

## MAPPING THE TRAJECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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### Summary

*The aim of this study is to conduct a bibliometric and systematic analysis of academic literature dealing with the subject of leadership development in connection with the fields of business and management. Researchers employed the PRISMA approach to conduct a systematic literature search of the Web of Science database during the previous 15 years and, finally, 1017 documents were used. Biblioshiny, and VOSviewer were utilized for quantitative analyses and data visualization. The results include lists of leading authors and their countries, connected keywords, and the most prestigious academic publications conducting work on leadership development. Furthermore, the study's results highlight the principal domains researched to date and reveal gaps in the literature, pointing to possible future research avenues. The research offers policymakers and practitioners with a solid foundation on which to build leadership in organizations and consider the managerial and structural implications of doing so.*

**Keywords:** leadership development, PRISMA Approach, systematic review, bibliometric

**JEL:** J24, C55, C18, C88

### Introduction

Organizations, irrespective of all size, need efficient leaders, which arguably goes without saying. There is a strong interest in leadership development among practitioners e.g., business, industry, educator, government which appears to be at its zenith specially in the field of business and management (Day, 2001). To adopt in a changing environment, leadership skills are undeniable for all levels of management. These skills are abilities that can be developed and learned to focus on leadership development programs to reorientate management roles. On the other hand, to build a motivated workforce, an organization needs many people roles, not just as individual role for exercising leadership traits. These roles are defined by various leadership styles which guide to understand everyone's role within the domain of leadership development (Kairys, 2018; Leslie–Canwell, 2010; Montano et al., 2023).

Leadership development helps leaders to engage in developing their positive capabilities (Hojcska et al, 2022; Chopra et al., 2023; Nassar et al., 2023). It focuses their behavior primarily on individual's development and the organizations itself (Vince–Pedler, 2018). (London, 2001) viewed leadership development as a system from two perspectives. One is organizational and the other is individual. From an organizational perspective, it begins by assessing skills in the organization and comparing them to anticipated skills required in the future. Hence, assessing current and prospective leaders' talents is considered as leadership development. From an individual perspective, it helps to foster a developing mindset among the organization's employees. Being diverse workplace culture, it requires continuous efforts. Sexual scandals, unethical behaviors, individualism which create a low level of performance or productivity, have become a major challenge for the organization. To tackle these issues, leadership development or management development can be a strategic issue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that means organization will act as the key element in the self-learning process to spread creativity and innovation for transferring learning and development programs in

all kinds of firms. So, the need for scientific methods and leadership programs in hiring and recruiting talents to bring successful leaders is a necessity (McCauley–van Velsor, 2004; Alreahi et al, 2023; Makhouloufi et al, 2023).

Thus, considering the potential need for leadership development for enhancing organizational performance, this study addresses the leadership trends in business and management area to produce quality leaders in hand to run the organization continuously. Moreover, we found tremendous interest among the managers and leaders in today's competitive environment to survive. To address, organizational leadership development still has a great chance to explore since many complex issues persist unanswered. Therefore, our aim is to systematically examine scholarly published articles on the topic of leadership development based on keywords and to offer further research ideas in the near future within the context of business and management. The current study makes no claims to be inclusive. Instead, it will concentrate on recent research and practice that has been applied or published, usually within the last 15 years. In this case, the researchers pose these following questions:

- 1) How substantially have the publication trends and article sources changed within the specified time frame?
- 2) Who are the leading academic institutions in this research field, and which country has produced the most articles in this field?
- 3) What relationship exists between the frequently applied keywords and their co-occurrences?
- 4) How reviewing the conceptual framework and future direction can spark interest among future leadership development researchers?

According to our research, the results of previous studies, however, indicate that more research is needed on the implications of leadership development in the business and management area. We found only a bibliometric review of the leadership development field: How we got here, where we are, and where we are headed (Vogel et al., 2021) . In that research, authors conducted a comprehensive, objective and integrative review of leadership development field. Besides, some empirical research has been also conducted and published in reputed journals about leadership but more research on the conceptualization of leadership development trends needed to incorporate both positive and negative elements in the field of business and management (Lerutla–Steyn, 2021; Farkas et al., 2021). Though, few systematic and comprehensive review articles have appeared in the last couple of years. There are many authors (Megheirkouni, 2018; Megheirkouni–Mejheirkouni, 2020b; Megheirkouni–Roomi, 2017) who produced a base for understanding the leadership theories, approaches and framework.

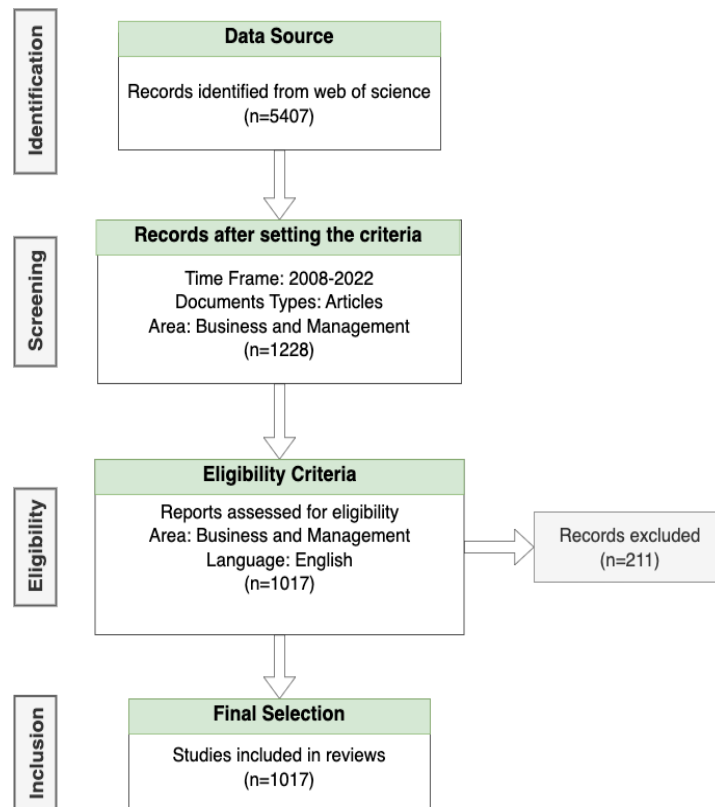
The rest of this paper is structured as follows. The research methodology is described in Section 2 along with the tools (used software), data, and research questions that were used to reach the results. Section 3 offers the results and discussion, which are an overview of the data statistics, the top publishing journals, and the top countries that focused on this topic. In section 4, we provide potentials implication and recommendations of leadership development in the future which can strengthen research and the practice of leadership development programs and training.

## Material and method

In this paper, we performed a bibliometric analysis to unveil our research questions. Bibliometrics is a subfield of informatics that employs statistical methods to assess the influence of academic books and journals and the amount of new information they disseminate (Broadus, 1987; Cuccurullo et al., 2016). It allows researchers to dig into more information than can be included in a systematic literature review while still ensuring a high standard of rigor, intellectual coherence, transparency, and replicability (Dada, 2018, Priatmoko et al, 2021). Moreover, the review strategy and software are the primary instruments for implementing a systematic review and bibliometrics analysis to expand research objectives (Vogel et al., 2021).

The Bibliometrix software used for this analysis was created by (Cuccurullo et al., 2016), Scholars from a variety of fields are becoming increasingly interested in Bibliometrix as a means of performing descriptive analysis beginning with bibliographic databases (Linnenluecke et al., 2019). The analysis in this study was performed using Biblioshiny and other features of the bibliometrics package in RStudio. The open-source software VOSviewer is used to create and display bibliometric networks, and it also contributes to the co-occurrence structure.

As a research strategy, we used a systematic literature review (SLR) of the most relevant scholarly databases (Web of Science) to compile the data for this study. This strategy was developed to identify, examine, and respond to the study's research questions without biasing results for any period (García-Peñalvo, 2017). In conducting this review, researchers followed the guidelines laid out in the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement (Moher et al., 2009). The process consists of four steps: (a) identification, whereas previously published publications are found through database searching; (b) screening, in which publications are screened and duplicate materials in databases are eliminated; (c) eligibility, through which publications are accepted or rejected based on specific established criteria; and (d) inclusion, under which publications are included following synthesis and qualitative and quantitative analyses of their content. To find relevant articles, the researchers applied the Web of Science database's advanced search feature, which provides access to the most popular and persuasive dataset for bibliometrics in use today (Liu, 2013; Martín-Martín et al., 2018; Zupic, 2015). The following algorithm was employed.  $TS = ("Leader* Develop*" OR "Leader* Train*")$ . A schematic of the PRISMA protocol's (Moher et al., 2009) four-stage screening process is depicted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. PRISMA review process**

*Source: authors own elaboration*

## Results and Discussion

### *General Features of Bibliometrics Analysis*

Table 1 below summarizes the findings from our analysis of the articles that we found when searched for the term "leadership development." There were a total of 2384 authors, and the articles appeared in 242 sources between 2008 and 2022. A total of 1017 written works on the topic of "Leadership Development and Training" have been compiled. Articles constitute 92.03% of the documents, whereas book chapters comprise 7.77%, conference papers constitute 0.20 percent.

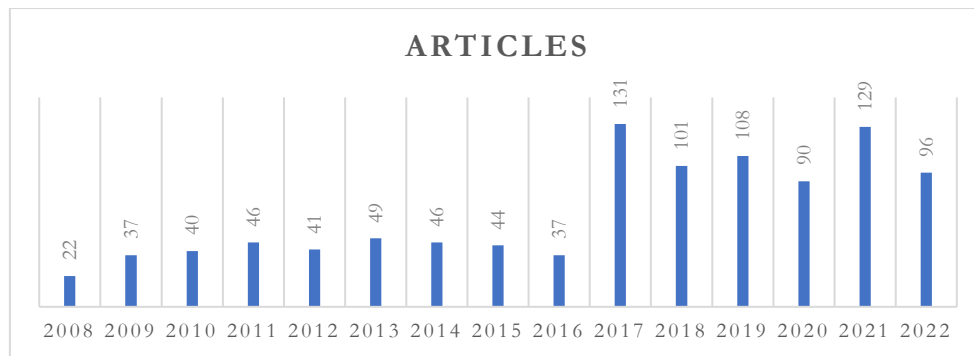
**Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the dataset.**

Main Information about Data	Results
Timespan	2008:2022
Sources (Journals, Books, etc.)	242
Documents	1017
Annual Growth Rate %	11.1
Authors	2384
Document Types	Results

article	936
article; book chapter	78
article; proceedings paper	3

*Source: authors own elaboration based on Biblioshiny*

Figure 2 depicts the increase in published works from 2008 to 2022. There has been an increase in the number of publications, with the yearly percentage growth rate reaching 11.1 percent. It indicates that more and more scholars are interested in leadership development research. The column chart can be broken down into two distinct time intervals based on its trending behavior.



**Figure 2. Annual scientific production**

*Source: authors own elaboration based on Biblioshiny*

1. 2008 to 2016: At this time frame, the rate of change is relatively slow, and there are less than fifty articles produced annually. This marks the beginning of a period during which leadership development studies are being emphasized. This is the beginning, or introduction, phase.
2. 2017 to 2022: There was a sharp increase in the number of leadership-related articles published between 2017 and 2022. As a matter of fact, 2017 saw the highest annual total of papers published (131). To be precise, there were 96 articles in 2022. The current period is considered as a growth period in this field of research.

### ***Prolific Journals***

The most significant journals (10) addressing leadership development topics are shown in Table 2. The 1017 papers analyzed were published in 242 different journals. The majority 37.2% (379) of the articles examined were published in just 10 journals. The Chartered Association of Business Schools (ABS) ranks publications based on their quality, and 233 of the 379 articles examined were published in ABS-ranked journals. Further, 284 articles have been published in journals that are included in the ABDC's list. These results show that leading academic and professional journals in the fields of business and management are the primary platforms for leadership development research. The Journal of Leadership Quarterly has published the height articles (73), while the Leadership & Organization Development Journal has published the second-most (70). Combined, the two journals contributed 14.06 percent of all articles in the research. In terms of total citations, Leadership Quarterly also came out on top, followed by the Journal of Nursing Management (1016) and the Leadership Journal (877).

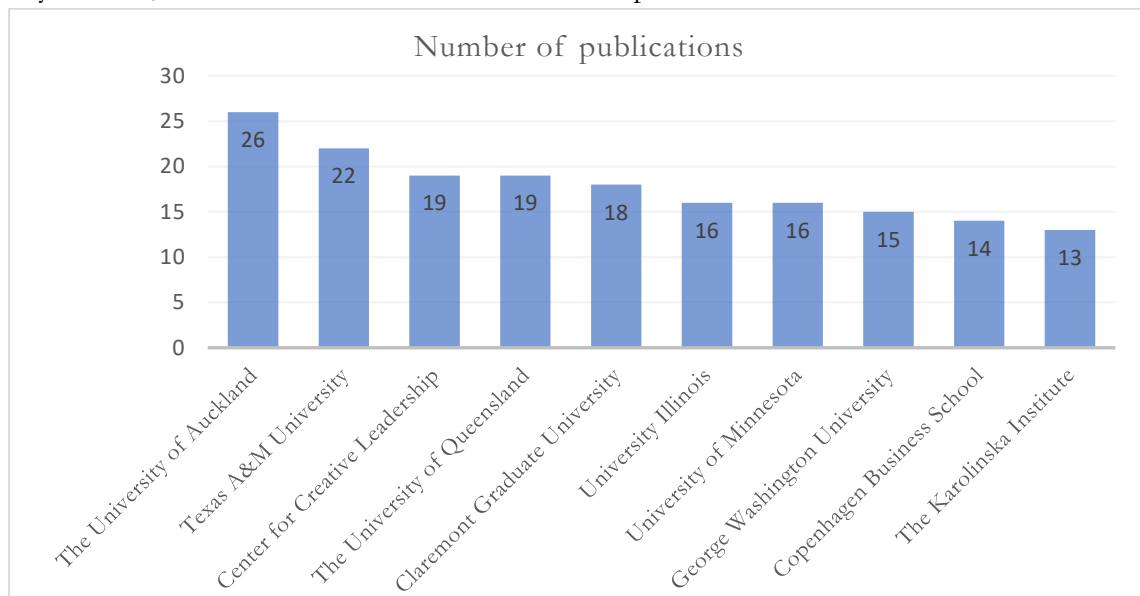
**Table 2. Leading journals published between 2008 and 2022 on leadership development**

Order	Sources	PA	ABDC rating	CABS Rating	Ranked by Scimago list	TC
1	Leadership Quarterly	73	A*	4	Q1	3794
2	Leadership & Organization Development Journal	70	B	NR	Q1	732
3	Journal of Nursing Management	54	NR	NR	Q1	1016
4	Leadership	42	B	2	Q1	877
5	Journal of Management Development	29	C	1	Q1	149
6	Journal of Business Ethics	25	A	3	Q1	540
7	Management Learning	23	A	3	Q1	476
8	Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies	22	NR	NR	Q1	242
9	Journal of Managerial Psychology	22	B	3	Q1	645
10	Journal of Leadership Studies	19	NR	1	Q3	63

*Source: Authors own elaboration based on Biblioshiny*

***Most important affiliated Institutions***

Figure 3 displays the 10 institutions that have made the most significant scholarly contributions to the study of leadership development. The period goes from 2008 to 2022. In the number of papers published, the University of Auckland came out on top with 26, followed by Texas A&M University with 22, and the Center for Creative Leadership with 19.



**Figure 3. Top ten productive institutions in the number of publications**

*Source: Authors own elaboration based on RStudio*

### *Articles' Geography*

The 1017 articles included in the datasets were written by 2384 authors from 75 countries and contributed by 1029 unique institutions. Since just 163 documents on leadership development are single author publications, collaboration is extremely important in this field. However, when examining publications with many authors, it becomes clear that the most productive countries are not always the most welcoming to international collaboration. This is shown in Table 3, which considers three separate metrics: (i) the number of publications that are specific to a single country (SCPs), (ii) the number of publications that span multiple countries (MCPs), and (iii) the ratio of MCPs to SCPs (TP-BM). The "SCP" indicates the total number of works by writers from a single country (intra-country collaboration). Multi-Country Publications (or "MCP") stands for the total number of works authored by authors from many nations (inter-country collaboration). The "MCP Ratio" provides a relative value that indicates the degree to which each country is open to global collaboration. Just 14 of the 75 countries have contributed with only a single paper, indicating widespread interest in the topic of leadership development and training. However, if we look at the most productive nations, we can see that they are all developed economies in either North America or Europe. It's interesting to note that the United States published around three times higher as many publications as the United Kingdom, which comes in at a distant second. Their MCP ratio indicates that they are not among the top three countries with which they collaborate internationally. Table 4 lists the top 10 countries based on the overall number of citations they earned. Table 3 shows that the United States, followed by the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, is the leading country in leadership development in terms of both output and relevance. While previously important countries like India and South Africa drop out of the top 10, others like the Netherlands and France grow relative to the total citations received.

**Table 3. On the left, the top 10 countries ranked by the number of articles in the dataset (TP-BM); on the right, by the ratio of inter-country collaborations (MCP/TP-BM).**

No.	Countries	TP-BM	SCPs	MCPs	No.	Countries	MCP_Ratio
1	USA	361	312	49	1	China	0.378
2	United Kingdom	104	75	29	2	New Zealand	0.36
3	Australia	72	49	23	3	Sweden	0.36
4	Canada	56	41	15	4	Australia	0.319
5	China	37	23	14	5	United Kingdom	0.279
6	India	31	30	1	6	Canada	0.268
7	Germany	30	27	3	7	South Africa	0.172
8	South Africa	29	24	5	8	USA	0.136
9	New Zealand	25	16	9	9	Germany	0.1
10	Sweden	25	16	9	10	India	0.032

*Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Biblioshiny*

**Table 4. The top ten countries in terms of total citations received (TC).**

#	Country	TC
1	USA	9010
2	United Kingdom	2224
3	Australia	1479

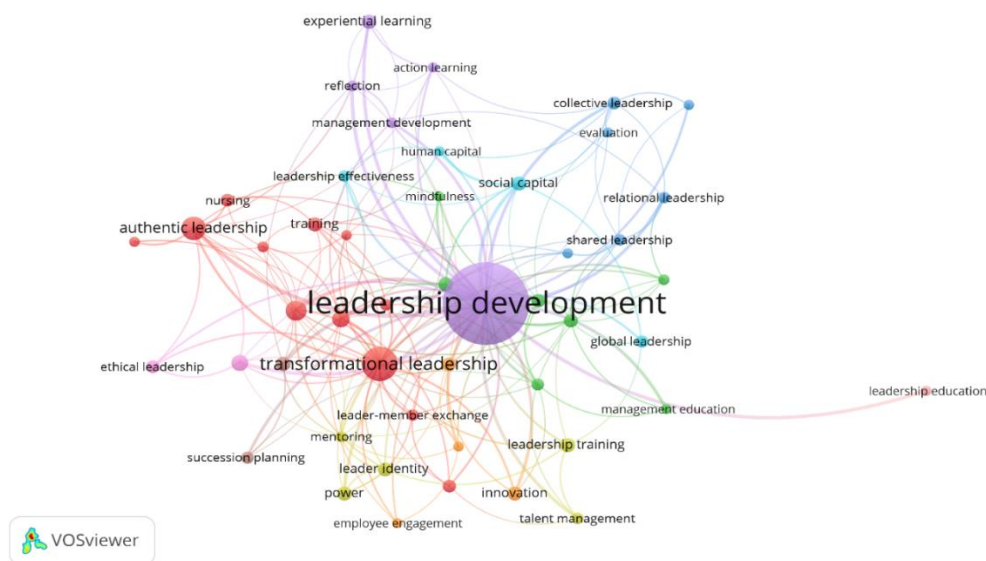
4	Canada	1443
5	New Zealand	683
6	Sweden	617
7	Netherlands	610
8	Germany	608
9	China	594
10	France	361

*Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Biblioshiny*

### ***Cocurrence Analysis of Keywords***

The keyword co-occurrence analysis is a text mining method that establishes the association between keywords. Co-word analysis is a type of content analysis that employs words in articles to form links and develop the conceptual structure of a topic (Callon et al., 1983). According to van Eck & Waltman (2010), co-word analysis takes into account how often a keyword appears in a certain set of articles, or the frequency with which two terms appear in the same set of articles. In particular, the co-word network displays the strength of the occurrence links between keywords. Co-word analysis creates a network of themes and connections that represents the conceptual space of a field. The co-occurrence analysis of keywords analyzes the actual content of the publication, focusing on the author's keywords (Škare et al., 2022).

This semantic map is useful for inferring the conceptual structure of the things being mapped. Figure 4 presents a co-word map of the Leadership Development literature, illustrating the relative emphasis on several themes. The size of the node may signify the frequency of the keyword; the larger the node, the more often the keyword. The strength of an association between two keywords is indicated by how close together they are, with a thicker line indicating a more robust connection. This section addresses keyword co-occurrence analysis to investigate the relationship between leadership and organizational development, innovation, and sustainability.



**Figure 4. Co-occurrence of authors' keywords**

*Source: Authors own elaboration based on VOSviewer*



The author used Co-word network analysis to find the answer to the study's central question because it is particularly well-suited to examining the crucial areas of highly focused research. Therefore, the co-occurrences analysis showed that larger nodes on the map reflected "transformational leadership," "authentic leadership," innovation, social capital, and experiential learning (Figure 4). It shows that these are the most common terms used in studies.

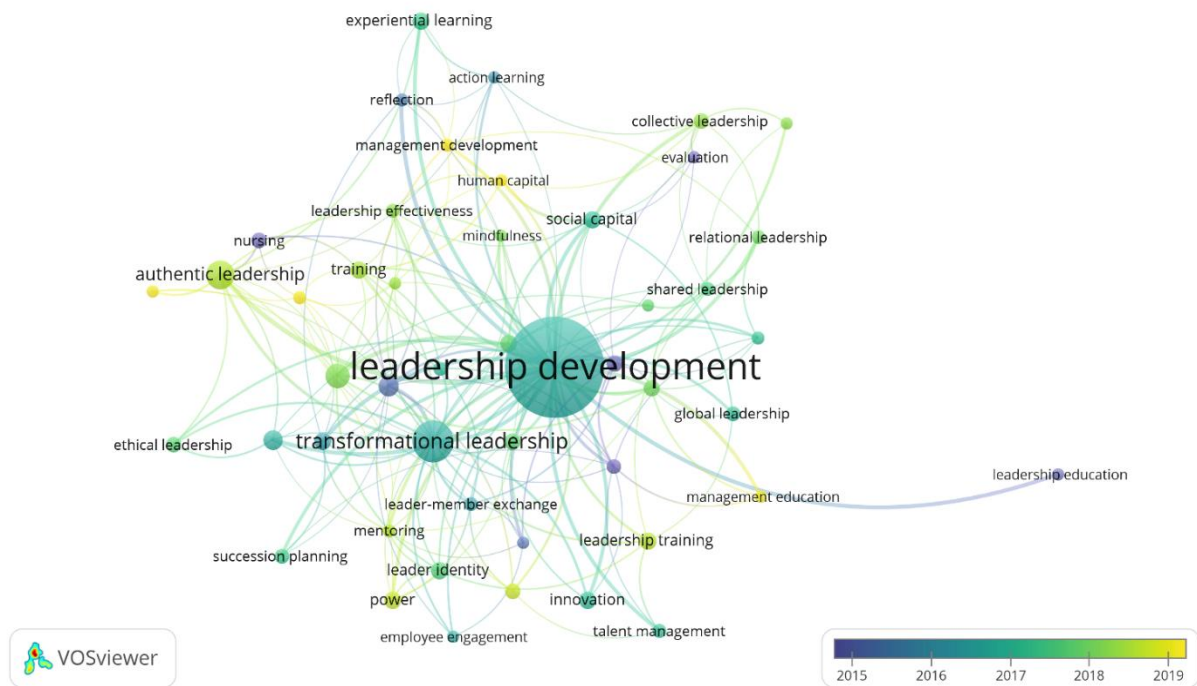
It is evident that "transformational leadership" and organizational leadership development are highly correlated. It's possible that there's a good reason for this finding to appear in research. Furthermore, it has been shown that authentic leadership is a greater concern in leadership development from an organizational standpoint, giving support to the phrase "authentic leadership" (see Figure 4). Developing "social capital" is a primary objective of leadership training. In other words, by implementing robust organizational leadership development techniques, it is possible to achieve organizational development. Leadership development is linked to factors like "leadership training," "talent management," "innovation," "mentoring," "management education," "leader identity," "leader member exchange," and "succession planning," as shown in the figure.

Additionally, Figure 4 shows four main clusters identified by different colors, with different phrases inside each cluster. Specifically, Table 5 shows the total number of elements in each category, indicating substantial progress in the study of leadership development. It is considered that the degree to which keywords group together indicates how strongly they represent similar ideas.

**Table 5. Clusters of authors' keywords**

<b>Clusters</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Items</b>
<b>Cluster 1</b>	12	Authentic leadership, Emotional intelligence, Gender, Human resource management, Job satisfaction, Leader member exchange, nursing, performance, Self- efficacy, training, transformational leadership, work engagement.
<b>Cluster 2</b>	7	Change management, diversity, Management education, Mindfulness, Organizational changes, Sustainability, Women.
<b>Cluster 3</b>	6	Collective leadership, Distributed leadership, Evaluation, Relational leadership, Shared leadership, Team performance
<b>Cluster 4</b>	5	Leader identity, Leadership training, Mentoring, Power, Talent management.
<b>Cluster 5</b>	5	Action learning, Experimental learning, Leadership development, Management development, Reflection.
<b>Cluster 6</b>	4	Global leadership, Human Capital, Leadership effectiveness.
<b>Cluster 7</b>	4	Employee management, Innovation, Learning, Organizational development.
<b>Cluster 8</b>	2	Coaching, Succession Planning.
<b>Cluster 9</b>	2	Ethical leadership, Servant leadership.
<b>Cluster 10</b>	1	Leadership education.

*Source: Author own elaboration based on VOSviewer*



**Figure 5. Keyword’s co-occurrence map of leadership development literature with time span.**

*Source: Author own elaboration based on VOSviewer*

Articles about leadership development are analyzed for their keywords across time, as seen in Figure 5. Size of the node represents the total number of times a keyword appeared, while color represents the typical year of publication for the keyword (van Eck–Waltman, 2017). The yellow color denotes terms used in 2019 or after, the green color represents keywords used in 2017/2018, and the violet color represents terms used in 2016 or earlier (Figure 5). Figure 5 reveals those terms including leadership education, nursing, change management, organizational development, reflection, and evaluation first appeared in writing sometime between 2015 or before. Transformational leadership, experiment learning, action learning, social capital, shared leadership, global leadership, leader member exchange, innovation, talent management, leader identity, employee engagement, succession planning, and so on were all hot topics in organizational leadership in 2017 and 2018. Collective leadership, mindfulness, relational leadership, leader effectiveness, training, mentorship, authentic leadership, and similar concepts all made an appearance in the literature in the year 2018–2019. During this time, several scholarly works discussed how to improve organizational leadership by adopting novel approaches to management. Moreover, terms such as management development, human capital, work engagement, self-efficacy, and management education started appearing around the year 2019 or later. This suggests that the formation of landscapes and transitions in leadership development studies across settings is aided by the temporal visualization of keywords. Leadership development programs, which place an emphasis on various leadership styles, leadership, and management education, as well as human capital, are continually improving the efficiency of organizations, which explains the shift that has been noticed.

## Discussion

The analysis includes the number of publications, most important sources, authors affiliated institutions, articles geographies, and co-occurrence of authors keywords evaluation. There are 242 papers from the web of Science core collection published on the topic of leadership development between 2008 and 2022 that are used in this analysis. A rise in the number of scholarly articles published on the topic (from 22 in 2008 to 49 in 2013 to 131 in 2017 to 96 in 2022) is indicative of growing interest in the field. There has been a lot of study into leadership development in the recent years because of the widespread notion that trained leaders can improve their followers' attitudes and productivity (Martin et al., 2018). Furthermore, leadership development programs can improve the standard in terms of leadership quality, which helps the organization to increase its performance. Leadership development has been shown to have a favorable effect on businesses outcome (Martin et al., 2021).

The study found that, when evaluating the most significant sources, *Leadership Quarterly* published 7.18 percent of all papers between 2008 and 2022, followed by *Leadership and Organizational Development* journal and *Journal of Nursing Management* with respective percentages of 6.88% and 5.33%. As can be seen, the University of Auckland contributed the most to the literature with its 26 papers (2.5% of all publications), followed by Texas A&M University with 22 articles (2.2% of all publications), and the Center for Creative Leadership with 19 articles (1.8% of all publications). Based on the findings, the researchers can fairly say that these three organizations are crucial for the growth of leadership development literature. The findings also reveal that the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia are the top three countries responsible for the majority of leadership development research. The analysis makes it clear that developed countries have carried out most of the relevant research. It's possible that only highly developed countries are prioritizing leadership training and development. Only three developing countries, China, India, and South Africa, are focusing on the leadership training and development.

A co-occurrence study of 48 authors' keywords revealed 10 distinct groups with a minimum frequency of keyword 8. Figure 5 presents a time-sequence diagram that clarifies the authors' use of certain keywords from 2008 to 2022. In recent years, "Authentic Leadership," "Management Education," "Leadership Training," "Power," "Mentoring," "Management Development" and "Human Capital," have all been popular keywords that developed in 2019-2022. Business organizations in the 21st century face many obstacles. Due to the prevalence of sexual scandals, unethical actions, individualism, crises, and low performance or productivity, the development of unique leadership style like authentic leadership has emerged as a concerning issue for most organizations (Megheirkouni–Mejheirkouni, 2020a). However, this approach that has been promoted as a remedy for unethical leadership practices is cultivating authentic leadership with integrity (Crawford et al., 2020).

The management education of leaders is critical for the overall development of organizational effectiveness and efficiency. However, In the last decade, there has been a shift toward new ways of leadership. To teach these methods to the staff, management education and training is essential (Rothbard, 1998). Since, strong organizational performance and successful business strategies are facilitated by well-trained leaders (Barros–Taylor, 2020; Rivera–Camino et al., 2006; Kassai–Farkas, 2012).

The key advantages of management development programs seem to be survival, growth, less failure, and enhanced performance of the organization (Fuller–Love, 2006). Management development will be relatively simple to do in an organization if the leadership is developed. Moreover, a

good leader is the only one capable of unlocking the full potential of human resources to boost the organization's overall performance.

Overall, leaders are responsible for developing and implementing strategies that foster growth and success, good leadership is a crucial factor in every organization's advancement. A company's long-term success and ability to adapt to changing conditions depends on the quality of its leadership, which can be improved by investment in leadership. In order to foster creativity, reach corporate goals, and stay ahead of the competition, effective leadership and a positive work environment are essential.

## Implications and recommendations

The development of leadership theory, as well as the traits, skills, and styles that constitute the ideal leader, has advanced over the years. In our bibliometric analysis, the results offer significant implications for how organizations might enhance their selection and leadership development practices (Seidle et al., 2016). So, we also attempted to explore the new horizon of studies because leadership development should be more researched and practiced to the organizational leaders (Panda, 2019). From our analysis, our study shows that there has been a gradual increase of the number of publications on leadership development during the last 15 years (2008- 2022). So, the pattern itself says that business organizations have grown their interests in developing a pool of leaders. This finding not only provides indications to the top management who invest long run for creating effective leaders but also guides all levels of managers. Moreover, trained leaders can improve their followers' attitudes and productivity for better organizational performance. Another major statistic reveals the top countries and institutions that have made significant achievements in leadership research. These data can help practitioners in developing countries to gain a better understanding of the need for effective leadership and training programs. We also see scope for managers from emerging countries to gain further knowledge and expertise from the USA, UK, Canada.

In recent years, "Authentic Leadership," "Management Education," and "Human Capital," have become more popular for researchers. Especially "Authentic Leadership" can be useful to lessen the impact of unethical issues e.g., sexual scandals, individualism, development of unique leadership. The need for leadership development has never been more urgent. To survive in today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment, an organization needs leadership skills and capabilities. Our study emphasizes that the key to effective leadership development is the close interaction between leaders and the leadership development managers who are hired to build organizational capability. However, to develop leadership within the business, there isn't a single path to follow. It is difficult for organizations to consistently concentrate on the areas that will contribute to successful and efficient leadership development. This study will serve as a fresh starting point for next studies on leadership development, which will enhance organizational performance. Consequently, an organization's leadership effectiveness in a leadership development program can affect the growth and effectiveness of emerging leaders. Because their mindfulness at this stage provides a useful guide for future leadership. On the other hand, Professional, innovative team members are extremely important to organizations. These highly developed teams grow over time, not all at once, and the team's leadership must evolve as the team matures.

This research has certain limitations. One limitation is that the authors used only web of science database. Secondly, the analysis is based on quantitative keywords. We believe that the keywords chosen might have influence on our results because our keywords were confined only leader's

development in search terms. The researchers also experience the limitation of having to confine their article selection to the business and management fields. As a further direction of research, it would be worth it to conduct a qualitative analysis of publications by the content analysis to confirm the results. We have come up with a unique set of conceptually and practically viable possible future research directions based on our findings that can significantly improve the practice of leadership development. The results suggest several directions for leadership development initiatives: (1) to suggest an area of need for further empirical studies. Researchers and practitioners alike will benefit from a greater understanding of leadership development in the field of business and management, (2) The primary theories that are still important for the development of leadership skills should be the emphasis in leadership education, and finally (3) the abundance of leadership-related issues to include a variety of leadership programs for training leaders. We think that future research into leadership development in the realm of business and management will be greatly influenced by the findings that result from our suggestions for future research.

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