Article

Probing the Practicality of Ethical School Leadership Amid Socio-Political and Economic Turmoil

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Abstract: This study aims to probe the practicality of ethical school leadership amid socio-political and economic turmoil. This was necessitated by the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy in 2000 up until 2009 when they abandoned their currency due to hyperinflation. The downturn of the economy has not been abated to date, and education, together with other social services has been affected tremendously. The objective of this study is to find out the practicality of school leadership amid social, political, and economic turmoil, such as the one prevailing in Zimbabwe. Based on the findings, the study aims to suggest ways of dealing with ethical school leadership in such an environment. A qualitative study was conducted involving two primary and two secondary schools, where four school heads and sixteen teachers constituted the sample. Semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were conducted. The findings indicated that school heads and teachers are finding it very difficult to practice ethical school leadership in the environment prevailing in Zimbabwe. This paper proposes that ethical leadership be promoted in these schools through engaging the 'reusable past' from their African Indigenous Knowledge and additionally applying a multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral intervention strategy to bring sustainable and practical change.

Keywords: Ethical leadership; socio-political and economic; turbulence; primary and secondary schools; sustainable

Introduction

Zimbabwe's Land Reform Programme, which was done in the year 2000, created a plethora of turbulence in the social, political, and economic arena. This reform involved the taking of land from close to four thousand White farmers without compensation, and it was redistributed to Black Zimbabweans (UNESCO,2018). Since then, there has been a severe meltdown in the economy, and millions of Zimbabweans have left the country, and the majority who remain are in the informal sector, with unemployment sitting at 95% (The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, Africa Check, 2014). Against this background, this study is probing the practicality of ethical school leadership amid socio-political and economic turmoil. This is achieved through investigating the experiences of school heads and teachers in Marondera.

The problem created by this turmoil for school leadership is that teachers' salaries were eroded by inflation and often came late, banks lacked cash, and teachers queued for hours on end during school time. Most teachers left for greener pastures, and those that remained became overloaded, furthermore they ran side hustles to survive. Teachers often came to class late or left early from school; others did not come to work regularly. Some ran market stalls during hours, and others did private tutoring at their homes, affecting ethical conduct. This study comprises, an urban secondary and a primary school, alongside another peri-urban secondary and primary school, where four school heads and sixteen teachers were the participants. The researchers felt that understanding school leadership that is ethical in the turmoil prevailing in Zimbabwe

would help bring more productivity and professionalism to these schools. The assumption is that ethical school leadership helps in improving the instruction of schools, regardless of their geographical location.

Literature Review
The studies that were conducted in Zimbabwe, on school leadership that is ethical, which this study reviewed indicate that there are challenges regarding school leadership because of the politicization of institutions, the targeting of teachers in the run-up to elections, run away teacher-pupil ratios due to high staff turnovers, poor resourcing of schools and stifling of professional unions. They also assert that poor teacher remuneration has had serious negative effects on the ethical conduct of teachers (Mawadza, 2009; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; Chireshe & Shumba, 2011; Erlwanga, 2013; Mufundikwa, 2010). The studies conducted on ethical leadership in schools mainly focused on the big cities, these were also conducted before the current turmoil, making this study different and of great relevance.

1. Understanding the Types of Leadership Styles
School personnel can use many leadership styles, given that each has its own merits and demerits. A few such styles were discussed in the unfolding paragraphs in an attempt to solidly anchor the current study:

Servant Leadership
Servant leadership focuses on the end goal of the people who are being led. A servant leader supports the people he is leading and reflects on his actions towards them (Lynch, 2023). This kind of leadership is built on guiding people, empowering them, and building trust. The weakness of servant leadership is that it works with mature subordinates, hence the need to augment it with other forms of leadership approaches.

Transactional Leadership
This form of leadership is based on the principle of give and take, resembling a transaction in a business deal. Both the employers and the employees need each other, and each must compromise; the employer has tasks to be accomplished while the employees need to be paid. in the something-for-something concept. However, Lynch (2023) argues that teachers are motivated by other things that go beyond their salary. Educators focus on higher-order purposes, such as role modelling, Ubuntu transferring, and other value insemination drives that take place daily in schools as teachers and learners rub against each other. Money is money; therefore, it is not the major motivating factor.

Emotional Leadership
Emotional leadership is based on the followers using that emotional intelligence, but the satisfaction that comes from being able to deliver one's mandate is the replication of society through the learners. This kind of leadership is the direct opposite of transactional leadership, which thrives on direct exchanges Lynch (2018).

Transformational Leadership
According to Nguyen (2021), the transformational type of leadership is built by borrowing the best lessons from all the other forms of leadership and crafting these together. There is a sense of shared purpose in this form of leadership, which is the motivating factor on both sides. School heads and teachers would benefit more by adopting transformational leadership.

2. Ethical Leadership Amid Socio-political and Economic Turbulence
Ethical leadership in schools, as a concept, has yet to be thoroughly investigated in Zimbabwean schools since the start of the current socio-political and economic turmoil that has been mounting since the year 2000. Relatedly, there is a dearth of literature on this concept of ethical leadership, which safeguards social justice and the humanization of communities under any societal stress. The socio-political and economic disturbances are because of the taking of land from the White farmers in Zimbabwe to give to the Black people in 2000. Chireshe and Shumba 2011 resonate with Mufundikwa (2010) in pointing out that this political move was the cause of hyperinflation in 2009. Since that time, the Zimbabwean economy has not recovered; rather, it has

continued to plummet, resulting in the current economic mayhem, where unemployment is said to be ninety-five percent (Africa Check, 2014).

Mnangagwa's overthrow of Mugabe in 2017, followed by the disputed elections of 2018 and 2023, compounded the turmoil, creating more negative ripple effects on ethical leadership in the schools. This is the atmosphere in which ethical leadership in schools is being investigated in this study. The social, political, and economic turbulence factors that hit Zimbabwe are perceived to be heavily weighing against ethical school leadership; these include late or non-payment of salaries and bonuses for teachers, huge teacher exodus locally and abroad, a breakdown in the funding system for education, targeting the opposition and teachers in violence that is politically motivated and salary erosion due to hyperinflation, amongst other factors (Mawadza, 2009). These factors create an environment that disavows practicing ethical leadership in schools due to head and teacher apathy, permissiveness, disgruntlement, idleness, dejection, and truancy among the teachers (Munro, 2015).

This further corresponds with Khoza (2017), who talks of the Ubuntu theory, whose roots are enshrined in the concept of society propagating itself through the older generations and transmitting their values and beliefs to the younger ones. To that end, this study posits that the socio-political and economic turbulence created by the factors stated in the above paragraphs has a serious negative bearing on ethical leadership, as these result in a lot of strain and trauma being experienced amongst the school heads and the teachers, eventually affecting the learners.

When a country is hit by the kind of turmoil that is in Zimbabwe, public institutions suffer, there are shortages of resources everywhere, including in schools, and there are signs of near collapse in all state-run institutions Burde (2004). This kind of environment threatens the discharge of ethical leadership, prompting the interrogation of school heads and teachers on the practicability of ethical leadership in such an environment through the current study.

Reviewed literature on Zimbabwe indicates that teachers were reported to be absent from duty or were constantly late because they were running private businesses, trying to subsidize the inflationary eroded and late-paid salaries and bonuses, and they left learners unattended to for most of the time (Mawere, 2013; Masango, 2014). It goes uncontested that teachers are critical cogs in learners' academic and moral development; hence, ethical leadership is proposed as the way forward to eliminate anti-Ubuntu school heads and teachers' behaviours.

3. The Concept of Leadership in Schools

The goal of school leadership is to ensure that students adhere to the curriculum, succeed academically, furthermore, grow socially and morally to become excellent members of society. Additionally, the educational leader achieves this primarily through collaborating with teachers and other stakeholders (Chiome & Paul, 2011). Leadership in schools involves the art of guiding, monitoring, and growing the capacities of students and teachers to attain educational goals (Magwa, 2014). Suffice it to say that the school head's critical obligation thus is to ensure that teachers are satisfied with their jobs, are empowered to execute their tasks, and are given the room to realize their own goals and maximum potential. With these tenets in mind, leadership is further viewed in this study as getting the best out of teachers and students by establishing sound principles and guidelines to be used consistently in the school (Day et al., 2020).

4. Theoretical Framing

The theories underpinning this study are the turbulent theory (Shapiro and Gross, 2013) and the ethical leadership theory (Lewis, 1944). Each of these was discussed briefly below.

Turbulence Theory

Burde (2004) advances the argument that schools are meant for peace if they are to thrive. When there are turbulences involving displacements, people losing jobs, and economies collapsing, turmoil is created, and it affects school leadership. One of the major causes of school upheavals or turbulence is political instability. Two types of turbulences, internal and external, affect ethical leadership in schools (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). The theory has four levels namely extreme turbulence, severe turbulence, moderate turbulence, and lastly light

turbulence. When the intensity of the turmoil increases, so does the loss of control as well as the damage caused.

Ethical Leadership Theory
Unless the human being is taught good values, he is corrupt and blind to such. Ethics are found in good values, and for a man to be ethical, he needs to be taught so that he can practice what he has been taught (Heeringa,2022). "One must be trained to feel pleasure, liking, disgust, and hatred at those things that are pleasant, likable, disgusting, and hateful," argues Heeringa (ibid). Moore (2022) advances that Ethical leaders consider norms, principles, values, standards, and ethics fundamentally and practically when performing multiple tasks and communicate the same to other members of their teams, departments, and organizations to make the workplace more effective. Khoza (2012) lists the fundamental ethical values a leader should follow, which are accountability, fairness, equality, trust, honesty, and respect. Ethical school leadership involves leading people, and making sound decisions that are based on values such as; fairness and accountability.

Methodology

1. Research Design
The current study carries a qualitative design. It is a case study that has four case sites (schools). The focus of the research is on interrogating the practicality of school leadership that is ethical when during turbulence. Multiple case studies can take place on one site with different settings, or at sites that are separated (Moore et al., 2012). This study is conducted at four different schools.

2. Sampling
Purposive sampling was used in this study, where certain schools were sampled for the characteristics, they had which would help in answering the research objectives. The sample comprised four schools, from which sixteen teachers and four school heads were sampled. Selected individuals who were identified as best suited to generate the data required for this study were sampled. Each school had five participants. Litchman (2011) posits that each case has boundaries observed at an early stage in the research study. The other distinction leading to the choice was the issue of being in primary or high school, urban or peri-urban. The schools were given pseudonyms to protect their identities, and so were the participants.

3. Data Collection Methods
Semi-structured interviews were used to generate data from heads, while focus group interviews were conducted on the teachers. Permission to carry out the study and to take audio recordings from the participants was sought. All the ethical considerations were adhered to. Cresswell (2014) refers to anonymity, freedom from harm, the right to withdraw from the study, informed consent, and the right to know the research outcome. These were adhered to. The data were used solely for this study (Marcus, 2014).

4. Data Analysis
The data analysis approach used to do thematic qualitative data analysis was created by (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) In this method, the data were transcribed, and grouped into themes which were later analysed to develop emerging patterns and conclusions. Discussion and analysis were centred on the findings from the themes that emerged.

Findings

Hereunder, the researchers present the study results. The study set out to define and describe what ethical school leadership is and isolate the socio-political and economic turbulence hindering the school heads and teachers from practicing it in Marondera District.

To ensure that the participants understood what ethical school leadership means, the following question was asked: Do school personnel understand ethical leadership? As such, some of the participants had this to say:

"The expected professional conduct from the teachers and heads, as given in their code of conduct, includes respect, integrity, dignity, and role modelling. This is expected from both heads and their subordinates, by the community, and by the learners as well." (Participant H1, a school head)

"For me, ethical leadership from teachers means punctuality, dignified communication, etiquette, kindness and patience with the learners, good grooming, and mentoring. It also means accountability and trustworthiness." (Participant T4, a school teacher)

Related responses were also obtained from the other participants. This understanding is important to this study. The researchers asked the participants, "Why is ethical leadership important in schools?" These were some of the verbal attestations :

"Schools cannot do without ethical conduct; it is the basis and foundation of discipline and harmony in any one of them. It brings accountability, and role modelling, helps maintain discipline, and discourages anti-social behaviour in the students." (Participant T2, a school teacher)

"Once we disregard ethical leadership, we breed indiscipline and mayhem in our schools. All teacher and learner conduct and discipline are built around sound ethics, be it punctuality, dress code, honesty, lesson delivery, learner behaviour, and you name it. Ethics are tantamount to a disciplinary code, both amongst the staff and the students alike, as I see it." (Participant H3, school head)

The above responses suggest that ethical school leadership forms the backbone of true leadership in schools. Once we do away with ethics, we pave the way for teacher malfunctioning and learner indiscipline.

1. Themes Emerging From The Study
The themes that emerged from this study are presented below. The guiding question was: There is total agreement from the participants that they are experiencing plenty of unethical practices that negatively impact their ethical leadership in the schools, which they said were being triggered by the current turmoil. A question was asked "Are there any unethical leadership practices in the school caused by the turbulence?" There was a hundred percent agreement among the participants, one said :

"There are plenty in this economic environment. Absenteeism, both teachers and pupils. Teachers, because of economic hardships, are trying to put food on the table, trying to make extra cash, so at times, he does not come to work, busy somewhere trying to make extra cash for a living. We have situations where teachers have affairs with pupils also, all because of the economic hardships driving these pupils to this, which drives some teachers to take advantage of these school kids. There is a betrayal of trust, and there is a breach of the code of conduct." (Participant H3, school head).

The study established beyond any doubt that indeed there are plenty of unethical leadership practices affecting schools in Marondera. This leads to the themes that emerged from the study being discussed next.

Teacher Absenteeism
The study revealed that the issue of teacher absenteeism was triggered by many factors, such as salary erosion due to hyperinflation and late payment of remuneration. Furthermore, it emerged that there was inaccessibility of money when they went to the banks. The participants pointed out that the prevailing turmoil directly causes all these factors raised, here are some of their responses:

"At times, teachers come late for work from the bank; they have to get cash; they have to get money; they have to sustain themselves. They have to wait at the bank instead of exercising their duties at the workplace." (Participant H1, school head)

"This is a tough one, and a very sensitive one too. I prefer to speak out of the camera (laughs). The current political environment is tense, and it has led to this economic slumber. So, who is caught in between? It is the teacher! You need to carry on and adhere to your ethics. At times, politics plays its part. You cannot run away

from the job because this is the only job that you have, so it is a bit tough! Come month's end, you go to the bank and get twenty dollars!" (Participant T11, school teacher)

"Aaaaaaa to be honest with you, these teachers are not living in isolation; they are in a real situation! They are living among the five, six, and seven million Zimbabweans who are struggling, so they are also struggling." (Participant H3, school head)

Data from the heads of schools show that circumstances forced them to give in on their ethical leadership stance to permit teachers' absence, this was against the ministerial code of conduct.

Erosion of Salaries And Bonuses Due to Hyperinflation
During the focus group interviews, it emerged that private extra classes, informal trade, market vending, forex trading, and keeping chickens were the main activities that kept the teachers away from the schools during working hours. The participants' voices are added:

"Professionally trained people are out there. They are now vendors. You will be forced to set up a business out there and run it while you are also running the profession." (Participant T16, school teacher)

"Something in you will tell you that what you are doing is wrong, but then there is the issue of poverty, the issue of the cash crisis. Teachers end up being corrupt, trying to earn a living somehow but without considering the consequences. That is a big job now; you are supposed to be at work, yet you want to have cash! ," (Participant T8, school teacher)

It emerged that these teachers were aware that what they were doing was unethical, and even then, they blamed the turbulence in the nation. The study further revealed that those teachers who neglected the very students at school trapped them at home for extra tutorial engagement, dubbed 'home tutoring' (Interview: Participants, school teachers T1, T3, T9, and 14). Students were charged as much as USD 10, and a home class could carry as many as twenty students (Interview: Participant T1). Some even became so daring that they offered these extra lessons at the schools where they worked, using school resources:

"We have teachers in one of the schools; I will not mention the name; it was discovered they were using the school premises to do their extra lessons. So, the regional office descended upon them, and almost the whole lot that was teaching grades five, six, and seven were discharged," (Participant T11, school teacher).

It emerged that these were caught by the Ministry of Education officials, brought to a hearing, and dismissed from the service. The question that lingers is, "How many remained uncaught but were in the same practice?"

Massive Brain Drain
The study established that there was an exodus of trained teachers from the schools and the country. The juvenile teachers that replaced them, both trained and untrained, failed to perform their duties with the professionalism, experience, and integrity that was applied by those they replaced. One school head had this to say on this issue:

"From my observation, the Zimbabwean curriculum and the Zimbabwean teaching profession have been good. The problem we are facing now is that we have young kids who have just graduated, and the majority of the seasoned teachers who were supposed to groom these 'kids' to understand the expectations of the system are no longer there." (Participant H3, school head)

The data generated from both the school heads and the teachers unanimously agrees that the teacher-pupil ratios are too high, and some have pointed out 1:60 in the secondary school and 1:40 in the primary school,

"The teacher-pupil ratio is too high; you have about 60 students, and you have five classes. The teacher's load should be reduced to get quality results because a teacher is also a human being. You can imagine when a teacher has seven classes with 60 kids, and you expect that teacher to give two or three exercises per week." (Participant T1, school teacher)

The teacher said they get overworked, frustrated, and fatigued, creating backlashes against the system. When ethical leadership fails, the immediate 'beneficiary' of this concoction is the learner. These high teacher-pupil ratios are a result of the brain drain and the failure to replace some of these teachers who go on maternity, sick, or annual leave. When the ratios are this high, the teachers said they were forced to neglect giving learners regular exercises; if they do, they do not mark the large volumes, particularly in content subjects such as history, Shona, and English, it emerged.

Forty-five thousand teachers were said to have been lost to the exodus, (Coltart, 2010). Now, going by these statistics, the issue raised by the participants, is that schools are mainly staffed by young and recently trained personnel, and in some cases, untrained ones. A sentiment is shared in that regard:

"Remember, most of our teachers are now inexperienced and young because of brain drain. The majority of those seasoned, trained teachers have left for greener pastures, so of late we have just these young graduates. They need money, they need joy, and they need their social life. So, we invite the Ministry of Education to come and try to conscientize these 'kids.'" Participant H4, school head).

While there is no problem with being young and newly trained, the aspect of mentoring and professional guidance from seasoned members is heavily compromised, creating a void that comes back to haunt the schools' ethical leadership.

Political Violence Against Teachers
Participant T10, a school teacher narrated an incident that occurred in Marondera, where teachers from a certain school were frog-marched by their students to a political base and were bitten in front of their very students, for supporting the opposition party. Both the school heads and the teachers indicated that violence against teachers was common, particularly during the run-up to elections. She said:

These teachers abandon their stations until it is safe to return. The majority of them do not return at all, and those present suffer with their load, the Ministry does not replace them quickly at all, (Participant T10, school teacher).

The non-replacement of these teachers created understaffing causing the already high teacher-pupil ratios to skyrocket.

The Practicality of Ethical Leadership Amid Turbulence
This question was raised "How practical is ethical leadership in schools amid this turmoil?" The data generated regarding the practicability of school ethical leadership during turbulence points to the fact that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain ethical leadership in schools amid such turbulence. For us to conclude thus, is based on the participants' sentiments, and also on what is raised below. One school head said:

"You are now caught in between; you need to carry on or adhere to your ethics, but you see the teacher is caught in the slumber. Because you are also in the same predicament as these teachers, but you are supposed to lead by example, but what example are you going to show? It's a bit tricky and difficult." (Participant H2, school head)

The participants confessed their disgruntlement, lack of resources, apprehensiveness, and high-stress levels caused by the turbulence; this created an environment tantamount to making ethical leadership very difficult to impossible in such a scenario. Here are some of the other expressions made to that effect:

"Yaaaa, it is very difficult to balance the situation, sir. We are trying to work under these circumstances. But we are finding it very difficult to work. We are failing to meet most of our mandates. Yaaaa, we are failing." (Participant H2, school head)

"However, one needs to strike a balance between being harsh, though the Public Service Commission (PSC) expects us to follow the rules to the letter. However, you find it difficult, but we try to strike a balance because you know what the members of staff are facing". (Participant H1, school head)

When the researchers probed further into how he was dealing with this kind of dilemma as a school head, he said he could not force the teacher to close his business because probably that was his only source of income that he was surviving on. So, in the end, the school heads allowed the teachers to be absent from work, doing their private business elsewhere, resulting in unethical practices. The sentiments registered by this school head are similar to those of his colleagues. The voices and experiences presented and discussed above were associated with the turbulence prevailing in Marondera and elsewhere in the country, which, if not put to bay, will continue to negatively affect ethical leadership in the schools.

Discussion

One priority area in this study was to establish whether the participants understood what ethical school leadership is, they showed they fully understood. The verbal attestations from participants H1 and T4 above indicate an understanding of what ethical conduct entails. Related responses were also obtained from the other participants, where ethical leadership was associated with punctuality, dignified communication, etiquette, kindness and patience with the learners, good grooming, mentoring, accountability, and trustworthiness. Such an understanding is important to this study, it forms the basis of sound ethical leadership in the schools. The cited participants displayed how ethical leadership works: that when entrusted with a task, one must participate because, through that, a person exercises ethics, and is also humanized in the process. Ethical school leadership has been stated as a duty to the community, and a contractual obligation. The participants' understanding of ethical leadership resonates with what Meylahn and Musiyambiri (2017) postulate, that ethics-driven school leadership cannot exclude the values of *Ubuntu* because the two, *Ubuntu* and leadership per se, are interlinked since they focus on human servanthood and offer fundamental underpinnings of ethical school leadership values.

The importance of ethical leadership in schools is discussed in this paragraph. The participants were very clear on the importance of school ethical leadership, viz, as the foundation for staff and learner discipline, accountability, role modelling, dress code, punctuality, and harmony. Thus, ethical leadership is being raised as a compass for directing both teachers and learners toward curriculum achievement while observing humanness and tranquillity. Khoza (2012) views this as attuned leadership, a leadership that values people and espouses Ubuntu concepts to achieve its goals.

A question was asked under the findings of the study, to establish if there were any unethical leadership practices in the Marondera schools, the results indicated that there were many. All the participants agreed that the current turbulence in the country was the ultimate cause of these unethical school leadership practices. Data from the heads of schools showed that circumstances forced them to give in on their ethical leadership stance to permit teachers' absence, this was against the ministerial code of conduct, the regulations state that teachers should be in school during working hours. The subsequent paragraphs dwell more on discussing the findings on the raised individual types of unethical school leadership practices and their implications.

The unethical practice of teacher absenteeism, Theme 1 above, was triggered by many factors, such as salary erosion due to hyperinflation and late payment of remuneration. The prevailing turbulence was painted as directly causing all these practices. The strongly raised sentiment was that teachers are humans, and they are not spared from what is going on in the country. They emphatically stressed that as much as they want to practice ethical leadership, they are constrained by the need to survive, and the system is pushing them to the cliff-edge. Masango (2011) indicates that the widespread death of ethical leadership in high offices is the catalyst behind unethical practices in these schools and in other government departments. Helliker and Murisa (2020) and Mazorodze (2023) share the same view that the change from Mugabe to Mnangagwa was dishing the same stew on different plates. They argue the cronies of Mugabe will take time to purge from the

government systems, particularly the civil service that drives government departments. Furthermore, the same people Mugabe used are being used by Mnangagwa, given that they are from the same political party.

When salaries and bonuses get eroded by hyperinflation, the major motivator for teachers to come to work ceases to exist. Teachers seek alternative means to survive, hence the flouting of school ethical leadership practices. As a result, there is a backlash against the system. When ethical leadership fails, the immediate 'beneficiary' of this concoction is the learner.

These high teacher-pupil ratios are a result of the brain drain and the failure to replace some of these teachers who go on maternity, sick, or annual leave, die, or retire. The ratios, too, are a result of the little to no funding available for the education sector due to the current turbulence in the country. When the ratios are this high, the teachers neglect giving learners exercises; if they do, they cannot mark such large volumes, particularly in content subjects such as history, Shona, and English. Forty-five thousand teachers were said to have been lost to the exodus, the then Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Coltart (2010). The issue raised by the participants is that schools are mainly staffed by young and recently trained personnel, and in some cases, untrained ones. While there is no problem with being young and newly trained, the aspect of mentoring and professional guidance from seasoned members is heavily compromised, creating a void that comes back to haunt the profession ethically (Mangena, 2011).

Political violence against teachers has created turbulences whose ripple effects harm ethical leadership in the schools. When teachers can no longer have control over their learners, as in the case narrated where teachers were taken to a political base by their students, there are serious ethical leadership problems in such schools. One such problem is a loss of respect and a lack of control by the teachers, which results in learner indiscipline. If this incident is measured in Shapiro and Gross's (2013) turbulence theory scale, it would fall under extreme turbulence, where control is completely lost by the pilot; in this case, our school personnel, being the pilots, would have lost control.

The voices and experiences presented and discussed above can be traced back to the turbulence prevailing in Marondera and elsewhere in the country, which, if not put to bay, will continue to negatively affect ethical school leadership. Khoza (2017) proposes that those turbulent times require responsible and responsive leadership that respects ethical tenets and can identify the nature of the problem, how it is manifesting, and the severity of the challenge it poses. He further argues that real ethical leaders do not succumb during times of turbulence, but they tame the turbulence.

Viewed from Gross and Shapiro's (2013) turbulence theory perspective, political and economic will to change the external environmental turbulent forces, is needed, these are hitting ethical school leadership hard. The internal manifestations, from the viewpoint of the turbulence theory, are just creating ripple effects, so by fixing the external source, ethical leadership will be restored. This external turbulence has its roots in the crumbled economy, which has created a plethora of ripple effects pouring from the unethical practices raised by school heads and teachers (Nguyen et. al,2017; Forster, 2012).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to interrogate the practicability of ethical leadership in schools amidst socio-political and economic turmoil. This was done by reviewing the experiences of school heads and teachers in the Marondera district. The results indicate that school heads and teachers know what is expected of them on ethical leadership and conduct in the schools. It emerged from the study that the current socio-political and economic turbulence prevailing in the country has adverse effects on school personnel and renders ethical leadership very difficult. Conceptually, the study promulgates that when survival is threatened, everything else becomes secondary. In this study, where teacher survival was threatened, ethical leadership played second fiddle to survival. Addressing the issues threatening teacher survival would be the only solution to restoring ethical school leadership. From a theoretical perspective, positionality matters much; by positionality, we mean where one stands within turbulence, and this is very vital in that it determines how one views and reacts to the turbulence.

The study recommends several interventions to restore ethical school leadership; a multi-sectoral approach involving government, parents, labour unions, international donor agencies, and bodies as well as the teachers themselves. Again, a multi-dimensional focus on teacher remuneration, restoring professionalism

and teacher dignity, training and support for the young newly trained teachers, and political will to engage all stakeholders is needed. Furthermore, a change in educational funding structures is critical, this has been revealed to be the most turbulent factor affecting teacher remuneration and school resourcing. Lastly, a larger scale study that includes private and high fee-paying schools to establish more variables regarding the effects of turbulence on education nationally and perchance regionally would be ideal.

Informed Consent Statement: Consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study, the school heads, and teachers.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare there is no conflict when it comes to interest.

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