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Leadership Skills Employed By Principal on Students' Academic Performance in Public Teachers Training Colleges in Lake Region, Kenya

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to establish the leadership skills employed by principal on student academic performance in public teachers training colleges in Lake Region, Kenya. This research therefore, targeted all 4 Principals, 4 Board of Management chair persons and 52 college HODs and 180 student leaders' total of 240 participants. The sampling technique applied here was convenient sampling for principals, BOM-chairmen and HODs for they were few hence all were considered 100 percent. Hence purposive sampling to select principals, BOM chairpersons and HODs. While 30 % was used to select student leaders whose population was 180. Stratified sampling technique was used to distribute the student leaders equitably to the four colleges (15-each) that also ensured gender equality and random sampling was finally used to select the participating sample. Questionnaires and interviews schedules were used in collecting data. The researcher ensured that these instruments were tested for reliability by using test re-test methods and validity by using suggestions from supervisors before setting out to collect data. Split-Half technique was employed for the test of reliability, the Pilot questionnaires were divided into two equivalent halves and their correlation co-efficient for the two halves computed using the Spearman rank correlation coefficient, describing the internal consistency of the test then if it showed that the instrument is reliable, correlation coefficient minimum of 0.65 was accepted as reliable. The researcher adhered to regulations and ethical considerations. The findings revealed that administrative council met (50%) both monthly and quarterly; he had facilitated strategic planning by monitoring and ensuring a high budget adherence as indicated by (75%) he as well ensured departments meet regularly by (75%). The study concluded that the Principals had time management skills. The study recommends that all Principals must be well trained on time management periodically because time is a key management skill. The researcher adhered to research ethics including plagiarism and getting the consent of respondents among others.

Keywords: Principals, leadership Skills, students, academic, performance.

INTRODUCTION

The influence of principals' activities as put forward by Grissom, Loeb and Mitani [1] indicated that as leaders, they are responsible for supporting the college and hence college vision to be achieved. That goes all the time to sustain high level of student academic performance. It requires building strategic departmental teams that are focused at effective college mission implementation. The immediate player to be networked is the deputy principal who collaborates with principal in the development, college implementation and evaluation of instructional best practices [2]. The Principal has to frame and enforce a strategic plan prioritizing allocation of resources towards effective acquisition of set core curriculum areas so as to enhance a teacher trainee's ability to pass both internal and national examinations. The principal's obligation therefore is to focus at specifically providing teachers with targets, content specific feedback, resources and instructional capacity to support whole college transformation efforts.

One of the key core values is the team work between the principal and his deputy. That helps in ensuring effective implementation of teacher performance contracting practices [3]; which normally influence students' academic performance considerably.

The teachers are a Social Pillar in the Vision 2030 [4]- which has singled out education and training as the basic train that shall accelerate our (Kenya) economic growth into becoming a middle-income

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economy. Allan [5] described a college manager as any person or body of persons- Board of Management (BOM) responsible for the governance of a college. The teacher training college leadership should be informed that the government of Kenya is committed to the provision of quality education and training to its learners at all levels. In addition, the Constitution, 2010 has provided that education is a human right to every Kenyan child and that in primary it's free and compulsory. The college principal is therefore obliged to align teaching and training to the demands of the Education Act 2013 so as satisfy the requirements of the constitution.

This means reviewing all aspects of Curriculum establishment system to make it responsive to the new realities. The college principal has the obligation to make teacher training understandable. The student teacher could only internalize what is understandable, comprehensible and intelligible. UNESCO [6] argued that of 77 million of those who could not read and write, the concentration of those were in developing countries especially in Africa. High illiteracy rate (which can only be reduced by quality teachers) is major obstacle to economic development.

It is presumed that principals are knowledgeable in educational management [4]. Allan, [5] describe educational management as the art of getting human resource activities together to accomplish desired goals through planning, organizing, sourcing, leading or directing and controlling for the purpose of accomplishing a goal .He is the real designer in planning which is the application of a rational and systematic analysis to the process of development with a view to maximizing effectiveness and efficiency.

The Teacher Training College Principal should be well armed with the information that educational planning is the application of a rational and systematic analysis to the process of educational development. The major purpose is to make teacher professional education more effective and efficient .The baseline of all that is in responding to the multiple aspirations and needs of the county's development. He shoulders the technocrat's responsibility for meeting specific educational goals so as to enhance student academic performance. Its basic concepts, logic and principles, are universally applicable. However, each TTC principal ought to be aware that he should make them flexible enough to fit into his kind of situations that differ in ideology, level of sophistication and form social learning institutions.

The element of organizing is very important because it involves time which is very crucial in academic performance and college principals are particular about it. Burrus *et al.* [7] have pointed out that existing time management interventions which include training in skills such as goal-setting,

scheduling, prioritizing tasks, self-monitoring, problemsolving techniques, delegating, and negotiating, as well as conflict resolution are indispensable for college principals' success in academics. Goldman [8] has argued that appointments of principals is done on the assumption that the pre-service professional training that they underwent to prepare them for teaching, coupled with the experience that they get as practicing teachers are enough to enable them discharge their roles effectively. It is also assumed that when the newly appointed heads assume office they will learn on the job and that they will attend in-service training to equip them with emerging managerial challenges. However from the principals own experiences and in view of how they have been discharging their roles, it raises many unanswered questions about their preparedness in this respect. Du Brin [9] In this regard, agreed that training improves workers' effectiveness in discharging their functions. It is therefore important that training needs for college heads are addressed immediately one is appointed. This would render them effective in discharging their managerial duties such implementing educational policies.

Principals training, on job support from colleagues and experience has been found to be pivotal to academic performance. Burrus et al. [7] and Goldman [8] have explained that there have been few investigations into the changing nature of the role of principals in focusing on their preparedness for management and leadership of tertiary institutions. When they considered themselves to be well prepared, they generally attribute this to experience combination with training and experience. The type of support, which the majority would prefer when taking up the post is mentoring by an experienced principal from a similar type of tertiary college. This has proved to be quite healthy for their progress at work. Studies Collins [10], Muzenda [11] and Moller and Pankate [12] stated that perceived unique challenges related to the increasingly complex and diverse nature of the teacher student population and behaviour in tertiary colleges calls for greater knowledge, understanding and awareness of relevant legislation. This includes understanding of the role, structure and function of service providers, demonstrating skills in human resource activities management including adolescents, and in curriculum planning and management. Undivided attention of college sponsors and political good will also contribute [13].

In Kenya, the situation is not very different. According to Yambo [14] and Koech[5] principals are appointed under the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), and run the day-to-day administrative operations of the colleges they are in charge of. The commission monitors the teachers and college heads through quality assurance officers who conduct regular inspections in colleges and report to the ministry through the established reporting process and avenues. The TSC

seems to have adopted a highly decentralized model where the field officers supervise principals in exercising their duties but adopts a 'hands off' approach when it comes to actual administrative style of individual heads. This means that such issues as discipline of staff and students are left entirely to the discretion of each principal and the college boards [15]. The Ministry of Education [16] plays such roles as policymaking, resource mobilization, quality assurance, auditing how resources are used, field implementation, and capacity building. Teacher training colleges like all Teacher Training colleges are advancing in complexity with an increasing number of factors that impact on college management and academic performance. Consequently, they raise challenges for academic leadership styles that call for principals as leaders in these colleges to create attractive and enabling working environment in order to motivate and retain effective teachers and non-teaching staff [17].

Statement of the Problem

problem of academic In Kenya, the performance in public training colleges in national examinations has been a concern of all stakeholders. In the lake region, the situation has been worse due to the continuous students' poor academic performance every year as compared to other colleges in the country. Very few students pass with distinctions in all subjects in national examinations. Educators and members of public acknowledge that different colleges achieve different degrees of success even with similar learning facilities. There is great competition today among colleges all trying to produce better results in national examinations. Some have maintained better results while others have dropped possibly due to different principals' leadership skills in the colleges. Success in producing good results in national examinations is largely determined by the principals' leadership skills. These principals are well trained, remunerated, are supported and are experienced yet their colleges still post dismal performance in national examinations. This study therefore endeavors to determine the influence of the principals' leadership skills on students' academic performance in public teachers training colleges in Lake Region, Kenya.

Principal's leadership skill employed in public teachers

Training colleges on students' academic performance

In the recent past various researchers have been battling with conceptualization of leadership skills in different ways. It is through the different understanding of the concept of leadership that sometimes has led to some problems in the field of leadership practices. In this regard, Armstrong [18], in an attempt to shade light in this very important area, stated that leadership occurs any time one attempts to influence the behavior of an individual or groups of

human resource activities regardless of the reason for doing so. This includes planning, organizing, directing, delegation, controlling and motivation based on this understanding; does it work in the college leadership setting?

Sanders and Davey [19] argued that trait theories, behavioral theories, contingency theories, transactional theories and contemporary (transformational) theories might be applied by a principal. The major purpose is to enumerate the primary elements of the influence principal effectiveness construct and linkages to effectiveness. They furthermore made observations that all of those theories generally endeavor to explain the influence principal effectiveness construct, but thus far no overall paradigm has been found in the scholarly literature that explicitly aligns these theories into a model that links influence principal effectiveness and TTC effectiveness.

Learning institutions are by definition composed of human resource activities involved in dynamic social relationships. It is through these relationships between leaders and followers, superiors and subordinates, managers and workers, that the work and thus the fundamental purposes of learning institutions are achieved. The effectiveness of these relationships undoubtedly influences the effectiveness of learning institutions. However, the effectiveness of these relationships depends largely on the effectiveness of the behavioral inputs supplied by the participants in these relationships relative to TTC goals. Hence leader effectiveness must be an input to and determinant of TTC effectiveness and influence principal effectiveness is likewise a function of TTC effectiveness [8].

According to Norviewu-Mortty [20] he argued that a synthesis of the influence of principal is brought about by theories indicates at least three elements that are essential to the construct of influence of principal effectiveness, namely Task focused activities, human resource activities focus and improvement focus Task focused activities involves those processes that are aimed at the accomplishment of the basic purpose of the group such as goals, objectives and results. Influence principal inputs that are human resource activities focused such as: consideration; participative decision making; concern for followers' needs; matching personal and group needs; fairness; respect; trust; and equitable rewards. Improvement focus includes the periodic need to establish new patterns that take cognizance of altered conditions in which the organization operates.

The influence of principal effectiveness is either, human resource activities focus and improvement focus [19]. Task focused activities involve those processes that are aimed at the accomplishment of the basic purpose of the institution.

Influence of principal inputs activities that are human resource activities focused such as: consideration of their personal life challenges; participative decision making including student government activities. Further still it includes concern for staff and support staff needs- welfare activities grouping. In addition to that matching personal- visiting a madam who has just delivered a baby and group needs; fairness in promotion; respect in motivation and discipline; trust in the word and action. Moreover, Armstrong [18] eluded that improvement focus activities includes the time to time establishment new patterns that take into consideration of altered work environment.

It has been pointed out by Adrian [21] that for effective leadership to be realized human resource activities must be influenced positively and in a more productive way in order to achieve set goals in time of Teacher Training College. Armstrong [18] stated that leadership should be viewed as an influencing power and legitimate authority acquired by a leader to be able to effectively transform the Teacher Training College through the direction of the human resources that are the most important Teacher training college assets leading to the performance of desired purpose that is transactional leadership. On the other hand, Cole [22] admitted that leadership is inspiring human resource activities to perform and manage time well.

They shape institutional strategies including their execution and effectiveness. A study by German [23] adds concerning leadership: that it has a direct cause and effect relationship upon Teacher Training colleges and their success that leaders determine values, culture change, and tolerance and employee motivation. Leadership is about human resource activities who influence those around them in order to reap maximum benefit from the Teacher Training college resources, including the most vital and expensive; its human resource activities. Lussier and Achua [24] call it the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve Teacher training college objectives through change. While according to Adebayo [43] was commenting on leadership, he reiterated that it is the process of influencing others toward Teacher training college performance. Leadership and time management is the heart of any Teacher Training college, because it determines the success or failure of the Teacher Training College.

Daft [25] states that democratic leadership has an influential relationship among leaders and followers whose intentions are to effect real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes. It is evident that influence stands out as a common denominator in reference to the existence of a leader and a follower. Larferla [26] argues further that the true measure of a leader is the ability to empower staff, develop human resource activities and direct the efforts of others to achieve extra ordinary optimal results. In the colleges

teacher context the principal is the leader of the college and is expected to influence the teachers to perform and attain the college's goals and objectives.

The Teacher training college s, require visionary and charismatic leaders the type that satisfies the needs and the tasks involved. Oyetunyi [27] point out that in an Teacher Training college, the importance of leadership is reflected in every aspect of the colleges like instructional practices, academic performance, students discipline and colleges climate to mention but a few. Principals play a vital and multifaceted role in setting direction for colleges that are po sitive and productive work places for teachers and vibrant learning environment for children. It has been reported that the leadership behavior of a principal and his/her role as an instructional leader has a significant impact on creating more effective teaching and learning colleges leading to higher levels of student academic performances [28-30].

Strategic influence within a teacher training college is that optimal state in which enables strategy, employees and tutors, students and key processes to work in concerted effort so as to propel growth and improved students' academic performance. Aligned college leadership enjoys greater student and teaching staff satisfaction. It produces improved results which are a key target in teacher performance contracting [12].

It is maintained that leadership influence gives principals and HODs at every level of the Teacher training college the ability to rapidly deploy a coherent teaching and learning strategy, which totally customer focused, develop world-class human resource activities and continuously improve teaching and learning processes - all at the same time. Strategic influence furthermore provides a means to measure the effectiveness of college leadership. Akomolafe [31]. Has observed that two human resource activities are aligned when they move in the same direction however, they are integrated when they cooperate with each other. Total influence encompasses both influence and integration. It is possible to be aligned-being in the college or department but not integrated such as sharing in the teaching topics or sub-topics in same subject. This is evidenced when two human resource activities move in the same direction but without cooperation. Taffinder [32] maintains that influence needs a center of focus or frame of reference for all employees and tutors, which is the vision, values and strategy of the college. Influence therefore means influence with the college's vision, values and strategy.

Principal's Leadership is very crucial in any Teacher Training college like that of teacher training colleges to succeed. The work of Quinn [28] says that leadership is crucial in implementing decisions making successfully. A Leader as a principal, sets a direction for the rest of us of the workers. They help us visualize

what they might achieve; they encourage them and inspire them. Without leadership a group of human being degenerates into argument and conflict because they see things in different ways and lean towards different solutions Quinn [28]. Leadership therefore helps to point to workers in the same direction and harness their efforts jointly. Preferred leadership according to Nyongesa [33] is that which gives the team a chance to contribute to college matters effectively for that has been a cornerstone to successful Teacher Training College.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design because according to Orodho [34] it assesses the nature of prevailing conditions. It also involves the collection of data in order to answer research questions on the effect of Principal leadership skills on improving academic performance.

The study was conducted in the Lake Region which covers Migori, Kisii, Homa bay and Siaya counties. This area surrounds Lake Victoria and Kisii highlands and normally experiences rainfall in the afternoon. This region was chosen because it is an area where it is perceived that some public teachers training colleges have not been performing well in Primary Teacher Education (PTE) examinations, Ministry of Education [35]. This areas have fertile soil, good climate, cheap agricultural land and self-employment opportunities particularly in the urban set ups. Economically, the human resource activities are fishermen, livestock keepers, subsistence farmers, commercial tea and coffee farmers in Kisii highlands (Appendix Vii). The other economic activities are soap

stone mining in south Kisii, Sugarcane farming and milling of sugar; sweet potato, maize farming. Some other human resource activities get blue-colour jobs in the small industries in the surrounding towns such as Homa Bay, Kisii, Migori, Bondo and Kendu Bay. Studies done by Kamau, Indire, Ombongi and Rutere [36] explain that tourism industry in this area is on the increase due to the recent expansion of Tabaka Soapstone carvings in south Kisii and Ruma national park. The existence of Sori national park, Simbi Crater Lake Game Park, Thimlich Ohinga historical site also attracts tourists considerably. Increased sport fishing and boat racing in Lake Victoria is worth noting. Their environs also provide some small scale jobs. The population is approximately 2,255,550 human resource activities. This region lies within latitude 0and 10 South and between longitude 340 East and 350 East of the Equator. The rainfall averages at 175ml per year.

Target Population

Target Population according to Best and Khan [37] should comprise of the entire group of individuals' events or objects having common observable characteristics which the researcher need to generate the results of the study. In this case, all principals, student leaders, Board of Management chair persons and college HODs were considered. This research therefore, targeted all 4 Principals, 4 Board of Management chair persons and 52 college HODs and 180 student leaders a total of 240 participants.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

This research therefore, sampled all 4 Principals, 180 student leaders and 4 Board of Management chair persons and 52 college HODs.

Table-1: Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Respondents	Population	Percent	Sample
BOM chairpersons	4	100	4
Student Leaders	180	30%	60
Principals	4	100	4
HODs	52	100	52
Total	240		120

This research therefore, sampled all 4 Principals, 4 Board of Management chair persons and 52 college HODs and 60 student leaders' total of 120 participants. The sampling technique applied here was convenient sampling for principals, BOM-chairmen and HODs for they were few hence all were considered 100 percent. Hence purposive sampling to select principals, HODs and BOM chairpersons. While 30 % was used to select student leaders whose population was 180? Stratified sampling technique was used to distribute the student leaders equitably to the four colleges (15-each) that also ensured gender equality and random sampling was finally used to select the participating sample of the student leaders.

Data Collection Techniques

In this study, questionnaires were used. According to Saunders, Philip and Adrian [21] a questionnaire is a set of questions or respondent on the study. In order to collect data that precisely meets the objectives of the study, both open-ended and closed-ended questions are included in the questionnaire. The open-ended questions gave respondents room to give more information and express themselves to their satisfaction while the close-ended questions produced the kind of answers expected by the researcher. In addition, close-ended questions enable a researcher to form an opinion and make a valuable conclusion. Furthermore, Amin [18] contend that structured or close-ended questions are easier to analyze, administer

and are more economical in terms of time and finances. On the other hand, unstructured questions are simple to formulate, they encourage in-depth response and they permit the respondents to respond in their own words.

Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity is the degree to which a test uses to measures what it purports to measure as appraised by experts [37]. It is in other words the degree to which results from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under investigation. Validity is also the degree to which an empirical measure or several measures of a concept accurately represent that topic [34]. The issue of control invalidity is concerned with errors that may occur in the research process. It is concerned with systematic error biases rather than random errors. The researcher established content and criterion related validity. Validity was established by giving the instruments to the three experts in the faculty of education of Rongo University College. They read and examined it for content and criterion validity and gave their feedback which was increasing Teacher training college d.

Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability is the measure of the degree of which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial [38]. Before the actual data collection, a pilot study was conducted among the respondents who were not included in the final study population. This was done from Ugenya-Siaya County.

Where 1 Principal, 20 student leaders and 1 Board of Management chairpersons and 14 college HODS were considered. These were the minimum number of cases required for conducting statistical analysis as recommended by [34]. The purpose of this was to enable the researcher to ascertain the reliability of the instruments, and also to be familiar with the administration of the questionnaires. Split-Half technique was employed for the test. Pilot questionnaires were divided into two equivalent halves and their correlation co-efficient for the two halves computed using the Spearman ranking coefficient prophecy formula $\{r_s=1-6(\sum d^2/n \ (n^2-1))\}$, describing the internal consistency of the test then if it showed that the instrument is reliable, correlation coefficient minimum of 0.65 was accepted as reliable because this fact is supported by Bloomberg and Volpe [39].

Data Collection Procedures

This is the collection of information to prove some facts as put forward by Kombo and Tromp [40]; the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Dean of Faculty of Education and then proceeded for a research permit from the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) for the ongoing research to enable the researcher to collect data from the colleges. The researcher visited individual colleges to conduct the research on the actual dates of the study by administering the questionnaires and interview schedules while collecting them accordingly.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing of data to obtain answers to research questions. After the data collection, the researcher subjected data to editing before starting completion and coding of data. According to Orodho [34] editing improves the quality of data for coding. The coded data was examined critically by making inferences [40]. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics by means, percentages and frequency distribution tables.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher was fully aware that it was a voluntary activity for the respondents to participate in research. They were therefore assured of confidentiality of information since each respondent gave his/her own response/opinion from the questionnaire. The researcher consequently ensured that research questions do not invade personal lives of the respondents. Anonymity of respondents was ensured. The researcher endeavored to guard against plagiarism and also gave credit and acknowledged all the information which was referred to [39].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Leadership skills employed by principal on student academic performance

The objective of the study was to establish Leadership skills employed by principal on student academic performance. The findings were summarized qualitatively and quantitatively that included: the frequency of the administrative council meetings, principal and strategic planning, the Principal ensures departmental meetings, the principal and student leadership in financial planning, the principal supervision lessons, performance contracting.

The frequency of the administrative council meetings

The participants were responses on how often the administrative council meets to deliberate on TTC activities, are displayed in table 2

Table-2: the frequency the administrative council

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Monthly	2	50
Quarterly	2	50
Total	4	100

From table 2, 2 (50%) of the respondents indicated that administrative council meet monthly while another 2 (50%) of the respondents indicated that they meet quarterly. Leaders operate through meetings where decisions are made. Ogundele *et al.* [41] noted that college administration involves managing, administering the curriculum and teaching. He further pointed out that pastoral care, discipline, assessment, evaluation and examinations are part of his roles, they went ahead to reveal that resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal and relationship with the community require the principals use of the practical skills such as decision-making,

negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling and running meetings.

Principal and strategic planning

The other qualitative research findings were on principal strategic planning. The strategic plan is a document highlighting school goals and objective priorities with clear logical frameworks for implementation so as to achieve the institutions mission, vision and monitors to ensure a high budget adherence and the results are presented in table 3.

Table-3: Principal facilitated strategic planning

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	33	75
No	14	25
Total	47	100

From Table 3 it can be seen majority of the respondents indicated that Principals had facilitated strategic planning by monitoring and ensuring a high budget adherence as shown by 3 (75%) whereas 1(25%) demonstrated that they had not . Decision making skills, directly influence academic achievement in institutions of learning. Kindiki [42] and Ojera & Yambo [14] revealed that most principals who were involved in active decision making processes had most of their contributions controlled by the sponsors. That eventually interfered with academic achievements due to conflict of interests. It was therefore recommended that the principals had to be more empowered in

decision making so as to assist the BOM and sponsors effectively. According Akomolafe [31] those intellectuals, college leaders who work together with their collaborators and favor collegiality achieve a collective purpose that gives direction and shapes beliefs, values and attitudes of the college's community in promoting better learning out comes.

The Principal ensures departmental meetings

The study further revealed that there were departmental meetings and the principal had ensured that departments meet regularly. Table 4 gives a clear picture

Table-4: Principal ensured departments meet regularly

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	45	75
No	15	25
Total	60	100

The results from Table 4.3.3: indicate that the departments met regularly as reported by 45 (75%) of the respondents whereas 15(25 %) of them indicated they had not.

CONCLUSION

The studies found out that the Principals had time management skills and it's principal's in their leadership skills. Time in itself had been an important factor in all aspects of leadership and management in general as. The study found out the Principals understood the need for time management skills on students' academic performance in public teachers training colleges in Lake Region, Kenya. The study found out that the Principals understood the needs of budget development, and facilitated the strategic and financial planning; had efficiency in fee collection .The study found out that the decision making skills contributed to students' academic performance in public

teachers training colleges in Lake Region. Decision making skills, directly influence academic achievement in institutions of learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that all Principals must be well trained on financial management skill and emphasis be laid on the budget development and accounting process because the study found a shortfall on it. The board of management in colleges should comprise of professionals, the study found out that the college management board do not necessarily consists of professionals. This work prescribed that college administration involves managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, pastoral care, discipline, assessment evaluation and examinations, resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal relationship with the community, use of the practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of Teacher

Training college such as decision-making, negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling, running meetings and so on.

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