

Dr. Vongai Blessing Chakanyuka

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Professional Profile

Dynamic and visionary female academic leader with over 25 years of progressive experience in education across Zimbabwe and South Africa. Demonstrated excellence in academic leadership, lectureship, strategic planning, teacher development, and curriculum transformation. Proven ability to lead diverse teams, influence educational policy, and deliver results in high-pressure academic environments. Deeply committed to gender equality issues in education, social justice, inclusive, innovative, and equitable education practices that empower communities and transform learning outcomes. 45 years of age and passionate about contemporary issues in educational leadership.

Core Leadership Competencies

- **Strategic Educational Leadership:** Educational lectureship, strategic educational organisational development, institutional governance, research and coordination of national teacher education programmes.
 - **School Leadership:** Mentors school leaders, Founding and management of private educational institutions; policy compliance and quality assurance.
 - **Gender Empowerment and Capacity Building:** Mentor and trainer for emerging female educators and educational leaders across schools, university and college systems.
 - **Academic Oversight:** Supervision of PhD, MEd, and undergraduate theses; curriculum review; exam design and assessment; research group leadership.
 - **Educational Innovation:** Champion for ICT integration and future-ready teaching methodologies.
 - **Cross-cultural Management:** Effective leadership in multicultural and multilingual education settings.
 - **Stakeholder Engagement:** Liaison with government, church boards, NGOs, and community leaders.
 - **Event Leadership:** Faculty-level event planning and coordination, academic symposia, and stakeholder engagement platforms.
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Career Objectives

- Lead transformative initiatives in education through strategic vision and collaboration.
 - Cultivate gender aware, inclusive, high-performing academic environments.
 - Champion equitable access to quality education in underserved communities.
 - Drive innovation in pedagogy and curriculum aligned with global standards.
 - Shape resilient, ethical, and socially responsible educational institutions.
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Academic Qualifications

- **PhD in Education** – University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa (2022)
 - **Master's in Educational Management** – University of Zimbabwe (2016–2017)
 - **Bachelor's in Educational Management** – University of Zimbabwe (2012–2013)
 - **Diploma in Secondary Education (Sciences- Biology, Physics & Chemistry)** Mutare Teacher's College, Zimbabwe (1999–2001)
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Professional Experience

University of Zimbabwe

Lecturer, Educational Administration Department

University Teachers Colleges Coordinator | Faculty Director of Events | Research Group Leader

The Zimbabwe Journal of Teacher Education (ZJTE) Editorial Board member

Current

- Provide academic leadership and strategic direction to the department.
- Coordinate and supervise academic standards across Zimbabwe's network of teachers' colleges.
- Lead and mentor postgraduate and doctoral students in research and professional development.
- Chair faculty and departmental research group and promote inter-institutional research collaboration.
- Assess the suitability of research manuscripts in the faculty of Education.
- Oversee curriculum development and continuous programme improvement.
- Plan and manage faculty-level academic events, workshops, and conferences.
- Serve as external examiner to national teacher training institutions.

University of the Witwatersrand

Lecturer & Supervisor, Educational Leadership & Foundations Department

2019 – 2023

- Supervised postgraduate dissertations and academic research.
- Assessed research proposals with rigor and academic integrity.

- Contributed to leadership and policy studies research initiatives.

Education Consultant (National & Regional)

Ongoing

- Board member and national education consultant for the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), Kutama College, St Augustine's College and St Charles Luwanga.
- Led multiple school start-ups and policy formulation in school governance.
- Advised on teacher recruitment, performance evaluation, conflict mediation, and examination board registration (ZIMSEC & Cambridge).

Acting Head- St Augustine's College -2024

- Helped start and temporarily led a thriving private college from inception to full registration.
- Recruited and managed staff, developed curricula, and established strong school culture.
- Upheld academic quality and regulatory alignment with national standards

Board Chair – FreshStart NGO

Present

- Provide strategic leadership and oversight in youth mental health and wellness initiatives.
- Drive community-based interventions to support youth affected by substance abuse.

Principal Director – Lionsgate Private College

2015 – 2022

- Founded and led a thriving private college from inception to full registration.
- Recruited and managed faculty, developed curricula, and established strong school culture.
- Delivered consistent academic performance and operational excellence.

Intern Head – Queen Elizabeth Girls' High School

2017

- Oversaw holistic school operations, including boarding, procurement, and compliance.
- Resolved stakeholder conflicts with diplomacy and authority.
- Upheld academic quality and regulatory alignment with national standards.

Science & Mathematics Teacher – Zimbabwe and South Africa

2000 – 2011

- Delivered high-impact instruction with measurable success (e.g., Gauteng Province top Science results, 2009).
- Taught in diverse Zimbabwean socio-economic contexts, contributing to curriculum equity and innovation.

Key Leadership Achievements

- Spearheaded research and publications on gender equity and female leadership in education.
- Appointed board member at top Catholic high schools (Kutama Boys, St. Charles Luwanga, St. Augustine's).
- Coordinated national teacher education programmes through the University of Zimbabwe.
- SDC chair and member for two top schools in Harare.
- Founded and led Lionsgate Private College, growing it from inception to fully registered institution.
- Championed teacher development programmes across Zimbabwe and South Africa.
- Played a pivotal advisory role in curriculum reform at both basic and advanced education levels.
- Designed and implemented major academic events at faculty level.

Professional References

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