

### CHALLENGES FACING SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN A POST-COVID WORLD

The roles of school principals have changed substantially in a post-covid world. The challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic such as school closures, children out of school (UNESCO, 2020), leading schools virtually (Sahlberg, 2020), continuing education remotely with limited resources (Adams et al., 2021), unanticipated circumstances (Longmuir, 2021), crisis management, and ensuring school staff and student welfare (Bush, 2021) needed principals to be strong instructional leaders (Adams et al., 2019). During the pandemic, principals remained the main person accountable for the school's immediate goals while ensuring the learning and teaching processes gradually return to 'normal' (Adams et al., 2021; Bush, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the many inequities in education facing children and youth from low-income counties, single-parent families, immigrants and refugees, indigenous communities, and children with special education needs. These schoolchildren in many parts of the world suffered from being deprived of physical learning opportunities, inadequate internet access, social and emotional support, and additional support services such as meals in schools (Cerna, Rutigliano & Mezzanotte, 2020). In addition, parents support for home-schooling and working hand-in-hand with teachers was needed more than ever to provide the best learning conditions and support for their children during school closures.

As schools began to gradually reopen across the globe, school principals need to guarantee equity and inclusion of all schoolchildren. The co-operation between the school leadership team and policymakers is the key to ensure a holistic approach to inclusive school re-opening. School principals must first ensure the safety for both students and teachers. The well-being of students should be prioritised, and teachers should be encouraged to be proactive and creative in meeting the needs of their students. Close contact with parents remains crucial and creating strong links within the school community will be an added advantage. Additionally, school principals need to ensure ongoing communication with state authorities for them to provide resources in creating a safe, supportive and inclusive school for all students.

This issue of IOJEL features a paper by Firas Imfadi Abuhola and Zuraidah Abdullah focusing on the management of gifted students' identification in middle eastern countries by reviewing the teachers' contributions. A systematic review on 11 articles found four main themes, namely academic achievements, lack of specific concepts for gifted students, teacher training and experience, and the effectiveness of early identification and intervention. This review stimulates the efforts of initiating and enriching research in nurturing giftedness among children, which will strengthen the creative and innovative outcomes of gifted individuals in other parts of the world.

Joanna Loura Jimbun and colleagues present findings from a bibliometric analysis of 87 documents to identify research on exploitative leadership. Previous research has largely focused on authoritarian, bureaucratic, and destructive leadership. However, in recent times, considerable attention has been paid to exploitative leadership, in which a leader acts in an excessively self-interested and exploitative manner toward others. The bibliometric analysis studies on exploitative leadership in developing countries remain relatively low, however, the authors predicts it may enter a growth phase in the future.

have pointed out several negative consequences of exploitative leadership such as reduced employee's job satisfaction and organizational commitment as well as increased job burnout and workplace bias (Wang et al., 2021). Nevertheless, up until this date, no bibliometric analysis of exploitative leadership were carried out and published. Thus, this study explores the publication pattern of dark leadership with consideration to the roles of the managers and the supervisors.

The final paper of this issue focus on humanistic aspects of leadership in education. Nai-Cheng Kuo and Keonna Stanley provides a fresh new perspective on school leadership grounded in humanity. The authors felt this perspective will help school leaders tackle the root of problems that cause people to suffer and help students lead fulfilled lives. Their article explores three exemplary leaders: Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Daisaku Ikeda, all of whom have profound impacts on education and society. The humanistic values and the implications of these values in education are discussed in great depth.

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