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**MEDIATING ROLE OF PRINCIPAL EMPOWERMENT PRACTICES ON THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER QUALITY AND EXPECTED  
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

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## PERANAN PERANTARAAN AMALAN PENURUNAN KUASA PENGETUA DAN HUBUNGANNYA DENGAN KUALITI GURU DAN JANGKAAN PRESTASI AKADEMIK PELAJAR

### ABSTRAK

Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji peranan perantaraan Amalan Penurunan Kuasa pengetua dan hubungannya dengan Kualiti Guru dan jangkaan prestasi Akademik Pelajar di sekolah menengah awam Negeri Kwara, Nigeria. Reka bentuk penyelidikan kuantitatif secara eksploratori digunakan. Sejumlah 450 orang guru telah dipilih sebagai sampel melalui teknik pensampelan rawak berstrata. Analisis data dengan menggunakan kaedah Pemodelan Persamaan Struktur (SEM) menunjukkan hubungan yang kuat antara Kualiti Guru dan Jangkaan Prestasi Akademik Pelajar dengan pemberat regresi piawai 0.817 dan signifikan pada  $p < 0.05$ . Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa Kualiti Guru menyumbang secara signifikan kepada Jangkaan Prestasi Akademik Pelajar dengan koefisien piawai 0.94 dan signifikan pada  $p < 0.05$ . Kualiti Guru dan Amalan Penurunan Kuasa pengetua menunjukkan hubungan yang tidak signifikan dengan koefisien piawai 0.88 di mana  $p > 0.05$ . Amalan Penurunan Kuasa pengetua dan Jangkaan Prestasi Akademik Pelajar juga menunjukkan hubungan yang tidak signifikan dengan koefisien piawai 0.36 di mana  $p > 0.05$ . Seterusnya, didapati Amalan Penurunan Kuasa pengetua merupakan perantara separa dalam hubungan antara Kualiti Guru dan jangkaan Prestasi Akademik Pelajar dengan kesan secara tidak langsung 0.56 ( $p > 0.05$ ) adalah kurang daripada kesan langsung 0.81 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Secara kesimpulan, dimensi-dimensi kualiti Guru seperti pengetahuan, kemahiran berkomunikasi, komitmen guru dan pengurusan kelas adalah factor penentu yang meningkatkan Prestasi Akademik Pelajar. Implikasi kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa guru perlu dihantar untuk menjalani latihan profesional supaya mereka dapat memperoleh pengetahuan, kemahiran berkomunikasi dan pengurusan kelas yang akan meningkatkan prestasi guru dalam bilik darjah. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian lanjutan harus dijalankan terhadap sumbangan Kualiti Guru dalam meningkatkan Prestasi Akademik Pelajar sekolah menengah.





## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate the mediating role of Principal Empowerment Practices on the relationship between Teacher Quality and Expected Students' Academic Performance in Kwara State Public Secondary Schools, Nigeria. A quantitative exploratory research design was utilized. A total of 450 teachers were chosen as a sample through a stratified random sampling technique. Data analysis using the structural equation modeling indicated a strong relationship between Teacher Quality and Expected Students' Academic performance with standardized regression weight of 0.817 and significant at  $p < 0.05$ . The findings showed that Teacher Quality contributed significantly to Expected Student Academic Performance with standardized coefficient of 0.94 and significant at  $p < 0.05$ . The Teacher Quality and Principal Empowerment Practices showed an insignificant relationship with a standardized coefficient of 0.88 where  $p > 0.05$ . The Principal Empowerment Practices and Expected Students' Academic Performance also showed an insignificant relationship with standardized coefficient of 0.36 where  $p > 0.05$ . Further, it was found that Principal Empowerment Practices acted as a partial mediator in the relationship between Teacher Quality and Expected Students' Academic Performance since total indirect effect of 0.56 ( $p > 0.05$ ) was less than a direct effect of 0.81 ( $p < 0.05$ ). In conclusion, the dimensions of teacher quality such as Knowledge, Communication Skills, Teacher Commitment and Classroom Management skills were the determinant factors that improve Students' Academic Performance. The implication of this study suggested that teachers' should be sent for professional training so that they can acquire Knowledge, Communication Skills and Classroom Management skills that would improve the performance of teachers in the classroom. However, a further investigation should be conducted into the contribution of Teacher Quality to improve Expected Student Academic performance at secondary school.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Affective Commitment
AIC	Akaike information Criterion
B.Ed.	Bachelor in Education
CPR	Centre Pedagogiques Regionaux
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CM	Classroom Management
CS	Communication Skills
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CC	Continuance Commitment
ESDE	Ecoles Suprieures Du Professorat ET De L'education
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
GOF	Goodness-of-Fit
FRN	Federal Republic of Nigeria
CFI	Incremental Fit Index
ITE	Institute of Teacher Education
IUDM	Instituts Unversitaires Deformation Des Maitre
ILO	International Labour Organization
MOE	Ministry of Education
NPC	National Policy on Education

NCTM	National Council of Teacher of Mathematics
NCC	National Curriculum Conference
NTI	National Teacher Institute
NCE	Nigeria Certificate in Education
NC	Normative Commitment
NFI	Normed Fit Index
PGOF	Parsimonious Goodness-of-Fit
PNFI	Parsimonious Normed Fit Index
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PEP	Principal Empowerment Practices
RMSR	Root Mean Square Residual
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
TC	Teacher Commitment
TED	Teacher Education Department
TK	Teacher Knowledge
TP	Teacher Performance
TQ	Teacher Quality
TCM	Three Commitment Model
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education

VSO Voluntary Service Overseas

WASC West African School Certificate



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION



#### 1.1 Overview

Teacher quality has been one of the debatable issues to the Kwara State government, Nigeria. In Kwara State, for more than five years, students' academic performance was declined when compared to secondary schools in other states in Nigeria (Arinde, 2010). The declined in the students' performance prompt the stakeholders in education pinpoint that teacher quality is dropping. In order to improve students' academic performance, teachers need to possess some of the requisite quality that would make them relevant in the classrooms. As a result of that, researchers (e.g. Figlio, Karbownik, Roth & Wasserman, 2016; Descristan, Kauter, Fauth, Bittner, Hardy, & Hertel, 2016; Rieser, Naumann, Decristan, Fauth, Klieme, & Büttner, 2016); Feng & Sass, 2017) states that students' academic performance relies on teachers' competency and skills they possess.





Also, teacher quality plays a significant role in the teaching and learning as well as promoting teacher efficiency (Arinde, 2010; Ogunyinka, Okeke, & Adedoyin, 2015). The teaching profession is different from other professions in the sense that it nurtures and prepares an individual to be a useful person in the society. That is why the teachers needed in the profession must be adequately committed to the career. Teachers in Kwara State must have teaching commitment, content knowledge, communication skills and classroom management (Ajeyalemi, 2013). These are the basic qualities which teachers in Kwara state must possessed. Abd Hamid, Hassan, Sariah, and Ismail (2012) asserted that when teachers exhibit good skills, they are regarded as good teachers. In the Kwara context, teacher quality is not associated with the high salary paid to teachers but it is the quality brought to the teaching profession that matters. With this, the teacher quality determinant has become debatable issues which require more attention (Darling-Hammond, 2017).



## 1.2 Background of the Study

Education is as old as human being and there is no nation without any form of education. Education given to anybody is essential to the pace of economic, political and social development of any nation (Olujuwon, 2002; Ogunyinka et al., 2015). Participants in the Jomtien world conference on education for all in 2006 which stated that Education is an inalienable right for everybody, men and women of all ages all over the countries. This is why the majority of countries of the world make every effort to allocate huge amount of money to the educational sector. In Nigeria, about 7.04% of 8.6 billion budget was allocated to the educational sector (Ogunyinka et al., 2015). Similarly, guardians and





parents spend huge amount of fees for their children's education. Guardians and parents usually expect quality and accountability from the schools to which they pay huge school fees for their children's education (Onyekuru & Ibegunam, 2013). For any nation to attained these national aspiration, secondary schools education are expected to provide quality instructions that will be oriented towards instilling value for the worth and dignity of a person; capability to make judicious decision, share responsibility for the society, moral and spiritual values in interpersonal relationship among others (Etuk Afangideh & Uya, 2013). Education also inculcates values, skills and competencies to person (s) that would transform the society as a whole.

However, the foundation on which higher institution is built as the pillar of whatever child/student wants to become in life, academically rest on secondary education (Arinde 2010; Asiyai, 2015). The Nigerian educational system is like public enterprises that has witnessed government funding and dynamic intervention and control (Arinde, 2010; Ajala, Lawal, & Oyelade, 2017). Secondary education could be described as the bridge between primary and university level. That is why the constitution of federal government of Nigeria boldly states that "the aims of secondary education are as preparation for useful living within community and for higher institution" (Timilehin, 2010; Ajala et al., 2017).

The core point is that secondary schools should be able to develop and promote Nigerian's languages and cultures; stimulating students with desires for self-improvement and achievement that of distinction; raising generations that can think for themselves, respect the views of others; provide all primary school leavers with opportunities for education of higher level irrespective of religious or ethnic background,





status, social and sex; providing diversified curriculum to cater for differences in opportunities, futures roles and talents, providing technical and vocational knowledge (Timilehin, 2010; Asiyai, 2015).

The number of secondary schools in Nigeria is increasing on a yearly basis, and presently secondary schools have sprung up to 20,501 (Yusufu, 2012). In primary schools, children are expected to complete their studies within six years right from ages of 6 to 11 years. Likewise, children started secondary education from the ages of 11 to 16 years and the total duration is six years (Ibanga, 2016; Olatunji, 2015). Some of the subjects offered in secondary schools are Chemistry, Physics, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Accounting, Government, Agriculture, Biology, English, Literature, and other subjects.



The Federal Ministry of Education (2016) described secondary education as an intermediary stage of education. This is a stage that determines what students would study in the tertiary institutions. That is why classes are divided into commercial class, science class and art class. One of the factors that determine those classes mentioned is the number of credits obtained from the junior certificate examination. The examination conducted in the last stage of junior secondary school which is regarded as the second stage of education. Nigeria operates a 6-3-3-4 system of education refer to six years in primary, three years in junior school, three years in senior school and four years in tertiary institution (Maigida, 2017; Federal Ministry of Education, 2016). One of the main reasons for this is to develop an individual student to have good foundation in the primary and secondary school before moving to higher institution and they could know what they would specialize in (Inuwa & Yusuf, 2012; Olatunji, 2015).



The pillar of Nigeria education system is the teacher who control the whole process (Ozurumba, 2015). This is because teachers prepare lesson plans, organize the class, use relevant teaching methods and consider individual differences in the class. The teacher will definitely continue to be the major factor in primary, secondary or university level, and the determinant of the quality of education in the schools (Akinsolu, 2010; Chonjo, 2018).

Generally speaking, the quality of educational system depends majorly on the quality of teachers employed who possess academic qualifications and experience (Boakye-Amponsah, Enninful, Anin, & Vanderpuye, 2015). In Kwara state, Nigeria, for example, there were 29,420 teachers and out of which some teachers' have B.Ed. and M.Ed. qualification to teach (Federal Ministry of Education, 2016). Mukminin, Rohayati Putra, Habibi, and Aina (2017) affirmed that quality and effective learning depends solely on retention, recruitment, and selection of teachers needed to increase the level of performance and the quality of education.

Teaching and learning occur with the skills and knowledge of teachers (Nwagwu, 2003; Abidin, 2015). These skills or qualities are trustworthiness, knowledge of subject matter, accessibility to students, approachability and diligence. Besides skills, teachers also need to be dedicated (Ekpiken & Edet, 2014). Promoting teacher quality is a chief factor in developing secondary education (Harris & Sass, 2011; Gerritsen, Plug, & Webbink, 2017; Feng & Sass, 2017). In the same opinion, scholars like (Hanushek & Rivkin 2006; Nwagwu, 2003 & Darling-Hammond, 2017) concurred that the quality of the education system depends not only on the quantity but the quality, quantity and commitment of its teaching staff.



On another note, in order to enhance teacher quality, the teachers need to be adequately empowered by the principals. It is believed that empowered teachers play an even more effective role in the accomplishment of the schools goals (Veisi, Azizifar, Gowhary, & Jamalinesari, 2015). Teacher empowerment is regarded as an indispensable variable within the growth and development of the school system. Teachers can be empowered through six dimensions which include teachers' impact on students and school, professional development, teacher autonomy, decision making-process, teacher status and self-efficacy (Short & Rinehart, 1992; Jamal & Ali, 2017). It is understandable that when principals utilize all these dimensions in empowering teachers, teacher quality would improve in leaps and bounds. Balkar (2009) and Avidov-Ungar (2018) expressed that the outcome of teacher empowerment is that it enhances the adoption of transformation as well as achievement of relevant schooling objectives.



## 1.2 Problem Statement

Extensive researches have been investigated on the causes of students' academic failure (Arinde, 2010; Akinsolu, 2010; Timilehin, 2010; Figlio, Karbownik, Roth, & Wasserman, 2016; Descristan, Kauter, Fauth, Bittner, Hardy, & Hertel, 2016; Rieser, Naumann, Decristan, Fauth, Klieme, & Büttner, 2016, Feng and Sass, 2017). The declining in students' academic performance in Nigeria has been a concern to parent and government (Ozordi, 2010; Olasehinde-Williams, Yahaya, & Owolabi, 2018). The government and stakeholders in education attributed this sudden dropped in students' academic performance to teacher incompetence (Aregbeyen, 2010). Based on the results of students released by West African Examination Council in 2014 to 2016 which shown





that about 70% of the students' failed woefully in both English and Mathematics. Olasehinde-Williams et al. (2018) supported that the failure of these students in external examination is attributed to poor quality of some teachers. Also, Ladipo (2014) posited that the poor quality of teachers is one factors that lead to poor academic performance of students' in Nigerian secondary schools. Studies investigated on quality of teachers suggested that students' performance can only be improved if qualified teachers are recruited in the system (Arinde, 2010; Gerritsen, Plug, & Webbink, 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Mukminin, Rohayati, Putra, Habibi, & Aina, 2017). This scenario require urgent solution to ameliorate the situation.

As a result this, the students' could not get employment and would most turn likely turn to vices in the society. In fact, there are many unqualified teachers in Nigerian secondary schools that teach subjects which they did not studied in university (Olasehinde-Williams et al., 2018). It has been found that teacher with degree in computer found to be teaching agriculture. It is believed in this study that this might cause more problem to the declined in students' academic performance. Similarly, some of these teachers' were not empowered by the school principal on what should be done to improve this situation. An empowered teachers make every effort to improve students' academic performance (Barsi, Ziglari, & Abadi, 2013). When teachers are not in invited in the decision making in the school, it might affect students' performance. This call for the use of empowerment as a mediator to investigate the relationship between TQ and ESAP because incompetence teachers are found in the system. This serve as gap to fill.





Meanwhile, in some of the studies investigated on teacher quality and students' academic performance in both home and abroad. Teacher quality was viewed in general instead of integrated dimensions. In Nigeria, teacher quality using qualification and experience (Arinde, 2010) teacher quality in general (Aregbeyen, 2010) quality teacher and efficiency of education (Asiyai, 2015); educational quality (Odiba, 2012); teacher education and development (Ogunyinka et al., 2015); teacher education (Osuji, 2009); teacher quality and students' performance in general (Ojimba, 2013). In abroad, teacher and students outcomes (Goe, 2007); teacher quality in general (Harris & Sass, 2011); teacher preparation and teacher quality (Koedel, Parsons, Podgursky, & Ehlert, 2015); teacher quality, students' attendance and students' achievement (Gershenson, 2016); teacher quality and learning outcome (Araujo, Carneiro, Cruz-Aguayo, & Schady, 2016); teacher quality and students inequality (Mansfield, 2015); teacher turnover, teacher quality and students' achievement (Adnot, Dee, Katz, & Wyckoff, 2017).



On the other hand, despite the abundant studies on teacher quality in both home and abroad, none of studies have ever investigating teacher quality using sets of dimensions to measure it with students' academic performance together with empowerment as a mediator. Sensing the gap, the researcher takes the courage to examine the mediating role of principal empowerment practices on the relationship between teacher quality and expected students' academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools not because it has neglected by previous studies, but rather, it emerges as a dire need. Empowerment came as a mediator not just by chance but because the parents, government and stakeholders' in education have pointed that there are poor quality of teachers' in the system. This empowerment will likely to improve teachers'





productivity in the effective teaching. Table 1.1 shows the declined in the percentages of students in examination from 2014 to 2016.

Table 1.1

*Percentage Difference in Yearly Examinations*

Years	Percentages	Difference
2012	38.81	-
2013	36.57	2.24
2014	31.28	5.29
2015	28.59	2.69
2016	38.50	9.91

*Source:* The Premium Times, Nigeria.



### 1.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework refers to as theory the researcher chooses to his research (Imenda, 2014). Also, theoretical framework is the application of existing theory which help to understand an event for a particular research. In the course of this study, several theories were borrowed from scholars that were used to drawn conceptual framework. Some the theories has helped the researcher to understand the mediating role of principal empowerment practices on the relationship teacher quality and expected students' academic performance. In fact, without the role of theoretical framework, the construction of conceptual framework would not have been possible.





In this study, seven theories were used to form the relationship among the variables that of Principal Empowerment Practices (PEP), Teacher Quality (TQ) and expected students' academic performance (ESAP). The theories for the construction of conceptual framework were as follow:

- (1) The Goe (2007); Ibrahim, Arshad, and Salleh (2017) and Elassy (2015) model were used to formulate teacher quality in the conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1.2. Model of quality explained the qualities which teachers must possess in order to improve students' academic performance in the school system.
- (2) Shulman (1986) theory was also used in conceptual framework for teacher knowledge. According to (Shulman, 1986) opined that knowledge of teacher's in the school system determine performance of students'.
- (3) The theory of Mortimer and Scott (2002); Silverman, Kurtz, and Draper (2016) was used for teacher's communication skills for conceptual framework for this study. The theory posited that effective communication skills of teacher can bring effective teaching in the classroom.
- (4) Accordingly, Meyer and Allen (1991) theory was used for teacher's commitment in the conceptual framework of this study. The theory explain that commitment of teacher's to teaching profession can bring effective teaching to students'.
- (5) Wolfgang and Glickman (1980) theory of classroom management was used to construct teacher's classroom management in the conceptual framework in Figure 1.2. According to the theory which says that classroom management skill of a teachers' can lead to effective teaching and learning in the classroom.
- (6) Elger (2007) theory was used to construct expected students' academic performance in the conceptual framework of this study. According to Elger (2007) posited that





internal examination of students' in the school determine whether students' performance is low or high.

- (7) Lastly, Kauter theory of empowerment (1993) and Nursalam, Fibriansari, Yuwono, Hadi, Efendi, & Bushy, (2018) help the researcher to construct principal empowerment practices in the conceptual framework. The theory stipulated that an empowered teacher in the school will be able to perform professionally on the job. Some of these theories were shown in Figure 1.1.



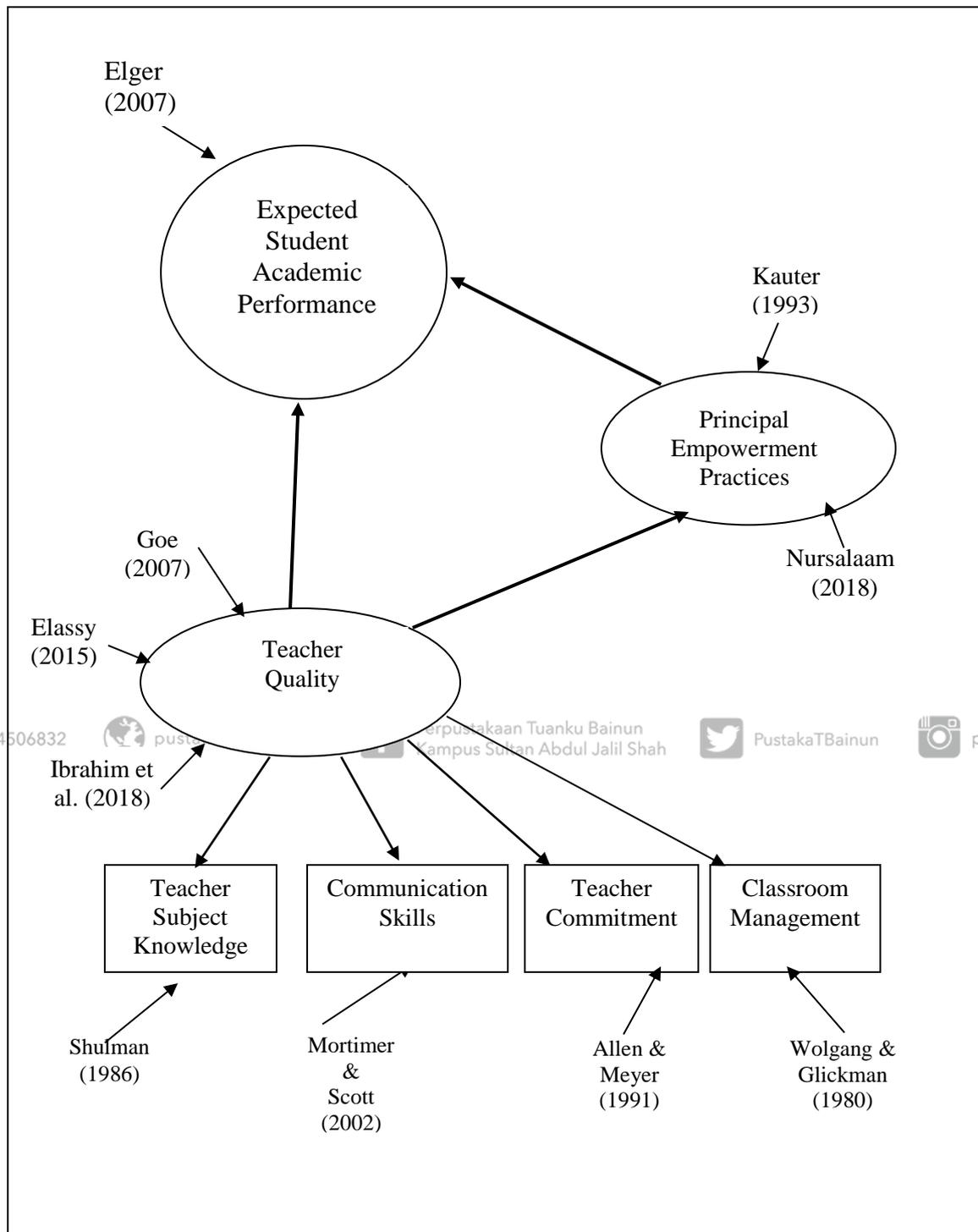


Figure 1.1. Theoretical Framework for three Variables. Source: Self-Developed



## 1.4 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework (Imenda, 2014) is the end result of uniting a number of related concepts to predicts and explain a phenomenon of interest in a more understanding ways for a research problem. The conceptual framework of this study has helped in constructing the research problem, the research objectives, research questions and in the selection of methods that suitable to the study. Most importantly, the conceptual frameworks used different approaches or theories that has been borrowed from elsewhere but the researcher just build upon the structure and organization of the theories (Imenda, 2017; ReSearCher, 2017).

The conceptual framework for this study was constructed and designed to understand whether principal empowerment practices (PEP) can mediate the relationship between teacher quality (TQ) and expected students' academic performance (ESAP). As shown in Figure 1.2, there were three variables used for the construction of conceptual framework which include the following:



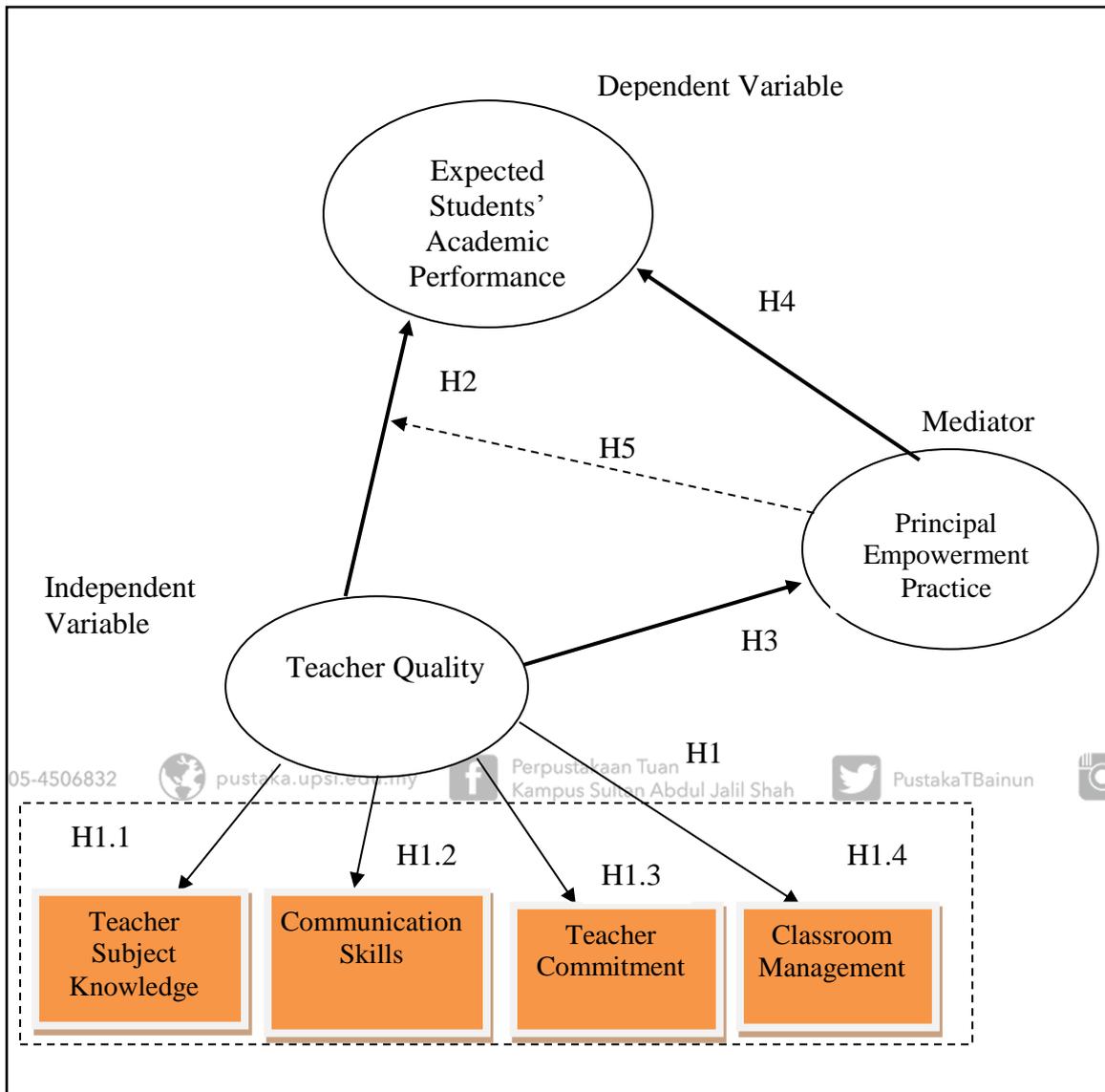


Figure 1.2. The Conceptual Framework with Study of Hypotheses. *Source:* Self-Developed

(1) Independent variable: Teacher Quality (TQ) is the independent variable used for this study.

There were four dimensions used for measuring teacher quality, teacher knowledge emanated from Shulman theory (1986), teacher commitment came from Meyer & Allen (1991); communication skills came from Mortimer & Scott (2002) and classroom management also came from Wolfgang & Glickman (1980).

- (2) Dependent variable: expected students’ academic performance refers to as dependent variable for this study. Then, Elger (2007) theory was used to design expected students’ academic performance.
- (3) Mediator variable: the principal empowerment practices was borrowed from the idea or notion of Kauter (1993) to prepared empowerment.

Therefore, the idea of construction of the variables mentioned aboved was borrowed from teacher quality (Goe, 2007); teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1986); teacher commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), communication (Mortimer and Scott, 2002); classroom management (Wolgang and Glickman, 1980), expected students’ academic performance (Elger, 2007) and empowerment (Kauter, 1993). The findings and conclusion of these theories help to justify and enable the researcher to build a conceptual framework based on

existing structure.

Table 1.2

*The Construction of Conceptual Framework Based on Theories*

Factors	Supporting theories
* Teacher Quality	(Goe, 2007); Teacher Knowledge (Shulman, 1986); Teacher Commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), Communication (Mortimer & Scott, 2002); Classroom Management (Wolgang & Glickman, 1980),
*Expected students’ Academic performance	Students’ Performance (Elger, 2007)
*Principal Empowerment Practices	Empowerment (Kauter, 1993)



## 1.5 Objectives of the Study

In this study, five research objectives were raised to guide the study. The objectives include the following:

- RO1: To determine the direct relationship among the dimensions of teacher quality namely, Teacher Knowledge, Communication Skills, Teacher Commitment and Classroom Management.
- RO2: To determine the direct relationship between teacher quality and expected students' academic performance.
- RO3: To determine the direct relationship between teacher quality and principal empowerment.
- RO4: To determine the direct relationship between principal empowerment and expected students' academic performance.
- RO5: To determine the effects of teacher quality on expected students academic performance with the mediating role of principal empowerment.



## 1.6 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives stated, five research questions were raised to guide the study. The research questions contain the following:

- RQ1: Can teacher quality be explained by dimensions of teacher knowledge, communication skills, teacher commitment and classroom management?
- RQ2: Is there any significant direct relationship between teacher quality and expected Student academic performance?





RQ3: Is there any significant direct relationship between teacher quality and principal empowerment?

RQ4: Is there any significant direct relationship between principal empowerment and expected students' academic performance?

RQ5: To what extent the principal empowerment mediates the relationship between teacher quality and expected student academic performance?

### 1.7 Hypotheses Development

Research hypotheses are all about making predictions about the expected results of the research work after data is obtained for analysis by the researcher (Creswell et al., 2011).

A null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between two or more variables. This study has three variables which include independent, dependent and mediating variable. The independent variable is teacher quality with dimensions of teachers' knowledge, communication skills, teacher commitment and classroom management. The mediating variable is the principal empowerment practices and dependent variable is expected students' academic performance.



## Operational Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses guided the study:

**H1:** There is significant direct relationship among the dimensions of teacher's quality namely teacher knowledge, communication skills, teacher commitment and classroom management.

Based on previous research findings collected on teacher's knowledge and expected students' performance (quality) in public secondary schools in different countries. Researchers like Kauter (1993); Liakopoulou (2011); Adediwura (2007); Adedoyin (2011) & Shepherd (2013) found significant relationship between teacher knowledge and students' academic performance reflecting teacher quality in secondary schools. Therefore, this current study hypothesize that there is a significant relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher quality. This lead to the hypothesis H1.1

**H1.1:** Teacher quality has significant effect on teacher's knowledge.

In view of past studies investigated on teacher communication skills and students' performance (reflecting teacher quality) in secondary school, researchers such as Das (2014); Palos & Petrovici (2014) & Loy (2006) found positive relationships between teacher communication skills and students' performance (quality) in secondary schools. Because of that, the hypothesis formulated in this study is that there is a significant relationship between teacher communication skills and students' academic performance. This lead to the hypothesis H1.2:

**H1.2:** Teacher quality has significant effect on teacher's communication skills.

In line with the previous studies which was found on the relationship between teacher's commitment and students' academic performance (reflecting teacher quality) in secondary schools. Take for example: Haftkhavani (2012); Mart (2013); Celep & Yilmaztuk (2012) discovered that strong relationship occurred between teacher commitment and students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools. Based on that, this study formulated a hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between teacher's commitment and students' academic performance. This lead to the hypothesis H1.3

**H1.3:** Teacher quality has significant effect on teacher's commitment.

In view of research findings on teacher's classroom management and students' academic performance in secondary schools across countries, scholars such as Freiberg, Stein & Huang (1995); Adeyemo (2012) & Iacob & Musuroi (2013) revealed that perfect relationship was found between teacher's classroom management and teachers' performance in secondary schools. In the light of that, the hypothesis formulated there is a significant relationship between classroom management and teacher quality. This lead to the hypothesis H1.4

**H1.4:** Teacher quality has significant effect on teacher's classroom management.

Based on the research findings gathered that teacher quality improved students' academic performance (reflecting teacher quality) in secondary schools. For example, Odiba (2012); Arinde, (2010) & Darling Hammond (2017) discovered that significant relationships exist between teacher quality and students' academic performance in secondary schools. Because of that, this present study hypothesized that teacher quality

is significantly correlated with students' performance. This lead to the second hypothesis:

**H2:** Teacher quality has significant effect on expected students' academic performance.

Based on the findings revealed on teacher quality and principal empowerment practices in secondary schools that there will be efficiency in education. Researchers like Ramdhani, Anock, Swasono, and Suryanto (2012) and Wadesango (2012) discovered significant relationship between teacher quality and principal empowerment practices in secondary schools. In view of this, the hypothesis formulated on teacher quality and principal empowerment practices states that teacher quality is significantly correlated with principal empowerment practices. This lead to the third hypothesis:

**H3:** Teacher quality has significant effect on principal empowerment practices.

Previous studies found a relationship between principal empowerment practices and students' academic performance in secondary schools. Scholars like Bogler and Somech (2004) found good relationship between principal empowerment practices and students' academic performance in schools. Because of this, hypothesis is formulated that principal empowerment practices will be significantly correlated with students' academic performance. This lead to the fourth hypothesis:

**H4:** Principal empowerment practices have significant effect on students' academic performance.



Relevant literatures were carried out on teacher quality, students' academic performance and principal empowerment practices in secondary schools in different countries. Researchers such Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2005); Ahmad and Aziz (2009); Stander and Rothman (2009); Subroto (2013); Sahoo and Das (2011) found that significant relationships exist between empowerment practice, teacher quality and students' academic performance in secondary schools. Based on that, hypothesis is formulated on teacher quality, students' academic performance and principal empowerment practices. Therefore, there is a significant relationship among principal empowerment practice, teacher quality and students' academic performance. This lead to the fifth hypothesis:

**H5:** Principal empowerment practices mediate the relationships between teacher's quality and expected students' academic performance.



## 1.8 Significance of the Study

The academic performance of students in senior secondary schools has becoming a contentious issue which requires decisive attention of both the government and stakeholders in education. Some of the past studies reviewed expressed that the students' academic performance is extremely influenced by teacher quality (Arinde, 2010). Likewise, teacher quality determines the effectiveness, efficacy and performance of every student in secondary schools.





This present study might guide and provide an insight for educational policy makers and planners by identifying some of the skills needed by teachers to improve teacher skills then can be trained through workshop, in-service training, internal supervisions, monitoring, library services, internet services and computer services. These teacher skills are the resources needed that would help bring change to system of education and improve performance of teachers.

Again, the outcome of this present result would definitely add to existing and latent literature by widening the stock of knowledge on the mediating effect of empowerment practices on the teacher quality to improve student academic performance in public secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria. Besides, it would be a source of material for prospective researchers who intends to carry out research on this area but on different perspectives.

The findings of this research would be of germane to various school administrators because they are the representative of policy makers by creating better empowerment strategies that would improve the level of teachers' performance. Teacher quality and empowerment practices are inseparable to boost efficiency of teacher in public schools. Contributions of teachers in the decision making process significantly would transform them and achieve quick attainment of educational goals.

In addition, the study is expected to serve as a framework for educational designers on the provision of educational services that might increase and develop the secondary schools teacher quality. In this study, emphasis is made on the fact that teachers should be intellectual, physically and academically sound in teacher knowledge



to be able to perform excellently and produce quality outputs which the country needs in the quality education.

This current study might draw the attentions of government on the welfare of teachers. Teacher welfare matter a lot because it is one of the ingredients of teacher quality and teacher performance. When teachers are promoted regularly and given prompt salary, their performance would definitely improve in a geometric progression.

### **1.9 Scope and Delimitation of Study**

In Nigeria there are has 36 states with population of 170 million. The focus of this study was Kwara state in Nigeria. The researcher chosen Kwara state as a research location for this study simply because it is a state that has not be witness book-haram, kidnapping and relatively peaceful. Some of the points below were the reasons why Kwara state is being chosen for this study.

First and foremost, this study cannot cover all the states in Nigeria. There are some states in Nigeria that is so far and takes four days before one can get to the place. In this case, the researcher is not mobile enough to get to such places as some places are only accessible by who cannot go on road prefer to go on flight.



Moreover, security in some parts of the states in Nigeria like northern and southern part is compromised and not safe. In the northern part of Nigeria, Boko-haram militant threat is widespread and it has incapacitated the people of the area (Akinfala, Akinbode, & Kemmer, 2014; Ordu, 2017). Likewise, in the southern part of Nigeria the issues of kidnapping innocent people, bunkering of petrol pipeline, cultist and violence are found in the area (Obi & Rustad, 2011; Akanni & Adam, 2017; Ezirim, 2018; Chinwe, Chikwem & Chikwendu Duru, 2018). There was a case of a researcher who went there to administer questionnaires and was kidnapped. As a result of insecure, the researcher has reservation of carrying out research in aforementioned parts of the country. Kwara state is chosen because it is a nonviolent state and within the finding capability of the researcher. In Kwara state, this kind of unique research has not be done before and it would add as an advantage to the government of Kwara state policy maker, the school administrators, and teachers among others.



## 1.10 Operational Definitions

The following definitions are provided to have an in-depth knowledge of the terms throughout the study:

### Secondary School Principal

According to Abdulrasheed, Hussin, and Dzahir Kasa (2016) school principal is the link officer that mediates between the secondary school and the community. In this study, secondary school principal refers to the head of school that manage, organize, control,



direct and supervise both human and materials resources for the realization of educational goals in Kwara state government schools. It is secondary principal who create conducive environment for the teachers, and distribute tasks and functions to teachers. In Kwara state, Nigeria, to be a school principal one must reach the levels of 15 and 16 meaning that one has spent 25 years in the service.

### **Empowerment**

In line with Avidov-Ungar (2018) which defined empowerment as given the role leadership to teachers in the school system with aim of improving productivity. In the context of this study, empowerment refers to opportunities given to teachers the opportunity to participate in the decision making process in the school, curriculum, method of teaching, staff development programs, as well as has create an avenue for complaints.

### **Secondary School Teacher**

Teacher has been defined by Musa, Jimba, and Ogundele (2015) as people that motivate and inspire the students to strive for greatness and who see that students' become useful member in the society. Secondary school teacher is conceptualized in this study as someone who is endowed or trained from college of education/universities of education in Kwara state, Nigeria. Some of these teachers have acquired particular knowledge, tasks, and attitude and instructs or passes the learners in such area of capability and ability within the confinement of either virtual or physical classroom. The minimum

qualification for teaching in Nigeria is a Nigerian certificate in Education and a bachelor degree in education.

### **Quality**

According to Thangeda, Baratisseng, and Mompan (2016) Quality can be defined in terms of excellence, perfection, value for money, fitness to purpose. This study refer Quality as degree of excellence” or relatively to the nature or class of quality. The quality in education also means that most of the input and output of education must be of quality. The teacher, instructional materials, policies (input), students (output) and instructions must be quality oriented.

School refers to a place of learning under organized instructions for children between the ages of 11 to 18 years in Kwara state, Nigeria. In Kwara state children starts school from age of 11 and finish at the age of 18. Public schools are controlled by government and private school managed by individual. Governments recruited the teachers and post them to where they are needed.

### **Teacher Commitment (TC)**

Commitment has been defined by Mart (2013) as dedication, zeal to teach and able to shape the students wholeheartedly in the school. This study see teacher commitment as



zeal, loyalty and devotion of teachers for the improvement of teaching and learning e.g. affective commitment, continuance and normative commitment.

### **Classroom Management (CM)**

Aliakbari and Bozorgmanesh (2015) defined Classroom management embodies establishing rules to organize the class, to plan materials and activities, and to explain instructions and consequences of acting up. In the case of this study, classroom management conceptualized as the organization and utilization of time, discipline, space and students for the purpose of teaching and learning. Classroom management is the beginning and foundation for any successful teaching to occur.



### **Teacher Knowledge (TK)**

Olasehinde-Williams, Yahaya, and Owolabi (2018) defined teacher knowledge as skills possess by teacher in area like strategies to impart, development of curriculum and method of teaching and able to impart such skills meaningfully on students. In case of this study, the teacher knowledge refers to the knowledge by teacher in designing method of teaching, passing relevant information and knowledge of subject.





## **Communication Skills (CS)**

Communication skills has been defined by Khan, Khan, Ul-Islam, and Khan (2017) as one that involve listening and speaking which facilitates effective teaching in the classroom. In this current study, communication skills refers to means of passing relevant ideas and information to learners through reading, writing, listening, etc.

## **Students' Academic Performance (SAP)**

This refers to the performance of the learners after they have been exposed to school activities (i.e. test and exams) by qualified teachers with the availability of quality instructional materials and organization of workshops for acquiring skills.



## **Senior Secondary School**

Senior secondary school means the students of upper classes starting from SS I to SS III in the schools system.

### **1.11 Summary**

This work is on the mediating role of principal empowerment practices on the relationship between teacher quality and students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools, Kwara state, Nigeria. Thus far, the researcher discussed extensively on the background of the study; problem statement; objectives of the study;





research questions; hypotheses development; significance of the study; theoretical framework; conceptual framework; and scope and limitations of the study.

The chapter two of this study will explain all the variables based on relevant literature. The teacher quality variables which are the main focus in the study will be discussed. The relationship among the principal empowerment practices, teacher quality and students' academic performance will be discussed.

Lastly, chapter three of the work introduce the introduction, the research design, population and sampling, questionnaire, validity and reliability, data collection, data analysis and summary.



Chapter four discussed the process of data analysis used in the study for data collected while the chapter five of the study discussed the findings, recommendations and conclusion.

