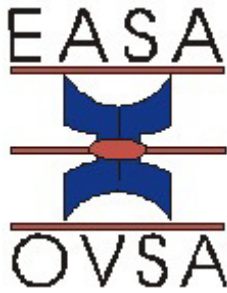


Call for Papers: Special Issue



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Educational Leadership and Organisational Development and Change in a Developing Country Context

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There are some strong indications that leadership is fundamental to the improvement of the quality of education (Bush, 2009, 2012; Hallinger, 2011; Huber, 2004), although there does not appear to be conclusive empirical evidence of a direct link between leadership and education improvement over the longer term (five years and more) (Bush, 2012; Hallinger, 2011). This issue must be contextualised in an emerging economy, and a society still changing into a fully-fledged democracy, where social justice and equity are key issues to be addressed by school leaders. The socio-economic status – and specifically the diversity in the socio-economic composition of emerging economies – proves to be a further challenge to ensuring quality education for all learners. Schools in historically disadvantaged areas may experience different challenges from those in advantaged areas, but the learner composition in the latter has since changed which provides different challenges. Leaders are challenged not to succumb under the pressure of challenges like service delivery and lack of support from parents and provincial departments of education, or new policies, which demands development and change for teachers.

Principals cannot prevent new curricula or new policies, where it must be kept in mind that a new policy or curriculum does not in itself achieve new academic standards simply by virtue of being issued. Leaders need people to implement policy, and therefore leadership implies followership and relationships, motivation, trust and respect, vision, and willingness to challenge the status quo. Leadership is contextual, and seeks solutions, rather than excuses. This conceptualisation of leadership is founded on research in anthropology, sociology and psychology, and therefore, perspectives from these fields on leadership in the educational context are valuable.

It is well established that there are challenges in the education system, and specifically in schools (including at levels and in structures outside of schools); hence, this issue will focus on what leadership can do to change the current unacceptable level of performance, and why leadership appears unable to bring about change in performance on a larger scale.

There are already some exceptional examples of schools performing against all odds, and from these successes we can learn and theorise about educational change on a larger systemic scale. A deeper understanding of leadership practice and theorising about these practices are required in order to support sustainable development and change. Current issues in leadership that require attention include the need to lead towards diversity, social justice, and leadership for the sake of quality education, and not only for the examination system.

Among the greatest challenges to leaders in all organisations is the continuous nature of change and the speed of change (Dennis, 2014), which requires intrinsic longer-term motivation, rather than short-term, spur-of-the-moment motivational activities. The critical question is whether leaders understand the change and resistance process and are truly prepared to lead in and through change. Dennis (2014) emphasises that it is more important to, among other things, develop educational leaders' decision-making skills and emotional competencies, rather than just their skill in the legal process, drafting a budget, or the technical process to appoint a staff member. This development, according to Schaap, Baartman and De Bruijn (2012), needs the internalisation of new knowledge, skills and values, where, without such internalisation there may be less change and development. The implication for leadership development is that leaders can provide the context, opportunity and motivation for people to develop, but cannot effect development in people.

For the purpose of this special issue, a leader is defined as any person in a post or position, who is able to provide leadership at any level in any educational organisation, including non-governmental organisations.

This issue encourages articles that focus on practice, but would like to specifically invite articles of a conceptual and theoretical nature. The challenge is forwarded to emphasise the theories underpinning the process of change or the lack thereof in schools in South Africa as a developing country. Researchers from developing countries in particular are invited to submit articles for inclusion in this special issue.

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Closing date for submissions: 15 April 2016