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Editorial: Presidents, principals and teachers. New ways of leading schools and universities

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Editorial: Presidents, Principals and Teachers. New Ways of Leading Schools and Universities

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We begin another year of IJELM with a renewed illusion. In the first editorial of last year, we congratulated ourselves for the very different geographical backgrounds of our authors, although we also stated that “we will be very pleased to receive further submissions from other areas” (Tintoré, 2014, p. 3) and we cited specifically Latin-America. In this new issue we are pleased to introduce four articles from five academics that, even living and working in other countries, have in common their Iberian or Latin-American origins.

From very different perspectives, this new issue of IJELM presents researches about university presidents, women in top high school positions, school principals, and teachers who want to improve their organizations being leaders at the same time.

The current issue of IJELM begins with an article by Dr. Roser Salavert, a Catalan researcher and practitioner living at New York. Dr. Salavert explores

both coaching and leadership, and points out that coaching partnership can help students – especially in underperforming schools- to avoid the cycle of failure. She defends the apprenticeship approach like that of medieval times, when apprentices learned with on-the-job training beside a master until they themselves become the next experts, prepared to lead another novices. She concludes saying that the collaboration and actions around leadership and instructional coaching stimulate the acquisition of knowledge and the mastery of skills in the learner (Salavert, 2015, p. 19).

Readers can learn about the lights and shadows of teamwork in the case study from a Catalan university introduced by Galtés and Tomás in the second article. From data obtained through documental analysis, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire, the authors provide insights into how university teachers perceive their teamwork and what should be done in order to improve their effectiveness. Galtés and Tomás recommend considering teacher teams as an internal strategy for institutional growth at universities.

Moving from the Iberian Peninsula to Latin-America, we present the last two articles. In the third article of the present issue, López Delgado examines, from Birmingham, the appointment of school heads in Mexican primary schools based on a system called “El escalafón” (the ladder), promulgated more than 40 years ago. His research examines the promotion system, its strengths and shortcomings, and concludes that it is necessary to thoroughly revise the system, to increase still more the transparency of the processes, and to make an accurate selection of the best candidates to be school heads.

The second article from Latin-America ends this first part of our journal with the reflections of the vice president of the Finis Terrae University in Chile. Doctor Vega explores from a theoretical point of view, the academic leadership of some university presidents in Latin-America comparing how they perform leadership with the academic literature on the subject. We find especially relevant his study of the history of leadership and his reflections on this subject. Vega denounces the lack of research on management in universities, especially in his geographical area, and ends the article with some suggestions in order to improve research on this subject.

Our book review, prepared by Doctor Carmen Carrillo, closes the issue introducing a recent publication coordinated by Longman and Madsen, within the “Women and Leadership” book series. This new book series on women leadership is supported by the International Leadership Association in concert with Information Age Publishing. “Women & Leadership in Higher

Education” – the book we are reviewing - is the first volume in the series. The book begins with a foreword from the recently died and extraordinary academic on leadership, Warren Bennis. Bennis thanks the ILA for promoting this kind of subject, which he considers of extraordinary importance.

The editors open the book with a great statement that shows the nature of the rest of chapters: ”Some leaders are born female” meaning that women leadership is still something odd, even in the USA and in the field of higher education. As the authors say: “Higher Education has much to gain by identifying, preparing and advancing more high-potential women into leadership roles” (Longman & Madsen, 2014, p. X). Considering the importance of this theme, we strongly recommend the reading of this new book and we will consider contributions to the journal based on this subject.

We cannot finish this issue without a new call to expand our geographical area: we still need more contributions from Asia and we hope to receive some articles from Africa in order to capture the diversity of the leadership discipline all over the world. All of them will be welcomed.

As the publication of this issue arrived to the end, we received news of the death of two great leaders and founders of the Leadership Discipline: James MacGregor Burns and Warren Bennis. From the pages of *IJELM*, we want to pay a tribute to these extraordinary researchers and practitioners of leadership. Thank you, James and Warren, for your contribution to leadership studies. We will try to follow the path you opened.

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