

Reimagining Education in Africa: Innovations, Equity, and Policy for a Transformative Future

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As we navigate an increasingly complex educational landscape, the intersection of research, policy, and practice emerges as a crucial space for innovation and transformation. This special issue of the *International Journal of Educational Development in Africa (IJEDA)* is dedicated to exploring progressive ideas, strategies, and interventions aimed at shaping the future of education across diverse contexts. The collected articles reflect a dynamic range of scholarly inquiry and practical insight, offering timely responses to enduring challenges and new opportunities within the African educational environment and beyond.

The contributions in this issue explore transformative approaches to curriculum reform, teacher professional development, inclusive education, and technology integration in learning environments. These studies, grounded in qualitative and mixed-methods methodologies, offer critical insights into the opportunities and barriers shaping educational systems in South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and beyond, with implications for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and global education discourse.

A recurring theme in this issue is the imperative of **equity and inclusion**. Several contributions highlight the need to dismantle systemic barriers and promote inclusive education. From the analysis of inclusive strategies in Tanzanian schools to the study of gender-responsive teaching in South Africa, these contributions draw attention to the persistent disparities and urgent call for culturally and contextually grounded solutions.



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Another strong thread is the role of **teacher development and leadership**. Articles highlight how teacher competencies, support systems, and leadership practices significantly influence educational outcomes. Innovations such as mentorship models, professional learning communities, and adaptive leadership approaches are presented as viable pathways to enhance instructional quality and learner engagement.

In addition, **digital transformation** and its implications for education are examined with nuance and clarity. With the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating the adoption of digital learning, contributors explore the potential and pitfalls of technology in African classrooms. This includes analyses of e-learning platforms, mobile learning interventions, and the digital divide that continues to limit equitable access.

Moreover, this issue brings to the fore **policy-oriented research** that interrogates how national frameworks and institutional strategies can be optimised. Authors advocate for evidence-based policy-making and participatory approaches that centre local voices, values, and needs. Particularly compelling are discussions on curriculum reform, educational governance, and funding models tailored to the realities of African societies.

Finally, we are reminded of the value of **collaborative, interdisciplinary research** in fostering sustainable educational innovation. The contributions demonstrate how partnerships across sectors—government, academia, civil society, and communities—can yield practical, scalable solutions to complex problems.

As guest editors, we are inspired by the commitment, creativity, and critical perspectives represented in these articles. They not only illuminate pressing issues but also propose thoughtful and actionable responses. We hope this issue catalyses ongoing dialogue, experimentation, and transformation in educational research, policy, and practice. We thank all the contributors for their scholarly rigour and passion, and we invite readers to engage deeply with these works as we collectively imagine and build the future of education.

In conclusion, we sincerely thank *IJEDA* for hosting this special issue and its steadfast commitment to open access knowledge dissemination. We are especially grateful to Prof. Velisiwe Gasa, Prof. Nomanesi Madikizela-Madiya, and Mr Shopo Cry Zitha for their unwavering support, guidance, and professionalism throughout this process. Our sincere thanks also go to the reviewers, whose thoughtful and rigorous feedback has been instrumental in enhancing the quality of the articles featured.

Congratulations to all the contributing authors! We trust that the insights and recommendations shared in this special issue will inspire educators, policymakers, and researchers to pursue bold, innovative approaches that shape the future of education. Thank you for your continued support and engagement with *IJEDA*.