantly predicted teachers' perception of 21st-century skills competence.

Other scholars noted that principals' leadership behaviours, including their communication skills, have a great impact on teachers' self-efficacy (TSE). Among such studies is the one conducted in the USA by Bellibas and Liu (2017) to investigate the extent to which principals' instructional leadership and communication predict TSE in classroom management, instruction, and student management. The results demonstrated a significant and positive relationship between principals' perceived instructional leadership, effective communication practices, and teacher efficacy in classroom management, instruction, and student engagement. The study recommended that strong instructional leadership and open communication in schools help teachers develop a greater sense of ability in classroom management, instruction, and student engagement.

In their study carried out in Nigeria using a sample of 389 teachers in public secondary schools to investigate the impact of principals' instructional leadership practices on secondary school

teachers' effectiveness, Bada et al. (2020) indicate that instructional leadership (defining the school mission, managing instructional programmes, and developing a positive school learning climate) is significantly and positively associated with teachers' effectiveness. The study further emphasized that school principals should focus more on instructional leadership practices that relate to teaching and learning in order to improve teachers' effectiveness.

Kenya is also facing the challenge of low TSE which has continued to characterize most learning institutions (Odanga & Aloka, 2022). In Kisumu County for instance, levels of teacher efficacy were low despite its importance on students' academic performance. A study was conducted by Odanga et al. (2022) to investigate the effects of teaching experience on TSE in Kenyan secondary schools using a sequential explanatory design within the mixed method approach, and teacher efficacy scale. The scale consisted of 24 items that measure the three domains of efficacy; student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies. The results demonstrated that the effect of experience on teachers' self-efficacy was significant. The study concluded that Teachers Service Commission should maximize the use of experienced teachers as resource persons.

Studies in Nairobi County show that TSE was underlined as playing a crucial role in managing and modifying problem behaviours affectively. Study conducted by Otieno (2023) explored teachers perceived self-efficacy in addressing problem behaviours among high school students in Nairobi County. The research findings were that teachers with high level of SE demonstrated proactive and constructive approach to behaviour management, thereby fostering a positive learning environment whereas teachers with low SE struggled to implement effective strategies, leading to potential challenges in maintaining classroom order and student engagement. Additionally, teachers who received professional development in classroom management and behaviour modification techniques exhibited higher efficacy in dealing with challenging student behaviours through open communication and positive reinforcement. The study concluded that implementing targeted interventions to boost teachers' confidence in addressing problem behaviours can contribute to the academic success and well-being of both teachers and students.

Mutune et al. (2019) conducted a study in Nairobi with the purpose of establishing the influence of headteachers' supportive leadership practices on teachers' job satisfaction in Catholic private primary schools. The results revealed that head teachers' supportive leadership practices had a positive significant influence on teachers' job satisfaction thereby recommending school heads to integrate supportive leadership practices like approachability in the execution of other leadership practices and create a caring and supportive environment that enhances supportive relationships. In Westlands Constituency, a study was conducted by Asava (2021). The aims of the study were threefold; to identify how teachers can use learning-centred teaching to implement a skill-based curriculum, to investigate the influence of teachers' use of teaching and learning materials, and to evaluate the use of practical experience by teachers to implement a skill-based curriculum. The results showed that most instructors are challenged in the implementation of key competencies in teaching, learning and communication, and in their visual communication techniques. The study therefore identified a gap in the teachers' effectiveness and recommended in service training for teacher pedagogies which will make it possible for teachers to apply CBC efficiently in order to promote essential curricular skills. Considering the above studies, it is evident that principals are

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Abstract: This study aimed to examine how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy secondary schools in Westlands Constituency- Nairobi County, Kenya. The study is anchored on Maslow's Motivation. Mixed method approach with a concurrent mixed design was used. The target population was secondary schools, 14 principals, 14 deputy principals, and 322 teachers. Stratified proportionate and simple sampling was used to select schools and teachers while purposive sampling was used for principals and deputy principals. The researcher sampled 5 schools, 5 principals, 5 deputy principals, and 98 teachers. Questionnaire and in-depth interviews guide were used for data collection. The validity and reliability of the quantitative instrument established using Cronbach's alpha to ascertain the internal consistency. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and results presented using tables. The qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Spearman rho was used to establish the relationships between variables as well as test the null hypothesis. The researcher ensured ethics throughout the process. The study established that principals' leadership and communication significantly and positively influence teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools. Communication demonstrated the strongest effect ($\rho = +0.719, p < 0.05$), highlighting the core role of communication in enhancing teacher confidence, competence, and effectiveness. This study recommends that the Ministry of Education should develop policies and targeted training programmes that equip school leaders with skills in communication and motivation and that the Ministry and relevant education authorities should develop policies to institutionalize continuous professional development for teachers.

Keywords: Principals' Leadership, Communication, Competence, Effectiveness, Motivation and Professional Development

1.1 Background of the study

Leadership is an influential process that leads to the achievement of predetermined purposes, for this reason, school leaders can never escape the salient place they occupy in the school management. As opined by Ndirangu, L. W., & Mungai, J. G. (2024), school leaders influence their followers by using their leadership ability to raise others to achieve the goal by empowering their followers not necessarily by domination but through making the best use of their efforts towards a goal. While reiterating the same idea in the education sector Winn et al. (2021) observed

ered to have a great managerial responsibility and are influential on many schools' organizational components particularly increasing TSE (Engin, 2020). Therefore, the current research seeks to determine how principals' practices of delegating of duties, teacher motivation, teacher professional development, and communication influence TSE in public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Studies confirmed, over the past four decades, teachers' self-efficacy (TSE) has become an important area of educational research (Zee & Koomen, 2016; Berg & Smith, 2016), with numerous studies emphasizing that principals' strategic roles and communication practices significantly influence TSE (Wang et al., 2022). Glanzi (2022) further observes that school principals, through effective leadership and open communication, impact many organizational dimensions, including the development of teachers' self-efficacy (Atasoy, 2020). Such communication fosters confidence, resilience, and teachers' willingness to embrace challenging tasks successfully (Cherry, 2020; Chen & Rong, 2023). Supporting this view, Wang et al. (2022) affirm that teachers with high self-efficacy often nurtured through supportive communication and feedback from principals positively influence students' academic achievement. Despite teachers' critical role in ensuring quality education, many still experience low self-efficacy, which limits their instructional effectiveness. Studies in Nairobi and Kiambu Counties revealed that several pre-school teachers exhibited low self-efficacy, weakening their classroom management and instructional practices (Kihoro & Bunyi, 2020). Similarly, in Western Kenya, inadequate teacher efficacy constrained the successful implementation of Competency-Based Assessment (Macheso, Wafula, & Kati, 2024). Otieno (2023) also noted that teachers in Nairobi reported low confidence in addressing complex student behaviour, which affected their classroom management and communication. In Westlands Constituency, low teachers' self-efficacy has similarly jeopardized educational quality. Asava (2021) found that many instructors struggled with implementing key competencies in teaching, learning, and communication particularly in visual communication techniques hindering effective instruction. These findings confirm that low teacher self-efficacy remains a persistent challenge affecting education quality across Kenya, including in Westlands Constituency. Evidence from prior studies highlights that principals' communication and leadership practices are central to shaping teachers' self-belief and professional growth, which directly influence student outcomes (Sila, 2023). Effective communication from principals fosters collaboration, transparency, and trust, empowering teachers to perform confidently and innovatively. Conversely, lack of communication or unclear feedback often leads to low morale, reduced motivation, and weak instructional outcomes. Therefore, this study in Westlands Constituency seeks to examine how principals' communication alongside teacher motivation, delegation of duties, and professional development affects teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools.

1.3 The Study Objective

This study was guided by the following objective:

To examine how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency- Nairobi County, Kenya

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study sought to highlight the principals' leadership practices that lead to teacher self-efficacy. Therefore, the study is anticipated to contribute to the already existing literature that can serve as a guide to the Kenya Ministry of Education (MoE) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to produce documents that can enhance programmes at school level for the purpose of supporting

principals' administrative practices for the benefit of teachers and learners. Since achievement of educational goals is a collective responsibility, the research may offer insightful information to educators, administrators, as well as policy makers at the school level and beyond on the best practices that would enhance creation of an efficient teacher performance. Besides, the study may be beneficial to the researcher who being in the field of education, will gain knowledge on the most feasible practices that enhance quality leadership. Other researchers can also benefit from the wealth of information.

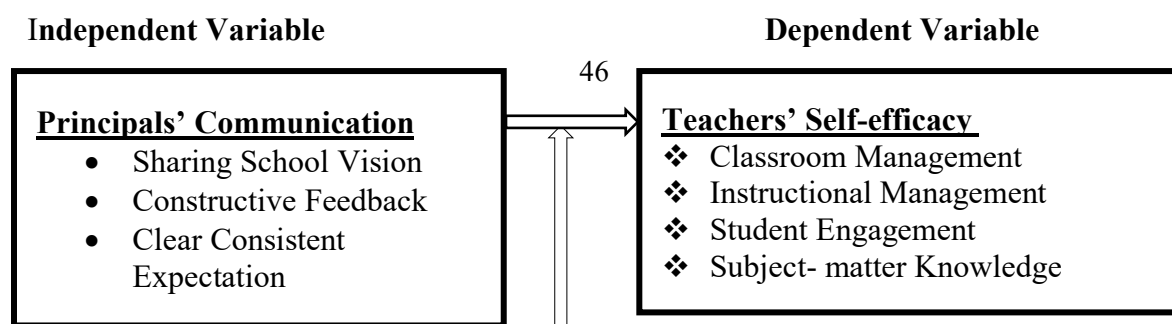
Besides, the schools used for the study may also directly benefit from the research by applying the findings to address the already existing gaps through enhanced and feasible practices. In addition, it can benefit the parents since efficacious teachers will positively influence the academic as well as overall performance of the learners. Moreover, the study may directly benefit the teachers since the principals may use the ideas and principles advanced in this research to boost teachers' self-efficacy through the recommended leadership practices. In addition, the study is anticipated to benefit the learners who are at the centre of all learning activities since principals' use of delegation, motivation, professional development, as well as communication on teachers will enhance teachers' self-efficacy, a quality that enables them to manage teaching and learning for the benefit of the learners and for their own self-actualization. Lastly, the research may open doors for further studies.

1.5 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The study aimed to examine how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency- Nairobi County, Kenya. The target population included principals, who are responsible for these leadership practices, as well as deputy principals, who assist in these roles, and teachers, who implement the curriculum and interact with students. Students were excluded from the study since the focus was specifically on the relationship between principals' leadership practices and teachers' self-efficacy. While students could provide insights, they do not have the depth of experience needed to assess the professional dynamics affecting teachers. Thus, their inclusion would not yield relevant data for this specific study.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a visual diagram that illustrates how different variables are connected, including the independent, intervening, and dependent variables in the study. It depicts how the variables are related to one another (Rustamov et al., 2023). The study's methodological structure focused on the idea on how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy. Figure 1 shows the relationship among the variables.



1.7 Literature review

In this section, the theoretical framework and empirical review are presented.

1.7.1 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Maslow's Theory of Motivation, developed by Abraham Maslow in 1943, is a foundational framework in human motivation and psychology. It asserts that individuals are driven to satisfy their needs, with three key assumptions: there is always an unmet need, fulfilled needs lose their urgency, and needs are organized in a hierarchy of priority (Putri et al., 2024; Shikalepo, 2020). According to this theory, basic psychological needs such as shelter, food, and health must be met before higher-level needs like belonging, esteem, and self-actualization can be addressed (Kombo & Tromp, 2018). In relation to how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy, effective communication from school leaders can help fulfill teachers' esteem needs, which are crucial for their sense of value and contribution. When principals acknowledge and appreciate teachers' efforts, it enhances their self-esteem and confidence, reinforcing their self-efficacy. Conversely, insufficient recognition can lead to feelings of inferiority, undermining self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, principals' communication plays a vital role in shaping teachers' self-efficacy by addressing their fundamental needs for respect and appreciation.

Maslow's Theory of Motivation offers valuable insights for understanding how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy. The theory provides a framework for identifying the factors that drive individuals' behaviors, making it useful for creating motivating work environments and designing productivity-enhancing programs (Bandhu et al., 2024). Its holistic approach integrates physiological, psychological, and self-fulfillment needs, allowing principals to address various motivating elements relevant to teachers at different stages of their careers. The simplicity and clarity of the needs pyramid make it easy for principals to apply the theory in educational settings, helping them meet teachers' basic needs while progressively focusing on

higher-order goals. By fostering an environment that prioritizes self-actualization and human potential, Maslow's theory encourages self-improvement and continuous personal development, which are essential for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy (Gross et al., 2022). Ultimately, effective communication from principals can help fulfill these needs, reinforcing teachers' confidence and commitment to their roles.

However, critics of Maslow's Theory of Motivation argue that the concept of self-actualization lacks scientific proof, and the hierarchical nature of needs is unrealistic. Shikalepo (2020) points out that needs are socially acquired and can vary significantly across different races, cultures, and groups, making empirical testing and generalization challenging. Additionally, people may prioritize different needs at different times, suggesting that the theory's strict hierarchy does not reflect reality (Paaish & Pattiruhu, 2020). The idea that individuals must satisfy lower-level needs before moving to higher ones has also received little support, as people can fulfill multiple needs simultaneously. Furthermore, a secondary need for one individual may be a primary need for another; for instance, the need for acceptance may outweigh basic physiological needs like food (Putri et al., 2024). Despite these weaknesses, Maslow's framework can guide principals toward better motivational practices, as it offers insights for enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in education.

Maslow's Theory of Motivation is appropriate for this study because it empowers school principals to address the diverse needs of teachers, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy and overall performance. The elements of this theory align closely with the variables in this study, including principals' communication practices, teacher motivation, delegation of responsibilities, and professional development. By acknowledging and addressing the varying needs of teachers, principals can foster an environment that promotes appreciation and recognition, which are vital for building self-confidence. Furthermore, the theory's emphasis on fulfilling basic needs before higher-order needs provides a framework for principals to create a supportive atmosphere where teachers feel valued and capable. This supportive environment encourages teachers to engage more fully in their professional roles, ultimately improving instructional practices and student outcomes. Thus, Maslow's Theory of Motivation serves as a valuable guide for school principals in establishing effective leadership practices that cultivate teacher motivation and self-efficacy. It is particularly relevant for evaluating how principals' communication and leadership influence teachers' confidence and commitment in public secondary schools.

1.7.2 Empirical review

Effective communication by principals plays a pivotal role in fostering a collaborative environment among teachers, thereby boosting their collective belief in their ability to positively impact student learning and school success. Practices such as clarity of vision, supportive feedback mechanisms, and inclusive decision-making processes can contribute to the development and sustainability of TSE within secondary school setting. Systematic study was carried out by Tamadoni et al. (2024) on contextual challenges facing school principals. The study adopted a descriptive quantitative systematic review to analyze 169 related studies between the year 2001- 2020 focusing on the challenges faced by principals and research-informed coping solutions for such challenges. The study identified 734 contextual challenges; challenges related to principals' roles and actions was 31%, institutional contexts was 24%, socio-cultural contexts was 11%, while stake holders and parents were 3.4% and 5.2% respectively.

Further contextual challenges were those related to leading the staff (6%), teachers (7.9%) and finally those concerns about student performance (11.2%). The research recommended the need to modify leadership preparation programmes in a context sensitive manner, active participation of all stakeholders in setting school targets as well as methods for achieving them, and creating a supportive culture that encourages mutual progressive trust between different bodies such as government, local communities and school principals. This involves principals actively engaging in communication to set school targets and methods for achieving them. While the reviewed study used quantitative research method, the current study used both qualitative and quantitative so as to ensure that in-depth information has been garnered to enrich the findings. Additionally, the above studies have expounded on the challenges faced by the school principals however, the present study has sought to address this gap by identifying how principal communication practices influence the efficiency of the teachers in public secondary schools.

Winn et al. (2021) conducted a study in the USA to examine the relationship between principals' leadership practices and teachers' efficacy. Using a mixed-method study, 144 teacher participants from schools located in an urban school district, responded to a 36-item survey instrument as well as participated in an interview to measure and assess teacher effectiveness and efficacy as well as leadership behaviours of their principals. The results revealed a statistically significant relationship between TSE and principals' leadership behaviours including communication behaviours. The study highlighted that effective communication from principals can positively impact teachers' self-confidence and effectiveness, noting that teachers' knowledge of the vision for the school was important since it is an essential aspect of forecasting the future and giving a sense of direction for all members of the school community. Similarly, having a strong vision provides teachers with a sense of direction for all members of the school community. While the above study was conducted in the USA, the current study was conducted in Westlands Constituency of Nairobi County- Kenya to close the geographical gap.

While emphasizing the critical role of the principal professional development in enhancing school performance in the USA, study was conducted by Steinberg and Yalçinkaya et al. (2021) to assess if professional development improves schooling outcomes. The study used Pennsylvania's Inspired Leadership (PIL) induction programme. The programme required that new principals undergo targeted professional development aligned with state leadership standards. Using panel data and various analytical strategies, the study found out that PIL induction improved student Mathematics achievement by enhancing teacher effectiveness, especially in economically disadvantaged urban schools. The study revealed that the impact was strongest when principals were able to complete the programme within their first two years. Additionally, teacher turn-over decreased post-induction. The study highlights that effective communication skills and leadership by principals, fostered through such development programmes, positively influence TSE and student achievement, particularly in economically disadvantaged urban schools. Further, it showed the need for structured and context-sensitive induction programmes to address the varying challenges faced by school principals. This study was conducted in a geographically different area with a different educational system from that of Kenya. Though the above findings may shed light on the current study, the researcher closed the contextual gap by carrying this study in Westlands Constituency in Nairobi, Kenya.

In Indonesia, Simatupang et al. (2024) carried out a literature review examining communication strategies of school principals for effective school management, emphasizing the critical role of school principals. The findings show that education is fundamental for individual and societal development, yet

there is a gap between community expectations and expert evaluations of educational quality. The study observed that principals are pivotal in addressing these challenges through clear educational objectives, structured learning approaches, and inclusive stakeholder engagement while effective communication was underlined as essential for organizational coherence and achieving educational goals. The review advocates for customized communication strategies by school principals to enhance management effectiveness, contributing to the discourse on education leadership and management practices in Indonesia. While this study focused on the place of communication for effective management of schools, the researcher in the current study focused on how principals' communication enhances TSE which in turn enhances school success thereby addressing the knowledge gap.

A separate study was conducted in Indonesia by Ubaidillah et al. (2024) which aimed at determining school communication planning in improving teacher performance. The study used a qualitative approach with a multi-case design. Data were collected using in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data were analysed using Miles Huberman model of data presentation, data condensation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that communication planning will improve teacher performance if it is carried out at the beginning of each year. Other means include incidental and routine planning, problem-solving, one-way and two-way communication, individual, group coaching, and internal school meetings- both formal and informal were among the recommended strategies. As such, principals were seen as instrumental in establishing good communication so as to create a conducive work climate, effective work mechanisms, and involve all related elements in the school.

Research was conducted in Turkey by Ozeren et al. (2020) to investigate the relationship between teachers' perception of school principals' motivating language and teachers' self- efficacy mediated by cultural context. A survey method was applied with 252 teachers who were selected through convenience sampling. Motivating language theory was employed since it provides a model that helps to understand how the language, precisely the speech acts used by school principals impact on TSE. The results showed that the principals' use of motivating language was significantly and positively associated with TSE while the low- context culture was found to have full mediating effect in this relationship. The reviewed study focused on verbal language while the current one focuses on other elements of communication; namely sharing school vision, constructive feedback, and expressing clear consistent expectations.

In Germany, Meyer et al. (2022) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between principal leadership and teacher collaboration while investigating the mediating effect of teachers' collective efficacy. Data was collected from 630 teachers in 29 primary schools. The results showed that principals considered themselves as school administrators than school leaders who should foster school improvement thereby using only a small amount of their time for school improvement. However, the principals expressed high need for their professional development so as to enhance their leadership skills. The study suggested that principals need specific skills so as to be able to engage more in instructional and staff development. This study underscores the importance of communication practices as a critical skill for principals. By effectively communicating, principals can enhance teacher collaboration and boost teachers' collective efficacy, leading to a more collaborative and effective educational environment. The study focused on primary school principals' communication skills without showing how such skills will influence TSE. In the current study, therefore, the researcher addressed this gap by

researching how principals' communication influences TSE in public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency in Nairobi County, Kenya. Additionally, while the reviewed study employed no theory, the current study applied Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs to address the theoretical gap.

A study was also conducted in Nigeria by Bada et al. (2024) to examine the impact of principals' instructional leadership practices on teachers' effectiveness. It surveyed 389 teachers across 18 public secondary schools using the Principal Management Rating Scale and the Virgilio Teacher Behaviour Inventory. Results revealed a significant positive association between instructional leadership, such as defining school mission, managing instructional programmes and fostering a positive learning climate, and teachers' effectiveness. The study suggested that stakeholders in education can enhance teachers' effectiveness by focusing on principals' instructional leadership. Moreover, the principals in turn, should prioritize instructional leadership practices related to teaching and learning to improve overall effectiveness. The study highlighted the critical role of principals' instructional practices, which are closely tied to effective communication skills. By communicating clearly, providing support, and fostering a collaborative environment, principals can enhance teachers' effectiveness and contribute to higher levels of teachers' efficacy in improving overall educational outcomes. The reviewed study strengthened and even clarified the findings of this present study.

In Africa, the results of principals' leadership practices were highlighted. A study that aimed at investigating varied challenges that principals face in an attempt to improve secondary schools in Oromia Regional State in Ethiopia was carried out by Keno (2020). Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected using semi-structured interview guides and focus group discussions. The study employed clustering, stratified, random, as well as purposive sampling techniques to select 6 zones of the Oromia region, 30 schools, 45 interviewees, and 36 discussants, respectively. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis and narrative methods while also paraphrasing the results of the focus groups. The research identified key issues such as limited stakeholder involvement, inadequate capacity building for principals, low student commitment, and insufficient facilities. While the research observed that these challenges hindered school improvement thereby leaving most schools below the expected performance level, the recommendation was that of enhancing principals' leadership skills, providing necessary resources as well as reorienting stakeholders to support school improvement efforts. Effective communication skills are essential for principals to navigate the challenges highlighted in this study, strengthen their leadership practices, and enhance TSE. While the study was carried out in Ethiopia, which is a different geographical area, the current one was conducted in Westlands Constituency thereby addressing the geographical gap. Methodological gap was also addressed by collecting quantitative data using questionnaires which were administered to teachers and deputy principals since the reviewed used qualitative data only.

In Kenyan, Kiilu et al. (2023) carried out a study to assess the role of principals in improving teacher professional development in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The sample size comprised of 357 respondents- 119 principals and 238 teachers. The data was collected using questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in tables. The study revealed that principals in Makueni County possessed managerial supervisory competencies; evaluative, interpersonal, motivational, and disciplinary that enabled them to foster collaborative relationships with staff, cultivate a supportive school community, effectively manage human resources, and ensure adherence to MoE guidelines. Despite the above qualities, the study recommended the principals to seek in-service training

to boost their skills for effective instructional leadership. The study employed questionnaires only which may not have created the chance for the researcher to get in-depth information that may be useful for generalization. To address this gap, the current study has included interviews to enhance generalization of the study findings and addressed the scope gap by considering communication as well as delegation as leadership practices that enhance teachers' self-efficacy.

Odhiambo et al. (2023) carried out a study regarding communication in secondary schools. The study investigated the causes of conflicts between teaching staff and principals in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub-County, Homabay County, Kenya. The study used a mixed-methods approach, including surveys with 62 participants and in-depth interviews with 4 principals and teachers. The findings revealed that poor communication and competition for limited resources were the primary causes of conflicts, which were work-related. The study recommended training for teachers and principals on effective communication strategies for conflict management and organizing workshops and seminars on professionalism to reduce work-related conflicts. It is evident from the findings that principals occupy an indispensable position in influencing schools since when they have effective communication skills, they can prevent misunderstandings and reduce conflict which will eventually influence the effectiveness of teachers. The study concentrated on conflicts between principals' and teachers and how to address them, however, the current study sought to close the contextual gap by investigating how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy in Westlands Constituency.

In Uriri and Nyatike Sub-Counties, Alabu et al. (2020) investigated the influence of principals' conflict management techniques on teacher job satisfaction in selected secondary schools. The study was guided by Herzberg's two-factor-theory while employing descriptive survey design. Stratified simple random sampling was used to obtain a sample of 29 principals and 319 teachers while data was collected using questionnaires from 87 secondary schools. The study observed that school principals spend 24% of their time managing conflicts, thereby wasting a substantial amount of time necessary for other administrative work. The study suggested that this could only be addressed by improving management thereby advising that for school principals to be able to manage schools effectively, there should be a guideline. The study recommended TSC and MoE to have and provide formal guidelines on conflict management techniques apart from seminars and workshops that they hold for school administrators so as to enable them manage conflicts effectively and efficiently. The study used descriptive survey design while the current study employed concurrent mixed methods design. Furthermore, the study was conducted in Migori County while the present one was conducted in Nairobi County, precisely Westlands Constituency.

To investigate the impact of principals' relationship building skills on the effective administration of secondary schools, Wanjeri et al. (2024) conducted a study in Nairobi County. The study was anchored on Social Exchange Theory. Using descriptive research design, data were collected from teachers and principals using questionnaires and interviews. The findings suggested that principals' relationship building skills significantly contribute to the overall effectiveness of school administration, including resource management, continuous school improvement, and decision making. The study concluded that for successful school leadership and management, it is important to nurture interpersonal relationships, foster collaboration, as well as build trust among stakeholders. While Social Exchange Theory was used in the study, the researcher in the current study has employed Maslow's Theory to address the theoretical gap. The researcher also addressed the methodological gap by using concurrent mixed design.

A different study was conducted in Nairobi by Huma, et al. (2023). This study investigated the relationship between visionary leadership and the implementation of change management strategies in private secondary schools in Nairobi County. The research aimed to clarify and test how visionary leadership influences organizational change. Data was collected from 513 respondents, including principals, teachers, and school administrators, using questionnaires and interview guides. The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling methods. The findings indicate that visionary leadership positively impacts the implementation of change management strategies in these schools. The study recommended that top management should encourage employee participation and input in creative process. The study provides valuable insights into the role of visionary leadership in implementing change management strategies in private secondary schools showing that communication as a management strategy is needed throughout the process. The study was conducted in private secondary schools while the current study was conducted in public secondary schools so as to fill the contextual gap.

Study by Kisoi et al. (2023) examined the impact of change management strategies, specifically communication and leadership strategies, on the performance of public secondary schools in the Makadara Sub-County in Nairobi County. Targeting 15 public secondary schools, the study focused on a population of 195 school principals, senior teachers, and Board of Management members, with a 20% sample size resulting in 60 respondents. Data was collected using structured questionnaires. The findings revealed that both leadership and communication strategies significantly influenced and improved school performance, establishing a statistically significant relationship between these strategies and performance enhancement. Though the study was carried out in Makadara, it reflects one of the indicators of effective leadership practice. Therefore, it has been used as a reinforcement to the current research. From the reviewed literature, it is evident that principals are pivotal in pursuit of effective leadership and their capacity to effectively use communication skills, encourages and enhances overall growth of the school in particular the teacher effectiveness. However, the reviewed literature has focused scantily on how principals' communication practice influence TSE. Therefore, the researcher in the current study sought to investigate the influence that principals' communication skills have on teachers' efficacy in public secondary school in Westlands Constituency.

1.8 Methodology

This study used a convergent parallel mixed method approach in the study. The approach enabled the researcher to examine how principals' communication influences teachers' self-efficacy. It also helps the researcher to collect data from various respondents namely: principals, teachers and students. These assisted in getting a wider view and deeper understanding of the research problem. The study took place in selected public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County, Kenya. Westlands comprises of 14 public secondary schools and is bordered by various constituencies among them Dagoretti North to the south, Kasarani to the east, Roysambu to the north and Kiambu County to the West. The target population was 14 public secondary schools, 14 principals, 14 deputy principals, and 322 teachers. Stratified proportionate and simple random sampling was used to select schools and teachers while purposive sampling was used for principals and deputy principals. The researcher sampled 5 schools, 5 principals, 5 deputy principals, and 98 teachers. The validity and reliability of the quantitative instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha to ascertain the internal consistency.

Data collection instruments and procedures included a questionnaire and an interview guide. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics and results were presented using tables. The qualitative data were thematically analysed. Spearman's rho was used to establish the relationships between variables as well as test the null hypothesis. The researcher ensured ethics throughout the process.

1.9 Findings

Response Rate of the Participants

Three categories of people comprising teachers, deputy principals, and principals of public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency of Nairobi County, comprised the target population from which the sample of the study was drawn. Table 1 provides a summary of the response rate relating to each of the categories of the samples from which quantitative (questionnaire-based) and qualitative (interview-based and open-ended questions in the questionnaire) data were collected.

Table 1: The Response Rate of the Participants

Population Description	Population Size	Target Sample Size	Responding Sample	Response Rate
Teachers	322	98	84	87%
Deputy Principals	14	5	4	80%
Principals	14	5	4	80%

Source: *Field data, 2025*

From Table 1, it can be observed that for almost all the categories of the target sample of research, a response rate of over 80% and above was achieved. In particular, 86.7% of teachers' response rate was achieved while that of the principals and deputy principals was 80% each. The responding sample was deemed reliable for the study and also suitable for both qualitative and quantitative studies as suggested by Kombo and Tromp (2018) as well as Selvam (2019) who advise that responding samples in such a range gives the researcher the chance to make generalizations from the data since all the groups are well represented, with Kerridge (2024) asserting that achieving high rate of response ensures validity and reliability. The study recorded a high response rate of over 80% across all categories. The researcher attributes this to the fact that the study's focus on principals' leadership practices and teachers' self-efficacy was directly relevant to the professional roles of the participants and this may have motivated them to take part. Additionally, the researcher served the principals' office with the formal permission from the Sub-County Office of Education, and in their part, the principals granted formal permission which enhanced the legitimacy and encouraged cooperation. Moreover, the researcher engaged directly in administering and following up on the questionnaires through the deputy principals who carried the task to the full.

Demographic Information of the Participants

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. The demographic information was important in capturing data whose insights could be linked to the

differences based on gender, years of working experience, and even specific job category. In addition, the demographic characteristics could have an insightful value in the discussions of the findings as well as for the generalization of the results.

Gender Distribution of Research Participants

The research sought to determine the gender distribution of the research participants in the responding sample. Table 2 describes the summary of findings from the study.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Research Participants

	Teachers		Deputy Principals		Principals	
	F	%	f	%	F	%
Male	50	60%	0	0%	2	50%
Female	34	40%	4	100%	2	50%
Total	84	100%	4	100%	4	100%

Source: Field data, 2025

According to Table 3, the four deputy principals who supplied data were all female (100%) and 50 out of 84 teachers, or 60% of the respondents that took part in the study, were male. The study included four principals, two of whom were (50%) female and two of whom were (50%) male. As a result, the research had a rather excellent gender distribution, capturing gender-specific or gender-based traits that might have an instructive impact on the research's conclusions.

Years of Teaching Experience

The participants' distribution of teaching experience can provide important insights into how years of service may affect principals' leadership practices and teachers' self-efficacy. Table 3 has the summary of the distribution of teaching experience for the research participants:

Table 3: Years of Teaching Experience

	Teachers		D/principals		Principals	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
1 - 5 years	20	24%	3	75%	0	0%
6 - 10 years	29	35%	1	25%	2	50%
11 - 15 years	12	14%	0	0%	0	0%
16 - 20 years	5	6%	0	0%	2	50%
21 years and above	18	21%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	84	100%	4	100%	4	100%

Source: Field data, 2025

In Table 3, 35% percent of the 84 teachers had 6–10 years of experience, compared to 24% who had 1–5 years. Furthermore, 21% of educators had more than 21 years of experience. Those with 11–15 years of teaching experience (14%) are probably fairly confident in their ability to manage the classroom and

implement instructional tactics. They can still ask the school administration for approval and assistance, though. Because of their prolonged exposure, teachers with over 20 years of experience (21%) may also exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy, which makes them more independent and less reliant on outside validation.

Additionally, according to the distribution, 75% of the deputy principals have between 1 and 5 years of teaching experience, which may imply that they lack sufficient leadership expertise. These deficiencies can affect their confidence in their ability to make decisions and assign tasks, making them more dependent on senior leadership's direction. However, the two principals in the 6–10 making a (50%), and 50%, of the principals in 16–20-year ranges, probably have more experience in leadership techniques that have been cultivated via consistent involvement with staff training, curriculum management, and school improvement tactics. They may be more effective leaders as a result of their experience, which could affect how they advise and assist teachers. According to research, a teacher's self-efficacy is significantly shaped by their teaching experience. Hafner (2024) found that teaching experience significantly predicted teachers' self-efficacy, precisely in classroom management as well as instructional strategies, while Mishal et al. (2024) reported a positive correlation between years of teaching experience and TSE, especially in classroom management.

Principals' Communication Influences Teachers' Self-Efficacy

The study objective was to examine the principals' communication influence on teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. The study used an interview guide for the school principals, while the teachers and deputy principals were asked to give their opinion on their principals' communication of the school's vision and goals on a five-point scale. The scores of the scale are Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 Disagree (D) = 2 Neutral(N) =3 Agree (A) =4 and Strongly Agree (SA) =5. The findings are presented in Table 11.

Table 4: Principals' Communication Influences Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Statement	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Teachers (n = 84)										
My principal communicates the school vision and goals	1	1%	3	4%	13	15%	42	50%	25	30%
My principal communicates clearly the school policies and expectations	1	1%	2	2%	4	5%	40	48%	37	48%
My principal provides constructive feedback on the teachers' performance	1	1%	5	6%	12	14%	36	43%	30	36%
My principal involves teachers in decision making processes	9	11%	11	13%	15	18%	30	36%	19	23%
My principal is accessible for formal and informal discussions	0	0%	12	15%	6	7%	33	39%	33	39%
Principal's communication motivates me to try new methods and belief in my ability	2	2%	4	5%	15	18%	39	46%	24	29%
Deputy Principals (n = 4)										
My principal communicates the school vision and goals	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	50%	2	50%
My principal communicates clearly the school policies and expectations	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%
My principal provides constructive feedback on the teachers' performance	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	25%	3	75%
My principal involves teachers in decision making processes	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	50%	2	50%
My principal is accessible for formal and informal discussions	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	50%	2	50%
Principal's communication motivates me to try new methods and belief in my ability	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	75%	1	25%

Source: Field data, 2025

The findings of this study reveal that principals' communication of the school's vision and goals is generally consistent, with 80% of the teachers, 50% agreeing and 30% strongly agreeing. and all deputy principals (50%) agreeing or strongly agreeing (50%). Besides, the data reveals that 92% of teachers perceive principals' communication of school policies and expectations as clear with 48% agreeing and 44% strongly agreeing. Similarly, 100% of the deputy principals perceived principals' communication as very clear, demonstrating strong alignment at the leadership level. This indicates that school leadership is largely effective in articulating institutional guidelines as well as expectations. This high positive response reflects a strong foundation of clarity and direction in school operations, which is vital for maintaining consistency, accountability, and effective performance by the staff.

Frequent communication forms a basic element in the school, as it helps to create and facilitate synergy in pursuit of the common goal. This corresponds with Hallinger and Wang (2023) who asserted that frequent communication of the vision is a cornerstone of instructional leadership, as it fosters shared understanding, motivates teachers, and promotes coherence in school improvement efforts. Their study emphasized that when principals clearly articulate institutional objectives, teachers are more likely to

conform their practices to the school priorities, which strengthens both commitment and self-efficacy. Further, the present study results suggest that consistent sharing of the vision creates alignment and boosts confidence among teachers by reinforcing a sense of purpose as well as collective responsibility. This agrees with Hallinger and Wang's (2023) argument that leaders who consistently communicate goals nurture organizational direction, thereby enabling teachers to better see the connection between their instructional practices and broader school objectives. Therefore, communication of school goals emerges as a critical leadership practice that enhances motivation, fosters belonging, and strengthens both individual and collective efficacy.

Clear communication of school policies not only reduces ambiguity but also strengthens expectations and roles, which contributes to better task execution. Clarity from leadership facilitates confidence among staff, as teachers who clearly understand what is expected of them are more likely to experience self-belief as they feel capable and empowered to effectively accomplish their duties. These findings are consistent with various studies that emphasize the critical role of clear communication in effective school leadership. Arar and Nasra (2023) observed that when principals communicate expectations in clarity, this fosters trust, minimizes uncertainty, and enables teachers to perform their duties with confidence. Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2023) highlighted that leaders who consistently articulate school goals and policies enhance teacher motivation and accountability, thereby strengthening overall school performance.

Constructive feedback is central to effective communication. Results of this study confirm that school principals provide constructive feedback to both teachers as well as the deputy principals. A majority of teachers (43%) agreed that they usually receive constructive feedback while 36% strongly agreed receiving. A smaller portion of 14% remained neutral, while 6% and 1% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively thereby suggesting minimal dissatisfaction in this area. Various studies emphasize the central role of specific and constructive feedback in boosting teachers' confidence in instructional abilities. Accordingly, Smith et al. (2020) revealed that secondary school teachers who received specific and valued evaluation feedback reported significantly higher levels of self-efficacy in instructional abilities compared to those that received vague feedback. Notably, the perceived usefulness of the feedback emerged as a strong predictor of SE, emphasizing the value of both frequency and constructiveness in performance-related communication. Constructive feedback plays a very essential role in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy. Similarly, when principals frequently offer clear, supportive, as well as actionable feedback, teachers are more likely to understand their strengths as well as areas for improvement which in turn bolsters their confidence in their teaching abilities. Regular feedback also enhances continuous growth, and helps teachers feel valued and supported which in turn increases their belief in their capacity to influence student learning outcomes effectively. These results bring to light the vital role of constructive feedback in reinforcing teachers' professional self-belief as well decision-making in the classroom. Study by Kurt (2023) affirm this relationship, noting that effective feedback from school leaders significantly strengthens teachers' instructional confidence and willingness to improve their practice.

Furthermore, the data revealed 36% of teachers agreeing being involved in school decision making while 23% strongly agreed. However, a notable proportion expressed limited involvement with 11% strongly disagreeing, and 13% disagreeing while 18% stated a neutral view. This suggests that while many teachers express being moderately to highly involved, a considerable number still perceive gaps in their

participation. Contrary, all the 4 deputy principals reported a high level of involvement in decision-making with 50% agreeing and another 50% strongly agreeing. The results align closely with the results of a study conducted in secondary schools demonstrating the significance of teacher involvement for job satisfaction and school performance. In Kakamega County, Shikokoti et al. (2023) found a statistically significant relationship between principals involving teachers in decision-making and increased job-satisfaction, noting that feeling included enhances motivation as well as morale. Similarly, in Mandera North Sub-County, study by Maalim and Gikandi (2024) reported that teachers were highly involved and this was positively and significantly linked to job satisfaction, underlining that greater inclusion enhances a greater sense of belonging and engagement. Another evidence from Mombasa County revealed that while participatory processes were in place, teachers were only partially engaged in group-based fora, consequently limiting the motivational potential benefits of inclusive decision-making on school programme (Marakis, 2021). This may demonstrate that deputy principals are consistently included in school decision-making due to their leadership role. The difference between teacher and deputy principal responses points out to a hierarchical participation structure, where leadership roles provide greater access to decision-making. The school leadership should promote a more inclusive practices so as to enhance teachers' sense of ownership that can contribute positively to school improvement efforts.

Principals' accessibility ensures that the teachers can as well access communication, as well as feedback necessary for their professional growth. From the results a 78% of teachers rated their principals as accessible with 39% agreeing and 39% strongly agreeing. On the other hand, all the deputy principals unanimously agreeing on the principals' accessibility, with a 50% agreeing and 50% strongly agreeing. This clearly indicates that a majority of principals are approachable and open to dialogue thereby reflecting positively on school leadership practices, as accessibility is crucial for timely and effective communication within the school environment. Teachers who can easily communicate, seek support, and receive guidance feel more empowered and confident in their instructional roles. This idea is supported by a meta-analytic structural equation modelling study, synthesizing data from 90 global studies by Barnes et al. (2025), which revealed that principal leadership behaviours which include accessibility and supportive interactions have moderate direct impact on teachers' self-efficacy, and directly influence student outcomes through enhanced teachers' efficacy. These results are also supported by Gacicio (2022) who conducted a study in Nairobi County and offers substantial information asserting that principals' responsiveness, openness, and support is strongly linked to higher teachers' self-efficacy as well as instructional confidence. As such, these findings assert that high principal accessibility likely nurtures trust, collaboration, and a safe environment conducive for teachers' confidence and effectiveness. These findings correspond to those of Wanjohi (2022) who conducted a study in Kenya and observed that effective communication by the principal to the teachers plays a pivotal role in fostering collaborative professional cultures in schools.

This underlines the effect of principals' communication which shapes teachers' self-efficacy while also strengthening support systems through empowering deputy principals who play a vital role in sustaining collaborative and instructional leadership within schools. Essentially, the results highlight that principals' communication is a pivotal leadership practice that directly shapes self-efficacy, motivation, as well as readiness to innovate. More than conveying directives, effective communication enhances trust, collaboration, and empowerment, which are crucial for teachers' professional growth and a means to enhance student outcomes. These findings align well with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs which highlights that teacher esteem and self-actualization needs must be met for them to perform optimally.

Therefore, by providing constructive feedback, fostering collaboration, as well as inspiring teachers through clear vision and encouragement, principals address these psychological needs, thereby creating favourable conditions for professional fulfilment and higher TSE.

The open-ended questions provided a wide range of insights regarding teachers' opinion on principals' communication and what positively influences them. When teachers and deputy principals were asked to suggest principals' communication practices, they find most beneficial, they identified a range of them with constructive and corrective feedback emerging as the most valued.

My principal is always clear and precise in his communication both formal and informal. She offers public praise and private correction, while also offering constructive feedback on my performance. Most of my colleagues feel at home when we receive corrective feedback, which happens mostly during staff briefings and through internal memos (Deputy Principal B, 19/3/2025).

Timely communication through staff briefings, meetings, internal memos, emails, and notice boards was also highlighted as essential as it ensures clarity and inclusivity. Many teachers also appreciated professional guidance, encouragement for further education, and motivation through both public and private correction. Additionally, open-door policies, one-on-one interactions, and open discussions were noted as fostering approachability, collaboration, teamwork, and overall effectiveness. Regarding the question on the areas teachers and deputy principals thought their principal would need to improve in order to support them, teachers suggested that principals could improve their communication by being more accessible, timely, and emphatic in their interactions. They also emphasized other key areas among them, providing consistent and constructive feedback, recognizing and rewarding good performance, and addressing mistakes privately rather than publicly. Teachers also highlighted the importance of involving them more in decision-making process, clearly communicating the school's policies and emerging educational changes, and ensuring follow-up on agreed actions. One teacher expressed the above ideas:

Our principal indeed puts a lot of effort to communicate and share the school's dream with us. However, he may need to improve by addressing teachers privately and confidently when they have made mistakes rather than publicly while also providing open and timely feedback while incorporating empathy and emotional intelligence. Additionally, he needs to encourage and guide the novice teachers in the profession by providing more consistent and timely feedback, sharing clear updates about policy or curriculum changes and regular fora, to help us remain updated (Teacher 3, 23/3/2025).

In this study, the principals were asked how they communicate the school's vision and goals to their staff, and the frequency of communication. The principals reported that they communicate the school's vision and goals mainly through regular meetings and briefings, with some holding them weekly or fortnightly, and others incorporating departmental discussions for target setting and evaluation. In addition to verbal communication, they make visible and accessible the school vision by writing and displaying it on the school walls. This consistent communication fosters clarity, alignment, and a shared

sense of purpose among teachers and administrators. The practice of structured communication not only keeps the vision present but also nurtures teacher self-efficacy and alignment with the school objectives. In their study, He et al. (2024) found that strong instructional leadership as well as clear goal setting and structured communication, is significantly associated with teachers' development and growth.

The school principals also gave their opinion, highlighting a variety of methods they consider most effective in providing feedback to teachers, emphasizing the importance of balancing praise with constructive criticism. They expressed that public recognition, such as praising teachers during staff briefings or using high performers as role models, fostering open dialogue by minimizing protocols, encourages teachers, while private reprimand and individual feedback ensure dignity and personal growth.

I ensure that I know each teacher individually and then deal with them at a personal level. I ensure that I do not critically compare them. Every principal should support teachers professionally and emotionally; 'be your teachers' team leader, role model and a mentor, not their boss, respect them' (Principal B, 19/3/2025).

These ideas align with those of Gao et al. (2025), who advised that balanced feedback methods that combine public praise with guidance and recognition contribute to higher levels of teacher motivation and self-efficacy. Other strategies included peer evaluation, goal setting and evaluation, benchmarking with other schools, and creating informal spaces for feedback such as trips or special dinners.

When asked how their communication practices influence teachers' belief in their ability to impact student learning, the principals noted that effective communication practices build teachers' confidence, motivation, and classroom management skills, which in turn enhance their ability to influence student learning. They emphasized that communication enables teachers to deliver content effectively, manage discipline, and foster positive student engagement, all of which contribute to improved performance and retention. Ultimately, strong communication empowers teachers, reinforces their competence, and ultimately strengthens their self-efficacy in propelling student success (Xie et al., 2025). The findings of this study demonstrate that principals' communication plays a central role in shaping teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Westlands constituency. Clear and consistent communication of the schools' vision and goals emerged critical in fostering alignment, motivation, and a sense of shared purpose among teachers. Equally, clarity in articulating policies and expectations enhanced teachers' confidence in fulfilling their duties effectively, while constructive feedback significantly enhanced teachers' instructional confidence. Accessibility of principals for dialogue further strengthened trust, openness, and collaboration thereby contributing positively to teachers' professional growth and classroom practices.

Moreover, communication was seen to extend beyond directives to become a motivational tool that encourages teachers to be innovative and continuously improve their instructional strategies. Teachers highlighted that effective communication not only enhances confidence and motivation but also empowers them to influence student learning outcomes more efficiently. Further, emphasis on open dialogue, inclusivity in decision-making, and responsiveness to professional and personal needs was also seen to enhance teacher commitment, morale, as well as collective efficacy. Summarily, the study confirms communication as a vital leadership practice that nurtures trust, motivation, and empowerment, consequently directly strengthening teachers' self-efficacy and contributing to improved teaching and

learning outcomes. The correlation analysis of the results relating to the fourth objective are presented in Table 5.

Table 15: Correlation Test Results for the Principals' Communication and Teachers' Self-efficacy

		Principals' Communication mean likert score rating	Teachers' Self- efficacy means Likert score rating
Spearman's rho	Principals' Communication mean likert score rating	1.000	.719** .000
	Teachers' Self- efficacy means Likert score rating	.719** .000	1.000

Source: Field data, 2025

With a positive correlation coefficient ($\rho = +0.719$) and a p-value (0.000), the test results indicate that the principals' communication enhances or positively (+0.719) influences teachers' self-efficacy according to the views from the sample of teachers and deputy principals accessed from public secondary schools in Westlands Constituency of Nairobi County, and that the finding is statistically significant (p-value = 0.000 and less than $\alpha = 0.05$). The finding leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). There is no significant relationship between principals' communication and teachers' self-efficacy, given that the p-value is less than $\alpha = 0.05$, and to the adoption of the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between principals' communication and teachers' self-efficacy. This finding can be important for guiding decision-making and policy-making in the area of principals' practices and teacher self-efficacy.

1.10 Conclusion

The study concluded that school principals' communication significantly enhances teachers' self-efficacy in public secondary schools. Most principals effectively communicate the school's vision, goals, policies, and expectations, fostering alignment, motivation, and shared purpose among teachers. This clarity and consistency in communication strengthen institutional direction and promote confidence and accountability among the teaching staff. However, some teachers felt that communication was not always timely or inclusive, leading to feelings of exclusion from decision-making and limited open dialogue. While deputy principals reported greater involvement, this hierarchical communication structure may leave some teachers out of participatory processes. Additionally, although most teachers received constructive feedback, a few noted delays or inadequate follow-up, which could hinder professional growth. The study also highlighted that principals' accessibility and openness to dialogue are crucial for building trust and collaboration, enhancing teachers' professional confidence. A strong positive correlation was found between principals' communication and teachers' self-efficacy ($\rho = +0.719$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that effective communication boosts teachers' confidence and ability to impact student learning outcomes. Consequently, there is a need for principals to ensure consistent, clear,

and inclusive communication, provide regular constructive feedback, and involve teachers more in decision-making. These practices foster a sense of belonging, improve collaboration, and strengthen teachers' self-efficacy, ultimately enhancing teaching quality and overall school performance.

1.11 Recommendation

The study recommends that school principals should establish structured mentorship and peer-collaboration programmes where experienced teachers and deputy principals support their colleagues in curriculum development, classroom management, and adoption of new instructional strategies, thereby enhancing collective self-efficacy. It also recommended that regular monitoring and evaluation systems should be put in place by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Teachers Service Commission and Boards of Management to assess the effectiveness of leadership practices of motivation, delegation, professional development as well as communication. These bodies should ensure that the monitoring provides data-driven strategies for the continuous improvement of teacher support and school performance.

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