Editorial: Disseminating good leadership practices across the globe

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Editorial: Disseminating Good Leadership Practices across the Globe

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In this new issue of IJELM, we are going to consider leadership practices in very different parts of the globe. In spite of cultural differences among countries, that exist nowadays and all over the globe, leadership has some common traits and practices. Furthermore, outstanding leaders usually have certain common personal attributes and skills, such as being collaborative or motivational –although there are also differences among leaders-.

In this sense, and according to Hallinger (2009:11), the most recent reviews of the empirical literature on educational leadership “appear to confirm that general leadership models […] do not capture the type of leadership that makes a difference for student learning in schools (Ball et al., 2003; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2004, 2006; Robinson et al., 2008; Southworth, 2002, 2003). Instead, the reviewers suggest that successful school leadership must include a core of leadership practices that we may term educational, instructional, or learning-centered”.

This means that in spite of all the cultural differences and differences in leadership behavior, good leaders all over the world use similar leadership
practices. This is important because research has shown that good leadership is associated with improvement for organizations (Orr & Orphanos, 2011) and also—and indirectly—and also with student achievement to some extent (Bhengu & Mkhize, 2013).

Furthermore, a great quantity of academics and researchers all over the world focus on leadership practices as a means to improving leadership and achievement. For example, after analyzing the work of McREL researchers (Marzano et al., 2005), Hanlin (2014:33) states that “researchers identified 66 practices grouped into 21 leadership responsibilities”. The Wallace study on Leadership arrived at similar conclusions (Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom and Anderson, 2010), as well as the Marzano School Leadership evaluation Model (Marzano, 2012) and Day et al. (2010) in their “Ten strong claims about successful school leadership”, which is a survey they conducted for the NCLSCS.

The practices grouped by all these researchers are visible all over the world, as our readers will see in the following pages of our Journal. In the case of educational leadership, these leadership practices are related to vision and goals, as well as to culture, structure and instruction. All these ways of doing things are at the core level of this new issue of IJELM. Trust is the glue that holds these practices together and it is the necessary condition for an outstanding collaborative leadership.

In this fifth issue of IJELM, we rely as usual on four articles: the first one, by Flores Fahara, Rodríguez Bulnes and García Quintanilla, explores the creation of a professional learning community in a Mexican public elementary school. In the second article, Parés goes in depth into the profile of principals in Mexican basic education. Moving to Africa, Olayiwola and Alabi take a close look at Nigerian educational leadership; while in the fourth article we continue on to Catalonia (Spain) where Xavier Ureta describes his life story, highlighting the most important aspects of his experience as a principal. All these articles show that, in spite of cultural and geographical differences, good leaders as a whole adopt similar leadership practices.

To end this new issue of IJELM, García Carrión, provides us with a splendid book review that analyzes David Frost’s work on teacher leadership, adding some powerful reflections on the traits and skills of educational leaders stating that “every single teacher can lead and act strategically” (García Carrión, 2015, p. 219).
With each number that we publish, IJELM contributes to knowledge and research on leadership. In this issue, core successful leadership practices are analysed in order to ascertain whether there are differences in leadership around the world. The contributors to this journal show that similarities are greater than differences, and this is good news.

References


