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Editorial: Human oriented leadership

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Editorial: Human Oriented Leadership

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Dear readers, welcome to the seventh issue of IJELM. In this new issue we have very different contributions: from the communicative skills of leaders in Nigeria, to the perceptions that student-leaders have about themselves in Granada (Spain), or a research done in the United States about principals and second language programs. Coming from Spain, there are also two contributions more: an article on ethic leadership in the field of education, and a book review on courageous leadership, equity and social justice.

All these articles show that something is changing in the field of leadership. The notions related to a Great Man have been changed for a new kind of leader and leadership which are more human oriented and caring, more democratic and extended, more concerned with social issues and ethics, more worried about communication and communicating. In all the articles and in the book review, we will see that as we begin the 21st century, there is an increased focus on leadership for social justice and better schools, instead of focusing on the leaders as it was common before.

In the opening article, Dr. Fashiku Christopher Oluwatoyin, from the OAU (Obafemi Awolowo University), investigates the influence leaders' communication pattern has on lecturers' job performance in some colleges of

education in Nigeria. With a sample of 500 respondents of a survey, both academic staff and students, the author concludes recommending that leaders use democratic communication patterns in order to improve the government of their institutions.

In the second article, Yolanda Padron and Hersh Waxman, from the College of Education and Human Development of Texas A & M University, explore also a topic related with communicative skills: principals' knowledge and perceptions of second language programs for English Language Learners. An open-ended survey and in-depth interviews with 22 elementary school principals from a district in the south of the U.S. are used to examine elementary school principals' knowledge of the second language programs implemented at their schools. It seems that these principals are not aware of what is happening in the classrooms, something that is very important if they want to be good instructional leaders and improve the outcomes in their schools. The administrators often lack the appropriate training needed for taking care of these new English language learners. As the authors say: "knowing how teachers should implement second language programs appropriately can assist principals in providing support to teachers as well as determining the type of training that their teachers may need in working more effectively with ELLs" (p. 127). This research is well related with those studies that suggest that leadership preparation programs should take into account minority students, due to the lack of preparation that is observed in a lot of school principals (Spring, 2001)

The third article belongs to Sofía Unda, from Universidad Internacional de la Rioja, an online university in Spain. The author explores the self-perception of university leaders related to the practice of ethical leadership. Ethical leadership is another concept that is advancing in leadership studies, and it can be defined as the process of influencing people through principles and values. As Brown, Treviño and Harrison (2005) declared, there is still little empirical research focused on the ethical dimension of leadership and this is the field that Unda searches. Sofia Unda studies how university managers working in Social Councils, University Boards as well as other university teams perceive themselves exercising their ethical leadership. The author interviews 29 university managers both at public and private national universities all over Spain and concludes that there are five categories of university managers' self-perception that she catalogues in the article.

Last, but not least, the fourth article comes also from Spain and is written by El Homrani, Conde Lacárcel and Ávalos Ruiz. This team examines the role and impact of 73 university students that are leaders at the Universidad de Granada. The researchers analyze the main features that characterize these students, specially their ethical commitment. The academics also study the work of these young leaders: using surveys, focus groups and interviews, the authors describe the perceptions, difficulties and responsibilities of the student-leaders and conclude describing ways of improving their work.

As usual, IJELM finishes with a book review. In this case, Salvans is examining a book published by ASCD and titled *Excellence through equity: Five principles of Courageous Leadership to guide achievement for every student*, written by Alan Blankstein and Pedro Noguera. As it is reflected in the title, the authors explore two great constructs: equity and courageous leadership. Why these two concepts? Because usually when we think about equity, the word evokes a win-lose scenario: if we do more for the disadvantaged, it will mean there will be less for the advantaged. It requires courage to change this perception and the book provides examples of brave leaders who are doing great things to promote excellence for all and through equity.

We hope you enjoy this new issue and the reflections that can be found behind these papers.

Mireia Tintoré,
Editor

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