



ICSEI

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KINGDOM OF MOROCCO



Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training,
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Education, Youth Empowerment, and Sustainable Development: Collaboration between the Global North and South to Improve Education Quality

6-10 January 2020

Marrakech, Morocco

Presenters: Dorothy Andrews and Joan Conway

Topic: Researchers and Practitioners Building Capacity for Sustainable School Revitalisation: A Review of Longitudinal Research by one Australian R & D team

Abstract: The contemporary reality of a researcher's life in academia grapples with the tension between pressure to produce timely ranked research performance and long-term requirement of building capacity with the field for sustainability of enhanced school outcomes for meaningful impact and relevance of research. Moreover, the highs and lows of capacity building within a team of researchers cannot be underestimated – relationship building, collaboration, collective responsibility and celebrating the diversity of team members' contributions, especially with the entry and exit of individuals over time.

This paper represents 20 years of Research and Development activity by researchers of the Leadership Research International (LRI) team at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), Australia, as they have worked with schools and researched processes of school revitalisation. It represents a unique partnership between University educators and schools and systems across Australia and internationally. The school improvement project, Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievements in Schools (IDEAS), has formed the basis of the team's work and been developed by school and university-based researchers working together to make meaning of the complex processes for school revitalisation.

The project has enabled the growth of professional educators and school-based leadership as they grapple with continual pressure to enhance school outcomes in a public arena where the teaching profession has not received supportive public commentary. School communities have also shown that they have the potential to reshape their communities and in so doing demonstrate to their communities how they can create shared contextual pedagogical practices that meet the needs within their communities.

Research by the LRI into school revitalisation processes has paralleled the schools' implementation. This relationship between development and research has been mapped to illustrate the growth of knowledge that underpins school revitalisation processes and the capacity building of a research team. Document analysis has revealed three contributing interrelated research initiatives – a university based team of researchers with a metaview of conceptual development focusing on leadership, school and system (organisational) alignment and teacher professional learning; doctoral students who have created emerging understandings of new concepts and continued their research career engagement with the team; and targeted research project teams that have explored the application of LRI concepts as they pertain to contemporary issues of education in specific contexts enabling individual team members to strengthen their research specialisation.

The dissemination of findings throughout this journey has enhanced the capacity of the research team to support schools and systems in regard to policy development and implementation of processes for leadership of school revitalisation, practical pedagogical development and implementation, raising the image of the teaching profession and enabling of teachers and school communities to enhance student achievement and well-being. Albeit, whilst juggling the range of personalities, personal motivations and expectations of belonging to a team, long-term researchers of the team have incrementally achieved capacity for leading projects, attracting research income, mentoring early career researchers, supervising incoming postgraduate candidates, and producing quality outcomes.

Map Outlining the Growth of Knowledge that Underpins IDEAS

