

## The Power Sources and Influences of Secondary School Principals in Eastern Ethiopia

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**Abstract.** This study aimed to critically examine the power sources and influences of school principals in secondary schools of Eastern Ethiopia. A descriptive survey research design was employed to carry out the study. The participants of the study were 145 teachers, 78 principals, and 41 supervisors who were selected by using stratified and random sampling techniques. The researcher adopted descriptive and inferential statistics to make sound interpretations of data. The results revealed that school principals were mostly used expert, legitimate, and reward sources of power. Likewise, school principals have predominantly exercised a positional basis of power rather than personal power. There was a significant statistical difference in power sources of school principals regarding positions, gender, and service years. The findings also showed that school principals dominantly practiced proactive influencing tactics. Moreover, findings indicated that subordinates carried out school principals' compliance to obtain a prize or avoid punishment by applied reactive influence tactics. The study further discovered that subordinates were inclined to resist school principals' influence. This study suggests secondary principals should rethink how power is managed and deployed to make sound influence over subordinates to assure quality education. Hence, the results of the study may serve as a springboard to improve secondary school leadership and equip novice teachers to bring them a principalship position. Plus, this study may provide a clear picture for policymakers, scholars, and government officials to support and retain principals for long-term school improvement, and it may also a theoretical benefit for future research on the area of study.

**Keywords:** Eastern Ethiopia; influences; leadership; power sources; secondary school; school principals

### 1. Introduction

Power and influences are the most important areas of interest within the field of educational leadership. Leadership is an individual's ability to influence, motivate, and allow others to contribute to an organization's effectiveness and success (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2020; Northouse, 2013). To do so, a

leader uses power as a means of influence to achieve institutional objectives (Alsobaie, 2015). Leadership is an art of utilizing power to influence others (Aslanargun, 2011). Hence, power and leadership are different sides of the same coin. So, power is a leader's capacity to inspire, direct, lead, and motivate others. In brief, power is the ability of a leader to influence subordinates to achieve institutional aims (Nelson & Quick, 2013). To influence others leader has to be grip power from true sources. People often get confused on interrelated terminologies i.e. leadership-power-influence. In short, Aslanargun (2011) described the relationship between influence, authority, and hierarchy as follows:

*Power is the potential of "A" to influence "B" despite resistance. Influence is the result of "A's" changeable act over "B's" behavior. An authority is bound to position in an organization based on power and legitimacy. Control is compliance behavior that "A" manages over "B". It is the success of the influence process. Hierarchy refers to the formal structure of an organization and emphasizes the structure, roles, and division of labor (p. 7).*

In brief, power represents the ability to induce someone to do something whereas influence is the exercise of that power. Power is the potential to influence, while the influence is power in action. "Authority is the leader's power to influence others in a specific way, and an important basis for the influence of under formal organization" (Yukl, 2010: p.185). Although power and influence are interrelated in complex ways, they can be separate constructions (Lunenburg, 2012).

Where does this power come from? What gives a person or group influence over others? Power can come from many sources. Based on the concept of leader power, Yukl (2010) pointed out that "the potential influence derived from a leader's position in the organization is the power of the position, and includes legitimate, rewarding information, coercive and ecological, while the characteristic of those in a leadership position is personal power, and includes expert and referent power (p. 185)".

There are two sources of power which namely positional power and personal power (Yuki, 2010). The sources of power that derived from a leader's position are positional power which includes legitimate, rewarding information, coercive and ecological, and while the character of those in a leadership position is personal power, and it includes expert and referent power (Northouse, 2013). Positional power specified that reinforcement and punishment depended on the formal roles of the agent in the organization. Personal power mostly relies on one's charisma, experience, and information based on the characters of the agents (Krause, 2004). Details of each power base and sources are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Different types of power**

<b>Position power</b>	<b>Personal power</b>
Legitimate sources of power	Expert sources of power
Information sources of power	Referent sources of power

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Reward sources of power  
 Ecological sources of power  
 Coercive sources of power

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Source: Yukl (2010, p. 155)

Pertaining to power sources, an effective and efficient leader mostly used personal power than positional power (Northouse, 2013). However, "it remains important and interacts in a complex way with the personal power to determine the influence of a leader over his followers" (Weinstein, Raczynski & Peña, 2020: p. 72). Personal sources of power are more closely related to employees' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee job performance than organizational power sources. Furthermore, true leaders are likely to use power subtly and carefully that minimizes differences in status and avoids threats to the target person's self-esteem (Northouse, 2013).

School principals applied different power sources in different circumstances with different situational factors. Most studies of power sources have found that legitimate, rewarding, and coercive powers were incompatible and that correlations with criteria are generally negative or insignificant rather than positive (Goshu & Woldeamanuel, 2019). Lunenburg (2012) argues that legitimate power could lead to disappointment and resistance if it is not supported by expertise or used excessively. As a result, when a leader frequently relies on legitimacy power, the possible outcome of subordinate is resistance. It has also been found that the powers of experts and referents have a substantial influence on all interactive groups. The formal power only influences subordinates, and that there is little or no influence of the reward and coercive power on external groups in developed organizations (Singh, 2009).

As pertains to school principals' influencing process, tactics, and outcomes of their influence over subordinates, and to be effective as a leader, it is essential to guide followers to comply with given assignments. School principals influence not only subordinates but also students (Dhuey & Smith, 2018). To influence others, leaders use four very fundamental influencing tactics that may differ in terms of purpose. These are impression management tactics, political tactics, proactive tactics, and reactive (or resistance) tactics (Yukl, 2010). Any tactic can fail if it is not used skillfully and ethically or if it is not appropriate for the purpose and situation of influence.

## 1.1 Literature Review

### *Sources of Power*

Most scholars identified that there are two broad types of power; positional power and personal power (Yukl, 2010). An influence derived from the position of a leader in an organization is positional power that consists of the legitimate power, the power of reward, and the power of coercion, while the characteristics of a person who holds a position in leadership are personal power sources that comprise of information and ecological power (Yukl, 2010). Positional power specified that reinforcement and punishment depended on the formal roles of the agent in an institution. On the other hand, personal power typically relies on one's charisma, experience, and information which is directly related to the

characters of the agents. Details of each power base and sources are presented as follows.

#### *Legitimate Power*

Most scholars agree on this source of power as the power which derives from the position itself and formal authority overwork. This source of power is awarded by written or verbal contracts from higher officials, and it describes the responsibilities of the manager, and is based on this position sanctioned, authorized, and exalted (Singh, 2009). The amount of legitimate power is determined through the extent of the power the person possesses. So, experienced leaders are inclined to have more power than novice managers and vice versa (Northouse, 2013).

#### *Reward Power*

Reward power is the manager's ability to award or hold back prize like money, privilege, endorsement, or status in itself carries official power (Singh, 2009). Likewise, this power mainly arises from grasping over tangible benefits, and if what a leader presenting as a prize is of no value to an individual, it is likely not to influence behavior (Northouse, 2013).

#### *Coercive Power*

This is the opposite of reward power. This source of power is not only managing prizes but dealing with penalties. So, the coercive power of a leader over his follower is based on the right over the penalty, which differs significantly between different types of organizations (Northouse, 2013). Subordinate mostly believe that he/she can be deprived of something if he/she does not comply (Singh, 2009). When leaders using this power in an institution could not implement sanctions such as arming and shooting, however, it can indirectly bring cancellation of the privilege of workers such as additional payments, a day off (Yukl, 2010). In brief, the manager executes coercive power either by taking away the most important thing from his/her suburbanites or by providing harmful things that may hurt him/her.

#### *Referent Power*

The power of referral arises from the aspiration of someone to please an agent to whom they have strong feelings of adore, respect, and faithfulness (Cogaltay, Yalcin & Karadag, 2016). These charismatic leaders positively influence others since they are respected and admired by their followers. Likewise, the power of reference allows a leader a shared identity, the personification of the personality, the cult of the hero, the shared culture, or idolatry are some of the sources of power (Singh, 2009). Therefore, the advantage of having a reference power is that it can induce people to do things that may not translate into a tangible reward; the reward comes from the relationship with the charismatic person.

#### *Expert Power*

Many scholars agree that this source of power arises from a person's know-how, knowledge, or talent. Perception of people on an expert as he/she has superior knowledge, skill, and experience on a specific issue than they possess (Aslanargun, 2011). If a problem is fixed enduringly or others train to fix it on their own, the agent's experience is no longer valuable. Most challenging in any

organization is substituting experienced personal and expert power that he/she possesses. Experience is a basis authority as long as people depend on the agent's pieces of advice and services.

#### *Information power*

This source of power implies figuring out vital information, and then organizing, analyzing, managing, dissemination to others by using his/her position, and communication skill, and network. Information is sources of power in the 21st century, having this power double advantage to the leader to lead a dynamic world (Tran, 2020).

#### *Ecological power*

This power derived from moral, Christian values and Confucian values by the principle of doing good for others as what you would like them to do to you "(Singh, 2009; Trinh, Pham, Cao, Nguyen, Nghiem & Tran, 2019). It is once able to control physical surroundings, technology, assessing, and scanning the work environment, and sometimes it is known as situational engineering or ecological control.

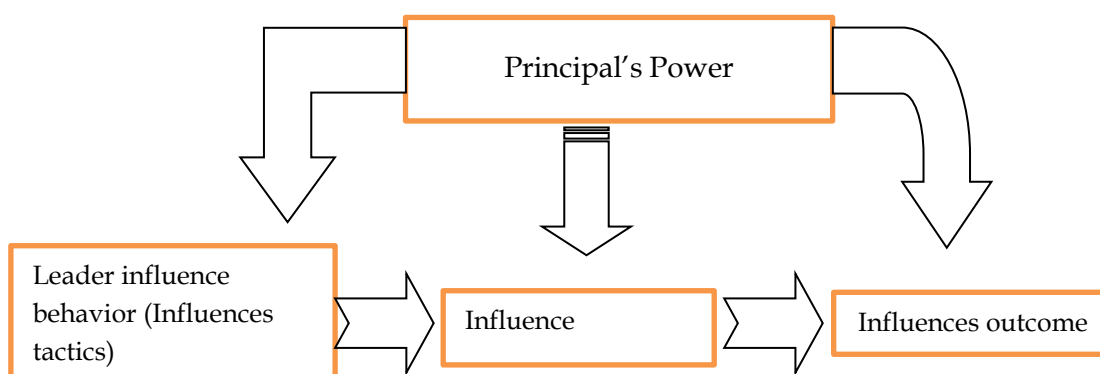
Investigating the school principals' power sources and influences is a continuing concern within the field of educational administration in Ethiopian secondary schools, yet there is insufficient research that includes their perspective. School principals can play a major role in engaging the school-community and other shareholders to participate in improving school (Mitchell, 2015). Despite the importance of school leadership, there remains a paucity of evidence on the school principals of Ethiopia. The main concern in Ethiopian schools is quantity rather than quality (Semela, 2011), and school leaders face more pressure to increase and maintain enrollment numbers than keeping quality education. Among the countless problems for the deteriorating education quality in Ethiopian secondary is school principals' related problems. The enrolment rate of students from lower primary to higher education is accelerating, but the quality issue is under questing (Goshu & Woldeamanuel, 2019). Most scholars agreed on fundamental causes for deteriorating education quality is school leadership-related problems.

One of the greatest challenges to the school leadership is a fatalistic picture for school principals. School principals lack the autonomy of administering funds, mobilizing resources, and determining important issues related to teacher recruitment and training (Mitchell, 2015). Utmost challenges for this may be that school principals are not aware of their sources of power and influencing process. In the long Ethiopian education history, there were no formal qualification criteria to lead schools, and school leaders simply elected appointed by government officials (Tekleselassie, 2005). Due to the reasons, the government should take first place for the failure of the quality of schools, school leadership, or principal ship (Goshu & Woldeamanuel, 2019). Another main challenge faced by many schools is the school principals' improperly excising power and authority over subordinates (Goshu & Woldeamanuel, 2019). Further, the school management has a strong impact on the job satisfaction of subordinates especially teachers (Cogaltay et al., 2016). Overall,

these studies highlight the need to examine the school principals' power sources, and the influence of school principals in Eastern Ethiopian secondary schools.

This study aims to fill the following research gaps in the context of Eastern Ethiopia secondary schools. First, there has been no detailed investigation of the mentioned concern, as stated by Mitchell (2012:12: p. 3), "the role of principals in educational leadership particularly proper application of power and influences is a vast field of study, yet little has been written from the perspective of Ethiopia". The impact of educational expansion on the quality of secondary education is understudied, particularly for school leadership. For the past 20 years, the Ethiopian education system has been growing fast, and despite this expansion, however, it created a slew of new problems, such as funding shortages, and a deterioration of quality (Mitchell, 2015). Consequently, concerns for the quality of education under questioned because of rapid expansions of schools Minister of Education (MoE, 2008). Thus, this study provides new insights into power sources and influences of school principals and its implication on education quality.

Finally, to design a framework for the study, it is essential to differentiate leader power sources, influencing tactics, processes, and outcomes. There are three main influencing tactics that any leaders can possess to lead institutions like political, proactive, and reactive tactics. Furthermore, engagement, compliance, and resistance are the three main outcomes of influences (Yukl 2010). The following figure 1 indicates the framework of the study.



Source: Adapted from Yukl (2010)

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework of school principals' power sources, and influencing tactics, process, and outcome**

## 1.2 Basic Research Questions

In light of all the above, the aim of this study critically examines the power sources and influences of school principals in secondary schools of Eastern Ethiopia. Hence, this study answers the following basic research questions.

1. What sources of power do school principals mostly use?
2. What kinds of tactics do school principals apply to influence subordinates?
3. Why do subordinates comply for school principals?
4. What outcomes are observed among subordinates for the influences of their school principals?

## 2. Methodology

### *Research Design*

This study used a descriptive survey research design. The basic ground behind applying this design is to collect data to answer questions about people's opinions, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and demographic composition on the current study (Mills & Gay, 2016). Additionally, this design is appropriate to collect and analyze data with a limited timeline and budget. The researcher also used a quantitative approach for a research strategy that requires collecting numerical data, quantification of collected data, and analysis of data that were selected from school teachers, principals, and supervisors (Creswell, 2012). The participants of this study were made up of teachers, principals, and supervisors who have been serving in different secondary schools in Eastern Ethiopia.

### *Population and Sample / Study Group/Participants*

This study was conducted in Eastern Ethiopia. It comprised of two zones of Oromia National Regional State (East and West Hararghe), one Administrative City (Dire Dawa), and two districts in Harari National Regional State. The study population (N=1,015) was composed of secondary school teachers (n=541), principals (n=301) and supervisors (n=173). The participating secondary school teachers had a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) of the 2018/19 academic year batch. Participants were selected via stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The basic reason behind employing the stratified sampling technique was that study groups had different categories (teachers, principals, and supervisors), and it was important to take into account such diverse strata.

To determine sample size from study population, the researchers applied Yamane (1967)  $n = \frac{N}{1 + NE^2}$ ; which N=total population; n=sample size, E=error rate /margin of error (.05) provides a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes and guess: 95% confidence level P=.05. Thus, sample size determination was calculated as follows:

$$N = \frac{1015}{1 + NE^2}$$

$$N = \frac{1015}{(1 + 361 * 0.05^2)}$$

$$N = \frac{1015}{3.5375}$$

$$N = 287$$

After determining the sample size from the three groups of the respondents, the researcher used stratified proportional sampling techniques to select respondents from each category.

**Table 2: Stratified Sampling Frame**

Strata	Population size	Sample size	Sampling technique/s
Teachers	541	153	stratified and random
Principals	301	85	stratified and random
Supervisors	173	49	stratified and random
Total	1,015	287	

The primary data were gathered via questionnaires (Appendix) from teachers, principals, and supervisors who worked the 2018/19 academic year of secondary schools of Eastern Ethiopia. The first part of the questionnaires was adapted from Hersey and Natemeyer (1979) entitled 'power perception profile-perception of others'; it includes 21 pairs of reasons frequently reported when asked why subordinates obey the orders of their school principals. The second part of the questionnaire was prepared by the researcher that aimed to measure school principals' influencing process, tactics, and outcome of the leaders' influence on their subordinates' performance.

The instruments were converted to local languages, such as Afan Oromoo and Amharic to reduce language barriers. To check the reliability of the items, a pilot test was conducted in Bate and Haramaya town secondary schools of Haramaya town. To check the validity of the instrument, area experts were consulted, and their comments were incorporated.

#### *Data Analysis*

The researcher applied descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation) to describe the nature of the data and the characteristics of the sample in a meaningful manner. Also, inferential statistics (independent t-test and one-way ANOVA) were adopted to compare significant differences that may exist between and within groups of teachers, principals, and supervisors in their perception of principals' power sources about their position, sex, service years, and academic qualification.

#### *Ethical Considerations*

The researcher had given full attention to the moral and ethical issues. Due consideration has been given to ethical concerns of the participants to ensuring and informing consent and developing confidentiality, maintaining anonymity, and other related ethical issues (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The researcher had communicated and assured the participants on their responses will be used only for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

### **3. Results**

The demographic data of respondents in this study can be described based on roles and gender. The questionnaire was initially distributed to (n=153) secondary school teachers, (n=85) school principals, and (n=49) supervisors with a total of (n =287). Of the total number of the questionnaire distributed to the groups, 264(92%) i.e. (n=145) teachers, (n=78) principals, and (n=41) supervisors were appropriately filled and returned. Even though the questionnaire retrieval rate is not at 100%, results could not have been affected by this retrieval rate and returned data has statistically sound to precede analysis (Cohen et al. 2007). Based on gender, it was found that about 221 males and 43 females have participated in this study.

#### *The sources of power school principals mostly use*

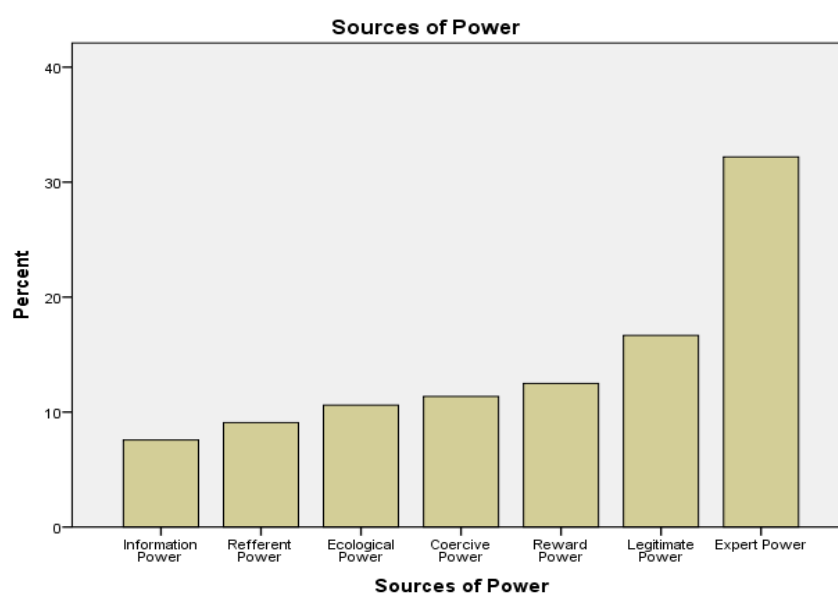
Frequency counts and percentages were used to identify the power sources that school principals mostly applied, as perceived by teachers, principals, and supervisors. The summary of results presented in Table 3.



**Table 3: School Principals' Power Bases and Sources**

Power basis	Sources power	Categories						Total	Summary of power basis		
		Teachers		Principals		Supervisors					
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Positional power	Legitimate Power	16	6.1	20	7.6	8	3	44	16.7	155	58.7
	Information Power	8	3	5	1.9	7	2.7	20	7.6		
	Reward Power	14	5.3	16	6.1	3	1.1	33	12.4		
	Ecological Power	15	5.7	11	4.2	2	.8	28	10.6		
	Coercive Power	27	10.2	2	.8	1	.4	30	11.4		
Personal power	Expert Power	51	19.3	19	7.2	15	5.7	85	32.2	109	41.3
	Referent Power	14	5.3	5	1.9	5	1.9	24	9.1		
	Total	145	55	78	29.5	41	15.5	264	100		

Looking at the detailed power sources of school principals reported in Table 3, most participants perceived that school principals apply expert power (32.2%), legitimate power (16.7%), and reward power (12.4%) most of the time. On the other hand, ecological power (10.6%), referent power (9.1%), and information power (7.6%) are sources of power that school principals slightly used to influence their subordinates. The last column in Table 3 summarizes the seven power sources that school principals are executing and further categorizes them into two power bases. Accordingly, school principals are exercising positional power (58.7%) and personal power (41.3%). To elaborate more about sources of power that school principals mostly possessed, the following figure summarizes in detail.

**Figure 2: Summary of Power Sources that School Principals' Mostly Used**

The above bar graph described the power sources which school leaders mostly applied, as perceived by teachers, principals, and supervisors. From the graph, it can be seen that expert, legitimate, and reward power are the most utilized power sources by school principals. On the other hand, information, ecological, and referent power sources were reported as principals' least utilized power sources.

#### Testing Variables on Perceptual Differences in Principals' Sources of Power

One-way ANOVA tests were conducted to uncover if there were statistically significant differences among teachers, supervisors, and principals. The results of these tests are shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: One-Way ANOVA Test on Perceptual Differences in Principals' Sources of Power by Position**

Groups	Descriptive			ANOVA Summary					
	N	Mean	SD	SV	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Supervisors	41	3.90	.55	Between Groups	3323.71	2	161.85	33.08	.00
Principals	78	3.73	.51	Within Groups	13111.25	260	50.24		
Teachers	145	3.15	.73	Total	16434.96	263			
Total	264	3.47	.72						

As Table 4 shows, there was a significant statistical difference in the perception of principals sources of power between the three groups:  $F(2, 263) = 33.08$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Despite the statistically significant results, the real difference in mean scores between groups was quite slight (Group 1:  $M = 3.90$ , Group 2:  $M = 3.73$  and Group 3:  $M = 3.15$ ). To find out exactly where the differences between the groups occurred, post hoc comparisons was applied by using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for group 2 ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ) was significantly different from that of group 3 ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ). Group 1 ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ) did not differ significantly from group 2 or 3. Tukey HSD test which indicated that the mean score for supervisors was significantly higher than that of principals and teachers. This implies that supervisors perceive principals' sources of power differently than teachers and principals.

An independent sample t-test was employed to compare whether there was a statistically significant difference in the sources of power of school principals between male and female participants. The results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Gender Difference in Sources of Power of School Principals**

Sex	N	Mean	SD	t-test for Equality of Mean					
				F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	MD
Male	221	3.53	.70	.011	.916	3.89	262	.000	4.893
Female	43	3.09	.71			3.85	58.28	.000	4.893

There was a significant statistical difference in scores for males ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = .70$ ) and females ( $M = 3.09$ ,  $SD = .71$ );  $t(287) = 3.89$ ,  $p < .001$ . The degree of the differences in the means (mean difference =  $-1.03$ , 95% CI: 2.42 to 7.36) was very small ( $\eta^2 = .005$ ). This clearly indicates that there is a difference in perceptions

between males and females on exercising power sources of school principals. Female principals are more excises personal sources of power than positional than male school principals while leading schools.

One-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to compare the mean scores of three groups that were categorized based on academic qualification with sources of power, and One-way among groups ANOVA test results were summarized and presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: One-Way ANOVA Test on Perceptual Differences of Power Sources by Academic Qualification**

Items	Descriptive			ANOVA Summary					
	N	Mean	SD	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Diploma	2	3.45	.13	Between Groups	10.403	2	5.20	.083	.92
Degree	261	3.43	.72	Within Groups	16424.55	261	62.93		
Master	1	3.72	-	Total	16434.96	263			
Total	264	3.44	.72						

Table 6 displays the one-way ANOVA results comparing participants' reported perceptions of principals' sources of power by using the mean scores of three groups categorized by participants' academic backgrounds. Participants are categorized into three groups according to their level of academic qualifications (Group 1: Diploma; Group 2: Degree; Group3: Master's). There was no statistically significant difference in perceptions of school principals' power between the three groups:  $F(2, 263) = .83, p = .92$ . Moreover, the descriptive results of each group assured that almost there was no mean difference between groups; G1 ( $M=3.45, SD=.13$ ); G 2 ( $M=3.43, SD=.72$ ); G 3 ( $M=3.72, SD=-$ ). The result indicates that level of academic qualifications has does not affect exercising different sources of power of school principals.

One-way between-groups ANOVA with posthoc tests administered to see the difference among respondents that grouped according to years of service and perception of principals' use of power, and the test results were summarized and presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: One-Way ANOVA Test on Perceptual Differences of Power Sources by Service Years**

Items	Descriptive			ANOVA Summary					
	N	Mean	SD	SV	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
≤5 Years	174	3.34	.70	Between Groups	606.64	4	151.66	2.48	.04
6- 10 Years	64	3.64	.74	Within Groups	15828.32	259	61.11		
11-15 Years	21	3.57	.52	Total	16434.96	263			
16-20 Years	3	3.21	.51						
≥21 Years	2	3.77	.32						
Total	264	3.44	.72						

Table 7 displays the results of the one-way between-groups analysis of variance were conducted to explore the impact of years of service in study group perception of the use of power by principals. Participants were divided into five groups according to their years of service (Group 1: <5 years; Group 2: 6-10 years; Group 3: 11-15 years, Group 4: 16-20 years; and Group 5 :> 21 years). The result revealed that there was a significant statistical difference in the perception of the use of power scores by principals for the year of service of the five groups:  $F(4, 259) = 2.48, p = 0.04$ . Despite obtaining statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between groups was medium (3.34, 3.64, 3.57, 3.21 and 3.77, respectively). To find out exactly where the differences between the groups occurred, post hoc comparisons was employed using the Tukey HSD test which indicated that the mean score for group 1 ( $M = 3.34, SD = 0.70$ ) was significantly different from that of group 2 ( $M = 3.64, SD = 0.74$ ). Group 3 ( $M = 3.57, SD = 0.52$ ), group 4 ( $M = 3.21, SD = 0.51$ ) and group 5 ( $M = 3.77, SD = 0.32$ ) did not differ significantly from group 1 or 2.

#### *Influencing tactics, process and outcomes of school principals*

The respondents were asked about school principals' influencing tactics, process, and outcome, and they were requested to choose one among the given alternatives. The results are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: School Principals' Influencing Tactics, Process and Outcome**

Types of influences	Items	Categories						Total N	%
		Teachers		Principals		Supervisors			
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
School Principals' Influencing tactics	Reactive influence tactics	27	9.4	0	0.0	1	.3	28	9.8
	Proactive influence tactics	68	23.7	42	14.6	32	11.1	142	49.5
	Political tactics	36	12.5	13	4.5	6	2.1	55	19.2
	Impression management tactics	22	7.7	30	10.5	10	3.5	62	21.6
	Total	153	53.3	85	29.6	49	17.1	287	100
School Principals' Influencing Processes	Reactive influence tactics	76	26.5	31	10.8	13	4.5	120	41.8
	Internalization	41	14.3	42	14.6	30	10.5	113	39.4
	Instrumental compliance	36	12.5	12	4.2	6	2.1	54	18.8
	Total	153	53.3	85	29.6	49	17.1	287	100
School Principals' Influence outcomes	Commitment	23	8	15	5.2	5	1.7	43	15.0
	Compliance	44	15.3	21	7.3	12	4.2	77	26.8
	Resistance	86	30.0	49	17.1	32	11.1	167	58.2
	Total	153	53.3	85	29.6	49	17.1	287	100

As indicated in Table 8, school principals are influencing their subordinates by using reactive influence tactics (9.8%), political tactics (19.2%), impression management tactics (21.6%), and proactive influence tactics (49.5%). These findings clearly indicate that most of the respondents noted their school principals applied influencing tactics, specifically proactive influencing tactics.

Pertaining to school principals' influencing processes, principals were liable to rely upon instrumental compliance (18.8%), internalization (39.4%), and reactive influence tactics (41.8%). Therefore, most of the respondents stated that school principals are predominantly using reactive influencing processes for persuading school subordinates.

Relating to the influence outcome of school principals on the job performance and satisfaction of their subordinates, the summary results of the respondents reported that commitment (15.0%), compliance (26.8%), and resistance (58.2%). Thus, statistically, data clearly indicated that subordinates are mostly resisting their school principals' influence. If the subordinates are dissatisfied by their respective leaders it is too hard to bring change and reform in an institution (Brezicha, Ikoma, Park & LeTendre, 2020).

As seen in the above Table 8, school principals are mostly applying proactive influencing tactics to influence subordinates. Likewise, reactive influencing tactics are a reason for subordinates complying with principals' requested actions. Furthermore, most of the time subordinates showed resistance towards their school principals' influence.

#### **4. Discussions**

The major aim of this study was to examine school principals' power sources, and influencing tactics, processes, and outcomes in secondary schools of Eastern Ethiopia. Four research questions guided the study.

The first key finding was that expert, legitimate, and reward powers are the power sources which school principals mostly applied to influence their subordinates. As Aslanargun (2011) argues, expert power is strongly accredited in an organization that leaders and followers trust one another. When school leaders appropriately applied the above-mentioned sources powers, the leader's behaviors could simply be internalized, leading to compliance. Likewise, if subordinates are internally motivated, they no longer need to be controlled as is the case with reward and coercion. Further, Singh (2009) conducted a study on 'Organizational Power in Perspective': results depicted that excessive use of legitimate and expert power, slows down motivation and creativity of workers, while the lack of power delay decision-making. Likewise, Mitchell (2012) suggests the most powerful means of influencing others is having a positive relationship.

Ironically, school principals slightly used referent, information, and ecological power sources to influence their followers. If school principals rarely apply the power of referent, subordinates cannot evoke a sense of trust, loyalty, fulfillment, and responsibility towards subordinates, as well as enthusiasm towards a leader (Aslanargun, 2011). Also, school principals are exercising positional power (58.7%) and personal power (41.3%). Likewise, principals mostly applied coercive influence of power over the teachers (Özaslan, 2018). School principals are steadiness applying a positional and personal basis of power. However, they are slightly exercising the positional power basis than personal sources of power. This finding directly contradicts the personal sources

of power is paramount important for employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance than positional sources of power (Lunenburg, 2012; Weinstein et al., 2020). Likewise, even though school leaders are expected to apply shared leadership to influence their followers, their level of application is not this much (Goksoy, 2016). Based on the result and discussions, it is possible to conclude that secondary school principals in Eastern Ethiopia mostly practice positional power. In particular from power sources perspectives they are highly exercising expert, legitimate, and reward power.

Another finding was that there was a statistically significant difference amongst teachers, principals, and superiors in their perception of power sources of school principals. The disparity in mean scores between principals and teachers was quite small. In addition to the gender variable, there was a significant difference in scores of males and females, and the degree of the differences in the means was very small. This clearly indicates that gender has a significant effect on male and female principals to apply different sources of power. Regarding to academic qualification, there was no statistically significant mean differences in perception of the power of sources of school principals for the three-level (Diploma, Degree, and Master's) qualifications. Moreover, there was a statistically significant difference in the perception of principals' use of power scores for the five groups' service years. The actual difference occurred in mean scores of service years between ( $\leq 5$  Years) and (6- 10 Years) were a small effect size. Based on the result and discussions it is briefed that there was a significant difference in power sources of school principals concerning positions, gender, and service years; however, there was no statistically significant difference in academic qualification.

The second key finding was that, even though school principals are using four basic influencing tactics namely impression management, political, proactive, and reactive influence tactics; they are predominantly applying proactive influence tactics. A certain situation may dictate the leaders what influencing tactics they should apply based on a given circumstance (Theron, 2020; Yukl, 2010). School administrators ought to recognize and give values to how they are exercising their power and influencing others (Stravakou, Lozgka & Melissopoulos, 2018). Based on the result and discussions it is concluded that school principals are mostly using proactive influence tactics than the rest types of tactics. Thus, school principals are using reasonable influence and factual evidence to make the request feasible (Aslanargun, 2011).

The third important finding was influencing the processes of school principals are instrumental compliance, internalization, and reactive influence. Most of the respondents, however, reported that subordinates carried out compliance and principals' requested action due to reactive influence, which suggests they obey to obtain a reward or avoid a penalty. Ironically, the result is reversed with stakeholders of the secondary are overloaded with resistance forces, while principals' experiences of change or leadership are more optimistic with fewer resistance forces (Van Wyk, Van der Westhuizen & Van Vuuren, 2014). School stakeholders resist while principals' experiences of change or leadership are more optimistic with fewer resisting forces

The fourth major finding was that the influence of the school principals brings three types of influence outcomes on subordinates' performance: commitment, compliance, and resistance. Most of the respondents, however, reported that subordinates mostly resisting their school principals' influence (Twalh, Alsolami, Cheng, & Islam, 2016). Further, the best way to lead employees as a manager is to become a storyteller meaning that leaders should always focus on creating user-friendly and interactive environments, rather than tense environments, in which the storyteller (manager) always engages and puts the audience at ease (Yan, 2020).

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the prior results and discussions, the researcher drew the following conclusions:

It is possible to conclude that secondary school principals in Eastern Ethiopia are mostly practicing positional power. In particularly from power sources perspectives they are highly exercising an expert, legitimate, and reward power. Thus, it is recommended that school principals should balance both sources of power, and then apply personal sources of power to ensure employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance. There was a statistically significant disparity in power sources of school principals concerning positions, gender, and service years; however, there was no statistically significant difference in academic qualification. Also, higher education officials and policymakers at the MoE, Minister of Sciences and Higher Education (MoSHE), Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Bureau, and district education offices should take in to account staff seniority, gender, and service years when they assign and appoint principals (Tingle, Corrales, & Peters, 2019).

Most of the time, an organization does not succeed because attention had not given to how leaders' power is managed and deployed (Twalh et al., 2016). School principals are mostly using proactive tactics than the rest two. Therefore, school principals should create a conducive work environment and positive school culture so that subordinates carry out requested action by recognizing compliance intrinsically, allowing them to maintain a relationship and favor with their leader. Teachers' perceptions of school principals influenced school culture and affected the teacher's work (Britton, 2018). Subordinates are obeyed by the school principals simply to reacting to order and instruction which they have given. Thus, it is possible to conclude subordinates are obeying school principals intended to obtain a tangible reward or avoiding punishment. It is of paramount importance that all school shareholders should friendly work together for the realization of intuitional goals (Kolleck, 2019; Eyal & Yarm, 2018). Lastly, resistance influence outcome is mainly observed among subordinates for the influences of the power of their school principals. Thus, subordinates are mostly resisting their school principals' influence. Principals then need with teachers to maximize their potential and efficiently utilize their capacity (Tang, Chen, Knippenberg, & Yu, 2020; Heffernan, 2018). School principals suggested motivating, encouraging, and inspiring subordinates to overcome unnecessary resistance and confrontation while managing schools.

### The Implication for Future Research

The study implies that there are only a few studies carried out in Ethiopia in general and Eastern regions in particular that are related to the power sources and influences of secondary school principals. Thus, based on the results, it is clear that how school principals' power is managed and deployed to make sound influence over subordinates to assure quality education. Also, it is evidence-based that the result of the study serves not only as a means of improving school leadership and teaching but also in rising and maximizing junior staff to shoulder responsibility in administrative areas for the future and to enhance their problem-solving skills. This study would add new knowledge on the power of and sources of influences of secondary school principals. The findings of the study have theoretical, practical, and policy-related benefits for the improvement of secondary school leadership.

However, this study has its own limitations, firstly, due to the resource constraints, the research addresses only some selected secondary schools of eastern Ethiopia. As a result, the research finding may not be generalized for all secondary school principals of Ethiopia. Secondly, since the study secured only quantitative data from the respondents it has methodological limitations too. Future research is needed to gain a more general understanding of the power sources and influences of school principals in the same areas in depth (Yan, 2020).

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## Appendix

**HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

**Questionnaire to be filled by: Secondary School Teachers, Principals and Supervisors**

Dear Respondents, the purpose of this questionnaire is to conduct a research entitled “*The Power Sources and Influences of Secondary School Principals in Eastern Ethiopia*”. The responses you provide will have a paramount importance for the successful accomplishment of this study. Thus, you are kindly requested to give your genuine response. Your responses will be used only for academic purpose and will remain confidential.

**Direction:**

- ☞ Please read each item carefully and record your genuine opinion based on your exposure and knowledge in the area of ethical leadership.
  - ☞ Please do not consult others while responding the items.
  - ☞ Please answer all questions in their order.
  - ☞ It is not necessary to write your name on the questionnaire.
  - ☞ Please return the completed questionnaire to the designated person/supervisor.
- Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation!

**Part I. General/Personal Information**

- 1.1. Name of the school that you are working for \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.2. Your current job position \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.3. Sex: Male  Female
- 1.4. Age: ≤20  21-25  26-30  31-35  >36-40  ≥ 41
- 1.5. Total work experience in leadership position years: ≤ 5  6-10  11-15  16-20  ≥21
- 1.6. Educational qualification:  
Diploma  BA/BSC Degree  MA/MSC Degree  PhD
- 1.7. Field of specialization: Educational Leadership and Management  Educational/school Leadership and Management  Others

**Instruction below**, you will find 21 pairs of reasons frequently given by people when asked why they obey the leaders of a school leader. Read each of these pairs of answers and allocate 3-points between the two alternative reasons in each pair. Base your point allocation on your judgment of each alternative's relative importance (0=Not important, 1= less important, 2 important and 3=Very Important). This is in reference to your perception of why your subordinates follows and obey you. *Remember, for each pair only allocate a total number of three points .i.e. A+B should be =3*

1	A	I can “punish” those who don’t co-operate with me.
	B	They realize that I am in contact with very important and influential
2	C	They respect my knowledge, capacity, judgment, and experience.
	D	They have access to information that is valuable to others.
3	E	My position in the organization confers me the authority to manage its
	F	They appreciate me and what to please me.
4	G	I can reward and support those who co-operate with me
	A	I can “punish” those who do not co-operate with me.

5	B	They realize that I am in contact with very important and influential
	C	They respect my knowledge, capacity, judgment and experience.
6	D	I have access to information that is valuable to others.
	E	My position in the organization confers me the authority to manage its
7	F	They appreciate me and what to please me.
	G	I can reward and support those who co-operate with me.
8	A	I can "punish" those who don't co-operate with me.
	C	They respect my knowledge, capacity, judgment and experience.
9	B	They realize that I am in contact with very important and influential people.
	D	I have access to information that is valuable to others.
10	C	They respect my knowledge, capacity, judgment and experience.
	E	My position in the organization confers me the authority to manage its
11	D	I have access to information that is valuable to others.
	A	I can "punish" those who don't co-operate with me.
12	E	My position in the organization confers me the authority to manage its
	B	They realize that I am in contact with very important and influential
13	F	They appreciate me and what to please me.
	C	They respect my knowledge, capacity, judgment, and experience.
14	G	I can reward and support those who co-operate with me.
	B	They realize that I am in contact with very important and influential
15	A	I can "punish" those who do not co-operate with me.
	E	My position in the organization confers me the authority to manage its
16	B	They realize that I am in contact with very important and influential people.
	F	They appreciate me and what to please me.
17	C	They respect my knowledge, capacity, judgment, and experience.
	G	I can reward and support those who co-operate with me.
18	D	I have access to information that is valuable to others.
	F	They appreciate me and what to please me.
19	E	My position in the organization confers me the authority to manage its
	G	I can reward and support those who co-operate with me.

20	F	They appreciate me and what to please me.
	A	I can "punish" those who do not co-operate with me.
21	G	I can reward and support those who co-operate with me.
	D	I have access to information that is valuable to others.

**TOTALS:**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G		Sum
							=	63

**Key: Please read each statement, and show your position by putting a tick mark (☐) under 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Usually, 5=Always**

No	A. Items prepared to assess influences Tactics of principals and supervisors adopted from Yukl (2010)	Responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
No	<b>A. Items prepared to assess Proactive Influence Tactics of principals and supervisors</b>					
1.	use logical arguments and factual evidence to make request feasible					
2.	explain how the person could benefit from carrying out a requested task.					
3.	arouse the target person's emotions to gain commitment for a request					
4.	encourage the target to suggest improvements					
5.	offer an incentive and promise to provide an appropriate reward who carry out a difficult request.					
6.	provide relevant resources and assistance if the subordinates will carry out a request					
7.	ask the person to do a favor for you as a friend					
8.	use praise before or during an influence by expressing person's ability while carry out request.					
9.	establish the legitimacy of a request by referring to rules, policies & contracts					
10.	use demands and frequent checking that the staff must do what I asked to do					
11.	seek the aid of others to persuade the subordinates to do something					

**Direction: Read the following questions carefully and choose the best answer that describes your influencing tactics and process in your school?**

**1. What kind of Influencing Tactics you are applying to influences your immediate fellow?**

- A. Provide praise or offering unconditional help for your subordinate self-promotion.
- B. Deception, manipulation and influencing decision makers to promote your interests.
- C. Uses logical arguments and factual evidence to make request feasible
- D. have switched roles with subordinates and subordinates resist and show unwanted behavior

**2. What do you think that your subordinates carry out your requested action?**

- A. Obtaining a tangible reward or avoiding a punishment.
- B. By recognizing compliance is intrinsically desirable & committed to support their leaders.
- C. To gain approval, maintain a relationship, need for acceptance and favor from the leader