

Leadership and diversity in Education in England: progress in the new millennium?

Editorial

We are delighted to be able to present this Invited Special Issue of *Management in Education* on “**Leadership and diversity in Education in England: progress in the new millennium?**” This theme straddles two important issues: diversity in leadership in England, and the degree to which progress has been or is being made in diversifying the educational leadership landscape.

Research and academic and political debates about ‘leadership and diversity’ in education, have, in recent years, been prolific, although the impact of these have been negligible. Whereas the student and staff populations in education institutions are becoming more diverse, the evidence suggest that diversity in leadership is still lagging behind this evolving trend (DfE, 2017; HESA, 2016). It appears therefore that, despite marginal increases in diversity in the educational workforce, and the strong potential for individuals from all backgrounds to contribute to educational leadership, diversity in educational leadership remains is arguably an aspiration at both the policy and practice levels. While gender equality has made some strides and is clearly more visible across all sectors, there is a considerable way to in addressing the underrepresentation of people, for example, from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds (BAME or BME) in senior roles in higher education (HE) (Leadership Foundation 2015, Singh and Kwhali 2015; Bhopal and Brown 2016; Miller, 2016) as well as in schools (NASUWT, 2015).

Whilst this issue focuses primarily on BAME and leadership issues, we recognise that ethnicity, however, is only one part of diversity. We recognise ‘diversity’ as a concept that encompasses many qualities some of which might be easily visible, for example race, gender, religious affiliations and disabilities, and others less visible, for example class or sexual orientation. A key tenet in this special issue is that negative stereotypes can automatically categorise and exclude individuals from leadership on the basis of presumed difference (Coleman 2012). In 2012, Coleman identified the need for more research focused on leadership and diversity and in 2018, although much more research is available, lack of progress in diversity and educational leadership remain a hugely problematic feature of education in England.

This special issue examines the debate on the career progression of BME individuals within educational leadership in England (and beyond) and explores challenges and debates while also interrogating leadership practice through a range of available lenses, models and theoretical frameworks. It seeks to locate the dimensions of leadership and diversity in education within critical theoretical discourses such as post-structuralism and post-colonialism with an emphasis on social justice as a key category of analysis. The authors explore the experiences of BAME staff in education in relation to both access and outcomes, and critique practices of educational leaders and policy-makers which continue to influence and shape their career trajectories- in schools, further and higher education.

The paper by Moorosi, Fuller & Reilly provides an international analysis of Black women leaders’ constructions of successful leadership. This paper recognises the limited attention given to black female ‘leadership narratives’. Using a life history approach, the paper provides a multi-national comparative analysis of the experiences of black women leaders in England, South Africa and the United States. The findings highlight the important role of race and gender in education, drawing on intersectionality to understand these comparative experiences.

The international theme is sustained by Miller who explores the career progression of Overseas Trained Teachers (OTT) in England. Drawing on theories of social identity and personal agency, Miller

examines how hostile and racialised migration and educational policies have advantaged the career progression of OTTs from White industrialised societies, whilst simultaneously disadvantaging those from non-White developing, non-industrialised countries. From this study of OTTs recruited to teach in primary and secondary schools in England between 2008- 2014, Miller concludes that whereas all OTTs appear to be surviving, only some appear to be thriving.

Callender also uses an innovative life histories methodological approach to examine the experiences of black male teachers in primary schools in England. Callender's research provides insights into the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender and class and explores how aspiring BME male leaders negotiate the education landscape against a backdrop of challenging structural experiences. The paper draws on both Critical Race Theory (CRT) and intersectionality to explore challenging professional and socio-identity themes to shed light on perspectives in England.

Elton-Chalcraft, Chapman and Kendrick explores factors inhibiting and/or encouraging women and men from BAME backgrounds in pursuing leadership roles in teaching. Based on research commissioned by the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), this paper explores the value and effectiveness of NCTL funded leadership pathways designed in supporting BAME progression to leadership. The paper adopts a grounded theory approach and highlights several significant differences between participants from BAME backgrounds and for women and men generally. Their findings are particularly useful for course and curriculum design in HE.

Distributed leadership has enjoyed a period of positive expansion and consolidation throughout the education sector in recent years. However, there is some recognition that distributed leadership as a practice needs further testing before generalised conclusions can be drawn about its usefulness and impact in education. In her paper, Joslyn applies the concept of cultural cloning as a methodological tool to explore the socio-cultural factors that shape and influence relationships within participatory models of distributed leadership model to examine the impact of this approach to leadership on the progress of BME leaders and aspiring leaders. This paper explores structural and process factors to examine key concepts such as cultural sameness and cultural difference and the nature of organisational aversion to difference to convey the impact on BME employees.

Arday suggests that educational leadership, particularly when aligned to the primacy of race in the context of education remains oblivious to some individuals responsible for and/or involved in the career progression of BME students/ academics. The challenges encountered by BME students/ academics in plotting a career trajectory that ends with a leadership role are examined in this paper. Based on the narratives of BME individuals in educational leadership positions in HE, this paper explores ways and techniques for advancing the discourse diversity in educational leadership.

It is believed this Special Issue will have widespread relevance to researchers, educators and policy makers alike. By combining a mix of intellectually rigorous, accessible and robust argument this special issue presents a distinctive and engaging voice, that seeks to broaden the understanding of diversity and leadership beyond the confines of the education sphere into an arena of sociological and cultural discourse. In this way, this special issue provides a challenge to current leadership discourse and provides opportunity for thinking about thinking about and researching diversity and educational leadership in new ways.

Professor Erica Joslyn, University of Suffolk

Professor Paul Miller, University of Huddersfield

Dr Christine Callender, University College London, Institute of Education

June 2018