

## Relationship Between Craft-Entrepreneur Assertiveness In Management And Business Performance Of Private Primary Schools In Kisumu Town

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**Abstract:** *Craft-entrepreneurs, being owner-managers, tend to be more assertive in their business ventures. Because of their skills they are likely to succeed than opportunistic-entrepreneur employee-managers who are third parties to the business. Literature links personnel assertiveness in management to probable business success. However, it is of concern that from 2008-2013, private primary schools in Kisumu Town owned by non-educationist opportunistic-entrepreneurs have on average been performing better, with a KCPE average mean score of 354, than those by educationist craft-entrepreneurs with 333. This is despite the fact that craft-entrepreneurs, who are specialists being trained teachers, are professionally qualified in both curriculum implementation and in school management unlike the opportunistic-entrepreneur who have to depend on hired educationist personnel. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance of private primary schools in Kisumu Town. The objectives of the study were to determine the relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management of private primary schools and business performance. The study was based on entrepreneurial well-being model which propounds a relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance. The study employed descriptive and ANOVA research designs. The study population consisted of 35 head teachers and 344 teachers. Saturated sampling technique were used to select 32 craft-entrepreneur headteachers and 314 teachers. Questionnaire for 32 headteacher and 314 teacher respondents, and in-depth interview for the 32 headteachers and 32 teachers were used to collect data. Face and content validity of instruments were ascertained by experts in entrepreneurship in School of Business Management at Kisii University. Reliability of instruments were ascertained through test-re-test piloting involving 3 craft-entrepreneur headteachers and 30 teachers. Quantitative data from questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts, percentages and means. ANOVA shall be used for inferential statistics. In addition, qualitative data were analyzed on an on-going process as themes and sub-themes emerge. The study found that headteachers rated themselves as mostly assertive at a mean score of 3.2 in tandem with teachers who rated their headteachers as assertive with a score of 2.7 meaning 'agree'. ANOVA indicated a significant relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness and school business performance given that  $F= 0.039$ ,  $df=29$  with a significance level of 0.39 at a  $p$ -value of 0.05. Some 16(53%) interviewee teachers noted walking around school to ensure that classes were going on as expected to be a sign of assertiveness. The study may be useful in addressing craft-entrepreneur management deficiencies for enhanced private primary school business profitability in Kisumu Town.*

**Keywords:** *Craft-Entrepreneur, Assertiveness, Business Performance, Headteacher, Private Schools, Kisumu*

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### 1.1 Background of the Study

Craft-entrepreneur-managers tend to be more success driven and hence their greater involvement in management of their own business investments than managers employed by opportunistic-entrepreneurs (Reijers&Masar, 2004; Harworth&Hamfasad, 1991 cited in Rich, Lepine& Crawford (2010).Such high hands-on management likely results to high business success and hence their need to re-invest their profits to re-engineer the business, and eventual high entrepreneur life satisfaction (Saridakis, Munoz, Torres &Johnstone, 2013). Such high hands-on technique espouses entrepreneur assertiveness as explained by Nyabbak(2012). The high unemployment ratios coupled with nationally unacceptable levels of poverty and underdevelopment, has led the government emphasizes the need for individuals to engage in entrepreneurship (Republic of Kenya, 1992). Given this gap, various professionals tend to invest in fields where they have knowledge, skill and experience, or even just interest, necessary for involvement in business ventures of choice (Koech, 2011). For

instance, for primary school teachers, mostly those retired or nearing retirement from public or private sector, investment in private primary schools is one way of responding to this government call (Onyango, 2012). This is driven by the already beheld skills in curriculum delivery and in child and school management (Oyaya, 2007).

In a qualitative study, Onyango (2012) in investigating the challenges faced in management of private primary schools in Nyando District in Kenya found out the following head teacher related reasons that led to inadequate school KCPE performance. Head teachers were over concentrating in sugarcane farming and in other SMEs such as kiosks, boda-bodas and matatus; some were over concentrating in upgrading their academic qualifications, some as far away as Kampala in Uganda; some had poor leadership skills; some were under qualified for the job; some were demotivated due to poor salaries by school owners; some worked with inadequate financial and physical resources; and some were not focused, having set low school targets. He recommended that there needed to be enhanced government supervision of private school head teachers and their in-service training for improved KCPE results. Onyango (2012) did not distinguish schools in relation to KCPE performance based on whether they were owned by craft-entrepreneurs or those by opportunistic-entrepreneurs, or whether they were managed by owner head teachers or employee head teachers. Based on the foregoing, it may be assumed that educationist entrepreneurs delve into school SMEs both with professional curriculum and school management competence. This is despite the fact that KCPE performance output is a major attraction of future enrolment numbers which translates into increased financial returns for the concerned investor (Onyango, 2012).

In this respect, UNESCO-IICBA (2011) in considering improvement of teaching conditions in rural schools in Africa recommended that school management should increase their input and involvement in respect of visibility, commitment, accessibility, assertiveness, availability, and innovativeness. This paper shall focus on private school owner-headteacher (craft-entrepreneur) assertiveness. Besides, Harworth and Hamfasad (1991) cited in Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010) confirmed the argument by asserting that craft-entrepreneurs ought to display visibility, assertiveness, and innovativeness in management of their professional investment of interests. However, the expectation that headteacher-owner schools should perform better in KCPE than employee-owner private schools in Kisumu Town has been negated as displayed in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1. Kisumu Town 2008-2013 KCPE Private Primary Schools Mean Score**

YEAR	Craft-entrepreneur Headteacher KCPE Mean Score	Opportunistic-entrepreneur Employee-headteacher KCPE Mean Score
2008	325	363
2009	344	354
2010	339	348
2011	324	354
2012	324	353
2013	340	356
<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>354</b>

Source: Sub-county Office Records (Kisumu East, Central & North)

Table 1.1 reveals that craft-entrepreneur managed schools have been performing better than opportunistic-entrepreneur managed schools. It is noteworthy that these opportunist non-educationist entrepreneurs have to depend on hired trained teachers for the reason that Education Act (Republic of Kenya, 2013) prohibits them from engaging in direct school management. They must therefore employ professionals to oversee curriculum implementation and to directly manage schools. This is despite the fact that owner-self-managers are more aggressively focused in business management realized in assertiveness (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; De Rue et al, 2011). In this respect, many authorities associate entrepreneur involvement is associated with increased probability of business performance (Berghaus, 2014; Unger, et al, 2011). Therefore this study seeks to determine the relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance of private primary schools in Kisumu Town.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Craft-entrepreneurs who operate owner-manager-run private primary schools should perform better in KCPE than opportunistic-entrepreneur owned schools. This is due to the fact that unlike opportunistic-entrepreneurs who rely on educationist employee trained teachers to run schools, craft-entrepreneurs are professionals in curriculum implementation and in school management and are present at business site to effect such competence to optimize business performance. However, it is of concern that over the period 2008-2013 in Kisumu Town, schools managed by opportunistic-entrepreneurs have on average been performing better, with a KCPE mean score of 354, than those by craft-entrepreneurs at 333 as evidenced by the records from the Sub-County Office. In the case of private primary schools, commendable KCPE performance is not only a major attraction for new enrolment which translates into higher entrepreneur income, but also an indicator of business

success. In this regard, craft-entrepreneurs being professionally relevant, should themselves display appropriate management competencies more successfully than opportunistic-entrepreneurs in management of their school SMEs. This variance in KCPE performance, an indicator of business success, could be attributed to the degree of entrepreneur assertiveness in schools in respect of management. This study seeks to determine the relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance of private primary schools in Kisumu Town.

### **1.3. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance of private primary schools in Kisumu Town.

### **1.4. Hypothesis**

The study on analysis of relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance of private primary schools in Kisumu Town will be guided by the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>01</sub>**- There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial assertiveness and business performance in private primary schools in Kisumu Town.

### **1.5 Theoretical background of the study**

Human motivational psychologists and theorists have made several observations in line with the setting of or striving for individual and or group goals as well as the well-being that ensue from a given setting (Berghaus,2014). Basically, there are three tenets that explain the existence of entrepreneurial activities namely; the individual, that is, entrepreneurial action is conceived as a human attribute, such as the willingness to face uncertainty; accepting risks and the need for achievement (McClelland, 1961), which differentiate entrepreneurs from the rest of society. In his quest to identify and analyze the psychological factors which produce entrepreneurial personalities, McClelland (1961) focused on the motivational variables affecting the supply of entrepreneurship: namely, the psychological drives underlying the individual's "need for achievement" (or n-Ach). He asserts that individuals with a high n-Ach are depicted as preferring to be responsible for solving problems and for setting goals to be reached by their own efforts as well as having a strong desire to receive feedback on their task accomplishment. Thus, the supply of entrepreneurship depends on individuals' psychic needs for achievement rather than on the desire for money (McClelland, 1961).

In line with entrepreneurial "need for achievement", Oswald, et al., (2014) agrees with this motivational theory which confers a trade-off between entrepreneur distinctiveness, himself as a self-supervised worker, and entrepreneur risk taking through supervisory engagement of subordinates to achieve set goals. To be different from employed professionals, entrepreneurs take commercial and financial risks beyond the call of professionalism. This is because they either 'live' or die' with the business (Parilla, 2013). Entrepreneur well-being would be experienced through healthy assertiveness which implies focused communication, firmness in respect of goals. Failure to do so would augment the risk of failure leading to entrepreneur dissatisfaction and a sense of personal failure as a result of business failure. This is summarized by Bockerman et al.,(2012), Bryson, Forth and Stokes (2014), Berghaus (2014) and Koncevic et al. (2014) who assert that the well-being of workers, either at managerial or subordinate cadres, affects workplace job performance.

### **1.6 Empirical Literature Review: Entrepreneurial Assertiveness and Business Performance**

Assertiveness is a fundamental personality characteristic necessary for entrepreneurial success (Kovcevic, et al., 2014). This is because assertiveness, as a management behaviour, has been defined as useful in explaining past business success and future development of newly formed business. Assertiveness in business is vital given that it is the ability to express oneself and achieve one's interest in a socially accepted way with a view to soliciting optimal performance of an entrepreneur towards clients, suppliers and business community as a whole (Lazenby, 2015).This was due to negatively biased stereotyping about perceptive female entrepreneur assertiveness in business. This assertion is in agreement with Judge, et al.(2004) who concluded from the study of curvilinear relationship between intelligence and leadership effectiveness and found that intelligent behaviour was expressed through moderate assertiveness and that this may be more predictive at leadership effectiveness than accessibility because of the collective perception of the subordinates with whom the leadership interacts. This means that individuals with low assertiveness rating can be perceived as having too much of agreeableness in terms of an appealing leadership emergence trait but may be unable to quell descent from competitors and or opposing forces whereas high assertiveness was aggressively unacceptable.

### **1.7 RESULTS**

The key respondent for the study is the headteacher since he is the vision bearer of the school business and is therefore able to gauge current performance against his personal pre-set goals or targets, be they academic or not.

### 1.7.1 Craft-entrepreneur Business Performance Rating of his Private Primary School

Each respondent was asked to rate 6 statements as displayed in Table 4.2 by indicating a value on a continuum from Very Low rating respondents(VL) which scored 1, Low (L) which scored 2, High (H) which scored 3, and Very High (VH) which scored 4. An average was arrived at across the 6 items to give a single-score which ranged from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 4. This represented an individual craft-entrepreneur headteacher respondent’s business performance rating score. According to Locke (2000) and Ndemo and Maina(2007), the vision of the business is best beheld by the founding entrepreneur who naturally continuously gauges success levels depending on business performance. This implies that it is the bearer of the vision, the entrepreneur, who can best tell whether the business is succeeding or not based on his set bench-marks. Based on the foregoing, scores as classified were interpreted in the following way:

- i. Very Low rating:** respondents’ business performance score of 1.0-1.49 meant that based on the vision of the craft-entrepreneur headteacher, the private school was performing very poorly. There were 0(00%) respondents who rated their schools so.
- ii. Low:** respondent’s business performance score of 1.5- 2.49 meant that, based on the vision of the craft-entrepreneur headteacher, the private school was performing poorly. There were 11(37%) respondents who rated their schools so.
- iii. High:** respondent’s business performance score of 2.5-3.49 meant that based on the vision of the craft-entrepreneur headteacher, the private school was performing well. There were 19(63%) respondents who rated their schools so. and
- iv. Very High:** respondent’s transfer intention score of 3.5-4.0 meant that based on the vision of the craft-entrepreneur headteacher, the private school was performing very well. There were 0(00%) respondents who rated their schools so.

Responses were as summarized in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 is a presentation of craft-entrepreneur business performance rating scores of his owner-managed private primary schools in Kisumu Town.

**Table 1.2** Craft-entrepreneur business performance Rating Scores

Business performance rating for individual craft-entrepreneur Mean	No. Respondents	% Respondents
Very Low business performance rating	-	00%
Low business performance rating	2.0 2.25 2.41	3 3 5 10 % 17%
High business performance	2.58 2.66	8 11 27% 36%
Very High business performance rating	-	-
<b>Total business performance mean rating</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>30</b>
		<b>100</b>

**Key: 1.0-1.49 Very Low** business performance rating; **1.5-2.49 Low** business performance rating; **2.5-3.49 High** business performance rating; **3.5-4.0Very High** business performance rating

The mean rate of craft-entrepreneurs business performance was **2.49** which was ‘low’ according to the scale applied in Table 1.2. There were 30 craft-entrepreneur headteachers out of whom none 00(00%) rated the business performance either very low or very high; while 11(37%) rated the business performance low and 19(63%) high. This is probably because they are not only considering KCPE outcomes over the period but may be considering other aspects of interest to an entrepreneur such as school expansion and public perception which all lead to business profitability.

### 1.7.2 Relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance of private primary schools in Kisumu Town

Information on the following aspect was as presented in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Self-rating of craft-entrepreneur on assertiveness in management of private primary schools

**KEY: A=Always; M=Mostly; S=Sometimes; R=Rarely**

Indicators of craft-entrepreneur (owner-headteacher) assertiveness: I know that...	A	M	S	R	T	M
I have the right to be treated with respect by all school stakeholders in pursuit of my school business goals	4	3	2	1	118	3.9
I believe I respect others' rights as I seek school goal achievement	0	21	9		81	2.7
I have the right to timely reorganize my school operations despite opinions of other stakeholders who may not understand my intentions	3	14	13	0	93	3.1
I use my persuasive skills to win goodwill of other stakeholders in accomplishing set tasks to achieve my school business goals	4	19	7	0	87	2.9
I believe I have the right to ensure instructions are followed ;as I timely reward, guide, counsel, warn or punish in respect of performance	0	30	0	0	90	3
I symbolize pursuit of quality and standards in my school	16	14	0	0	106	3.5
<b>Overall Mean</b>						<b>3.2</b>

**Key: 1.0-1.49 Rarely; 1.5-2.49 Sometimes; 2.5-3.49 Mostly; 3.5-4.0 Always**

In this study, the 30 craft-entrepreneur headteachers in private primary schools revealed that the variable their assertiveness scored a mean of 3.2 (interpreted as Mostly, Table 1.3). This implies that these headteachers are of the opinion that they are assertive. From the questionnaire, when asked to identify one way that they think headteacher assertiveness in school may lead to business success, 11(37%) teachers noted sounding focused during school assembly and other meetings that involve teachers, pupils and parents, 3(10%) indicated timely punishment versus reward while 16(53%) noted walking around school to ensure that classes are going on as expected.

**Table 1.4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Craft-entrepreneur Headteacher Business Performance Rating Versus Craft-entrepreneur Assertiveness in School Management**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	71.444	4	.116	.009	.039
Within Groups	62.012	25	.093		
Total	133.456	29			

The data provided in Table 1.4 reveals that there is a statistically significant evidence about there being a relationship between Craft-entrepreneur Headteacher Business Performance Rating versus Craft-entrepreneur Assertiveness in School. One way ANOVA reveals that  $F=0.009$ ,  $df=29$ , with a significance level of 0.39 at a  $p$ -value of 0.05, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship is rejected.

In addition, to complement information from craft-entrepreneur headteachers, the 302(100%) teachers were subjected to a scale whereby respondents were expected to indicate their opinion as regards their level of agreement with specified craft-entrepreneur headteacher elements as shown in Table 1.5.

**Table 1.5: Teacher Responses on their Headteacher Assertiveness in School Management**

**KEY: SA=Strongly Agree; A= Agree; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree**

Indicators of craft-entrepreneur assertiveness: Our head teacher...	SA	A	D	SD	T	M
Expresses the right to be treated with respect by all school stakeholders in pursuit of his school business goals	4	3	2	1	878	2.9
Respects others' rights as he seek school goal achievement	20	160	112	10	794	2.6
Expresses the right to timely reorganize his school operations despite opinions of other stakeholders who may not understand his intentions	99	92	11	0	894	3.0
Uses his persuasive skills to win goodwill of other stakeholders in accomplishing set tasks to achieve his school business goals	13	278	11	0	908	3.0
Expresses the right to ensure instructions are followed ;timely reward of performance as he warn non-performers	0	70	70	162	512	1.7
Symbolizes pursuit of school educational quality and standards	0	204	98	0	808	2.7
<b>Overall Total Mean</b>						<b>2.7</b>

In this study, according to 302(100%) teacher respondents in private primary schools, the variable craft-entrepreneur assertiveness scored a mean of 2.7 (interpreted as Agree, Table 1.5). This implies that these teachers are of the opinion that the owner-headteachers of their schools were assertive. From the questionnaire, when asked to identify one way that they think headteacher assertiveness in school may lead to business success, 261(86%) teachers noted insisting on standards despite challenges encountered ensures that teachers seek solutions to both academic and non-academic quagmires towards school goal achievement, 22(7%) indicated focused talk at all assemblies that involved teacher, pupil and parent as co-stakeholders while 19(6%) noted use of assertive delegates such as class-teachers and parents representatives.

However, the 30 (100%)craft-entrepreneur headteachers interviewed were in agreement that assertiveness was part and parcel of their management strategy that lead to all stakeholders making effort to understand the vision of the school owner in respect of school fee payment and other forms of participation. these included pupil school attendance and parent involvement in parent's day activities. 17(53%) of the 32 teacher interviewees noted that it was important for a headteacher vision bearer to draw all stakeholders into focused effort through informative letters to parents and school meetings. The remaining 15 indicated the importance of disciplinary measures where teachers, pupils and parents were offensive.

### **1.8 Conclusions**

It was noteworthy that there was a general agreement in opinion between teachers and headteachers that craft-entrepreneur headteachers were assertive in private primary school management in Kisumu Town. In addition, ANOVA, based on craft-entrepreneur headteacher scores, also revealed that there was a significant relationship between craft-entrepreneur assertiveness in management and business performance in these schools. Therefore there was expected a relationship whereby high assertiveness led to high business performance outcome.

### **1.9 Recommendations**

The headteacher should involve stakeholders such as parents, teachers and surrounding business community in decision making. They should optimize headteacher persuasive skills to ensure that their vision is achieved.

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