

The Contribution of Individual Leadership Attributes towards Academic Performance,  
Arusha City Public Primary Schools, Tanzania: A Conceptual Analysis

**Abstract-** Leadership attributes are a fundamental aspect of organizational success. It is argued here that children's academic performance is linked to the individual leadership characteristics of school principals. School principals promote and enhance positive attitudes toward school, increasing student engagement, and ultimately improving academic performance. This paper sought to examine the contribution of individual leadership attributes to children's academic performance. Eleven individual leadership attributes: dependability, straight forwardness, fair-mindedness, inspirational, forward thinking, competence, honesty, creativity, supportiveness, intelligence and broad mindedness, are considered. This study adopted the Trait and Skills theories of leadership attributed to Thomas Carlyle and Mumford et al. A mixed methods research approach was employed.

**Keywords:** *Contribution, Leadership, Leadership Attributes, Children's Academic Performance, Public Primary Schools*

## **I. Introduction**

“The concept of leadership attributes in education context is of paramount importance for the education institutions like schools prosperity. The current study focused on head of school leadership attributes in influencing students' academic performance in school. Leadership has a classical and vast history which associates many researchers work with it because there is an assumption that leaders are not born” (Aline and Ramkumar, 2018), they can be developed (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Ardichvili, Dag, and Manderscheid, 2016). According to Northhouse (2007), “leadership is a process of an individual to influence group(s) of

individuals towards attainment of a common goal”. Moreover, Swanson and Holton's (2001) defined “leadership as application of expertise that is a combination of experiences, problem-solving skills, and knowledge in achieving a stipulated objective. **Consequently, in the twenty-first century, the significance of leadership for successful operation of education institutions had been widely acknowledged”.**

The term leadership has been defined by different scholars in different perspectives. According to Armstrong (2004), “leadership refers to the influence, power and the legitimate authority acquired by a leader to be able to effectively transform the organization through the direction of the human resources that are the most important organizational asset, leading to the achievement of desired goals. This can be done through the articulation of the vision and mission of the organization at every moment, and influence the staff to define their power to share this vision”. Gupta (2008), “define leadership as the process of influencing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of goals in a given situation. Furthermore, leadership refers to the process of social influence in which one person and enlists the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of common task” (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). “The leadership incorporates the accomplishment of the task, which is the organization requirement and the satisfaction of employees which is the human resource requirement” (Okumbe, 1998).

“The term performance as used in this paper refers to both behaviors and results, and adjusting organizational behaviors and actions of work to achieve results or outcomes” (Armstrong, 2004). “Behaviors are outcomes in their own right and reactions to the product of mental and physical effort applied to tasks. In school environments therefore, performance should not only be defined in terms of test scores, examination results, students’ ability to socially apply what is learnt, and the rate at which students move on to higher institutions of

learning, but should consider the achievements of the school in other areas like equipping the learners with the requisite skills for survival” (Nsubuga, 2010).

“Leadership is an important component in guiding the teaching-learning process” (Afshari, 2008). “It is necessary for preparing today’s students with relevant knowledge and skills in today’s society to become a productive citizen of the 21st century” (Paschal and Gougou,2022). According to Gupta (2008) “there are various important functions performed by leaders in organizations. The importances of leadership in education include but not limited to: guiding people, developing teamwork, maintaining discipline, building morale and representing the group. Therefore, leadership is a cohesive force which holds the group intact, the disciplinary power that keeps the group working, the electric current that energizes human actions, the insight that converts despair into hope. In fact there is no substitute for effective leadership” (Gupta, 2008).

“The principal’s role is to promote academic performance. The success of what is done in the school is attributed to the principals. He or she is the pivot around which many aspects of the school revolve, being the person in charge of every detail of running the school, be it academic or administrative. Schools can make a difference to student achievement and the principals’ leadership is one factor determining that success. It is therefore important that the performance of a school is appraised against the performance of the person who leads it” (Kandula, 2007).

Therefore, from these viewpoints, the commitment of school leaders is vital in organizational skills that influence academic achievement. This paper aims to examine the contribution of individual leadership attributes to children’s academic performance.

## **II. Background to the Study**

“Worldwide there are increasing efforts to improve student learning outcomes at all levels in the education sector” (Kamiti & Kathamba, 2016). “This has been occasioned by the need to attain academic achievement at an individual level, family, and organization such as a school as well as at national level. For a school to perform well both in co-curricular activities and in academics, effective leadership is paramount” (Igwe, Ndidiamaka & Chidi, 2017). “The school principals can be effective leaders only when they are good at getting the best out of the teachers and students, and build their capacities so as to prepare them for the tough challenges against the academic performances” (Andreas, 2012; Abdulmajid, Bukar & Abdullahi, 2020). According to Abdulmajid et al. (2020) the principals are directly involved in influencing the activities of the students and school towards setting goals and their attainment. In concurrence, Igiri, Effiong, Ekpo and Ogri (2019) in a study done in Nigeria, emphasize the need to provide effective leadership in all schools as a precursor to students’ achievement. They further caution that effective leadership is highly dependent on the leadership attribute the principal employs in the school.

According to Adan (2015) the success of students in schools highly relies on the managerial and leadership attributes of school principals. This implies that school principals’ leadership attributes are critical to the success of a school and children’s academic performance. School principals, in particular are the ‘DNA’ of the entire school as a system. It is the school principals who enable and engage all the educational inputs such as teachers, teaching and learning resources, facilities, and key stakeholders (DeLucia, 2011). John & Mkulu (2011) are of the view that “in an educational organization, just like in any other organization, the role of leadership is crucial. In some situations, leader’s informed views may be pushed through in what may seem as force, especially when subordinates seem not interested or committed enough. An effective school principalship leads to good school productivity that is good academic performance. This is to say that school heads’ leadership, in particular the

leadership attributes are at the centre for the school as an organization to give the desired educational outcomes for both teachers and academic performance of students” (John & Mkulu, 2011).

Mofuga (2020) establishes that a number of researchers such as (Gurr, 2015, Wasonga, 2014, Yaakob and Tubin, 2014) have shown that “most of the academically successful schools in developed and developing countries are those whose leaders demonstrate high levels of leadership skills and leadership. That is, a good school leader should possess key leadership attributes such as trusting others, honesty, empathy and motivating staff toward achieving the desired organisational goals. Moreover, a good leader has knowledge, experience and skills in planning, organising, controlling and directing. The important role of school principals is to strengthen the human resource functions such recruitment, training, motivation, retention, leadership attributes and responsibility of teachers” (Ngithi, 2013). “Quality education, recruitment and training of school principals and teachers are strategic priority towards achieving improved children’s academic performance. Therefore, all those considered for leadership must display firm abilities in leading and fulfilling the defined requirements. Thus, the trait and charismatic theories of leadership are used to explain leadership attributes tenable for school principals” (Mofuga, 2020).

According to King (2002), “one of the greatest challenges school administrators face is providing a school environment that is conducive to professional growth of faculty for sustaining collaborative school cultures and for improving student achievement. Instructional leadership is not only defined actions to improve teaching and learning but also actions principals take to develop a productive and satisfying work environment for teachers with desirable learning outcomes for students” (Greenfield, 1987 as cited by McCann, 2011). “Additionally, McCann seconds, although principals may have preconceived perceptions about their role as school principals, their success depends on teachers’ support and how

teachers perceive their administrator. Therefore, it is necessary to identify important leadership characteristics of successful middle school principals as perceived by supporting teachers” (McCann, 2011). Therefore, this study aims at examining the contribution of individual leadership attributes to children’s academic performance in Arusha City public primary schools, Tanzania.

### **III. Statement of the Problem**

School principals, particularly head teacher’s leadership, are at the heart of ensuring desired children’s academic performance. (Cruickshank, 2017; Day & Samsons, 2016; Fedha Flora, Wambugu, & Bett, 2016; Brisbane Catholic Education, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2004). In Tanzania, particularly, in the government schools school principals play instrumental role in ensuring school success. All school principals are equally prepared and possess the required qualifications necessary to effectively manage and lead schools that are proportionately supported by the government. Given that all schools receive the uniform necessary operational support, and all operate in a similar education administrative system, one would expect desired academic performance of students among these government schools. But the observation shows unequal educational performance among government primary schools. For instance, there has been a noticeable difference in childrens’ academic performance in the recent Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) results in Tanzanian public primary schools, where some schools performed very high while others performed with an average and low results (NECTA, 2017; NECTA, 2018 & NECTA, 2019).

Regardless of many factors that make children perform well academically, the differences in public primary schools’ academic performance indicate that individual leadership attributes of a school principals may directly or indirectly be linked with children’s academic performance (Paschal, 2022). Thus, this is to say that there is a person who possesses certain

attributes that contribute to children's academic performance, and we do not seem to look at these individual leadership attributes when selecting school heads. Therefore, this research is centred at examining the contribution of individual leadership attributes to children's academic performance in Arusha City public primary schools, Tanzania.

#### **IV. Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study were;

- To examine the perceptions of teachers on the individual leadership attributes of their school heads.
- To assess the effect of school principals' leadership attributes on children's academic performance.

#### **V. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this research will contribute more evidence to limited existing empirical evidence in this area. The results of the study will add a new pool of applicable knowledge in the field and provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomena to the educational policy makers and planners on mechanisms of identifying the individual leadership attributes among school principals to improve leadership effectiveness and academic performance in Tanzanian primary schools and across the world. The robust findings of the study will inform the pre- and in-service teachers training providers to prepare and offer training programs that equip teachers with the strong leadership attributes, skills/ competencies and knowledge necessary to effectively manage schools.

The data will provide practical insights to the various key actors in the education sector, like the education officers and school quality assurers at national, regional, district and ward

levels, on the understanding of individual leadership attributes and its identification mechanisms for effective leadership at school level. The study findings could also be adopted by administrators and school managers as an assessment into their influence in academic performance.

The outcome of this research will also influence more researchers to investigate the topic in (societal question) question; and this will, finally, contribute to new knowledge and broaden our understanding on individual leadership attributes of school heads in relation to leadership effectiveness and school success. On a theoretical level, the results will expand what is known about the applicability of the theory (ies) that will be deployed to guide the undertaking of this study.

## **VI. Literature Review**

This part discussed the empirical literature review and theoretical literature review as related to the study. The theoretical literature review dealt with the description of the theory and its relevance to the study while the empirical literature review focused on previous studies relating to this study.

### **Theoretical Literature Review**

The foundation of this research rests on the two selected leadership theories that were used religiously to guide the undertaking of this study. The Trait and Skills theories of leadership were carefully studied and selected as per the objectives of this research.

#### **The Trait Theory (developed by Carlyle in 1800s)**

The Trait Theory argues that great leaders have certain traits such as: Physiological (appearance, height and weight), demographic (age, education and socioeconomic background), personality, self-confidence, and aggressiveness, intellective (intelligence,

decisiveness, judgement and knowledge), task related traits such as achievement drive, initiative and persistence. Carlyle believed that “history is shaped by extraordinary leaders, and that the ability to lead was something they inherited at birth and not something that could be developed” (Spector, 2016; Pyke, 2018 as cited in Mofuga, 2020). “Carlyle's theory of leadership was based on the rationale that people are "born" with leadership traits. Thus, most early researchers considered leaders traits to be permanent properties that were present at the birth of a future leader and they grow these traits are realized” (Zaccaro, 2007). “It views leadership solely from the perspective of the individual leader. Implicit in this approach is the assumption that traits produce patterns of behaviour that are consistent across situations. That is, leadership traits are considered to be enduring characteristics that people are born with and that remain relatively stable over time” (Fleenor, 2006). “The Trait Theory is the best theory for this study as it offers qualities a leader must possess, therefore makes it easier to identify individuals that will make right fit in different leadership positions. In support, Germain (2008) pines, the trait approach is concerned with what traits exhibit and who has those traits. This implies, it does not lay out a set of hypotheses or principles about what kind of leader is needed in a certain situation or what a leader should do, given a particular set of circumstances. The theory focuses on the difference between leaders and followers assuming that leaders would display more personality traits than the subordinates” (Kanodia and Sacher, 2016). According to Cherry (2019), “leadership traits are the consistent and habitual patterns of thoughts, feelings, behaviour, emotions or actions of the leader that distinguish the leader from the follower” (Cherry, 2019). Leadership traits are not fixed but remain stable throughout a leader’s life span. Rather, this approach emphasizes that having a leader with a certain set of traits is crucial to having effective leadership. It is the leader and their personality that are central to the leadership process apart from other circumstances that may prevail.

### **Skills Model (by Mumford et al., 2000)**

Skills model which is also known as capability model likewise will be used in the undertaking of this research. Skills model was introduced by Mumford et al in 2000, it takes a skill and knowledge based approach to describe leaders' performance. Just like Trait Theory, this skill model is also a leader-centered approach as it concentrates on the key attributes/qualities of leaders which make effective leadership possible. That is to say, individual leaders have attributes which need to be put into place for certain realizations and effects to arise. The model proposes four components which describes personal qualities of a leader. These include: general cognitive ability to process perceptions and information, creative and divergent thinking and memory skills of a leader; also, intellectual ability to learn and acquire knowledge and experience overtime. Another aspect is willingness and motivation to lead, solve complex problems, express dominance and communicate to the social good of the organization. Additionally, personality as an individual attribute of a leader helps people to adapt with complex organizational problems and set them effective leadership performance.

### **The Concept of Academic Achievement**

“Academic achievement of students has become so topical that it has prompted a lot of scholars to work hard to untangle factors that militate against good performance” (Paschal and Mkuu, (2020).

“It has attracted the attention of parents, policymakers, and planners. The major goal of the school is to ensure that students succeed academically” (Adeyemo cited in MeenuDev, 2016). “Academic achievement is crucial when assessing the success of an individual student and has the capacity to determine key life outcomes such as income and health”, (Briley et al, cited in Bosman, 2015). **Virtually everybody concerned with education places premium on deep, strong and reliable foundation.**

“Academic performance connotes outcomes that show the extent to which a student has accomplished goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, college, and university” (Steinmayr et al, 2015), “as a measure of success it is related to the knowledge and skills developed by a student in various courses. Academic achievement plays an important role in the life of an individual. The individual who is academically deficient is limited as far as progression in school is concerned, and more, his future income and productivity is negatively affected”, (Kasirye cited in Bosman, 2015). The consequence on the individual can be disastrous as he is likely to experience unemployment, substance use and delinquency as adults. He becomes a potential burden to himself, the family, and the community at large. It is therefore critical to examine the potential determinants of a student’s academic success so as to avoid him or her from becoming a burden to himself and the community.

“Besides the relevance for an individual, academic achievement is very important for the wealth of a nation and its prosperity. Results of International studies conducted on academic achievement by bodies such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) provide information about different indicators of a nation’s academic achievement. Such information is needed to assess the strengths and weaknesses of a nation’s educational system and to guide educational policy decisions” (Steinmayr et al, 2015).

“Some research on leadership in the recent past indicates successful schools provide holistic education. They emphasize positive values; whip up interest in lifelong learning, and foster citizenship and personal, economic and social capabilities” (Mulford & Silins, 2011;

Ishimeru, 2013 as cited in Day et al, 2016). However, in this work, the researcher considered academic performance, measured leadership behaviours of heads principals in the study locale.

### **Empirical Literature**

This section contains the review of empirical studies that are related to the current study. The sub sections are organized as per the study objectives and commence with a delineation of the characteristics of the leadership attributes. As the review of empirical studies is done, the research gaps have also been identified.

#### **Teachers' Perceptions on the individual leadership attributes of their school heads**

Turan & Bektas (2013) propose that “there is a “positive and significant relationship between primary school teachers’ perceptions and the leadership practices of school principals”. These scholars demonstrate that how teachers perceive school principals’ attributes can affect the culture of the school” (Aypay et al., 2012; Velsco et al., 2012; Whitaker, 2012).

“Leadership in organisations is fundamentally an influencing process, which depends on how leaders interact with their subordinates” (Bush, 2008; & Yukl, 2002). “Thus, a number of leadership scholars have opined that leadership can be considered to be a process of ‘being perceived as a leader’ (e.g. Hall and Lord, 1995 as cited in Lee & Nie, 2015), “which is largely a cognitive process such that the effectiveness of a leader’s behaviours may be contingent upon how the subordinates perceive and interpret the authenticity of the leader’s qualities” (Randolph & Kemery, 2011). “As such, in teacher empowerment research, this also highlights the importance of understanding not only how school principals may empower teachers but that a more accurate assessment of the effectiveness of collective school principals would likely depend on how teachers may perceive and interpret their school principals’ behaviours at different levels of management” (Lee & Nie, 2015). *Therefore, it is*

*paramount to tackle some individual leadership attributes school heads possess and show teachers' perceptions towards these attributes as revealed hereunder:*

**Supportive relationships:** “School heads who work collaboratively with teachers, by taking time to find out what a person needs to move forward, solicit their input, include them in decision-making processes, encourage open communication, and create a positive school culture maintain supportive relationships with teachers” (Paschal and Mkulu, 2020). “As a result of these strong relationships, schools yield greater student achievement. Moreover, school principals indirectly affect student learning through the practices by which they lead teachers and create the organizational climate of the school” (Lezotte & McKee, 2006). “Therefore, the need to implement teacher-supportive leadership practices is paramount to the success of childrens’ learning and must remain as an imperative concern of instructional leaders” (Shepherd-Jones, n.d).

**Competency:** the school heads who competent about the current curriculum & instruction, strong understanding of how schools work; are highly encouraged, that is, teachers love working together with them to ensure that all students are united and working together to achieve the school’s goals that lead to good and positive outcomes (Ofodu, Fatimayin, and Paschal, 2022). This entails, individual trait of an effective leader of the school (Rahman et al., 2019). According to Alias et al. (2018) among “the elements in leadership is that the headmaster should be capable to lead and mobilize the entire school towards attaining the vision and mission, with a clear school policy to achieve the expected outcomes”.

**Consideration:** “this involves demonstrating concern and respect for subordinates, showing appreciation and support, and looking out for subordinates’ welfare” (Otieno, 2020 cites Bass, 1990). “Likewise, Otieno (ibid) seconds, with this type of behaviour, the leader-subordinate relations are one of mutual trust and two-way communication. Consideration

focuses on the charismatic and affective elements of leadership, and it is concerned with values, ethics, emotions, standards, and long-term goals” (Northouse, 2004). “Noticeably, leader’s consideration stresses on the need to assess followers’ motives, satisfy their needs, and treat them as human beings; it relies on the strong influence of visionary, charismatic leaders who move followers to accomplish objectives above and beyond what is usually expected (Northouse, *ibid*). The outcome of this attribute is that it builds teachers’ trust in the head teacher’s ideology, a similarity in belief systems among the stakeholders, acceptance of the head teacher, expression of warmth, obedience, and identification, emotional involvement with goals, and stakeholder confidence in goal achievement” (Otieno, 2020).

**Initiating structure:** on the other hand, is oriented toward facilitating goal attainment. It involves the extent to which the leader initiates, organizes, and defines his/her role and the roles of subordinates, structuring the work to be completed and how it is to be completed. These behaviours pertain to how leaders behave towards subordinates in the group in general, rather than specific dyad-level relationships. Basically, school principals who employ autocratic methods of management do not work harmoniously with their staff members. When a teacher perceives the school principals as commanding and not giving them opportunity to participate in decision making, the teacher is likely to treat the pupils in derogatory ways and becomes more cynical towards them. Cautionary, Northouse as cited in Otieno, 2020) states that “if leadership is vital to the schools, preparation of those leaders is very serious business indeed, and graduate programmes must move beyond the training of efficient managers to the preparation of visionary, moral, and considerate leaders”.

**Inspirational motivation:** “The school head’s acts tap the interests of teachers and inspire them to do their job creatively and lead new and challenging innovations/ things to reach great heights of performance. Leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning to teachers. Indicators of this leadership include the practices of

building and sharing vision with subordinates, demonstrating a sense of confidence in the followers, committing to high standards at the workplace, and encouraging teamwork” (Mahona and Pacho, 2021). “This assists to sustain behaviours that focus on improvement” (Gyansah et al., 2020). As an outcome of this kind of motivation, Northouse (2016) comments that “teachers feel motivated to teach when the school principals maintains an enabling environment for learning, shares and develops the vision of the school with teachers and students, encourages team spirit, shows appreciation to good works done by followers, demonstrates confidence in the capacity of followers to perform, and initiates organizational change”.

“Inspirational Motivation school principals behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning to teachers and children's work. Indicators of this leadership practice that this study focused on included the practices of building and sharing vision with subordinates, demonstrating a sense of confidence in the followers, committing to high standards at the workplace, and encouraging team work” (Asare, 2016; Osagie & Momoh)

### *The effect of school principals' leadership attributes on children's' academic performance*

**Competence:** Anwer et al. (2018) are of the opinion that improved results in the school are attributed to the dispositions and competencies of school principals. After the analysis of school principals' leadership competencies and their relationship with school results, it was realized that there is strong relationship between leadership competencies of the school principals and children's academic performance. Hence, it is deeply realized that effective leadership is of fundamental importance in a school's development. Harris (2005) looks at competence as an integrated aspect to school improvement as a distinct approach to educational changes that enhances student's outcome; raising children's' achievement focusing on teaching –learning process and conditions that support it. The term competency

means, an observable, measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, or characteristics of an individual, needs for better performance in a job. However, incompetent school principals fail to employ needed strategies in academic, so learners perform poorly.

**Visionary leadership:** “good children's academic performance depends very much on the school vision that expresses what should be done, how it should be done, where and when to accomplish the main objective which is to provide knowledge, skills and attitudes to students” (Mahona and Pacho, 2021). The vision should identify the long, medium and short-term objectives. A school principal that analyses and plans for future needs, usually secures effective teaching and learning process that leads to improvement of children's academic performance. On the contrary, lack of vision in a school, make the teaching and learning process in effective because each member would not know what is the intended outcome, how, when and where to accomplish his/her responsibilities.

**Collaboration:** a school that is collaborative (Anwer et al., 2018 cites Hargreaves, 1998) is more supportive towards enhancing school improvement. Bredeson (2003) proposes that “the staff development is used as a lever for school improvement, it has to be included as part of the overall direction of the school. It should connect to the day-to-day work in schools and be linked to teachers’ collective learning and growth, in order to support pupils’ learning” (Bredeson, 2003).

**Systematic supervision of teaching/learning process:** “The school principals have to gather information systematically, which can be used to create possibilities for a further improvement in a schools’ academic performance. Both inputs and outputs should be keenly analyzed so as to achieve the determined objectives” (Mpondo, 2005). “Essentially, it is added, it is the responsibility of the school principals to make sure that relevant educational inputs which are of importance to the teaching of any subject in the school curriculum such as

pictures, postcards, diagrams, maps, filmstrips and models are available; these enhance the teaching and learning process to go smoothly” (Jekanyifa, n.d).

Supporting the above idea (Ndyali, 2013) asserts, “good children's academic performance can be realized if there is good supervision of the teaching process. The school principals would secure and sustain effective teaching throughout the school by monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of children's achievements. He or she should organize the implementation of the school curriculum by insisting on high learning time, a variety of teaching strategies, frequent homework, assessment and feedback. On the other hand, lack of teaching supervision leads to poor quality of teaching and low standard of children's academic performance. Good relationship between schools with the community creates the favourable environment for teaching and learning process, which results in good children's academic performance” (Ndyali, 2013).

### **Methodology**

Mixed methods research approach will be employed. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were employed giving the total sample size of 57 respondents. The explanatory cross-sectional survey research design will be used whereby the researcher anticipates incorporating quantitative and qualitative data in a single study and analyzing the two components independently; and then interpreting the results together. Quantitative data will be analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Version 21), while qualitative data will be analysed using open coding to get categories- themes. Documentary review, questionnaire and interview will be the methods for data collection.

### **Specification of propositions**

Yaakob and Tubin, 2014) have shown that “most of the academically successful schools in developed and developing countries are those whose leaders demonstrate high levels of leadership skills and leadership. That is, a good school leader should possess key leadership attributes such as trusting others, honesty, empathy and motivating staff toward achieving the desired organisational goals. Moreover, a good leader has knowledge, experience and skills in planning, organising, controlling and directing. Therefore, all those considered for leadership must display firm abilities in leading and fulfilling the defined requirements” (Mofuga, 2020).

Goolamally & Ahmed (2014) put that “studies on effective schools have found that the ability of an individual to move ahead in the path towards excellence was influenced by his traits, behaviour and actions (Goolamally & Ahmed, 2014 as cites Davis & Thomas, 1989). Seconds, even though a school principal may be able to implement and combine diverse leadership styles in the administration and management of a school in order to achieve excellence, they require personal qualities or traits which make them more stable and resilient” (Norlia & Jamil, 2007).

“Thus, the leadership efficiency of a school principal is determined by his or her traits and behaviour. The importance of selecting an effective school principal with good personal traits or qualities should be a priority and main focus of education in order to ensure that the nation’s school system functions effectively” (Goolamally & Ahmed, 2014). Research has demonstrated that school leaders ‘leadership attributes influence students ‘performance. The purpose of carrying out this study is to provide empirical evidence that would help in establishing whether leadership attributes influence students ‘academic performance.

## **VII. Discussion**

This paper specifies eleven personal leadership traits towards childrens' academic performance. These traits are: dependable, straight forward, fair-minded, inspirational, forward thinking, competency, honesty, creativity, supportive, intelligent and broad minded. Thus, the overall theoretical perspective emerging from the eleven traits specified in this paper reflects on the contribution of individual leadership attributes towards childrens' academic performance. These eleven qualities represent an inclusive set of relationships between individual leadership attributes and childrens' academic performance. Through the specification of these relationships, it addresses an important gap in the existing literature. This paper, for that reason, suggests certain directions for future research. First, future researchers can carry out empirical studies to examine individual leadership attributes variations and their impact on childrens' academic performance. Also, this paper focuses only on the contribution of individual leadership attributes towards childrens' academic performance. However, this study will employ mixed research design to collect data and explore more results that will support further research and other findings in this area.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

This paper points out that the existing studies have indicated that there is a need for examining the contribution of individual leadership attributes towards children's academic performance. To suffice this need, the paper chooses to address the contribution of individual leadership attributes as vital aspects in children's academic performance. The paper will be centred at eleven individual leadership attributes; each will be treated in relation to children's academic performance. These eleven traits will render a comprehensive representation of the contribution of individual leadership attributes as vital aspects in children's academic performance.

## REFERENCES

- Anwer, J., Kayani, A., & Jabeen, M. (2018). Role of School Heads' Leadership Competencies in the Context of School Improvement Initiatives. *Journal of Education and Practice*, Vol 9(25), pp. 2222-1735.
- Aline, I. and Ramkumar, S. (2018). Leaders are not born, they are made. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 4(5), 94-96
- Adeyemo, D. A. (2001). Teachers' job satisfaction, job involvement, career and organizational commitments as correlates of student-academic performance.
- Armstrong, M. (2004). *Handbook of human resource management practice* (9th ed.). London: Kogan Page.
- Ardichvili, A., Dag, K.N. and Manderscheid, S. (2016). Leadership development: Current and emerging models and practices. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 18(3), 275-285.
- Bosman, A. (2015). The relationship between student academic achievement and student learning styles in a multicultural senior school. Retrieved from [www.pdfdrive.net](http://www.pdfdrive.net)
- Bass, B.M. (1990). *Bass & Stodgill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research, & management applications*. New York: Free Press.
- Bredeson, P.V. 2003. *Designs for Learning: A New Architecture for Professional Development in Schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Bristbane Catholic Education (2013), Eligibility and Selection Criteria, Principal. Retrieved on 04 September 2022 from <http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au/bce-employment/about/senior%20leadership/Documents/PRINCIPAL%20%20E%20and%20SC%202013.pdf>.
- Bush T (2008) From management to leadership: semantic or meaningful change? *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* 36(2): 271–288.
- Cruickshank, V. (2017). The Influence of School principalship on Student Outcomes. Retrieved on 25 May 2019, from *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 5, 115-123. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2017.59009>.

Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., Meyerson, D., & Orr, M. (2007). Preparing school leaders for a changing world: Executive summary. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute.

Fleener, J., W. (2006). Trait Approach to Leadership. Encyclopaedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Sage Publications.

Germain, M. (2008). Traits and skills theories as the nexus between leadership and expertise: Reality or fallacy? *Performance improvement*, Vol 51(5), 31-35.

Goolamally, N. & Ahmed, J. (2014). Attributes of School principals towards Achieving Sustainable Leadership: A Factor Analysis. *Journal of Education and Learning*; Vol. 3, No. 1; 1927-5250.

Greenfield, W.D. (1987). Instructional leadership: Concepts, issues, and controversies. Newton, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Gurr, D. (2015) A Model of Successful School principalship from the International Successful School Principalship Project, *Societies*, 5(1), pp. 136-150. doi:10.3390/soc5010136.

Hao, N.T. (2013), Recruitment of School Principals in Vietnam: Using Evidences for Changing Appointment Policies. Retrieved on 02 August, 2022 from <https://ajhss.org/pdfs/vol1Issue3/Recruitment%20of%20schoolprincipalpdf>.

Harris, A. 2005. Teacher leadership and school improvement. In Harris, Aetal (Eds). effective leadership for school Improvement. London Routledge Farmer: 33-44.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2008). Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice (8th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Jekanyifa, A.A (n.d) Effects of Instractional Resources on the academic Performance of Students in history in Nigeria. Retrieved from <http://www.unilorin.edu.ng/publications/jekayinoluwa/2.%20EFFECTS%20OF%20INSTRUCTIONAL%20RESOURCES.htm>. Accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2022.

John, U. & Mkulu, D., G. (2020). Influence of School heads' Leadership Styles on Childrens' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Nyamagana District, Mwanza, Tanzania. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 5(6).

Kandula, S.R (2006). Performance management . In performance management Strategy Intervention. Drivers. 1st ed .p 5.

- King, D. (2002). The changing face of leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 59, 61-63.
- Lee A., N., & Nie, Y. (2015). Teachers' perceptions of school principals' empowering behaviours and psychological empowerment: Evidence from a Singapore sample. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 1-24.
- Ofodu, G. O., Fatimayin, F. F., & Paschal, M. J. (2022). Revolutionizing large classes and helping the silently excluded learners through language inclusive practices. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 34(2), 1-8.  
<https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2022/v34i2723>
- Mahona, P. & Pacho, T. (2021). Reshaping Education in the Post-COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa. *African Research Journal of Education and Social Sciences (ARJESS)*, 8(3), 13- 26. <http://arjess.org/education-research/reshaping-education-in-the-post-covid-19-pandemic-in-africa-.pdf>
- Paschal, M. J. & Mkulu, D. G. (2020 a). Teacher- Students' Relationship and Students 'Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Magu District, Tanzania. *Journal of Research in Education and Society*, 11(1), 20-3.  
<http://www.icidr.org/jresv11no1-content.php>.
- Lezotte, L. W., & McKee, K. M. (2006). *Stepping up: Leading the charge to improve our schools*. Okemos, MI: Effective Schools Products.
- Lopez, M. (2015). The Appointment of School principals in Mexican Primary Schools: An Exploratory Study of the System of Promotion. Retrieved on 22 May 2019, from *International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management*, 3(1), 55- 79. doi: 10.4471/ijelm.2015.04.
- McCann, D. G. (2011). A Study to Examine Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Characteristics that Middle School Principals Should Have to Be an Effective Instructional Leader. *Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 1351*.  
<https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/1351>.
- MeenuDev (2016). Factors affecting the academic achievement: A study of elementary School students of NCR Delhi, India. *Journal of Education and Practice*, Vol. 7, No.4. Retrieved from [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)
- Mofuga, C. (2020). Influence of Leadership Attributes of Head of Schools on Student Academic Performances, Munich, GRIN Verlag,  
<https://www.grin.com/document/922070>.
- Mpondo, L (2005) *Leadership and Management Training Programme for Heads of Schools*, Bagamoyo, ADEM.

Ngithi, N. G. (2013). Administrative challenges faced by primary school school principals in Management of Pupils in Embakasi District, Kenya. Masters' thesis submitted to the Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies, Kenyatta University.

Northouse, P.G. (2004). Leadership Theory and Practice (3rd Ed).Sage, Sage Publications.

Northouse, P. G. (2016). Leadership: Theory and practice. (7th Edition). Thousand Oaks,CA. Sage.

Nsubuga, Y.K.K., 2010. Analysis of leadership styles and school performance of secondary schools in Uganda. PhD Thesis: Nelson Mandela University Unpublished.

Otieno, K. (2020). "Teachers Perceptions of the Leadership Behaviours of Primary School School principals in Kenya" International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research (IJMSR), vol 8(7), pp. 100-110. doi: [http:// dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.0807013](http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.0807013).

Rahman, M. J. A., Jimbat, A. A., Razak, M. R. A., Daud, Md. Y., & Ensimau, N. K. (2019). Teacher's Perception towards Headmaster Leadership in Linus Management for Elementary School in Debak Zone, Betong, Sarawak. Creative Education, 10, 3142-3152. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.1012238>.

Raisiene, A., G., Pulokiene, A., & Valickas, A. (2018). Examining Leadership Characteristics at International Multilaterals. Montenegrin Journal of Economics, Vol. 14, No. 3, 189-198.

Swanson, R. A., Holton, E. F. (2001). Foundations of human resource development (1st ed). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Swanson, R. A., & Holton, E. F. III. (Eds.) (2005). Research in Organizations: Foundations and Methods of Inquiry. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Steinmayr, R. & Spinath, B. (2009). The importance of motivation as a predictor of school achievement. Learning and Individual Differences, 19, 80-90.

Siegrist, J. (1999). "Adverse health effects of reward in balance at work: Theory, empirical support and implication for prevention." In C.L. Cooper (Ed.), Theories of Organizational Stress (pp.190-204). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Turan, S., & Bektas, F. (2013). The relationship between school culture and leadership practices. Egitim Arastirmalari-Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 52, 155-168.

- UNESCO-IICBA (2011) Better Schools: Resource Materials for School principals in Africa (Introductory Module A- User's guide. Unit One). Retrieved from 97 [http://library.unescoiicba.org/English/Better\\_Schools/Better%20Schools/MODULE3/module3\\_unit5.htm](http://library.unescoiicba.org/English/Better_Schools/Better%20Schools/MODULE3/module3_unit5.htm). Accessed on 2nd July, 2022.
- Paschal, M. J. (2022). Investigating teachers' awareness of gifted children and resource accessibility for their learning in Tanzania. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 27(4), 9-31. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2022/v27i430660>
- UNICEF, (2001) Situational analysis of children in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam: Dogodogo street children project.
- Walker, A & Kwan, P. (2012). "Principal Selection Panels: Strategies, Preferences and Perceptions", *Journal of Education Administration*, Vol.50, pp.188-205. Retrieved on 01 August, 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231211210549>.
- Wasonga, T. (2014;" Kenya . From perdition to performance. *Leading Schools Successfully: Stories from the field* (London: Routledge", pp. 44-58.
- Yaakov, O. B., & Tubin, D. (2014). Israel. The evolution of success. *Leading Schools Successfully: Stories from the field* (London: Routledge", pp. 19-30.
- Yukl G (2002) *Leadership in Organizations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.