Educational Resource Management
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Published by University College London

Glover, Derek and Rosalind Levačić.
Educational Resource Management: An international perspective.
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Preface

When this book was first mooted, some 20 years ago, there was need for some material to support leadership – and specifically school headship – training, to meet the increasing demands of local and national developmental planning and accreditation schemes. At that time there was an increasing understanding of the nature of stakeholder involvement in educational policy and practice. Although the national schemes have changed over the past decades the rationale has remained the same and current literature points to the need for contextually appropriate understanding of funding, planning and using resources to the greatest advantage. Civil disturbances, cataclysmic natural events and widespread pandemics have all affected the resource level and the priorities for the effective use of financial support for systems and schools.

Educational resource management is an area of educational leadership that continues to suffer because many of those involved in the field lack understanding of the issues. Policy makers often fail to see the impact of the frameworks they have established for school and colleges. Teachers often feel trapped by systems that inhibit their true task of sharing the joy of learning. Parents and the wider community are often incapable of articulating what they want from education, and when this is known, they fail to exert the necessary pressure for appropriate levels of resourcing. Once again there is an increasing demand for explanations of the interaction between national and local educational resourcing for schools and colleges and the achievement (or otherwise) of educational objectives. The second edition of this book is an attempt to explore this link and to offer a current commentary with examples from international practice to enhance understanding of resourcing and its effect in the world of education.
The work stems from teaching undertaken by the authors for Masters and distance Masters courses at the UCL Institute of Education. However, the content has been presented in such a way that it offers a view of educational resource management pertinent to all those who are involved in educational leadership and management, not simply university students. To this end it is an amalgam of both ‘why we do it’ and ‘how we do it’, rather than either a guide to the practical aspects of accounting or software for educational resource management or a record of elements of macro- and micro-research.

The book contains examples of educational resource management in action drawn from both UK and international practice, commentary as shown in the research literature and our own reflection on the rationale for effective educational resource management. While predominantly concerned with school practice, there are similarities in further and higher education and so some of the supportive literature is drawn from these sources. We hope that we have been able to meet the needs of a diverse range of readers and users, both national and international, and that in sharing our findings we can enhance the educational experience of the coming generation – their education determines our future! The international perspective comes not only from the examples that we use but also from some of the associated literature. As always, culture, context and leadership styles determine practice at all levels.

This book owes much to the research that students have kindly allowed us to share as examples of practice across the years. We are grateful to them both for the material and for the reflection they have prompted.