



Education International Africa  
Internationale de l'Éducation Afrique  
EIA | IEA

# School Leadership in Africa: Policy and Practice

School Leadership in Africa: Policy and Practice

Dr. Casmir Chanda

Dr. Casmir Chanda  
June 2025



Education International Africa  
Internationale de l'Éducation Afrique  
EIA | IEA

# **School Leadership in Africa: Policy and Practice**

Dr. Casmir Chanda  
June 2025

## Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this important study on school leadership in Africa, commissioned by Education International Africa and carried out by Dr Casmir Chanda. As educators, we understand the pivotal role that school leaders play in shaping the learning experiences of students and the working conditions of teachers. However, the challenges facing school leadership in many African countries have often been overlooked.

This study sheds light on key issues surrounding school leadership through a comprehensive analysis of education policies and the lived experiences of school principals' union leaders across the continent. By examining national priorities, appointment criteria, professional training opportunities, and the gender dimensions of school leadership, the study seeks to address gaps in our understanding of the diverse realities of school leadership in different African contexts.

Through a transformational leadership lens, the findings also provide insights into how school leaders support quality education, equity, and student success while navigating resource constraints, accountability pressures, and other difficulties in the discharge of their duties. Especially during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, strong and supported school leadership is vital for building resilient education systems.

The recommendations from this research aim to stimulate thoughtful discussion and inform advocacy efforts regarding how school leadership can be strengthened and uplifted. As Education International Africa continues to put pressure on governments to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 on inclusive, equitable quality education for all, empowering school principals and teachers through improved policies, working conditions, and professional development will undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of global and regional education goals and targets.

I hope that this study contributes meaningful knowledge that can guide more focused and collaborative action towards enhancing school leadership across Africa for the benefit of all learners.

Dr. Dennis Sinyolo  
Regional Director  
EI Africa

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction and background information.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Introduction and Background.....	1
2. Aims of the study.....	2
3. Conceptual Framework on Quality School Leadership.....	3
4. Understanding school leadership.....	5
5. Meaning of school leadership.....	8
<b>Chapter 2: Desk study results.....</b>	<b>11</b>
6. Prioritisation of school leadership in African education policies.....	11
7. Addressing knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa.....	14
8. Provision of quality education and equal opportunities for all.....	14
9. Working conditions and trade union rights.....	15
10. Support from the education system.....	16
11. Advocacy and policy implementation.....	17
12. Challenges confronting school leaders in Africa.....	17
13. Effective school leadership in the context of Africa.....	19
14. Addressing the aims and objectives of the study.....	21
15. Criteria and qualifications required for the appointment of school leaders.....	21
16. Gender equity in the appointment of school leaders.....	24
17. Policies promoting gender equity in school leadership.....	26
18. Working conditions of school leaders.....	29
19. How school leaders exercise their trade union rights.....	30
20. Significant challenges facing school leaders in Africa.....	32
21. COVID-19 and its effect on school leaders.....	33
<b>Chapter 3: Findings of the research.....</b>	<b>36</b>
22. How school leadership is prioritised and addressed.....	39
23. Criteria for qualification and appointments of school leaders.....	45
24. Provision of quality education, equity and equal educational opportunities.....	45
25. Insight into the working conditions and trade union rights.....	56
26. Challenges confronting school leaders in Africa.....	61
27. COVID-19's impact on school leaders.....	62

<b>Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations</b> .....	65
28. Summary of main findings.....	65
29. Suggestions and recommendations.....	66
<b>References</b> .....	70

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### **Introduction**

School leaders play a pivotal role in the provision of quality education and in ensuring equity and equal educational opportunities for all children, pupils, and students. School leaders can create conditions for effective teaching and learning in their institutions by providing the necessary resources, support, and motivation for both teachers and students. Furthermore, school leaders can help to create and maintain a positive school climate and a culture of peace, tolerance, equity, inclusiveness, cooperation, and hard work in their institutions for the benefit of the whole school community. As Bush (2018) argues, school leadership requires specific preparation given the increasing complexity of the demands facing school leaders and has become an important issue as it is now widely accepted as a very significant aspect (second to classroom teaching) in influencing students' learning outcomes.

Despite its importance, school leadership is yet to be considered a top priority in the global education development and policy agenda. At the same time, school leaders continue to face a myriad of challenges, including shrinking school budgets, inadequate school infrastructure and resources, stringent accountability demands, and heavy workloads. School leaders are often expected to “deliver results” without receiving specialised leadership training or adequate support from the government and education authorities.

Education International (EI) continues to bring School Leadership and other issues to the global education policy agenda through evidence-based advocacy and other efforts. Since 2006, EI has been organising regular school leadership conferences, bringing together its affiliates, experts and partners from around the world to share experiences and develop strategies for improving educational leadership. The International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP) has addressed several teacher and school leadership issues.

As articulated in its 2011 Policy Paper on Education and the 2015 addendum to the policy paper, EI believes that collaborative, collegial and co-operative leadership, involving leaders, administrators, teachers, education support personnel and the whole pedagogical community, is the most effective form of

educational leadership. EI's concept of school leadership, therefore, goes beyond the principal, who no doubt plays a critical role, and includes teachers and other members of the school community.

Following on from the EI School Leadership Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, in April 2018, and in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on quality education, EI continues to research quality school leadership. The aim of conducting further research is to provide evidence and data to support EI Africa and member organisations' advocacy for the achievement of quality education and decent work for all through the strengthening of school leadership.

The research conducted by EI provides important findings about School Leadership in Africa. The research is expected to stimulate further debate and ways to improve school leadership, as well as inclusive quality leadership in schools as an enabler for quality education.

### **Aims of the study**

The main aims of the study include the following:

1. Assess the extent to which school leadership is prioritised and addressed in regional and national education and teacher policies;
2. Address knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa regarding national policies, criteria for appointment, professional training, and gender equity in appointment to leadership positions;
3. Provide evidence on how school leaders play a pivotal role in the provision of quality education and in ensuring equity and equal educational opportunities for all children and students;
4. Provide an insight into the working conditions and trade union rights of school leaders; and,
5. Identify the numerous challenges confronting school leaders across the African Region, including shrinking school budgets, inadequate school infrastructure and resources, stringent accountability demands, and heavy workloads.

### **Conceptual Framework on Quality Leadership in Schools**

Several conceptual frameworks in the field of school leadership provide a basis for understanding and analysing the complex role of school leaders. Some of the main conceptual frameworks on school leadership include the following: transformational leadership; distributed leadership; instructional leadership; servant leadership; ethical leadership; and adaptive leadership. These frameworks provide different lenses through which to approach and understand school leadership.

Distributed leadership views leadership as a shared responsibility that is distributed among various individuals within the school. It recognizes that leadership can emerge from different roles and levels within the organization and encourages collaboration and collective decision-making. Instructional leadership places a strong emphasis on the leader's role in improving teaching and learning. Instructional leaders focus on setting high expectations, providing instructional support, promoting professional development, and monitoring student progress to drive school improvement. Servant leadership emphasizes the leader's commitment to serving others and prioritizing the needs of the school community. Servant leaders demonstrate humility, empathy, and a focus on the well-being and growth of their followers. Ethical leadership highlights the importance of ethical decision-making and behaviour in leadership. Ethical leaders demonstrate integrity, fairness, and a commitment to ethical principles in their actions and decisions. Adaptive leadership focuses on the leader's ability to navigate and address complex challenges and changes within the school environment. Adaptive leaders promote learning, innovation, and flexibility to effectively respond to and lead change.

Transformational leadership, for example, emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire and motivate others towards a shared vision. Transformational leaders focus on building strong relationships, fostering collaboration, and promoting the growth and development of individuals within the school community. The Transformation Leadership Framework also focuses on categories that drive a school's success and contribute to quality leadership, teaching and learning, the school culture, talent management, operations and systems, and personal leadership.



These frameworks provide different lenses through which to understand and approach school leadership. It's important to note that these frameworks are not mutually exclusive, and effective school leaders often draw upon multiple frameworks depending on the context and needs of their schools. It is important to note that these frameworks are not mutually exclusive, and effective school leaders often draw upon multiple frameworks depending on the context and needs of their schools.

The conceptual framework provided (Figure 1) shows the link to transformation leadership and that it can be applied at all levels, from inputs, what happens within the schools, and outputs. This conceptual framework and its applications also depend on a variety of internal and external factors. All these factors (institutional, cultural, political, economic, religious) contribute to quality leadership and may need to be promoted and enhanced by the relevant authorities and/or organisations.

For school leaders to be effective and be able to transform their schools, they need support. Education personnel have an essential role to play in supporting the principal, teachers, and students, and should be fully involved in the management of the school so that the school leaders can provide quality school leadership. To facilitate the formulation of appropriate policies and advocate for quality leadership in schools, policymakers may need to consider the conceptual framework for quality leadership in schools (Figure 1). The European Agency for Development (2011) states that school leaders need to promote and support the following: education and training of all teachers; organisational culture and ethos that promotes inclusion; support structures organised to support inclusion; flexible resource systems that promote inclusion; support school policies and legislation.

Research shows that the key to improving academic achievement and supporting student success is ensuring that all students have access to an effective teacher in every classroom and effective school leaders in every school. This would then lead to quality leadership at all levels – among teachers and the leadership team. ETUCE states that principals as pedagogical leaders should ensure quality, equity, and equality of educational opportunities. School leaders must have working conditions and a wage level

that can attract high-quality applicants for school leadership positions. In addition, the recruitment of school leaders should be gender balanced. Therefore, professional development and support programmes for school leaders are essential to make it possible for them to respond effectively to new challenges, such as disability, migration, academic, pandemics and epidemics (such as COVID-19), social and economic issues.

### **Understanding school leadership**

A school leader in education is a person who makes decisions that affect the school, which can include, but is not limited to, head teachers, teachers, principals, subject leaders, curriculum planners, and other administrators. School leaders in education are individuals who hold leadership positions within educational institutions. These leaders are responsible for the overall management, administration, and direction of schools or educational organizations. School leadership involves setting a clear vision, promoting effective teaching and learning, nurturing a positive school culture, engaging stakeholders, and managing resources efficiently. Effective school leaders are instrumental in creating an environment where students can thrive academically and personally, and where the school can achieve its mission and goals.

Below are some of the key roles and positions held by school leaders in education.

The principal or head teacher is typically the top administrative leader and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, including managing staff, curriculum, budgeting, and ensuring a safe and productive learning environment for students.

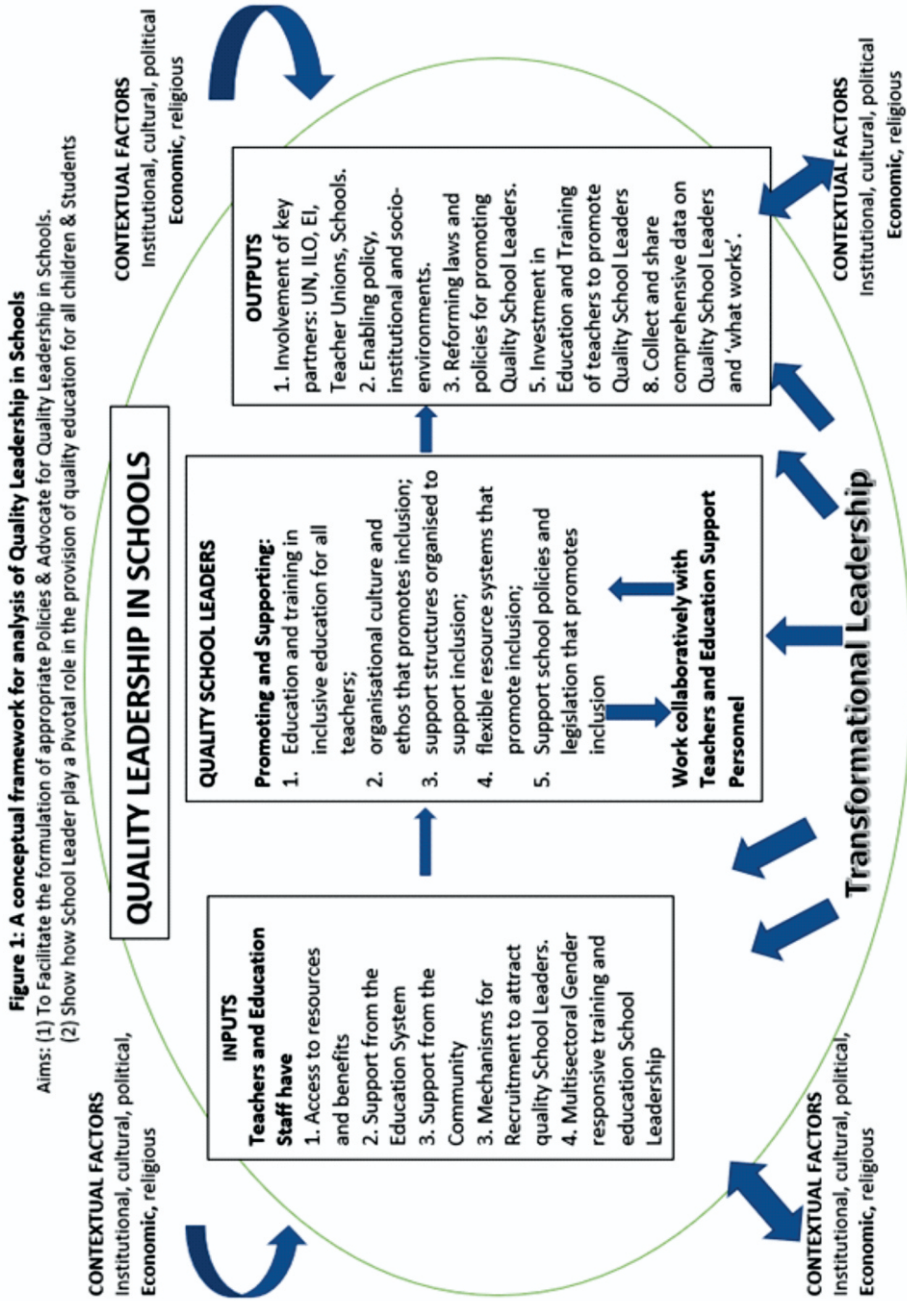
Assistant principals or vice principals, or deputy head teachers work alongside the principal to support the administration of a school. They often have specific responsibilities, such as handling discipline, curriculum development, or student activities.

School administration, which includes various categories such as department heads, subject leaders, and curriculum coordinators. These individuals often have specialised roles and may be responsible for specific aspects of a school's operation.

School Board Members are elected officials responsible for governing school districts. They make policy decisions, approve budgets, and provide oversight to oversee and ensure that schools are managed effectively and according to the vision and mission of the school.

School leaders play a pivotal role in education in several ways. Firstly, through curriculum implementation by ensuring that the curriculum is effectively delivered, aligning teaching methods with educational goals. Secondly, teacher support provides guidance and support to teachers, helping them improve their instructional practices. Thirdly, ensuring the implementation of policies and practices that promote equity, such as allocating resources to underserved communities and addressing achievement gaps. Fourthly, by ensuring safe learning environments, school leaders create a safe and inclusive school climate that fosters learning and respect for diversity. There is evidence that safe learning environments lead to improved student performance, reduced dropout rates, and increased access to quality education for marginalised or disadvantaged groups in schools.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.csee-etuice.org/images/attachments/ETUCEPolicyPaperchoolLeadershipEN.pdf>



## **Meaning of school leadership**

School leadership refers to the process of guiding, directing, and managing a school or educational institution to achieve its goals and provide quality and inclusive education. Effective school leadership is critical for creating a positive learning environment, fostering student success, and ensuring the overall success of the institution. School leadership mainly deals with vision and mission setting: School leaders play a pivotal role in defining the school's vision and mission. They need to articulate a clear and inspiring vision of what the school aims to achieve. This vision sets the direction for the entire institution, guiding decision-making, curriculum development, and overall school culture. A well-defined mission statement outlines the purpose and values of the school, aligning the efforts of teachers, students, and stakeholders towards common goals.

**Instructional Leadership:** Effective school leaders are instructional leaders. They are actively involved in shaping and improving teaching and learning processes within the school. This involves setting high academic standards, promoting effective teaching methods, and monitoring student progress. Instructional leaders support professional development for teachers, ensuring they have the tools and resources to help students succeed. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, they contribute to the academic growth of both students and staff.

**Creating a Positive School Culture:** School leaders are responsible for creating and maintaining a positive school culture. This involves promoting values such as respect, inclusivity, and collaboration. A positive school culture enhances student engagement, reduces discipline problems, and improves overall well-being. Leaders set the tone by modelling desired behaviours, establishing clear expectations, and addressing issues promptly and fairly. They also celebrate achievements and encourage a sense of belonging among all stakeholders.

**Stakeholder Engagement:** School leaders must engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, education support personnel, and the community. Effective communication and collaboration with these groups are essential for building trust and support. Leaders should seek input from stakeholders, involve them in decision-making processes, and

address their concerns. Engaging parents in their children's education, for example, can significantly impact student success, while community partnerships can provide valuable resources and opportunities for students.

**Resource Management:** School leaders are responsible for managing the school's resources efficiently. This includes budgeting, allocating funds, and ensuring that resources like facilities, technology, and instructional materials are adequate and well-maintained. School leaders need to ensure that the resources are managed effectively; this requires strategic planning and decision-making to optimize the use of available resources, ensuring that they directly support the school's educational goals.

School leadership plays a key role for well-functioning schools, but how school leadership is practiced depends on the education system and policy context. Education systems are evolving; school leaders are the ones who lead the work of education professionals in schools, as they prepare students for the future. As the 21st century advances, so does the external context. Governance is increasingly complex, and accountability is shifting towards professional responsibility. Schools are introducing technology, new curricula, and new forms of collaboration (Schleicher, 2018). Schools continue to engage with professional practices among their staff network across schools to learn best practices from other schools. This might change the role of school leaders, who will have to navigate, interpret, and make sense of the work with their education professionals in new ways. The main aim of what school leaders do is to improve the quality of education offered in schools.

Without leadership, individual teachers may act as a loosely connected group, without vision and motivation to produce an expected and socially praised change. The expectation to encourage reforms from the regional and district level, when not from the top, is purely utopian. Schools remain remote realities in such change models. Most systems in poorly resourced contexts are entangled in hierarchical school models and grounded in traditional power distance and colonial legacies. Without significant leadership processes stimulated by school principals at the very heart of such systems, cultural and new structural processes cannot be expected. To produce cultural change, the top leadership stratum must create the proper conditions, such as decent

salaries, manageable workloads, and other incentives for training and knowledge dissemination. (Mincu, M., 2022).

As discussed earlier, several conceptual frameworks are commonly referenced in the field of school leadership, particularly regarding improving the quality of education.

In this study, Transformational Leadership will be used as a framework to discuss the following aspects of school leadership:

1. The extent to which school leadership is prioritised and addressed in regional and national education and teacher policies;
2. The knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa regarding national policies, the criteria for appointment, professional training, and gender equity in appointment to leadership positions;
3. How school leaders play a pivotal role in the provision of quality education and in ensuring equity and equal educational opportunities for all children and students;
4. An insight into the working conditions and trade union rights of school leaders; and,
5. The challenges confronting school leaders across the African Region include shrinking school budgets, inadequate school infrastructure and resources, stringent accountability demands, and heavy workloads.

<sup>2</sup>Educational Leadership for the 21st Century (researchgate.net)

## CHAPTER 2

### DESK STUDY RESULTS

The findings of the desk study are discussed under eight broad topics, highlighted below.

#### **1. Prioritisation of school leadership in African education policies**

School leadership varies in priority across African countries and regions. Some nations prioritize it as a key component of education reform, while others may not give it as much attention. The extent to which school leadership is addressed depends on various factors, including political will, available resources, and the state of the education system. Some countries have established specific policies and guidelines for school leadership, while others may focus more on broader educational objectives. It's essential to assess and compare policies across countries to identify commonalities and differences in how school leadership is addressed.

School leadership is correctly identified as a key strategy to improve teaching and learning towards the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)4 (Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, 2015). A specific task assigned to school leadership is an increase in the supply of qualified teachers (UNESCO, 2016). At the same time, the need to transform schools is sometimes dissociated from the potential of school and system leadership to ensure such transformation. Failing to recognize the role of leaders in quality and equitable schooling must be rectified. The first place to start would be to examine the national education policies.

There is growing evidence that high-quality leadership is essential for student growth and school improvement, accounting for up to 27% of the variation in student outcomes. Leithwood et al., 2006 and Bush, 2020 discuss several leadership models, noting that transformational, distributed, and instructional approaches are particularly prominent in the leadership literature.

There are a few African countries that have focused on school leadership in their education policies. The summary table below indicates the few countries that shared the policies in previous studies and what the policies focus on:



Country	Name of Policy	Description of Policy
South Africa	South African Schools Act, 1996	This act governs education in South Africa and includes provisions for the roles and responsibilities of school governing bodies and principals in managing schools.
Nigeria	National Policy on Education, 2004 (Revised)	Policy recognizes the importance of school leadership in improving the quality of education.
Ghana	Education Strategic Plan (2018-2030)	Ghana's education plan outlines strategies for improving the quality of education, which include enhancing school leadership and management.
Kenya	Basic Education Act, 2013	This act establishes the framework for basic education in Kenya and addresses the role of school leadership in the management of schools.
Uganda	Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2017-2020	The ESSP includes strategies for enhancing school leadership and management to improve education quality in Uganda.
Tanzania	Education and Training Policy, 2014	This policy outlines the government's commitment to improving school leadership and management as part of its efforts to enhance the quality of education.
Rwanda	National Policy for Education (2017)	Rwanda's education policy includes provisions for strengthening school leadership and management to improve educational outcomes.
Ethiopia	Education and Training Policy (ETP), 1994 (Revised in 2012)	Ethiopia's ETP emphasizes the importance of effective school leadership and management in achieving quality education.

Country	Name of Policy	Description of Policy
Botswana	Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) 2015-2020	The ETSSP for Botswana includes strategies for improving school leadership and management in the country's education system.
Zambia	Educating Our Future 1996	Policy states that instructional leadership by head teachers is a priority in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

Zambia and South Africa have adopted national policies on Education. The Zambian Policy, *Educating our Future*, spells out instructional leadership by head teachers as a priority in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. The 1996 policy document also asserts that schools have a clear focus on learning, with school time being productively used in a systematic approach to teaching and learning. The school's instruction seems to take precedence over all other activities. (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 154). Kabeta *et al.* (2013) offer a more recent view that there is a gap in the general comprehension of instructional leadership and a lack of clear guidelines on how to execute it.

The Tanzanian School Improvement Toolkit (MoEVT, URT, 2013) documents how leaders should lead the improvement of instruction. It provides guidelines on how school leaders should engage the school community, carry out continuous assessment of teachers, track teacher attendance, teacher motivation, and accountability, enforce supervision and coaching of teachers, and they should source teaching and learning materials. Nyambo (2017) also notes that the Tanzanian government authorizes school leaders as internal supervisors to ensure implementation of educational policy, regulations, programmes, directives, and monitoring instruction to enhance learners' achievements.

<sup>3</sup>Bush (2020) *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed, Sage. London  
Leithwood et.al (2019) in "Educating School Leaders Toolset:"

Nigeria's policy on education encourages instructional leadership with an emphasis on improving curriculum in schools to improve learning outcomes. This is achieved through the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), which is responsible for developing, reviewing, and enriching the curriculum at all levels. The policy also encourages instructional leadership through its emphasis on teacher education and evaluation.

### **1. Addressing knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa**

There is very little research about school leaders and their experiences, national policies influencing school leaders, criteria for appointment of school leaders, professional training or lack of it, and gender equity in the appointment of school leaders.

To address knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa, several strategies can be employed, which include research and data collection, capacity building, policy analysis, promoting gender equity in leadership positions, international collaboration, and understanding the role of school leaders in quality education and equity.

### **2. Provision of quality education and equal opportunities for all**

School leaders play an important role in the provision of quality education as they ensure equity and equal educational opportunities for all children and students. It is important to note that interaction with trade unions or teacher unions may also affect or contribute to how effective school leaders can be in promoting and enhancing the quality and equity of education in schools.

One of the strengths of the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 is that it illustrates the quality of school leadership in the context of other factors that might significantly influence what happens in schools. It is argued that inclusive quality school leadership enables effective classroom teaching and learning. However, it is sometimes the classroom processes that are at the centre of what happens in schools that influence the school ethos and vice versa. It is also important to understand that the contextual factors which affect what happens in schools may also affect school leadership at all levels within a school, for example, the management team, subject leaders, student leaders, support staff, and parents. Working together as a team, the leadership capacity can create inclusive learning through the collective ability of a school

to harness the potential of processes and dynamics of the school system, the school, and its members, to generate and lead coordinated action that effectively addresses challenges of equity, inclusiveness, and learning.

Hallinger (2019) argues that the conceptualisation of instructional leadership has matured since 2010. Research in this period includes evidence of several “paths” connecting instructional leadership and student outcomes. These include several teacher-related aspects, notably teacher commitment, collective teacher efficacy, teacher trust, teacher capacity, and teacher engagement in professional learning. These studies collectively suggest that school principals achieve impact on student learning by shaping the school culture, designing work structures, and motivating and influencing teachers (Hallinger, 2019). Leithwood et al. (2020) added a fourth path, which they refer to as the “Family Path. This recognizes the important continuing influence that parents have on their children's learning, and highlights leadership practices that can leverage positive parental interest and involvement during their schooling years”. Hallinger and Heck (1996) proposed that leadership effects on student learning could also be conceptualized as a “reciprocal process” of mutual influence between the principal and other stakeholders. Robinson (2007) identified teacher professional learning as a particularly “high-value path” through which principals can contribute to student learning. Hallinger (2019) concludes that instructional leadership remains highly relevant as one of the core roles of school leaders.

In addition, there are global and international factors, including cultural, economic, academic, social, and religious factors, which may influence what happens in schools.

### **3. Working conditions and trade union rights**

The working conditions and trade union rights of school leaders in Africa can vary significantly from one country to another. In some countries, school leaders may enjoy certain benefits and protections, while in others, their rights may be limited. The responses to the survey questions indicate the variations in working conditions and trade union rights of school leaders in some African countries.

The overall working conditions of school leaders can vary significantly depending on various factors, including the country or region, the level of education (e.g., primary, secondary, or higher education), and the specific educational institution.

School leaders often face high expectations and responsibilities, which result in heavy workloads. They are responsible for the overall management of the school, including curriculum, student performance, and staff management. They therefore frequently work long hours, including evenings and weekends, to fulfil the administrative duties, attend meetings, and engage with the school community. The act of balancing administrative tasks, instructional leadership, and community engagement can be challenging and demanding.

Job security for school leaders may vary based on their contractual terms. Some may have renewable contracts, while others may have more stable positions. Performance evaluations and student outcomes can impact job security for school leaders, particularly in some educational systems where the performance of school leaders is linked to student examination results.

#### **4. Support from the education system**

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) indicates that when school leaders receive support within the school, their performance and outcomes may be greatly improved. The support for professional development can vary, but ongoing training and leadership development opportunities are generally available. School leaders are responsible for implementing education policies and may receive guidance and support from educational authorities. The level of support and cooperation from the local community, parents, and stakeholders can influence a school leader's effectiveness. Other supportive factors include access to professional and development opportunities, as well as salary and benefits.

Building positive relationships with parents, community members, and local organizations is essential for school leaders. School leaders often serve as the face of the school in the community, representing its values and mission.

## **5. Advocacy and policy implementation**

School leaders usually advocate for their school's needs, seek additional resources, and influence policy decisions at the district or regional level. They are responsible for implementing educational policies and ensuring compliance with regulations. Effective school leaders often build leadership teams within their schools to share responsibilities and promote collaborative decision-making. Supporting the professional growth of teachers and support staff is an essential leadership responsibility. School leaders can benefit from professional organizations that provide networking opportunities, resources, and advocacy support. Building relationships with other school leaders for peer support and sharing best practices is valuable.

It's important to note that the working conditions of school leaders can vary significantly, even within the same country or educational system. These conditions may also evolve based on changes in education policies, societal expectations, and the specific challenges facing each school and community.

## **6. Challenges confronting school leaders in Africa**

School leaders in Africa face numerous challenges, especially the lack of resources and other socio-economic challenges facing most African schools (Bush and Oduro 2006; Kitavi and van der Westthuisen, 1997; Onguko, Abdalla and Webber 2012, Bush 2018). School leaders face immense challenges, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. These included loss of life in the school community, concerns about mental health, prolonged school closures, and their impact on students (Global School Leaders Annual Pulse Survey, 2021).

The Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT) 2017 survey reveals several resource gaps, such as inadequate teaching and learning materials and equipment to cater for all learners. The survey also reveals that schools lack adequate computers or do not have any at all, creating another gap. The Ministry of Education (1996) also acknowledges that lack of access to teaching and learning materials and equipment presents a “fundamental” barrier to quality learning.

In Tanzania, there are disparities between levels of resources across communities and regions (UNICEF, 2018 and UNICEF, 2020). A survey

conducted by Kaai (2016) shows that 75% of teachers who responded to the survey mentioned challenges such as a lack of teaching and learning materials and a lack of infrastructure (classrooms, teachers' houses, latrines). A significant minority (25%) noted problems such as lack of desks, overcrowded classrooms, lack of electricity, and lack of first aid kits. The shortage of materials is also highlighted by Nyambo (2017), who states that textbooks and other teaching materials were not in place for the implementation of the new curriculum.

In Zimbabwe, there is a distinction between financial and material resources required to operate schools and those specific to instructional leadership. There are funding constraints, and the budgets are small. For small schools, the focus is on libraries and laboratories, while issues of pedagogy are something else (Nyambo 2017).

In Nigeria, contemporary methods are applied only in a limited way to teaching and learning. The Nigerian Policy on Education does not stipulate how resources such as time, money, materials, and expertise should be distributed, although it encourages hiring qualified teachers (Edna, 2019). It is suggested that a way forward would be through organising workshops for instructors on the use of innovative instructional methods, funding of teaching by the government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), integration of technological media into curriculum content, and attitudinal changes of teachers towards innovation and in-service training.

Overall, the literature and data indicate significant challenges in respect of financial, human and material resources in the six African countries studied, which is consistent with previous research by Bush and Oduro (2006). It seems there is a false or unrealistic assumption that working towards high-quality teaching and learning should be a universal requirement. However, some countries that are still struggling with funding and resources have adopted the policies for high-quality provision of education and school leadership.

Challenges experienced in the African context by school leaders are highly complex, making it even more important for school leaders to be prepared for their roles so that they have the skills to address the problems in context. As earlier discussed, the main challenges facing school leaders include the following:

- Shrinking School Budgets: Limited funding for education can result in inadequate resources for schools.
- Inadequate School Infrastructure: Many schools lack proper facilities, such as classrooms, libraries, and laboratories.
- Stringent Accountability Demands: School leaders are often held accountable for student performance, which can be challenging if resources are scarce.
- Heavy Workloads: Managing administrative tasks, teacher support, and other responsibilities can lead to heavy workloads and burnout.
- Teacher Shortages: In some regions, there may be a shortage of qualified teachers, putting additional strain on school leaders.

These challenges hinder the ability of school leaders to provide quality education and equal opportunities for all students. Addressing these issues often requires a combination of policy changes, resource allocation, and capacity building.

## **7. Effective school leadership in the context of Africa**

Effective school leadership plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of education anywhere in the world. Strong school leaders can create a positive learning environment, set high academic standards, and ensure that teachers are well-equipped to deliver quality instruction. To do this, school leaders would need support from the education system and teacher unions or any such bodies to protect and further their interests by negotiating over working conditions and any matters affecting school leaders. Several authors outline some of the responsibilities for school leaders, as highlighted below.

**Resource Allocation:** School leaders are responsible for managing resources within their schools. In many African countries, where resources can be limited, effective leadership is essential for allocating resources efficiently to meet the needs of students and staff.

**Teacher Development:** School leaders are often responsible for teacher professional development. They can support and mentor teachers, helping them improve their teaching skills, which ultimately benefits students.

**Community Engagement:** School leaders can facilitate community



engagement and involvement in education. This is particularly important in African contexts where community support can have a significant impact on school success.

**Achieving Educational Goals:** School leadership is critical for achieving national and international educational goals, such as improving literacy rates, increasing access to education, and reducing dropout rates.

**Innovation and Adaptation:** Effective leaders can promote innovative teaching methods and adapt the curriculum to local contexts and needs. This is especially important in diverse African regions with various cultural and socioeconomic factors.

**Accountability:** School leaders are responsible for ensuring that schools meet educational standards and objectives. They play a key role in accountability mechanisms and ensuring that schools are performing as expected.

**Sustainability:** Sustainable improvements in education often hinge on strong leadership. Effective leaders can establish systems and practices that continue to benefit schools and students over the long term.

Whilst the “executive” components implicit in any leadership function must be in place in organizations enjoying wide autonomy, this does not necessarily translate into managerialism. It is indeed the larger school context that can make an autonomous school perform in a managerial way or simply, with broader margins of action, that can facilitate good use of teachers' collective agency, as in some Scandinavian countries. To produce even modest change, let alone radical transformation, we must overcome the widely held misconception that leadership has to do with managerial tasks, competition, and effectiveness from a highly individualistic stance. Whilst this can be the case in certain country contexts and with disciplinary approaches, educational leadership does not simply overlap with managerialism as a technical ability. It is essentially about vision and collaboration around our global commons, as well as locally defined school goals.

Day et. al (2013) explore effective school leadership practices in African contexts and provide insights into improving educational outcomes. Suggestions include combinations and accumulations of values-led and

context-sensitive strategies that best illustrate the dynamic and complex nature of schools in the 21st century. This includes establishing a proactive, collaborative school mindset, supporting and enhancing staff, as well as student motivation, engagement and well-being, and the collective commitment needed to foster improvement and promote and sustain success for schools and classrooms which serve a range of advantaged and disadvantaged communities. Njoroge, P. W., & Obiakor, F. E. (2017) go beyond the classroom and analyse educational leadership in Africa from various perspectives, including cultural, social, and political dimensions. Their argument is as in the Conceptual Framework in this research shows that cultural, social, and political dimensions affect and influence what happens in schools.

### **Addressing the aims and objectives of the study**

The topics addressed in this study are discussed in the following sections.

### **National education policies that address or prioritise school leadership in Africa**

Several national education policies from African countries prioritize school leadership as outlined below. Some of these are also included in the responses received in the study:

**Zimbabwe:** Education Amendment Act, 2020: This act includes provisions related to school leadership and governance, emphasizing the roles and responsibilities of school heads and school development committees.

**Malawi:** National Education Sector Plan (2018-2023): Malawi's education sector plan focuses on improving the quality of education and includes strategies for strengthening school leadership and management.

**Senegal:** Plan d'Action Prioritaire (PAP) 2016-2018: Senegal's education plan prioritizes school leadership and management to improve the quality of education in the country.

**Mauritius:** National Education Framework (2017): This framework outlines Mauritius' vision for education and includes provisions for enhancing school leadership and management.

**Cameroon:** Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998 on the Orientation of Education in

**Cameroon:** This law provides guidelines for education in Cameroon and addresses the role of school leaders in the education system.

**Morocco:** Strategic Vision for the Reform of the Education and Training System (2015-2030): Morocco's education reform plan includes a focus on enhancing school leadership and management.

**Tunisia:** Education Sector Strategy 2016-2025: Tunisia's education sector strategy highlights the importance of improving school leadership and governance to enhance the quality of education.

**Côte d'Ivoire:** Strategic Plan for the Development of Education and Training (2016-2025): This plan includes strategies for strengthening school leadership and management in Côte d'Ivoire's education system.

**Madagascar:** Education Sector Plan (2018-2022): Madagascar's education sector plan includes initiatives aimed at improving school leadership and management for better educational outcomes.

**Zambia:** Education and Skills Sector Plan (2016-2030): Zambia's education sector plan prioritizes the improvement of school leadership and management to enhance the quality of education.

**Sierra Leone:** Education Act, 2004 (Revised in 2010): The Education Act of Sierra Leone includes provisions for the roles and responsibilities of school leaders and management committees.

National education policies often provide guidelines and support for school leaders in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. However, the extent and specificity of these guidelines can vary widely from one country to another. While education policies typically provide a framework for school leadership, the effectiveness of these policies depends on their implementation at the regional and local levels. In some cases, schools and school leaders may need additional guidance and support beyond what is outlined in national policies. Therefore, policymakers, educational authorities, and school leaders need to work collaboratively to ensure that policies are effectively translated into practice to improve the quality of education.

### **Criteria and qualifications required for the appointment of school leaders**

The criteria and qualifications required for the appointment of school leaders vary from one educational system to another and may depend on the specific role and level of leadership. However, some common criteria and qualifications that are often considered in the appointment of school leaders include the following:

**Teaching Experience:** Most school leadership positions require candidates to have a significant amount of teaching experience. This experience helps leaders understand the challenges and needs of both students and teachers.

**Educational Qualifications:** School leaders typically need to have a relevant educational background, often holding a bachelor's or master's degree in education or a related field. Some leadership positions may require additional certifications or advanced degrees.

**Leadership Training:** Many educational systems provide leadership training programs or courses for teachers aspiring to become school leaders. Completing such programs can be a valuable qualification.

**Professional Development:** School leaders are often expected to engage in ongoing professional development to stay current with educational trends, policies, and best practices.

**Administrative Skills:** School leaders need strong administrative and organizational skills to manage school operations effectively. This includes skills in budgeting, resource management, and scheduling.

**Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** Effective school leaders must be able to communicate clearly and collaborate with various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and community members.

**Vision and Leadership Philosophy:** School leaders need to articulate their vision for the school and their leadership philosophy, demonstrating their ability to lead and inspire others.

Knowledge of Education Policies: Understanding local, regional, and national education policies and regulations is crucial for school leaders to ensure compliance and make informed decisions.

**Problem-Solving Abilities:** School leaders often face complex challenges and must demonstrate problem-solving and decision-making skills.

**Management Experience:** In higher-level leadership roles, such as principals or headmasters, candidates may be expected to have prior management or leadership experience.

**References and Recommendations:** To receive an appointment as a school leader, a candidate may need to provide references or letters of recommendation from colleagues, supervisors, or mentors who can speak to their leadership potential.

**Interview and Assessment:** In some countries, candidates for school leadership positions go through an interview and assessment process to evaluate their qualifications, skills, and fit for the role.

It is important to note that the specific qualifications and criteria can vary significantly depending on the country, educational system, and the level of leadership (e.g., principal, vice-principal, department head). Additionally, schools may have their requirements and expectations for leadership roles, as shown in this study on school leadership.

Emphasis should be on inspiring and motivating others, building relationships, fostering collaboration, and promoting growth and development within the school community. The discussion delves into the principles and practices of transformational leadership in various educational contexts. School leaders strive to inspire, motivate, and cultivate a positive and collaborative school environment.

### **Gender equity in the appointment of school leaders**

Gender equity in the appointment of school leaders is an important aspect for promoting diversity, inclusivity, and equal opportunities in the field of education. Whether gender equity is considered in the appointment of school leaders can vary widely depending on the country, region, educational institution, and the specific policies and practices in place.

Below are some key points to consider regarding gender equity in the appointment of school leaders:

**Legal and Policy Frameworks:** Many countries have legal frameworks and educational policies that promote gender equity in education and leadership positions. These policies aim to ensure that both men and women have equal access to leadership roles in schools and educational institutions.

**Affirmative Action and Quotas:** Some countries have implemented affirmative action policies or gender quotas to increase the representation of women in leadership positions, including school principalship. These measures are designed to address historical gender imbalances.

**Selection Processes:** In the appointment and selection processes for school leaders, gender equity may be a consideration. Educational authorities may actively seek to include a diverse pool of candidates, including women, in the candidate pool.

**Professional Development:** Educational institutions and organizations often offer professional development and leadership training programs that encourage women to pursue leadership roles in education and provide them with the necessary skills and support.

**Awareness and Advocacy:** Gender equity advocates, educational associations, and women's organizations may raise awareness about the importance of gender equity in educational leadership and advocate for change.

**Challenges and Barriers:** Despite progress, there can still be challenges and barriers that hinder women's advancement into leadership roles in education. These can include societal expectations, stereotypes, and work-life balance issues.

**Research and Data:** Research on gender equity in educational leadership can provide valuable insights into the current situation, challenges, and potential solutions. Such research can inform policy and practice.

**Inclusive Leadership Styles:** Promoting gender equity in leadership can also be about fostering more inclusive leadership styles that value diverse perspectives and approaches.

It is important to note that while progress has been made in many places, gender equity in educational leadership is an ongoing effort. The extent to which gender equity is considered in the appointment of school leaders can vary, and it may require continued advocacy, awareness, and policy implementation to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities to lead in educational settings.

Additionally, the specific practices and policies related to gender equity in educational leadership can vary widely by country and region, so it's essential to consider the local context when discussing this issue.

### **Policies promoting gender equity in school leadership**

There are specific policies, initiatives, and practices in place in many countries and educational institutions around the world that are designed to promote gender equity in school leadership. These efforts aim to address historical gender imbalances and create equal opportunities for both men and women to assume leadership roles in education. Here are some examples:

**Affirmative Action and Gender Quotas:** Some countries have implemented affirmative action policies and gender quotas in educational leadership positions. These policies set targets or quotas for the representation of women in leadership roles, including school principalship. For example, Rwanda has achieved gender parity in educational leadership through a quota system.

**Leadership Training and Mentorship Programs:** Many educational institutions and organizations offer leadership training and mentorship programs specifically designed to support women in pursuing leadership roles in education. These programs provide skills development, networking opportunities, and guidance for aspiring female leaders.

**Gender-Responsive Policies:** Educational policies and guidelines may incorporate gender-responsive approaches, ensuring that they consider the unique needs and experiences of both male and female leaders. These policies aim to create a more inclusive and equitable leadership environment.

**Gender-Neutral Job Descriptions:** To reduce gender bias in hiring and promotion processes, some educational institutions have adopted gender-neutral job descriptions and qualifications. This helps eliminate gender-related barriers to leadership positions.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Some countries and institutions monitor and report on gender disparities in educational leadership positions. Regular reporting and data collection help identify areas where gender equity may be lacking and inform policy decisions.

**Public Awareness Campaigns:** Educational ministries and organizations may launch public awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of gender equity in school leadership and challenge stereotypes and biases related to leadership roles.

**Research and Data Collection:** Research on gender equity in educational leadership is crucial. Studies and data collection efforts help identify barriers and best practices and inform policy recommendations.

**Gender-Responsive Leadership Styles:** Promoting leadership styles that are inclusive and gender-responsive can create a more supportive environment for female leaders. These styles value diverse perspectives and experiences.

**Women's Leadership Networks:** Women's leadership networks and professional associations in education provide a platform for female leaders to connect, share experiences, and advocate for gender equity in leadership positions.

**Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance Policies:** Policies that support work-life balance, such as parental leave and flexible working arrangements, can make it easier for both men and women to balance leadership roles with family responsibilities.

These policies, initiatives, and practices vary by country and region, and their effectiveness may also differ based on local contexts and cultural norms. Gender equity in educational leadership remains an ongoing effort, and continued advocacy, awareness, and policy implementation are essential to further promote equality in school leadership positions.



The study also surveys how school leaders foster an inclusive school culture and ensure equity and equal educational opportunities for all.

How school leaders foster a positive and inclusive school culture

Fostering a positive and inclusive school culture that supports diversity, inclusivity, and equal opportunities for all students is a critical responsibility of school leaders. To do this, school leaders need to establish a clear vision and values; articulate a clear and inclusive vision for the school that emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusivity. They should also define core values that reflect respect, empathy, and equity. School leaders should aim to model inclusive behaviour, demonstrating respect for all individuals regardless of their background, abilities, or characteristics.

Creating inclusive policies will help develop and implement policies that promote diversity and inclusivity. Any such policies should address issues such as non-discrimination, harassment prevention, and accommodation for students with special needs. In addition, there should be ongoing professional development for staff on topics related to diversity, cultural competence, and inclusive teaching practices to ensure that educators have the skills to create inclusive classrooms. School leaders should actively seek diversity when hiring teachers and staff. A diverse staff can serve as role models and bring varied perspectives to the school community. It is important to encourage professional learning communities within the school where educators can share best practices for inclusive teaching and problem-solve together.

The curriculum should reflect a diverse range of perspectives, cultures, and experiences; include literature, history, and content that represents different voices and backgrounds. Students should also be encouraged to create an inclusive school culture. Encourage student clubs and organizations that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. Outside the education establishments, school leaders should build strong partnerships with parents and the local community, encourage involvement from all stakeholders, and seek their input on creating an inclusive environment.

The creation of a physically and emotionally safe and welcoming school environment where students feel respected and valued will promote inclusivity. School leaders need to address issues of bullying and

discrimination promptly and ensure that students who require support services, including those with disabilities or special needs, have equal access to necessary resources and accommodations.

Other strategies that promote inclusivity include a celebration of cultural events, resolving conflicts, conducting awareness campaigns, policy advocacy, and regular communication with the school community. By implementing these strategies, school leaders can help create an environment where all students feel valued, respected, and empowered to succeed, regardless of their background or identity. This inclusive culture contributes to the overall quality of education and prepares students for a diverse and interconnected world.

### **Working conditions of school leaders**

**Workload:** Many school leaders acknowledge the significant workload and stress associated with their roles. They often express the need to balance administrative tasks with instructional leadership and community engagement. School leaders may discuss the importance of time management and prioritization to handle their extensive responsibilities effectively.

Job security for school leaders can vary based on the specific context and educational system. Some express concerns about the challenges associated with performance evaluations and accountability measures. Contractual terms and employment conditions can influence school leaders' perceptions of job security.

**Support and Resources:** School leaders may highlight the importance of having access to adequate resources, including financial support and staffing, to effectively manage their schools. They may express the need for professional development opportunities and ongoing training to stay updated on educational trends and leadership practices.

**Challenges and Pressures:** School leaders often discuss the challenges they face, such as managing tight budgets, addressing accountability measures, and making difficult decisions that affect students and staff. They may express the importance of resilience and problem-solving skills in navigating these challenges.

**Community Relations:** Building positive relationships with parents, community members, and local organizations is frequently cited as essential for successful school leadership. School leaders may discuss their efforts to engage with the community and address concerns effectively.

**Advocacy and Policy Implementation:** Some school leaders engage in advocacy efforts to secure additional resources or influence policy decisions that benefit their schools and students. They may discuss their experiences with policy implementation and its impact on their schools. Leadership and Team Building:

School leaders often emphasize the importance of building strong leadership teams within their schools to share responsibilities and promote a collaborative decision-making culture.

They may discuss their approaches to mentoring and coaching staff for professional growth.

**Support Networks:** School leaders may mention the value of professional organizations and networks that provide networking opportunities, sharing best practices, and advocating for the profession. But will they have the time to do all this?

### **How school leaders exercise their trade union rights**

The extent to which school leaders can exercise their trade union rights effectively varies significantly depending on the country, region, and specific context. In some places, school leaders, like other education professionals, may have the ability to join and participate in trade unions, while in others, the legal framework or organizational policies may restrict their union activities. Here are a few books that discuss issues related to trade union rights and education professionals, which may provide insights into the topic.

The ability of school leaders to exercise their trade union rights effectively and freely in Africa can vary depending on the specific country, education system, and legal framework. Trade union rights and their enforcement can differ significantly across African nations. Below are a couple of books that provide insights into trade union rights and labour conditions in Africa. While they may not specifically focus on school leaders, they discuss broader labour-related issues in the African context:

Fuller, L. (2012) examines labour issues in rural Cuba and argues that while not specific to Africa, labour conditions and trade union rights in a developing country are quite different, and most people who want to be involved actively sometimes cannot for various reasons. Fuller provides comparative perspectives for understanding labour conditions in African nations. Belser et.al (2013) focus on labour relations and workers' rights in Africa and explore the role of international labour organizations in promoting labour rights on the continent. While not specific to school leaders, the book offers some insights into labour conditions in Africa.

It is important to note that the extent to which school leaders, as well as other education professionals, can exercise trade union rights varies widely within Africa. Labour rights, including those of school leaders, are influenced by national laws, government policies, and local labour conditions. Understanding trade union rights in Africa involves recognizing the diverse labour landscapes and legal frameworks that exist across the continent.

In this study, collective bargaining is discussed. This is a fundamental trade union right. It involves negotiations between trade unions and employers or government bodies to determine terms and conditions of employment, such as wages, working hours, and workplace safety. There is another crucial trade union right. Workers, including school leaders if they are part of a union, have the right to engage in strikes or other labour actions to protest unfavourable working conditions or negotiate better terms. Trade unions often play a role in advocating for workers' rights and protections. This includes ensuring fair wages, safe working conditions, and social benefits for employees. However, government regulations can influence the functioning of trade unions. Some governments may impose restrictions on union activities, while others may support and protect the rights of trade unions.

Many African countries are signatories to international labour standards and conventions, such as those established by the International Labour Organization (ILO). These standards provide a framework for labour rights and protections. Trade unions and teacher unions in Africa may face various challenges, including government restrictions, lack of resources, and issues related to informal labour markets. It's essential to consider these challenges when assessing the effectiveness of trade union rights.

### **Significant challenges facing school leaders in Africa**

School leaders in Africa face a range of significant challenges and issues that can vary by country and region. These challenges affect the effective management and leadership of educational institutions.

Resource constraints and lack of funding are major constraints. Many schools in Africa struggle with inadequate funding, leading to resource shortages for materials, infrastructure, and staff. There is a shortage of qualified teachers, especially in remote or underserved areas, which places additional pressure on school leaders to manage teaching staff effectively. Some Educational establishments lack proper infrastructure, including classrooms, libraries, and sanitation facilities, affecting the learning environment. School leaders often face difficulties in maintaining existing infrastructure due to limited budgets.

Other constraints are educational inequality, including disparities in access to quality education between urban and rural areas, which remains a significant challenge. Gender disparities in enrolment, retention, and academic achievement persist in many regions. Providing ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers can be challenging, affecting instructional quality. School leaders may lack resources for mentoring and supporting teachers, especially those in their early careers. Ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to local contexts and responsive to changing needs is an ongoing challenge. Promoting effective and student-centred pedagogical approaches can be demanding. School leaders often struggle to engage parents and communities in the educational process, which is crucial for student success. This is a common challenge, especially in remote and rural areas in Africa. Understanding and respecting local cultural norms and practices while promoting education can be complex.

With schools, motivating and retaining teachers, particularly in remote or disadvantaged areas, is a persistent challenge. Addressing issues related to working conditions, including salaries and professional recognition, is essential for teacher retention, but still a huge challenge for school leaders, especially in Africa. Implementing inclusive education policies to accommodate diverse learning needs, including students with disabilities, is a complex task. Aligning national education policies with local needs and priorities at the school level

can be difficult. Ensuring effective policy implementation and monitoring student outcomes requires adequate systems and capacity, and most of this is lacking in most African countries.

### **COVID-19 and its effect on school leaders**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on school leaders around the world, including in Africa. School leaders faced unprecedented challenges and had to adapt rapidly to navigate the crisis. Here are some ways in which COVID-19 has affected school leaders.

School leaders had to respond quickly to the pandemic, making decisions related to school closures, remote learning, and safety protocols. This required effective crisis management skills. School leaders were tasked with facilitating the transition to remote and online learning, ensuring that students and teachers had access to necessary technology and resources. Implementing and enforcing health and safety protocols became a top priority, including mask mandates, social distancing measures, and sanitization procedures.

**Communication:** Effective communication with students, parents, teachers, and the broader school community was essential to provide updates, address concerns, and maintain trust.

**Teacher and Staff Support:** School leaders had to support and guide teachers and staff in adapting to new teaching methods and technologies, often requiring professional development. Addressing the social and emotional well-being of students who faced disruptions in their education and routines became a significant concern. Ensuring equitable access to education and resources for all students, including those without internet access or devices, was a challenge.

Managing school budgets during economic uncertainties and addressing potential funding cuts became a pressing issue. School leaders had to navigate changing government policies and guidelines related to education and public health, often requiring rapid adjustments. Planning for the long-term impact of the pandemic on education, including potential learning gaps and recovery strategies, became a strategic focus. Engaging with parents, community members, and local authorities to build support for pandemic-related

decisions was crucial. Maintaining the morale and well-being of teachers and staff members, who faced increased stress and workload, was a leadership challenge.

**Professional Development:** School leaders sought professional development opportunities to enhance their skills in crisis management, technology integration, and remote leadership. Encouraging innovation in teaching and learning methods to adapt to the changing educational landscape became a priority. School leaders demonstrated resilience and adaptability in the face of uncertainty and a rapidly evolving situation.

It is important to note that the impact of COVID-19 on school leaders varied by region, educational system, and the severity of the pandemic in different areas. While the challenges were significant, many school leaders showed remarkable leadership and dedication in supporting their school communities during this unprecedented crisis.

Suggestions of the study conducted by Mckinsey and Company in 2022 revealed that students were behind in most subjects because of COVID-19. The following suggestions were offered:

### **1. Safely reopen schools for in-person learning**

The majority of school districts across the United States are planning to offer traditional five-day-a-week in-person instruction employing COVID-19 mitigation strategies such as staff and student vaccination drives, ongoing COVID-19 testing, mask mandates, and infrastructure updates. The evidence suggests that schools can reopen buildings safely with the right protocols in place, but health preparedness will likely remain critical as buildings reopen. Indeed, by the end of the school year, a significant subset of parents remain concerned about safety in schools, with nearly a third still very worried about the threat of COVID-19 to their child's health. Parents also want districts to continue to invest in safety— 39 percent say schools should invest in COVID-19 health and safety measures this fall.

### **2. Re-engage and re-enrol students in effective learning environments**

Opening buildings safely is hard enough, but encouraging students to show up could be even more challenging. Some students will have dropped out of

formal schooling entirely, and those who remain in school may be reluctant to return to physical classrooms. While remote learning may have worked well for some students, our data suggest that it failed many. In addition to understanding parent needs, districts should reach out to families and build confidence not just in their schools' safety precautions but also in their learning environment and broader role in the community.

### **3. Support students in recovering unfinished learning and in broader needs**

It was noted that even if students were to re-enrol in effective learning environments, many would be several months behind academically and may struggle to reintegrate into a traditional learning environment. The research suggests that parents underestimated the unfinished learning caused by the pandemic. Districts, therefore, should consider not only offering effective evidence-based programs, such as high-dosage tutoring and vacation academies, but also ensuring that these programs are attractive to students.

### **4. Recommit and reimagine our education systems for the long term**

Opportunity gaps have existed in the school systems for a long time. A potential starting point could be redoubling efforts to provide engaging, high-quality grade-level curriculum and instruction delivered by diverse and effective educators in every classroom, supported by effective assessments to inform instruction and support; redeploing staff and leveraging community-based partnerships to enable these smaller-group activities with trusted adults who mirror the demographics of the students.



## CHAPTER 3

### FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

#### **A recap of the aims of the study**

The study aimed to understand the extent to which education or other policies address school leadership; whether school leadership is prioritised; appointment criteria processes; effectiveness and inclusion efforts of school leaders; major challenges faced; participation in union activities, and the impact of COVID-19. Data was gathered through a survey of 44 teacher unions augmented by some in-depth interviews.

The study focused on the following main themes regarding school leadership, which are discussed under various headings in the next few sections. Each objective has a rationale for the questions posed to the respondents at the country level. These questions aimed to serve as a starting point for gathering information and insights on challenges confronting and related to school leaders in Africa.

The survey consisted of 20 questions which included a mix of Binary – 'Yes-No', open-ended, short answer, and Likert scale responses. The survey was hosted on Google, and respondents were required to complete questions on Google Forms. The analysis of responses suggests that the questions were understood and elicited the desired information.

#### **The sections of the survey included were:**

1. Background information
2. National education demographic context
3. Familiarisation of education policies on school Leadership
4. Prioritisation of school leadership
5. Guidelines and support for school leaders
6. Criteria for and specific qualifications required for school leaders.
7. Gender equity and appointment of school leaders

#### **Methodology of the study**

This section returns to the research questions that the study sought to investigate. The discussion presented here outlines appropriate ways of

answering the aims and research questions, justifying a quantitative approach as the core approach to the study. Firstly, the research design and data gathering procedures are outlined. Secondly, a short account of how the research developed from the initial questions about school leadership, to questions specifically on teacher unions, school leaders' challenges, gender equity, and inclusiveness in the study.

There are a few issues raised at the beginning of the study. Firstly, there are various approaches and frameworks to studying school leadership. Secondly, school leadership experiences, practices, and challenges vary across the world, in various continents and sometimes within countries and regions. Thirdly, there is a view that African countries might have similar experiences of school leadership, the transformative role of school leadership, and how these interact with teacher unions. There are various unique experiences between countries and within countries that make African countries an interesting study.

### **Respondents from African countries**

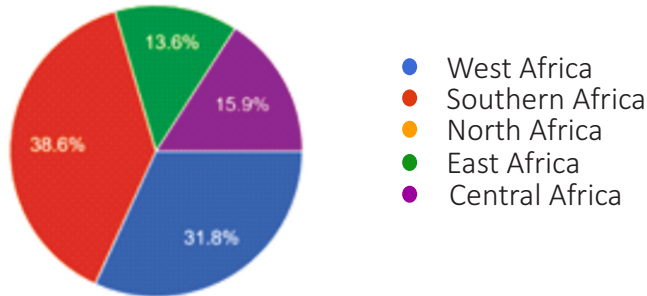
A survey questionnaire was sent to all EI countries in Africa. The questionnaire (in Appendices 1, 2, and 3) received 44 responses from various Teacher Unions, and in total, 17 countries took part in the study as listed below:

1. Bénin
2. Burkina Faso
3. Burundi
4. Cameroon
5. Chad
6. Côte d'Ivoire
7. Malawi
8. Mauritius
9. Niger
10. Rwanda
11. Senegal
12. South Africa (North West)
13. The Gambia

14. Togo
15. Uganda
16. Zambia
17. Zanzibar

The study respondents represent various countries across regions in Africa. Participation was from the following regions:

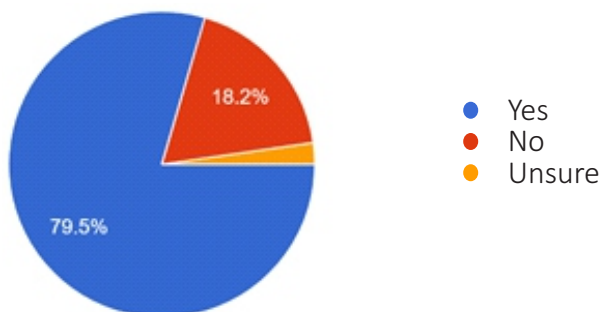
- West Africa: 50% of respondents
- East Africa: 23% of respondents
- Southern Africa: 16% of respondents
- Central Africa: 11% of respondents



**Figure 2: Regions in Africa that took part in the Survey**

Qualitative responses were received through open-ended questions from all the 17 countries. Additionally, responses were gathered through in-depth interviews with union leaders in The Gambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. The study encapsulates perspectives from teachers' unions and education stakeholders spanning Western, Eastern, Southern, and Central African countries. The breadth helps characterize common leadership issues faced, as well as some region-specific dynamics voiced across the continent.

While most countries (79%) confirmed that they organise school leaders, a small number (18%) reported that they do not organise school leaders, and about 2% were unsure.



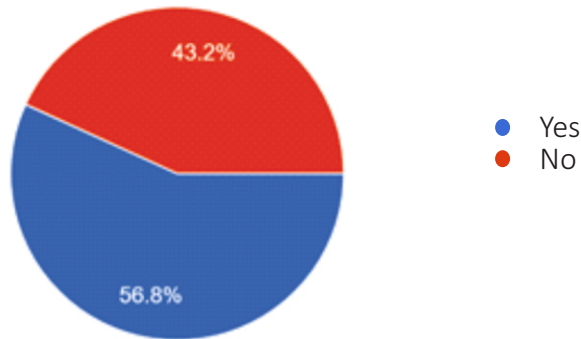
**Figure 3: Does your union organise school leaders?**

The data gathered from all other questions from the respondents provides a starting point for analysing and understanding school leadership in Africa. The study revealed some interesting findings regarding:

1. The extent to which school leadership is prioritised and addressed in regional and national education and teacher policies;
2. The knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa regarding national policies, criteria for appointment, professional training, and gender equity in appointment to leadership positions;
3. Evidence on how school leaders play a pivotal role in the provision of quality education, gender equity, and equal educational opportunities for all children and students;
4. Insight into the working conditions and trade union rights of school leaders;
5. Challenges confronting school leaders across the African Region, including shrinking school budgets, inadequate school infrastructure and resources, stringent accountability demands, and heavy workloads;
6. COVID-19 and its impact on schools, teachers, and school leaders; and,
7. Suggestions and recommendations.

**The responses from the survey are discussed under the following:**

- 1. Is school leadership prioritised and addressed in regional, national education, and teacher policies?**



**Figure 4: Familiarity with education policies that address school leadership**

Most respondents (over 56%) indicate familiarity with existing national education policies that directly address school leadership priorities in their countries. Common policy themes concentrate on delineating formal leadership qualifications, required pieces of training, competency models, and general role/responsibility guidance. However, only a moderate percentage (43%) felt such policies offer sufficiently clear leadership directives, suggesting significant ambiguity persists around policy translation into practical expectations and development supports.

The leadership qualification and appointment policies exhibit consistency in prioritizing credentials, showing years of instructional experience, demonstration of effective past administrative roles, and completion of higher education leadership certificates or degrees. Several supplements, such as education-focused prerequisites with additional competency-based assessments, gauge aspirational leaders' embodiment of more well-rounded leadership skills.

For some countries, the education policies display some consistency but also variations across contexts. Common themes that emerge include the establishment of leadership qualifications, training, and defining competency models. Some of the responses cited a vision or mission focused on directives more prominently than implementation.

In The Gambia, for example, the School Management Committee (SMC) policy deals with everything to do with the management of schools. However, very little is done to monitor the implementation or execution of such a policy. All senior secondary schools in The Gambia have school boards, and all the boards have policies that govern the schools. The guiding principles are there to offer guidelines for the schools to operate effectively. The Ministry of Education has various policies to deal with schools and communities, community leaders, School Councillors who live in the community, Mothers' Club members, Anti Sexual harassment policy, Library Policy, and Staff Conduct Policy. All the policies are there to support school leaders in the management of schools, and these are useful because school leaders rely on the policies to help in the effective and efficient management of schools.

South Africa cited the following policies: Regulations on the South African Schools Act; Policy on the South African standard for principalship; Education Labour Relations Council (policy Handbook for educators) & Constitution of the Education Labour Relations Council; Re-Admission Policy and Education for All Policy, and many more. Responding to the prioritisation of leadership question, the South African union leaders argued that “much of the leadership in school leaders comes from where they were – university plus their experience.” Experience is cardinal to the success of a school leader, yet not enough people are getting the relevant experience.

There is no shortage of policies, but the policies are not used widely enough and do not draw deeply enough for a broad scope of leadership to implement what is in the policies. The Governance Policy, for example, is a very important policy for governing schools, and the school leaders are part of the governing body. School Management teams cover a vast range of roles and responsibilities, starting with the headteacher to Heads of Department, so the policies they have must be in full use and implemented in the schools. Examples of policies within schools include Facilities Management Policies, which are observed very well, as school leaders want to maintain all their facilities. The Mental Health Policy deals with educating and helping students with mental health challenges. Like in The Gambia, one union leader also noted that *“unfortunately, the policies are just on paper but not implemented fully.”*

Zambia reported that the school leaders undergo training to improve their leadership. A few countries referred to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) & Quality Management System (QMS) policies, which are given to ensure school leaders are up to the required leadership level. The Zambia National Union of Teachers works well with the Education Labour Relations Council. Some of the policies cited include:

- The Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA)
- The National Education Policy in Zambia of 1996, "Educating Our Future"
- The National Teachers' Policy
- Security Industry Authority policy, which is about Managing Public Money and gives other Government-wide Corporate Guidance and Instructions

Kenya offers training to school leaders at the Kenya Education Management Institute, where leaders receive training and short courses to update their leadership skills. Kenya cited the following policies:

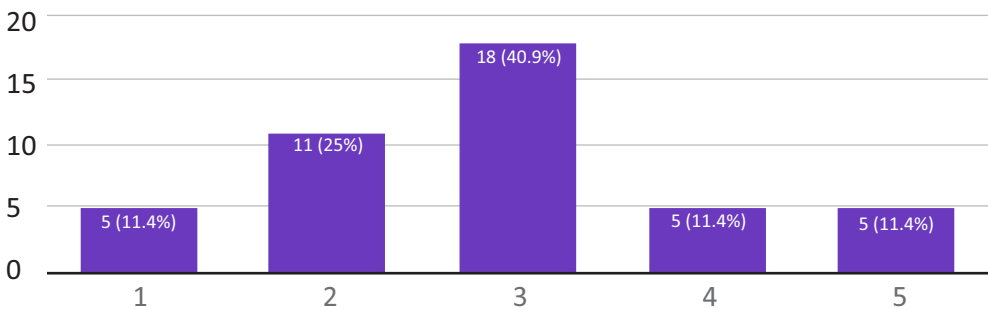
- Policies on school leadership, policies by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) (2012), <https://www.tsc.go.ke/index.php/downloads-b/file/282-the-teachers-service-commission-act-2012>
- Code of Regulations for teachers(2015), which was under review and updated in 2019

Expectations often scale up commensurate with grade levels supervised, where requirements are permitted for school leaders in primary schools. The most cited policies focused on establishing leadership qualifications, required training, competency models, and guiding roles and responsibilities.

<sup>6</sup><http://155.0.32.9:8080/jspui/bitstream/123456789/20/1/Educating%20Our%20Future%20-%20National%20Policy%20on%20Education.pdf>

There was reference to policies like sexual harassment prevention, staff conduct, anti-corruption requirements (Zimbabwe), gender representation initiatives (The Gambia), and decentralized school governance participation (South Africa). In The Gambia, for instance, primary schools accept leaders with basic teaching certificates depending on duration of in-system experience, but expect diploma or bachelor's degree credentials for upper basic and senior secondary heads, respectively. South Africa mandates governance training for leadership participation in collaborative school management bodies. And Zimbabwe has concentrated efforts on converting some leadership bachelor's degree options into master level and policymaker-oriented offerings to push advanced professional development.

Some respondents emphasize that policies are more geared toward espousing inspirational vision/mission statements or decentralizing oversight to school community stakeholders like boards and parent groups. But concrete focuses on recruitment, working conditions, and effectiveness support are lacking in most policies. In-depth feedback spotlights adjacent national policies shaping leadership execution around transparency (Zimbabwe), gender equity (The Gambia), and decentralized governance participation (South Africa). The respondents are aware and perceive that there is a priority given to school leadership in regional and national education and teacher policies. Most respondents are quite familiar with regional or national education policies that specifically address or prioritize school leadership.

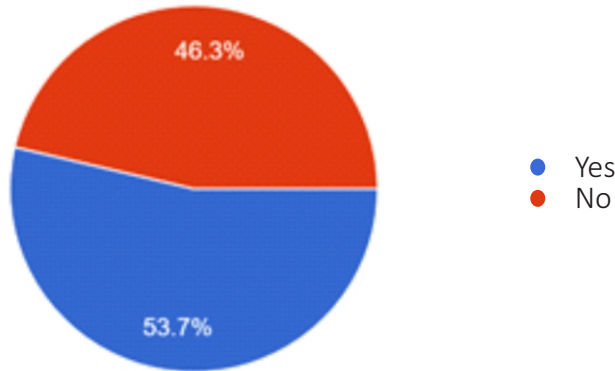


**Figure 5: Emphasis placed on school leadership in education policies**

<sup>7</sup><https://www.tsc.go.ke/index.php/downloads-b/file/29-code-of-regulations-for-teachers-2015>



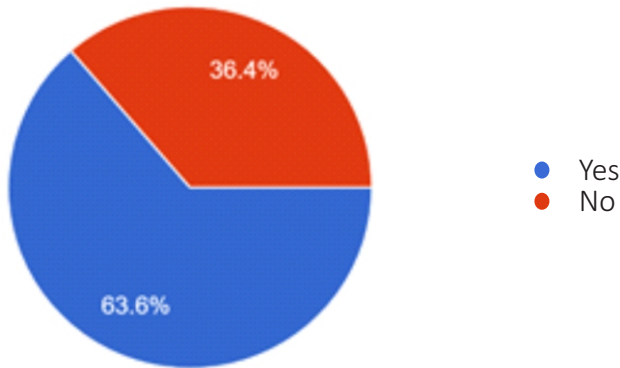
On a scale of 1 to 5, respondents rated the extent of leadership prominence across national policies. The respondents rated it at a 3.3 on average. This moderate score, with over 60% assigning a 3-4 rating, affirms room for more visible prioritization. Meanwhile, only 22% gave higher ratings of 4 or 5 on leadership presence. This is underscoring policy enhancement opportunities to better emphasize leadership development and system-wide support.



**Figure 6: Alignment of education policies to support school leadership**

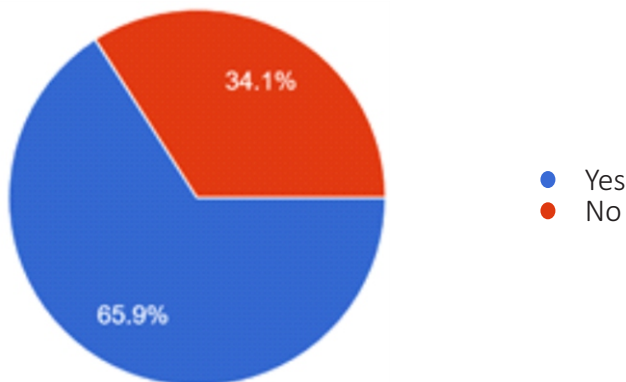
Respondents were also asked whether national education policies provide clear guidelines and support for school leaders to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. In alignment with the moderate leadership priority rating, two-thirds of the participants expressed that current national policies effectively define expected roles and responsibilities within educational contexts. However, the remaining one-third of respondents perceived a notable lack of clarity regarding the implementation of leadership activities in schools. This dichotomy highlights a persistent gap between theoretical policy formulation and the practical capacity-building required for educational leaders to navigate the intricate and ever-evolving landscape. Notably, this perspective was reinforced during in-depth interviews conducted with union leaders from The Gambia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

## 2. Criteria for Qualifications and Appointments of School Leaders



**Figure 7: Criteria for qualifications and appointment of school leaders**

Sixty-three percent (63%) of the respondents expressed familiarity with published qualification guidelines for school leadership at the national level. Yet 36% remained unaware that such credential policies exist. This result shows an information gap and publication or dissemination defects around policies, if in place, warrant redress. It is also interesting that the same question asked in another way gave similar responses: 65% agreed that there are specific qualifications for the appointment of school leaders, while 34% responded that there were no such qualifications or were unaware of any such policies or qualifications. The question following this was about transparency.



**Figure 8: Specific qualifications for appointment of school leaders**

An additional 75% of respondents (33 out of 44) outline some of the qualifications (in addition to experience) that school leaders require.

**The respondents listed the following as relevant for school leaders:**

- Teaching experience is one of the cardinal requirements and a required professional qualification
- A University Qualification Diploma at least in Education
- Experience at the management level and in the education system
- Advanced Certificate in Education and specifically in School Leadership
- Use Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) determined by the Minister of Education in terms of the Educators' Employment Act, 1998 (the Act) and the Regulations made in terms of the Act (Regulations), including Competency-Based Assessments.
- Qualified up to university level (First Degree level)
- Hold a post-primary and/or secondary education qualification
- Be of good moral character
- One who has not been brought before a disciplinary council
- Be trained within the past 5 years and employed in a high school, and is among college administrators
- The national Education Policy has a job profile in the special statute of civil servants which indicates the required seniority and who is eligible for appointment to a given position
- A diploma in the subject of speciality
- A professional diploma: Certificate of Professional Aptitude (CAP), which has a duration of at least three years (3) and requires good character
- School leaders are recruited from among associate professors
- An experienced teacher, i.e., to acquire knowledge and pedagogical and administrative skills, know how to manage the school (be attentive, punctual, assiduous, work under pressure, be courteous, rigorous in the work)
- Not be an intern and have a seniority of 5 years' experience
- Oversee a class for at least three years, demonstrate interest in socio-economic educational activities
- Be dynamic and have a reputation in his/her socio-professional

environment

- have obtained 60% or higher at the previous pedagogical inspection
- The grade about the area and the teachers of the establishment, the rigour at work, the respect of the rules, and the deontology (nature of duty and obligation) and ethics in terms of school legislation
- At the primary level, must be a certified school teacher
- Degree, seniority, sociability, and hard work
- Be a graduate of higher education for the position of Principal or Director in secondary education; have a Baccalaureate in secondary school 1st cycle or the Primary School Diploma

**The excerpts below illustrate the views of some of the respondents:**

*“The minimum requirements that require a teaching qualification and experience are stipulated, but it's not tied to any rank. You don't have to be a Deputy Principal or Departmental Head to be appointed as principal”.*

*“A Deputy Principal should have at least 5 years of teaching experience, while a principal leading a school should have 7 years of teaching experience”*

*“Career progression guidelines of the Teachers' Service Commission need to be followed. There are guidelines that set out the teachers' career progression from the point of entry up to the exit from the teaching service”.*

Zambia outlined qualification guidelines ranging from university degrees to extended experiential requirements for administrative appointment, along with supplemental competency evaluations. Clear role delineation and policy support for school leaders remained rated just moderately effective, however. Limited funding transparency, resource scarcity creating unsustainable teacher workloads were frequently cited challenges. No specifics were provided on gender equity provisions. And Zambia also noted an ambiguous climate around allowing leadership of union membership currently, with potential for retribution.

One respondent , added that there should be credentials focusing on years of prior teaching experience, some administrative roles, and completion of related higher education leadership degrees or certificates for people to be

appointed as school leaders. In The Gambia, for example, school leaders have various qualifications, and they are not the same. Most of them have a Higher Teachers' certificate. The Primary Teachers Certificate has been in The Gambia system for a long time, and being long in the teaching service can enable one to rise in rank to school leader in a primary school, which is now called Basic School from year 1 to 9 (ages 6 to 15).

School leaders in upper Basic School grades 7 – 9 (students aged 13 to 15) should hold a Diploma or Higher Teachers Certificate. A Diploma is always an advantage. But The Gambia Ministry of Education realised that a Diploma is not met by everyone, so they run school managers programmes for those who do not have a diploma but hold a higher school certificate so they can lead Upper Basic Schools. School Leaders for Senior secondary grades 10-12 (age 16 to 18) should hold a Bachelor's Degree as a requirement. There are very few instances where someone holds a Master's Degree. In Rural areas, most school leaders running senior secondary Schools may hold a Diploma with some experience in teaching.

According to an interviewee from Zimbabwe, one of the basic requirements for school leaders is the Diploma in Teaching. It is a Teaching Certificate, which is the entry requirement for all teachers and is issued by any University. The second requirement is a specialised Bachelor of Arts in Science, English, Technology, or any other specific subject. There is progression in the education system for Certificate, Diploma, bachelor's degree holders, and so on. Previously, a course for school administrators was developed to target school leaders. The universities offered a BA in Administration and Policy Studies, and this has now been escalated to a Master's degree and targeted at school leaders, inspectors, and policy makers like Permanent Secretaries. A school leader can be appointed when they have many years of teaching experience, but a Bachelor's Degree is encouraged as a requirement. Many school leaders running secondary schools hold a BA degree, and very few only a diploma.

Zimbabwe respondents also mentioned that regarding qualifications, the policies detail required teaching certificates, years' experience, and specialized higher education degrees, stipulating school leadership appointment criteria. They also offer qualifying administrators further developmental bachelor's and master's degree options tailored to various oversight tiers. Teacher performance and policy/curriculum reform management are viewed as highly

challenging for heads, along with severe underfunding for salaries, supplies, and infrastructure. While they report no explicit gender representation requirements currently, women do now comprise most teachers, potentially spurring more diverse leadership emergence from pipelines. And no barriers exist restricting administrator union engagement.

A respondent from South Africa explained that four universities in the country offer an advanced certificate in education in the field of leadership management and policy. The course is useful to anyone who aspires to go into management. It is useful that part of the bachelor's degree in education or a honours degree has a module on school management. Most school leaders have an accelerated certificate in education in addition to experience. In addition, school leaders who apply for promotion and with mentoring do well. School leaders learn from one another. In small and remote areas, school leaders get together and share information. They also meet regularly and discuss issues about disciplinary and policy issues. So, mentoring plays a huge part in developing good leaders. There is a labour relationship council to deal with and implement all labour laws.

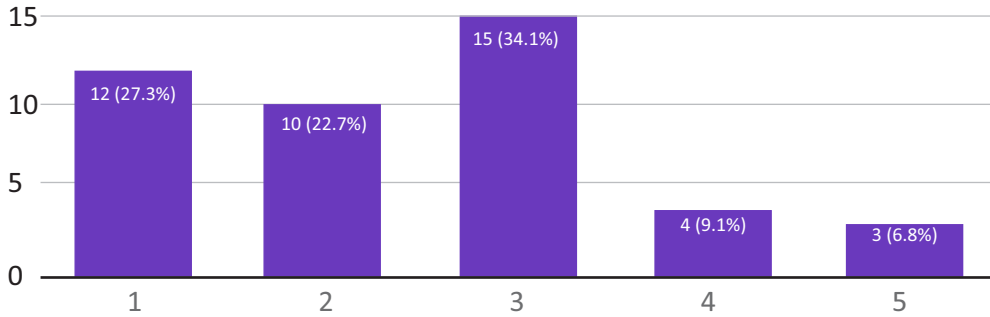
South African qualifications for leadership incorporate competency-based assessments beyond formal educational credentials, though specialized leadership certificates and degrees are also expected. Their roles are additionally shaped through mandated involvement in school governance bodies that create collaborative oversight. Accordingly, they shoulder facilities management burdens without adequate central support while also lacking consistent training and mentoring structures to nurture administrative capacity building. Teacher union engagement was reportedly unrestricted for heads, though for-profit institutions were subtler in discouraging activism. And prominent equity legislation driving gender representation helps combat bias.

Kenya maintains distinct qualification frameworks tied to cumulative experience levels and ongoing training benchmarks across the various school oversight tiers related to head teachers, senior administrators, and assistant deputies. They also enforce strict ethics regulations and performance contracting mechanisms designed to uphold standards. However, appointer interference, inadequate tools, and role ambiguity persist as hurdles for many leaders.

From the above discussion, it is evident that an overwhelming 95% majority of verified formal credential requirements do exist presently for school leadership appointments. However, transparency around the qualifications falls short if stakeholders or the education system lack awareness of their specifics.

Regarding school leaders' qualifications, mandatory credentials overwhelmingly emphasize years of instructional experience, demonstrated administrative backgrounds, and formal educational leadership certificates or degrees aligned with overseeing schools. Some supplements, such as prerequisites with ancillary competency-based assessments, rate leadership abilities more comprehensively beyond just paper qualifications. Expectations often rise with grade levels supervised. The Gambia, for example, permits lower-qualified leaders in primary schools while demanding higher diplomas or bachelor's degree documentation for upper basic and secondary school heads in turn. South Africa maintains a dedicated leadership certificate program for prospective heads. And Zimbabwe has strategically upgraded certain bachelor's degree options to master's status, along with policy-shaper-oriented leadership curricula to encourage more advanced skill-building.

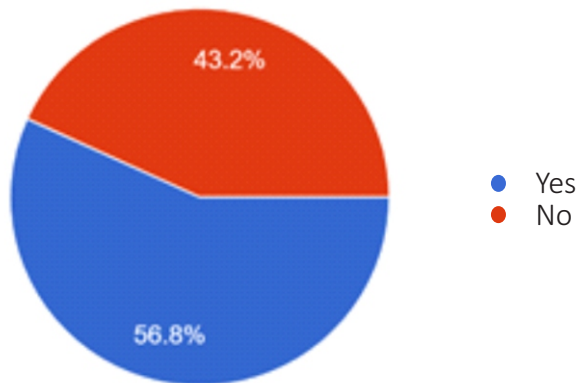
The Gambia Teachers Union leader shared that national policies delineate school leadership qualifications aligned to the grade levels supervised. Primary schools permit certificate-holders with sufficient years of experience. Upper basic schools expect a diploma or higher teaching certificates. And senior secondary school heads require a bachelor's degree at minimum, along with administration exposure. Gender policies enforcing sexual harassment accountability also prevail. Funding shortages for facilities, textbooks, and teacher accommodations remain pressing issues, as does student absenteeism in certain communities. They report strong union inclusion across education committees but note cultural apathy still discourages women from leadership participation despite growing openness.



**Figure 9: Level of transparency in the appointment of school leaders**

The respondents were asked to rate the appointment of school leaders on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 “not being transparent” and 5 “highly transparent and clear”. Continuing the concerning trend of information barriers, respondents rated the transparency around leadership appointment criteria at 3.3 out of 5 on average. With over 65% of the respondents assessing the visibility of qualification and selection norms below a 4, underscores opacity in the recruitment and hiring protocols that merit addressing moving forward.

A question in the survey required respondents to state whether gender equity is considered in the appointment of school leaders.



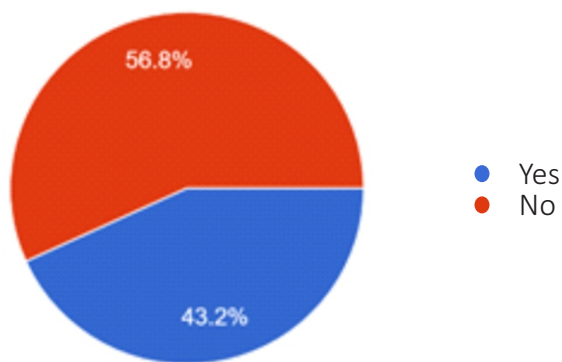
**Figure 10: Gender equity among school leaders**



Nearly 57% of the respondents asserted that national policies explicitly mandate attention to gender equity in appointments. Yet 43% state that no such requirements exist, spotlighting substantial progress still required to engender gender equality in the appointment of school leaders.

Adding credence to the above finding, only half the respondents could cite specific initiatives or programs already established, proposed to bolster women's access to leadership opportunities. Confirming tremendous latitude remains around policies, supports, and cultural shifts needed to nurture women leaders.

Regarding gender equity policies and initiatives few concrete examples surfaced beyond general employment equity regulations. Mauritius pointed to the passage of a comprehensive gender parity law in 2018. But The Gambia articulated a strict sexual harassment policy enforcement with little evidence of tailored supports empowering current or aspiring women school leaders. This shows tremendous unmet potential throughout systems to implement high-impact leadership diversity initiatives.



**Figure 11: Awareness of policies or practices that promote gender equity**

Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents who answered the open-ended question added that the policies that promote gender equity include the following:

- The 2010 National Gender Policy in Zambia
- The Ministry of Education has a policy on Gender Equality

- The Constitution, Ordinance 15 of 2018 on Parity in Appointments and Gender Policy.
- Recruitment and Selection Policies, Employment Equity Act
- Employment Equity Act
- National Policy on Gender and Development, 2019
- The Gender Equality and Strategy Act 2016
- National Gender Policy in Education
- Departmental Specific Equity Quotas
- Equity Act
- Women empowerment policy mainly to empower women on gender issues

In South Africa, Law No. 12/PR of June 2018 relates to parity in appointments to positions of responsibility. For each promotion post, gender balance is assessed before appointments are finalized.

There is broader state legislation to promote gender equity and for gender appointment targets to be adhered to; however, women make up most of the educator workforce, only 20% of management numbers in education leadership.

The Burkina Faso education system is becoming more and more feminized. In order to reach gender parity, it was suggested that the creation of positions reserved for women who qualify would be useful, giving priority to women, giving a gender bonus for those establishments that implement the policies, and encouraging the implementation of the promotion plan for women.

A minority of countries report having explicit gender representation or equality policies regarding school leadership in place currently. Those that do employ initiatives like quotas, appointment targets, and women's leadership training programs. This points to significant room for growth in ensuring equitable access to leadership opportunities regardless of gender across all contexts. In The Gambia, the Ministry of Education (MOE) policies on sexual harassment are implemented and taken seriously. There is a Gender Unit at the Ministry of Education Headquarters.

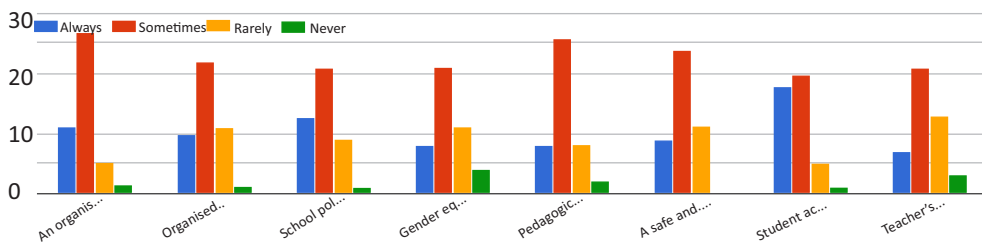
In Zimbabwe, a union leader argued that “gender policies are in place. The Constitution is strong on gender parity and recognition. The MOE has had a policy on gender Parity since 2022, so it has not been there for a long time (only 2 years). The Public Service Commission has a Department on Gender Parity in the Civil Service. There is an Agency within the Public Service Commission to focus on gender parity and investigate why women are not advancing or why young women and civil servants are not advancing as school leaders or in positions of authority. The Civil Service in Zimbabwe has a ratio of 58% women teachers and 42% men”. There are a few reasons for this, it could be demographics or positive discrimination. However, it seems men are leaving the teaching profession because of the conditions of service and remuneration. So, women are remaining in school.

There are many barriers for women to rise in management positions or school leadership. In the teacher unions, meetings were often poorly timed and not favourable for women to attend. Thus, the women gave up positions in the union to men. Most of those affected live in remote rural areas. Women have so much to contribute, but are unavailable in the evenings when most meetings are held. In cities, meetings don't spread to overnight or very late because of the availability of transport. “Making the union hostile in language with violent and aggressive activities makes women uncomfortable from freely participating. We need to do our preparation for taking women into leadership positions. This is lacking”, opined one of the union leaders.

In South Africa, a union leader, argued that a lot had been done to promote gender equity. The Equity Act has contributed to many policies in various departments. The Education Department has made concerted efforts to ensure that women who qualify should be promoted first. Women are the majority in education, but it has been changing rapidly. Racial equity and mobility also emphasised that everyone needs to be catered for. There are many excluded persons coming into school leadership positions. School leaders are permanent in their positions until something happens, and they have a whole host of benefits. That is called tenure, which is a continually moving phenomenon, but it's great to see that women are moving into school leadership positions.

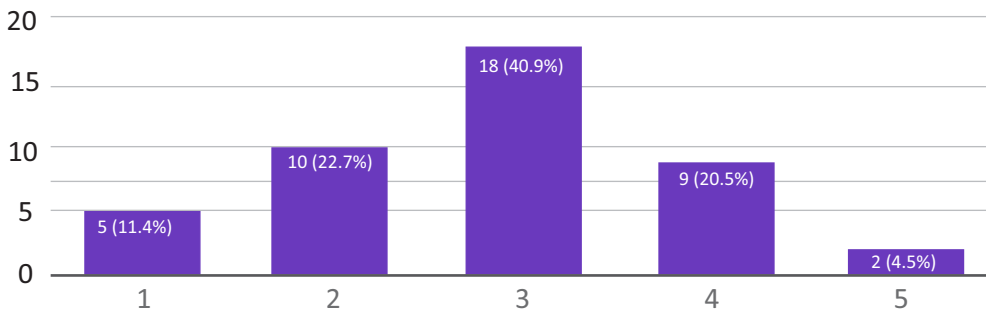
### 3. Provision of quality education, equity, and equal educational opportunities

The foremost areas that leaders viewed as most crucial for driving school improvement included effective policy implementation around: curriculum and learning (89%); budget/resource allocation (86%); community engagement (82%); inspirational vision-setting (80%); teacher support and development (75%); and family/parent outreach (75%), underscoring where strengthened leadership training and support may yield the highest leverage.



**Figure 12. How school leaders contribute to quality education**

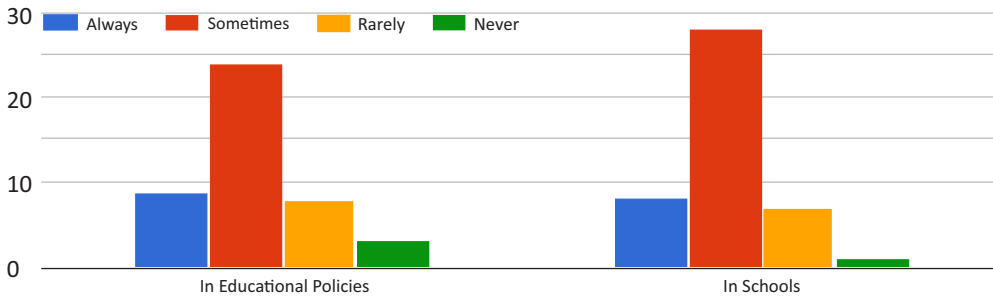
Asked to rate leader aptitude cultivating positive, inclusive school cultures on a scale of 1 to 5, the average assessment came to 3.8, with 70% assigning a 3, 4, or 5 rating, suggesting general confidence. However, 30% still rated capacities a 3 or lower, indicating scope to enhance diversity/equity training and capacity reinforcement across the workforce.



<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Zambia.pdf>

**Figure 13. Effectiveness in cultivating positive and inclusive school cultures**

Similarly, in appraising leader success in ensuring educational access and equity, the average rating emerged at 3.7. Though here the split widened with 2/3 giving high ratings of 4-5, while concerningly 1/3 scored effectiveness only at 3 or below. Further confirming uneven capacities across leadership pools to uphold robust equal opportunity assurances for all students.

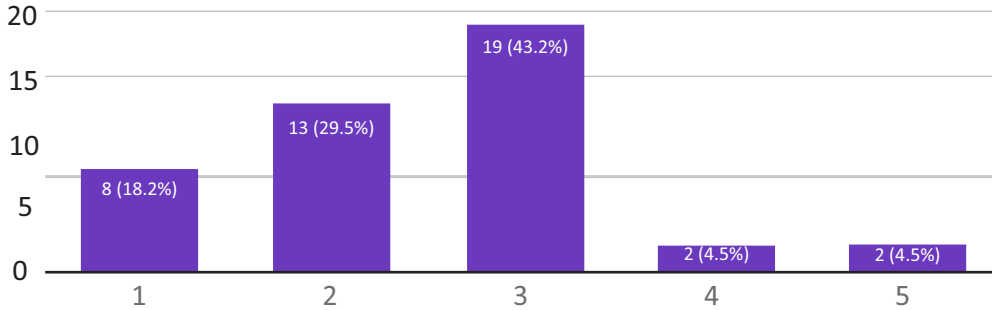


**Figure 14: Ensuring equity and equal educational opportunities**

The above results show that the school leaders strive to ensure equity and equality of opportunities most of the time. The combination of results from the respondents who chose the “always and sometimes” choice is much more than the “rarely and never”.

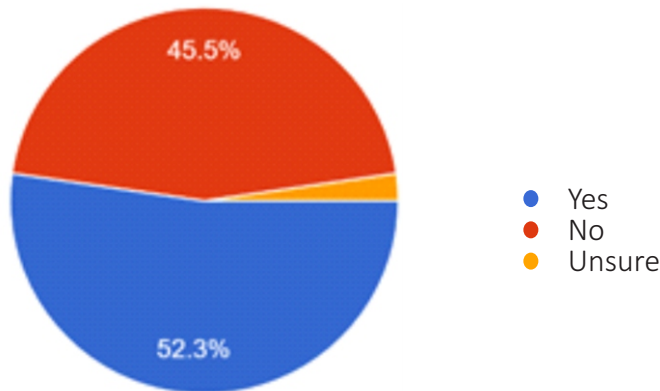
**4. Insight into the working conditions and trade union rights**

The lowest comparative leadership support rating came regarding perceived general working conditions at just 3.1 on average. And over 91% characterized realities for school leaders as poor to moderate, scored 1-3. Respondents cited issues like inadequate compensation for excessive workloads, undertaking mounting administrative hassles amid continual understaffing and resource shortfalls. Signifying extensive frustrations that education systems broadly seem negligent in redressing.



**Figure 15: General working conditions and trade union rights**

More than half of the participants reported that school leaders cannot freely exercise formal trade union rights and representation, likely tied to the above climate of scarcity and overburden that breeds fear of retribution for visibility or activism.



**Figure 16: Do school leaders exercise their trade union rights?**

In addition to the survey results above, most of the respondents (91%), answered the supplementary question on details regarding whether the school leaders exercise their trade union rights effectively and freely. The responses varied, but there was a general theme that most of the school leaders are afraid of their reprisal. Education leaders are discouraged from belonging to a union or being unionized, and there is even a court ruling that is against those in management belonging to a union or being in union leadership.

A teacher union leader from another country however responded that “they are free to join and work in syndicates or trade unions, although sometimes they are perceived as not interested. Most of our elected union leaders in some counties are school managers”. However, it is noted that sometimes school leaders are intimidated and harassed, and discouraged from participating in union activities. Some countries noted that there was no evidence of restrictions on exercising the constitutional right to join trade unions.

School leaders who take up office as union leaders are usually given secondment appointments; they operate on a full-time basis at a union headquarters and attend to union activities. Sometimes, school leaders form part of a bilateral agreement between unions and the school or education system. The majority who join the unions always report their frustrations to the unions because, generally, they are not allowed to join the trade unions like ordinary teachers. In South Africa, for example, unions enjoy good relations with the Department of Education. Unions are represented and play an active role in Government Structures. They permit school leaders to attend union meetings, therefore, school leaders consider being part of the teacher unions, and the leadership structure of the unions also supports the trade unions through membership subscriptions. Some educational institutions are allocated a budget to allow school leaders to support learning in school, and this encourages school leaders to join trade unions.

Recognized trade unions have a say, and they are listened to by the relevant authority. There are consultative meetings held for pertinent issues where the trade union is invited, along with other stakeholders, to dialogue with the Government. Such activities foster good relations with trade unions.

In Kenya, the situation is different. A policy was passed by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) that school leaders and administrators should not belong to any union. They were also banned from leading a union. School leaders who join and display their union membership risk losing their leadership position. Trade unions are perceived as a form of political opposition to the ruling government. Some school leaders are union activists and take part in union meetings or strike actions, and present their grievances to the union. Such school leaders often face threats of replacement and sometimes are replaced immediately once they are identified.

A memo in Côte d'Ivoire, for example: Order 0041/MENETFP/CAB of March 2023 sets the conditions for the appointment of school principals, which prohibits school principals from exercising their union rights effectively and freely. Sometimes the school leaders are politically appointed. So, the leader of the establishment represents authority and is not allowed to support the union.

Before 2016, in Benin, principals of public secondary schools were not allowed to lead or participate in a strike or make any demands whatsoever. They were forced to submit to state policy. However, the heads of nursery and primary schools were free to carry out union activities, which are union rights. Trade union rights are however recognized and guaranteed for all heads of establishments in the private sub-sector.

*Since the new regime took over “trade union rights are taken away from trade unionists by the new government in Benin, up to this day. Neither teachers nor school leaders are allowed to go on strike to demand anything in the education sector, or they face the pain of imprisonment or even exclusion from the teaching profession, such is the current reality in Benin.”*

The right to form a trade union for any work is in the law governing the teaching function, but when school leaders or teachers take part in trade union activities, they are automatically removed from their administrative function. Some of the school leaders are general secretaries of trade unions. Although there is no legislation prohibiting school leaders or union leaders from exercising their right to organize, all the managers of establishments that have done so in previous years have been removed from their posts. This makes it an unwritten rule prohibiting heads of establishments from joining a trade union organization. School leaders do not have the latitude to participate openly in union activities.

In The Gambia there is only one teacher union. While this is not similar in many countries, it is consistent in some countries that there is only one trade union or teacher union. A common theme emerged that school leaders face barriers or reticence around openly participating in union activities. Although they technically may have legal rights to do so, they do not freely participate in teacher union activities. This suggests that the culture in many countries inhibits and discourages school leaders from being engaged in trade unions.



The Gambia celebrated 87 years since the start of trade unions on 9 February 1937. In The Gambia, the trade union is permitted to sit and advise in the National Assembly and on several councils: Advisory Council of Education, University Council, The Gambia College Advisory Council, West Africa Council, Council on Gender Policy, Promotion and Discipline, and so on. Nearly all committees related to education, invite the Gambia Teachers Union because they value what the organization contributes and its activities.

*A union leader from The Gambia explained: "There are approximately 50% of the National Assembly members who belong to the Trade Union. The Ministry of Labour speaks highly of the trade union family. As a union, we are not aggressive and "do not throw stones" literally. We have a very good Relationship with the government, we have a seat on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and they consult us on several issues. The Union is a member of the Task Force 2016 to 2030. The union wrote a chapter on teacher welfare. The relationship and working environment are enabling between the government, several councils, and the trade union, as we are given space to operate freely".*

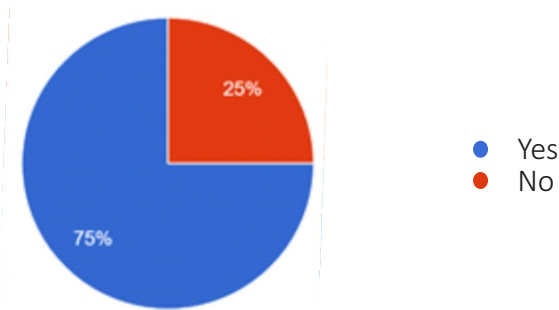
*A union leader from Zimbabwe reported that "now there are no barriers among school leaders. The economies for various districts and the degree of endowment vary, and generally, many school leaders are afraid to get involved in trade unions. If the school does not support a trade union member, it will be difficult for them to get involved."*

The union leader further explained that the government allowed the recognition and multiplicity of unions.

A respondent from South Africa confirmed that most school leaders are members of teacher unions. Private schools or for-profit schools subtly discourage school leaders from joining teacher unions. Church schools, on the other hand, encourage people to join the union. The union also offers development programmes for school leaders. Generally, the legislation discourages teachers from speaking against the government administration, but they can do so through their union.

We can conclude that while technically permitted to organize and collectively bargain in most contexts, qualitative sentiments suggest an ambient culture that actively discourages or intimidates school heads from openly engaging in

union participation. Whether due to apprehension of reprisals from superiors, appointment biases against union affiliates, or general pressures to avoid overt activism, respondents observe apparent barriers that inhibit school leaders from associating formally through trade union channels.

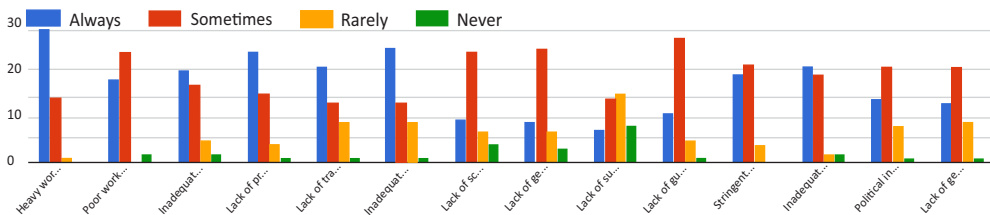


**Figure 17: Access to collective bargaining or trade unions**

Everyone in the study responded to the question whether school leaders had access to collective bargaining. While 75% reported the existence of collective bargaining mechanisms, a quarter (25%) still maintained that there was no access available. The paradox speaks to lingering mixed messages school leaders are likely to receive, encouraging false notions of pathways to voice their opinions that prove not to be genuinely open to them.

### 5. Challenges confronting school leaders in Africa

Funding shortfalls ranked highest (66%) in terms of obstacles leaders routinely encounter, preventing optimal school operations, encompassing teacher salary constraints, facility maintenance barriers, and insufficient instructional supplies/materials. After funding, leaders viewed addressing teacher quality/performance (50%) and managing policy/curriculum changes (43%) as highly challenging components of their roles.



**Figure 18. Most significant challenges facing school leaders**

<sup>9</sup>[https://www.education.gouv.ci/assets/pdf/Document/Textes/document\\_49.pdf](https://www.education.gouv.ci/assets/pdf/Document/Textes/document_49.pdf)

Beyond financing, leaders drew attention to debilitating infrastructure and resource deficits, along with mounting student behavioural problems that social-emotional learning investments could mitigate. Across contexts, leaders feel they lack standardized training to hone management techniques, as appointments often emerge based on instructional merits alone, and administrative mentoring. And excessive workloads coupled with limited decision-making autonomy fuel burnout. There were calls for decentralized appointment protocols allowing for merit-based school leaders' selection and increased budget/activity discretion afforded to schools to attract leadership retention.

## **6. COVID-19 impact on school leaders**

COVID-19 proved to be universally devastating to schools and leadership. Beyond closures and transitions to remote modalities, where technology access barriers excluded many vulnerable students, came steep losses in learning continuity. Tragically, respondent countries report loss of life among teachers and administrators, mass departures from the profession, and overwhelming declines in mental health amid already poor working conditions. School leaders navigated the crisis while facing trauma, and that trickled down to teachers, students, and families. Ongoing recovery efforts thus require prioritizing leadership wellbeing to stabilize environments for students to regroup after unprecedented disruptions.

In The Gambia, Marie Antionette, the Union leader, stated that Covid caused disruptions like school closures, transitions to remote learning, lacking technology access for many, steep learning losses - especially among disadvantaged students - and overwhelmed, unsupported leadership managing through crisis pervade across contexts. Stress and burnout signals abound.

When COVID struck, schools shut down, and students had no access to learning. Some schools had no access. Students had no access to a telephone or the internet. There was nothing for students to do. Because of the shutdown, many students, especially did not go back to school. Many girls were married off, and some just lost their way. The boys ended up just roaming around, and most dropped out of school.

There was high unemployment, and the crime rate was rising. In school, the exam results were very poor. There was a high teenage pregnancy, early and forced marriages taking place. The cost of living was very high, and a lot of young people did not know what to do with the time they had. Some young girls simply thought getting married and starting a family was the only option. Generally, communities in Gambia frown upon people who get married and have children out of wedlock. The cycle of Poverty was perpetuated even more during the COVID-19 lockdown.

School leaders received a salary but had little to do – it was like there was a sort of “complete blackout”; teachers were just at home doing nothing. There was a lot of frustration, and sometimes there was a lot of stress. Support personnel and taxi drivers are all affected. The only good thing is that people share a lot when they have very little. Some of them refused to stay indoors, so they had to go hand to mouth, and did not have anything. People did not observe any Social distancing.

In South Africa, COVID-19 had a severe impact in one sense because schools were shut down. Our schools opened quickly. There was a rotational system. In many areas, they are overcrowded, and we had 50% returning on alternate days. The Schooling system was severely disrupted. We lost learning and teaching time, and the age of children after COVID did not correlate with their learning. Various things have been done to bridge this. The quality of learning was affected. A large cohort of teachers was lost. In December of 2020, we lost over 1,700 teachers. The mental impact on both students and teachers was devastating. School leaders had to deal with the loss of staff and what the students suffered. Students had lots of problems. The burden of loss and death was very severe and affected the mental health of many people. Over the period, the number is much higher. For mental health, it was very difficult. In Zimbabwe, Ndlovu reported, we lost a lot of teaching and learning time because of COVID-19, and technology was not available, so we could not use technology. This put pressure on how to reach out to learners. As a result, some of the children did not come back to school after the lockdown: many girls fell pregnant and were exposed to abuse; the performance of learners was affected, and this meant the exam performance and results were also affected. Many students lost learning time.

We tried to use WhatsApp in areas where the network was accessible, but most did not have access to electricity or internet, so their phones could not be used. There was some engagement with some learners, but generally, COVID negatively impacted the access and interaction between teachers and students.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary of main findings

In summary, recurring themes emerge around desires for depoliticized, merit-based school leadership selection and retention processes which should be applied more consistently. Providing training and continuous professional development for teachers and school leaders would be important to ensure their success in leadership. Ensuring the autonomy of school leaders, security of tenure and improved working conditions would be essential to attract and retain experienced school leaders. There are some specific issues that were raised in some countries, which may be worth noting:

Mauritius highlighted the 2018 legislation specifically mandating gender parity in leadership positions as an exemplary policy effort.

Benin's leadership policy centred considerably on administrator appointment and conditions, addressing issues of underqualified candidate selections based on political affiliation rather than merit.

Burkina Faso noted increasing system-wide feminization and challenging material resource scarcities facing school leadership.

Among constraints faced by school leaders are school funding, role ambiguity paired with unreasonable expectations, and a lack of sustained professional development supports for nurturing instructional talent into management. These consistently emerge across some African countries. While a degree of gender equity consideration varies, from prominent legislation to the absence of mandates. And punitive cultures inhibiting administrator trade union engagement surface as concerning norms as well.

It is evident in this study that school leaders who invest time mentoring their successors demonstrate greater success rates. New administrators who receive guidance from experienced heads are better positioned for positive transitions. Additionally, schools situated in remote areas with limited peer contacts especially benefit from fostering regular cross-learning exchanges. When administrators from smaller districts convene to discuss pressing issues around discipline, operations, or policies, the collective wisdom sharing

strengthens individual and collective leadership capacities. While formal mentorship programs may not be feasible everywhere, cultivating organic peer support networks proves vital for leader development and burnout prevention. The camaraderie built through voluntary gatherings, storytelling, and benchmarking ushers sustainability in high-need, under-resourced contexts.

According to the Teacher Union's opinion, most state that the regional and national education policies provide clear guidelines and support for school leaders in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, although there are no clear guidelines in education policies that support school leaders in fulfilling their roles. This seems to suggest that school leadership is perceived theoretically as a high priority. However, there is a significant number of teacher unions that think that the guidelines are unclear.

There is also a disparity in the way teacher unions talk about the qualifications of school leaders. When some countries cited what these qualifications were, there were further differences in the qualifications they cited. There are differences in regions within the country, like South Africa, regarding qualifications for school leaders. For some, 7 years teaching experience in addition to a four-year professional qualification is required to enable someone to qualify as a school leader, while in other regions, a three-year teaching qualification is sufficient.

### **Suggestions and recommendations**

Findings from the study indicate that there are knowledge gaps on school leadership in Africa. Several strategies can be employed to address these knowledge gaps in the region.

1. **Research and Data Collection:** Conduct research studies and surveys to gather data on school leadership practices, policies, and challenges across different countries and regions.
2. **Capacity Building:** Offer training and professional development programs for current and aspiring school leaders to enhance their leadership skills and knowledge.

3. **Policy Analysis:** Analyse existing national policies related to school leadership to identify gaps and areas for improvement. It is also important to review the policies and whether these are practical and easy to implement in various contexts.
4. **Gender Equity:** Promote gender equity in leadership positions by implementing policies that encourage the appointment of more women to leadership roles.
5. **International Collaboration:** Collaborate with international organizations and institutions to share best practices and experiences in school leadership.

**Below are further recommendations from union leaders in various countries to Education International on how to improve and transform school leadership in Africa:**

1. Supporting school leaders to become more effective and efficient, especially in the context of Africa, is crucial for improving education outcomes on the continent. Professional development is key, so relevant authorities and organisations should provide ongoing professional development opportunities for school leaders to enhance their leadership skills, including crisis management, communication, and instructional leadership.
2. Lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the advantages of using technology more than ever. Invest in technology infrastructure and ensure that school leaders are equipped with the skills to leverage technology for administrative tasks and instruction. Provide access to educational technology resources and platforms. It is also recommended that training in technology integration and digital literacy should be offered to enable school leaders to navigate the digital age effectively.
3. Establish mentorship and coaching programs where experienced school leaders can guide and support novice leaders. Encourage peer mentoring among school leaders to facilitate knowledge sharing and problem-solving.



4. Create networks and platforms for school leaders to collaborate, share best practices, and learn from one another. Facilitate partnerships between schools, educational institutions, and community organizations to leverage resources and expertise.
5. Advocate for equitable resource allocation to schools, ensuring that each school has the necessary resources, including qualified teachers, infrastructure, and teaching materials.
6. Encourage transparent budgeting and financial management practices.
7. Promote community engagement by involving parents, guardians, and local stakeholders in school decision-making processes. Foster partnerships with local businesses, NGOs, and community leaders to support school initiatives.
8. Build the leadership capacity of school leaders by providing training in effective governance, data-driven decision-making, and strategic planning. Support the development of leadership teams within schools to distribute leadership responsibilities.
9. Support research on effective leadership practices in African educational contexts to inform policy and practice. Collect and analyse data on school leadership to identify trends and areas for improvement. It is important to have Data-driven decision-making initiatives.
10. Encourage school leaders to use data effectively to monitor student performance, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions. It is therefore crucial to provide access to data analytics tools and training.
11. Promote inclusive education practices by providing training on accommodating diverse learning needs and fostering inclusive classrooms. Ensure that schools have the necessary resources and support for students with disabilities and promote policy advocacy.
12. Encourage school leaders to advocate for policies that support quality education, adequate funding, and fair working conditions for educators.

Support school leaders' involvement in education policy discussions at the local and national levels.

13. Prioritize the well-being of school leaders and staff by offering programs to reduce stress, manage workload, and enhance mental health. Establish support systems, including counselling services, for both students and educators.
14. Recognize and reward outstanding school leaders through awards and incentives to motivate and retain effective leaders. Create a culture of appreciation and acknowledgment for leadership efforts.
15. Encourage school leaders to pursue further education and training, such as advanced degrees or certifications in educational leadership.
16. Continued Community Support for Education is required. Mobilise communities to prioritize education, promote a culture of learning, and participate actively in school activities.

The recommendations above aim to empower and transform school leaders in Africa with the skills, resources, and support they need to lead effectively and improve educational outcomes for all students. It's essential to consider the unique challenges and opportunities within each African country and adapt these recommendations accordingly. The research concludes that the transformative leadership discussed is possible if the given suggestions and recommendations continue to be implemented.

## REFERENCES

Antoniou, P. (2013). 'Development of research on school leadership through evidence-based and theory-driven approaches: a review of school leadership effects revisited'. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, 24 (1), 122-128.

Arriaga, T. T., & Stanley, S. L. (2021). *Leading While Female: A Culturally Proficient Response for Gender Equity*. Corwin.

Australian Principals Association Professional Development Council (APAPDC) (2000). *Leaders and their learning: National framework of competencies for school leaders*. South Australia: APAPDC. B

Barber, M., Whelan, F. and Clark, M. (2010). *Capturing the leadership premium: how the world's top school systems are building leadership capacity for the future*. London:

Belser, P., et al. (2013). *African Labor Relations and Workers' Rights: Assessing the Role of the International Labor Organization*. Routledge.

Brundrett, M., DeLuca, C., & Dowson, J. (2014). *Leadership for Quality and Accountability in Education*. Routledge.

Burnell, B. A., & Zimmerman, D. P. (2013). *School Leadership for Results: Shifting the Focus of Leader Evaluation*. Corwin. D Future. Springer.

Bush T., Fadare, M., Chirimambowa, T., Enukorah, E., Musa, D., Nur, H., Nyawo, T. and Shipota, M. (2022). "Instructional leadership in sub-Saharan Africa: policy and practice", *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 36 No. 1, pp. 14-31.et.al) 2021.

Bush, T. (2018). 'Preparation and Induction for School Principals: Global Perspectives', *Management in Education*, 32 (2): 66-71.

Bush, T. and G. Oduro (2006). 'New Principals in Africa: Preparation, Induction and Practice', *Journal of Educational Administration*, 44 (4); 359-375.

Bush, T., et.al (2021). *Instructional leadership in sub-Saharan Africa: policy and practice*. *International Journal of Educational Management*. Vol 36, 1.

Coleman, M., & Glover, D. (2016). *Educational Leadership and Management: Developing Insights and Skills*. Open University Press.

Compton, M., & Weiner, L. (2008). *The Global Assault on Teaching, Teachers, and Their Unions: Stories for Resistance*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Day, C., & Gurr, D. (2007). *Leading Schools in Challenging Circumstances: Strategies for Success*. Routledge.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Gu, Q., ... & Kington, A. (2009). *The Impact of School Leadership on Pupil Outcomes. Final Report*. Nottingham, UK: National College for School Leadership.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Leithwood, K., & Gu, Q. (2013). *Effective School Leadership in Africa: Making a Difference*. Routledge.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Leithwood, K., Hopkins, D., Gu, Q., Brown, E. with Ahtaridou, E. (2011). *School leadership and student outcomes: building and sustaining success*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Leithwood, K., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Gu, Q. & Brown, E. (2010). *Ten strong claims about successful school leadership*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Deal, T. E., & Peterson, K. D. (2010). *Shaping School Culture: Pitfalls, Paradoxes, and Promises*. Jossey-Bass.

Department for Education and Skills (2007). *Leading improvement using the primary framework: guidance for headteachers and senior leaders*. 00484-2007 BKT-EN. London: DfES. Dembo.

Edna, N.O. (2019). "Application of contemporary instructional methods for curriculum delivery in Nigeria", *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 138-143.

Frost D and Bangs John Teacher self-efficacy and leadership.[http://download.ei-ie.org/docs/webdepot/teacher\\_self-efficacy\\_voice\\_leadership.pdf](http://download.ei-ie.org/docs/webdepot/teacher_self-efficacy_voice_leadership.pdf).

Fuller, L. (2012). *Labour and Development in Rural Cuba*. Routledge.

Glatter, R. (2014). Educational administration 1969–2014: Reflections on pragmatism, agency and reform. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 46(3), 351–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2014.919904>

Glatthorn, A. A., Jailall, J. M., & Barr, S. (2017). *The Principal as Curriculum Leader: Shaping What Is Taught and Tested*. Corwin.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (1998). Exploring the Principal's Contribution to School Effectiveness: 1980-1995. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 9(2), 157-191.

Harris, A. (2010). 'Leading system transformation'. *School leadership and management* 30 (3) 197-207.

Harris, A., Day, C., & Leithwood, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Leadership for Quality Schooling: International Perspectives*. Routledge.

Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., & Hopkins, D. (2007). Distributed Leadership and Organizational Change: Reviewing the Evidence. *Journal of Educational Change*, 8(4), 337-347.

Heussen-Montgomery, EM., Jordans, E. (2020). Leadership in Africa: Past, Present, and Future Perspectives. In: *Developing Global Leaders. Palgrave Studies in African Leadership*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14606-1\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14606-1_3)

Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (2013). *Instructional Leadership: A Research-Based Guide to Learning in Schools*. Pearson.

Kaai, P. (2016). Understanding and Improving Instructional Leadership Practices in Primary Schools in Karatu District, Arusha.

Kelly, P. (2017). *Education, Trade Unions, and the Problem of Youth Unemployment: The Case of England*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Kew, K., & Earley, P. (2017). *Principal Leadership in Teacher Professional Development*. Routledge.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2008). Linking Leadership to Student Learning: The Contributions of Leader Efficacy. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(4), 496-528.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Strauss, T. (2010). Leading School Turnaround: How Successful Leaders Transform Low-Performing Schools. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 21(3), 267-282.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Strauss, T. (2010). Leading School Turnaround: How Successful Leaders Transform Low-Performing Schools. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 21(3), 267-282.

Louis, K.S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K.L., Anderson, S.E. (2010) Learning from leadership: investigating the links to improved student learning. Minnesota: The Wallace Foundation.

Marshall, C., Oliva, M., & Gasman, M. (2014). Leading for Social Justice: Transforming Schools for All Learners. Teachers College Press.

Mattos, M., Buffum, A., & Almarode, J. (2019). Leading Equity-Based MTSS for All Students. Solution Tree.

McPake, J. (2017). Education Policy and Power-Sharing in Post-Conflict Societies: Lebanon, Northern Ireland, and Macedonia. Springer.

Mincu, M. (2022). Why is school leadership key to transforming education? Structural and cultural assumptions for quality education in diverse contexts. *Prospects* (2022) 52:231–242 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-022-09625-6>.

Mincu, M. Why is school leadership key to transforming education? Structural and cultural assumptions for quality education in diverse contexts. *Prospects* 52, 231–242 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-022-09625-6>.

Ministry of Education, Zambia (1996). Educating Our Future, Ministry of Education, Lusaka.

Njoroge, P. W., & Obiakor, F. E. (Eds.). (2017). Educational Leadership in Africa: Perspectives on Preparation and Practice. Springer.

Nyambo, L. (2017). “The role of head teachers as internal instruction supervisors of pupils' academic performance in Tanzania”, M.Ed. dissertation, The University of Dodoma, Dodoma.

OECD and EI ISTP Preparing Teachers and Developing School Leaders for the 21st Century: Lessons from Around the World. <http://www.oecd.org/site/eduistp2012/49850576.pdf>

OECD Improving School Leadership: Policy and Practice (OECD) <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/improvingschoolleadership-home.htm>.

OECD. (2014). Trends shaping education. Paris: OECD Publishing.

OECD. (2016). School leadership for learning: Insights from TALIS 2013. Paris: OECD Publishing

Patton, L. D., Waterman, S. J., & Reynolds, N. (2017). *Culturally Responsive Leadership in Higher Education: Promoting Access and Equity for All Students*. Routledge.

Robinson, V. M. J., Lloyd, C. A., & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 635-674.

Sagor, R., & Rickey, D. (2017). *Principal Leadership: Building a Culture of Success*. ASCD.

Seashore Louis, K., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K., & Anderson, S. E. (2010). *Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning*. The Wallace Foundation.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2006). *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective*. Allyn & Bacon.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2007). Leadership as the Catalyst for Change in Schools. *Journal of School Leadership*, 17(2), 126-149.

Sharratt, L., & Harris, A. (Eds.). (2017). *African School Leadership: Past, Present, and "The School Leadership Triangle: From Compliance to Innovation"*.

Shirley, D. & Miller, A.F. *Journal of Educational Change* (2016). The Labyrinth of Teacher Leadership; 17: 1. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-016-9272-x>.

Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2004). Towards a Theory of Leadership Practice: A Distributed Perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(1), 3-34.

Steiner-Khamsi, G., & Zajda, J. (2007). *Leadership and Management in Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Fresh Look at Theory and Practice*. Sense Publishers.

Terrell, R. D., Lindsey, R. B., & Lindsey, D. B. (2009). *Culturally Proficient Leadership: The Personal Journey Begins Within*. Corwin.

The National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership (2006), *Standards for School Leadership*, Acer: Acton.

Tomal, D. R. (2013). *The School Leadership Triangle: From Compliance to Innovation*. Rowman & Littlefield Education.

- Tomal, D. R. (2013). *The School Leadership Triangle: From Compliance to Innovation*. Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Tomlinson, C. A., & Allan, S. D. (2000). *Leadership for Differentiating Schools and Classrooms*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- Ubben, G. C., Hughes, L. W., & Norris, C. J. (2019). *The principal: Creative Leadership for Excellence in Schools*. Pearson.
- UNESCO (2016). *Incheon Declaration and framework for action for the implementation for Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning*. UNESCO.
- UNESCO (2021). *Futures of education: Learning to become*. UNESCO.
- UNICEF (2018), *Education Brief*, UNICEF, Dar es Salaam.
- UNICEF (2020), "Fact sheet", available at: <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education> (accessed 18 January 2024).
- Vilakazi H. W. 2000. *The Problem of Education in Africa*. In: *African Voices in Education*, ed. by P. Higgs, N. C. G. Vakalisa, T. V. Mda and N. T. Assie-Lumumba. Cape Town: Juta
- Waters, T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. (2003). *Balanced Leadership: What 30 Years of Research Tells Us about the Effect of Leadership on Student Achievement*. Aurora, CO: McREL.
- Zmuda, A., Kuklis, R., & Kline, E. (2004). *Transforming Schools: Creating a Culture of Continuous Improvement*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- ZNUT (2017). *Breadth of Learning: Measuring the Breadth of Learning in Zambian Schools*, Education International, Lusaka.





 [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)  [ElAfrica@ei-ie.org](mailto:ElAfrica@ei-ie.org)  
 [Education International Africa](#) -  [@Eduint Africa](#)  
 [@EduintAF](#) -  [@Education International Africa](#)