



School Leadership and School Improvement in Malawi: An Exploratory Study

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Published: 10 October 2006 | **Received:** 19 July 2006 | **Accepted:** 10 September 2006

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18833404](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18833404)

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Chilanga Kachale is affiliated with Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) and focuses on Education research in Africa.

Abstract

School leadership plays a pivotal role in educational improvement across Malawi's varied school contexts. The research employed a mixed-methods approach including surveys, interviews with principals, and document reviews. Data were collected from 120 schools across six districts representing diverse educational landscapes in Malawi. A notable finding was that schools with more supportive leadership environments reported higher student engagement rates (75%) compared to those without such support (48%). Additionally, effective leadership significantly contributed to better curriculum adaptation and teacher morale ($r = -0.65$). The study underscores the critical role of school leadership in enhancing educational outcomes. School boards should prioritise developing supportive leadership structures that foster a positive learning environment and promote continuous professional development for teachers.

Keywords: *African education, leadership effectiveness, school improvement initiatives, transformational leadership, participative management, qualitative methods, mixed-methods approach*

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