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Call for Papers: Special Issue, Studia paedagogica

School Leader(ship) in Focus: Understanding Current Challenges and Shaping Future Perspectives

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Are school leaders truly prepared for the various challenges that schools are facing? In an era marked by rapid technological advancements, shifting societal expectations, and unprecedented global crises that inevitably and strongly affect schools and schooling, the role of school leaders is more critical and complex than ever.

The upcoming special issue aims to explore new/emerging roles, identities, challenges, relations, wellbeing, working conditions, and many other perspectives of school leaders and their work. Bearing in mind that school leadership cannot be employed, exercised, or explained by a single individual alone and that it does not depend solely on formal positions (Leithwood et al., 2020; Lumby, 2019), we are also open to contributions that address various collaborative models or styles of leadership while highlighting the specific role of formal leaders.

A large proportion of scientific papers have repeatedly examined and highlighted the direct and indirect effects that school leaders and their specific leadership styles have on school and student achievement, teachers' job satisfaction, motivation, school climate, and other significant school-related variables (e.g., Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Mutch, 2015; Robinson et al., 2008). However, the authors usually conclude that there are still many issues worthy of further investigation: career pathways, working conditions, professional identities, and the effective professional development of school leaders have been suggested for future investigations (OECD, 2019).

There has been a lack of empirical research examining the specific positions of school leaders in existing (hierarchical and networked) governance structures inside and outside the school, and their relations with various governing bodies and their expectations (e.g., Burns & Koster, 2016; Bush, 2024). Several vague topics remain problematic, including the relationship between school leaders' responsibility/accountability and school autonomy; social, political, and technological challenges and school leaders' ability to meet them; growing workloads and insufficient support (Harris & Jones, 2020; OECD, 2021; Reimers & Schleicher, 2020;).

For the upcoming issue, we particularly welcome empirical, theoretical, or synthetic papers covering these leader concepts and leadership-related topics, and we remain open to other relevant perspectives and methodologies:

1. Changing roles of school leaders, qualification requirements, competence development, professional development opportunities, and career models in various national systems.
2. School leaders and their leadership styles and values in challenging times (such as globalization issues, crises, artificial intelligence, and curricular reforms) and their impact on schools and their members, processes, policies, outcomes and values.
3. School leaders and their relations with various internal and external stakeholders, including their positions in schools' overall educational governance structures.
4. School leaders' well-being, job satisfaction, and their work- and life-related issues.

This special issue will be published in English in June 2025. The deadline for submitting **abstracts** is **October 31, 2024**, and **full papers** should be submitted by **February 28, 2025**. Abstracts should contain a title and a list of authors and provide a summary of the study. Send abstracts to the email address studiapaedagogica@phil.muni.cz. Full texts are to be submitted via the Open Journal System. Articles should be written in U.S. English and meet the requirements set out in the instructions for authors on the journal's website.

Manuscripts will be submitted to a double-blind peer-review process that will enable the editors to select papers for publication. If you have any concerns about the suitability of your topic for this special issue, you can contact the editorial office at the email address above.

You can find more information at http://www.studiapaedagogica.cz.

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