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Ethical Leadership as a Key to Reconciliation: The Role of Educational Leaders in Implementing the Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report

Short description / Abstract:

Abstract: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, published in June 2023, examines the consequences of Norway's assimilation policies (fornorskingspolitikken) on the Sámi, Kven/Norwegian Finns, and Forest Finns. It highlights how the education system was used as a tool for assimilation and recommends measures such as strengthening Sámi and Kven language teaching, increasing the focus on Indigenous and minority histories in curricula, and implementing initiatives for reconciliation and trust-building. Educational leaders are pivotal in addressing these recommendations.

This ongoing study, conducted by the Arctic Youth Research Centre (AY) and funded by the Research Council of Norway, explores how educational leaders implement the report's recommendations. Currently in its early stages, the study uses a quantitative, web-based survey to map practices in early childhood education, schools, and teacher training. Ethical leadership serves as the theoretical framework, focusing on how leaders promote justice, respect, and inclusion. The study examines how school leaders enhance teaching about Sámi history and culture, strengthen Sámi language education, and support staff development.

By investigating these practices, the study seeks to provide insights into how educational leaders can actively contribute to reconciliation and trust building, while recognising that this research remains in an exploratory phase.