Exploring Educational Leadership for a Decade, Now What?

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A decade ago now, I had the enormous pleasure and honour of publishing the first issue of the *International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management, IJELM*, a journal that was born in Spain with the aim of joining the dialogue on educational leadership that, at that time, was still an almost whole patrimony of the Anglo-Saxon countries. It is true that, as the title of the journal indicates, leadership was not the only issue that concerned us, we were also interested in everything that referred to management in the educational field, but we were aware that much had been written about management, and very good, and now it was time to delve into leadership.

In Spain, there was no academic journal on educational leadership at that time, and this gap - apart from IJELM - has not yet been filled today. In addition, the journal was born with an international vocation, so from the beginning, we tried to incorporate studies from places where publications on leadership and management were more common but also from other countries where publishing on these topics was more complex and less frequent.

The first editorial of IJELM, stated that the journal aimed to develop a community of professionals and scholars focused on Education and
Leadership, Organizational Learning, Organizational Studies in Education, and all the pressing issues in the field of study related to the organization and management of educational institutions. The aim was to support the improvement of educational contexts by focusing on people who could exercise leadership in those contexts.

Ten years have passed, and we can ensure that these objectives are being met and that the journal has gradually advanced in all these areas, especially leadership. Throughout this time, we have had publications from the five continents, with the participation of 82 universities corresponding to 22 countries (32 European universities, 29 American, of which 20 belong to the United States, 11 Asian, 8 African, and one from Oceania). The thematic lines developed by the authors correspond with the journal's objectives and the evolution of educational centres' leadership and management over the years. For this reason, and even though both management and organization are central topics in our journal, there is a total dominance of leadership studies, as shown by the following word cloud made with the keywords that our academics have been recording on each article (Figure 1), and the graph that can be seen below (Figure 2).

Figure 1
Word cloud based on the keywords that appeared in IJELM articles between July 2013 and January 2023
The cloud and the graph show how leadership significantly exceeds management in terms of the topics of the published papers and that many works focus on the principal, perhaps forgetting other leadership agents. These results align with the trends observed throughout this period during which international research has been clearly focused on leadership within the educational center and, more specifically, on the principal's leadership. For example, the concept of teacher leadership only appears once among the keywords, and student leadership only appears twice. From these pages, we call to try to improve this trend because these are two critical topics on which more research is needed.

The 30 articles related to leadership models range from very emerging models, such as sustainable leadership, to models that are also novel but in a certain sense already classic, such as instructional and learning leadership (6 articles), distributed leadership (5 articles) or leadership for social justice (5 articles). However, we miss the concept of transforming leadership among the keywords analyzed. In addition, some ideas related to these leadership models
are repeated among the keywords, for example, equity, inclusion, education for integration, poverty, or special needs, which are related to leadership for social justice; or change, improvement, collaboration, professional learning communities, or participation, which may relate to leadership for learning and distributed leadership. In this sense, IJELM has evolved with the times, and we hope it will continue to do so.

The issue of leadership development also has its place in many studies, which include, in addition to what is related to training, what refers to the monitoring or mentoring of leaders in the preparation process. The relationship between leadership and school climate, as well as the relationship with innovation, are among the most cited keywords, suggesting the importance of leadership for improving school culture and increasing modernization.

In these ten years that have elapsed, IJELM has positioned itself in the rankings and improved its indexing. We want to continue along this path so that the journal interests many more academics and that research in educational leadership improves education and society. We would also like to open up to emerging themes, such as leadership at the middle tier of the education system or system leadership, and expand the number of countries collaborating with us to disseminate educational leadership knowledge.

All this work would not have been possible without the commitment of the two editors who took over the academic journal in 2017, Marta Camarero-Figuerola and Gisela Redondo-Sama, from the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Spain). Gisela and Marta have carried the journal on their shoulders for seven of the ten years we are celebrating here today, and throughout this time, they have done an excellent job. I want to thank them from these pages sincerely. Without Marta and Gisela, this journal would not have reached its first decade or the levels of quality it enjoys today—heartfelt thanks to both of you on my behalf and behalf of the journal. We wish you that the new decade will be as rich and productive as the one we are leaving now.