

**PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP SKILLS, PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS  
AND THE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
SOUTH RIFT REGION, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Educational Management of Chuka University**

**CHUKA UNIVERSITY  
SEPTEMBER 2024**

## **DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION**

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Evaline, and children; Betty Jerop, Winnie Jeserem, Peninah Jepkurui, Eric Sirma, Monicah Jebichii and Moses Bartunen for their psychosocial support they accorded me throughout my study period.

The Thesis is also dedicated to my late Grandmother, Targok Kokop Kelikel, her great love for education, her inspirations and blessings that propelled me pursue my studies to this far.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I humbly acknowledge the grace of The Almighty God for granting me good health, knowledge, strength, and zeal to undertake my studies successfully. I sincerely thank the Chuka University administration for giving me the opportunity to pursue my doctoral studies in this inspiring University.

My special appreciation goes to my great Supervisors: Professor Eric Mwenda, Dr. John Ogembo and Dr. Peter Kimanthi for their professional guidance, encouragements, moral support, concerns and inspirations during the entire period of my study. God bless you abundantly.

The Faculty of Education of Chuka University was very friendly, and I wish to appreciate the entire staff for every support, and guidance they accorded me whenever I required.

I wish to appreciate Chuka University Institutional Ethics Review Committee (CUERC) for the authorisation and also National Commission for Science, Technology and innovation (NACOSTI) for issuing me with a research permit, and the respondents for making this study a success.

I acknowledge the support I received from Salina Chebor for organizing a team of Research Assistants transverse the vast South Rift region to administer questionnaires.

I wish to thank the Kenya Education Management institute Management and staff for the moral support they gave me while I undertook my studies.

## ABSTRACT

Performance of educational institutions continues to be a cause of concern to stakeholders due to the significant role of these institutions to the individual learner, the community and the nation in general. For secondary schools, principals are the overall leaders charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the schools are effectively and efficiently managed and therefore, meet their set goals. The leadership skills of a principal to a great degree determine how the institution he or she leads is managed. Previously, studies have attempted to underscore the existing relationship between principals' leadership skills and students' academic performance in disregard of other concepts of institutional performance. This study sought to determine the relationship between principals' leadership skills, personal characteristics and the performance of public secondary schools in South Rift region, Kenya as a contribution in bridging the existing knowledge gap. The specific objectives of the study were; determine the relationship between principals' financial management skills, establish the relationship between principals' instructional leadership skills as well as determine the relationship between principals' human resource management skills and institutional performance. It also sought to establish the influence of principals' personal characteristics as well as the institutional characteristics in the relationship between principals' leadership skills and institutional performance. The study adopted descriptive cross-sectional survey research design and correlational research design with mixed methods approach that used both qualitative and quantitative methods. A sample of 336 was obtained from 2050 respondents, comprising 1023 principals, 1023 senior teachers, and 4 County

Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (CQASOs) using multistage sampling techniques. Data was obtained from 331 individuals who participated in the study giving it a return rate of 98.51%. They responded to questionnaires items and interview guide. Prior to this, the research instruments were pretested in Kajiado county. Data obtained was analyzed descriptively and inferentially with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0 computer software. Frequency and percentages were used to describe the existing relationship between study variables while hypothesis was tested using logistic regression at 95% level of significance. Findings showed that principals' financial management skills, their instructional leadership skills as well as their human resource management skills were each positively and significantly related with institutional performance. Further, principals' level of education as well as their experience was found to positively and significantly influence the relationship between principals' leadership skills and institutional performance. Similarly, type of school was found to significantly influence the relationship between principals' leadership skills and institutional performance. It is therefore recommended that Ministry of Education in collaboration with Teachers Service Commission should ensure that school principals get adequate in-service training on financial management and human resource management prior to their deployment and refresher training periodically undertaken to enhance their leadership and management skills for better institutional performance.