

# THEORIES, PRACTICES AND DIGITAL INNOVATIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION



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## **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: THEORY, AND PRACTICE**

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### **Introduction**

There is great interest in educational leadership in the early part of the 21st century because of the widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and student outcomes. There is also increasing recognition that schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible education for their learners. Schools need trained and committed teachers but they, in turn, need the leadership of highly effective principals and support from other senior and middle managers. While the need for effective leaders is widely acknowledged, there is much less certainty about which leadership behaviours are most likely to produce favourable outcomes. I examine the theoretical underpinning of the field of educational leadership and management, assess different leadership models, and discuss the evidence of their relative effectiveness in developing successful schools.

### **The significance of educational leadership and management**

There is great interest in educational leadership in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is because of the widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and student outcomes. In many parts of the world, including South Africa, there is recognition that schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible education for their learners. As the global economy gathers pace, more governments are realising that their main assets are their people and that remaining, or becoming, competitive depends increasingly on the

situation, rather than adopting a 'one size fits all' stance: This approach assumes that what is important is how leaders respond to the unique organizational circumstances or problems ... there are wide variations in the contexts for leadership and that, to be effective, these contexts require different leadership responses ... individuals providing leadership, typically those in formal positions of authority, are capable of mastering a large repertoire of leadership practices

### Conclusion

Leadership can be understood as a process of influence based on clear values and beliefs and leading to a 'vision' for the school. The vision is articulated by leaders who seek to gain the commitment of staff and stakeholders to the ideal of a better future for the school, its learners and stakeholders. They provide distinctive but one-dimensional perspectives on school leadership. This means attempting to change the mind-set of leaders to regard the processes of teaching and learning as central to their role rather than simply leaving such matters to educators.

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