



JUTLP

Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice

Educational Leadership: A Fifteen Year Bibliometric Review

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Abstract

Exploring educational leadership is crucial for shaping the future of higher education, influencing students, educators, and institutional dynamics. This thorough review is conducted by analysing 36 research articles published in the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP) from 2008 to 2022. The study underscores the urgent need for a nuanced understanding of diverse leadership practices within the ever-changing educational landscape. While the majority of studies in JUTLP focused on women's leadership, it became evident that other aspects of educational leadership are yet to be explored in the journal's domain. The analysis also highlights significant gaps in the existing literature, emphasising the necessity for more comprehensive studies that encompass broader societal contexts and global perspectives. The prevalence of qualitative methodologies in the analysed articles indicates a preference for profound qualitative insights into leadership dynamics within academia, particularly in this journal. Key findings pinpoint critical areas for future exploration. With the spotlight on women's leadership, the study identifies gaps in research published in JUTLP related to diversity in leadership roles, international comparative studies, crisis management strategies, and the effective integration of technology in education. A particularly notable gap revolves around understanding the impact of educational leadership on sessional staff, urging institutions to empower this essential segment of academia. Additionally, the study offers strategic guidance for the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP), steering future research endeavors towards more inclusive, diverse, and globally relevant studies within the domain of educational leadership.

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Introduction

The focus of the study is to provide a comprehensive overview of the publication trends within the educational leadership research domain in JUTLP between 2008 and 2022. This review forms part of the twentieth annual volume publication of the Journal this year. It aims to reflect on the key topics the Journal has covered in its journey and to envision the future trajectory of research, with a particular focus on the newly introduced section dedicated to leadership in higher education. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, it becomes imperative for researchers to gain insights into the existing body of knowledge, identify emerging trends, and assess the overall impact and influence of research in this field. Research reviews of this nature are invaluable as they enable both researchers and readers to comprehend the current state of knowledge on a given topic and highlight areas that warrant further investigation (Cimini, 2021; Anderson, 2017).

The field of educational leadership and management boasts a rich research history spanning over seven decades. Taking its root from the scientific theories of management, human relations, and organisational learning, the educational leadership and management research domain has witnessed a great deal of scholarly interest over the years (McGinty et al., 2022; Bush, 2003). As an interdisciplinary field, educational leadership and management encompasses a diverse range of studies focusing on the principles, practices, and policies that guide educational institutions toward excellence (Amanchukwu et al., 2015). Starting in the 1950s, the research was driven by the quest to improve scholarly activity through the application of scientific principles anchored on empiricism rather than ideological belief and personal experience (Getzels et al., 1968; Halpin, 1958). Over the years different aspects of leadership and management within the educational sector have been studied including; the observable practices of leaders (Kempster et al. 2011) and methods of influential school leaders (Heck & Hallinger, 2005), leadership style within the educational sector and their influence on institutional effectiveness and job performance (Nebiyu & Kassahun, 2021), how educational leaders and managers engage with technology development, and work innovative practices (Gumus et al., 2016; Khan et al., 2020). The growing interest in this area is associated with the proven positive impact that both leadership and management have on school performance and student outcomes (Jamali et al., 2022; Karadağ, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2008), as well as the pivotal role education plays in shaping the future of societies (Day & Sammons, 2014).

While the concept of leadership overlaps with management, they are regarded as not the same (Bush, 2007). They are deeply connected, but different (Crawford, 2023). Leadership is described as the process through which persons seek to enact change or improvement by influencing people, organisational structures, and processes. In contrast, management is defined as the processes aimed at coordinating and controlling the organisation by persons holding formal administrative roles (Bush (2007). Leaders are

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visionaries and role-models (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), while managers are good at organising task and use power and authority (Graham, 2016). Within the educational sector, leaders are responsible for creating a positive and effective learning environment, guiding educational policies, making important decisions, and ensuring the overall success and growth of the institution. Educational managers on the other hand focus on procedures and the aim of educational institutions, working alongside senior management teams (SMT) and school governing body (SGB). Despite the difference, Bolman and Deal (2017) highlight both roles are equally important to organisations based on the situational contexts people face. Leading and managing are different, but both are important and “if schools are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives, both leadership and management need to be given equal prominence” (Bush, 2007, p. 392).

Whereas research on leadership and management is on the rise, there has been a concern over the lack of adequate space for high-quality research dedicated to leadership in higher education. “Across the higher education discipline, there is limited space for dedicated quality literature on how good leadership practices are understood, cultivated, and developed. And, indeed how this effects students, staff, and educational outcomes” (Crawford, 2023, p.1). Although certain journals, including Journal of Educational Administration, International Journal of Educational Management, School Leadership and Management, Educational Management Administration & Leadership, and International Journal of Leadership in Education seem to provide a platform for research and discussions on educational leadership, they tend to give greater emphasis to school-level leadership and management practices and not higher education (Crawford, 2023). Indeed, none of the top 20 journals in Google Scholar’s higher education category as well as Scopus and Web of Science specialise in leadership (Crawford, 2023).

The editorial team at The Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP) recognised the gap in the existing literature and the limited space for high-quality research dedicated to leadership in higher education. As a response, they introduced a section within the Journal focusing specifically on leadership in the higher education context. Indeed, the Journal has previously published a number of research works in leadership in higher education (e.g., Brown & Littrich, 2008; Aiston, 2022; Butler-Henderson et al., 2022; Harvey & Jones, 2022; Nachatar Singh, 2022). The formal introduction of a dedicated section on educational leadership is to promote research work “that is embedded deeply within the higher education context including connecting in with historically prevalent theories applied in higher education” (Crawford, 2023, p. 2).

Through this comprehensive bibliometric analysis, we aim to offer a retrospective and prospective insight into the trajectory of educational leadership research in the JUTLP, the dissemination of knowledge, and the extent to which the field advances over time, including research gaps. It would also provide valuable guidance and make recommendations for future research areas that scholars in higher educational leadership could explore further to advance knowledge in the area.

Our study will specifically address these four pivotal research questions:

Research Question 1. *What are the publication trends in the journal's educational leadership research domain?*

Research Question 2. *Who are the top authors, publications, affiliations, research methods, authors collaboration network and trending topics in the educational leadership research domain?*

Research Question 3. *Which themes (topics) have been discussed in the educational leadership research domain in the journal?*

Research Question 4. *What gaps exist in the literature, and where can future research focus in the educational leadership domain?*

Key Recent Reviews

Before analysing the papers published in JUTLP, we have summarised the key recent review conducted in the educational leadership domain as presented in Table 1. Generally, some of the reviews adopt a longitudinal approach, surveying articles over a period of decades to understand the evolution of research on educational leadership and management. There have been significant regional reviews on educational leadership geared to understand how principles of educational leadership, administration and management are applied to different contextual and cultural circumstances. These reviews are geared to explain how variations in educational leadership can be impacted by the environments and in so doing offer a rich understanding of how elements of theory can be adapted to different circumstances.

We begin this review by examining one of the most comprehensive recent reviews on the theme of educational leadership and administration by Hallinger and Kovačević (2019), who undertook a bibliometric review and science mapping of more than 22,000 articles from nine core journals on educational leadership, management, and administration over the period 1960 to 2018. Despite having a very brief discussion on the implications of the results of their analysis, this review highlights key bibliographic statistics spanning over 58 years, which includes the most cited articles, the most influential researchers, the geographic dispersion, and the intensity of publications. Also important has been the analysis of what can be considered the critical research themes or what the authors call "schools of thought" covered over the sample period. Among these are leadership and learning, which focuses on research on key leadership models, such as transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership. The second cluster focuses on leading school culture, which includes research on cultural change within schools and teacher training. The third cluster of research focuses on school effectiveness and school improvement. In contrast, the final cluster focuses on research on leading teachers and examines sub-themes such as how teachers' attitudes mediate student achievement and school quality. Hallinger and Kovačević (2019) also highlight the emergence of new research in educational leadership on social justice, race, gender, and ethics. Unfortunately, Hallinger and Kovačević (2019) analysis tends to "average out" temporal variations in the body of scholarship, leaving important questions unanswered concerning evolution of the field. For instance, given the number of articles and periods covered, more fine-grained analyses can examine findings on a decade-by-decade basis, which would offer a more detailed picture of the field's evolution, perhaps by geographic location.

One of the key issues of past educational leadership literature has been limited research examining the impact of educational leadership on the performance of higher educational institutions. Indeed, most past research has focused only on one or two dimensions of educational leadership, such as servant or transformational leadership and its impact on educational institutions and their employees (Abbas et al., 2022; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Sawan, 2020). Perhaps a more recent review that attempts to address this gap in the literature with a particular

focus on research on the impact of educational leadership styles on higher educational institutions is Maheshwari and Kha (2023). Based on their review of 127 articles from 2007 to 2022, they find the transformational leadership style to be the most effective regarding positive employee and organisational outcomes, such as employee commitment, job satisfaction, performance, creativity, and innovativeness. On the other hand, laissez-faire leadership styles tended to have a negative impact on job commitment, innovative work behavior, and employee efficiency. Other influential leadership styles that were found to have a largely positive effect on employee and organisational outcomes include ethical, participative, distributive, and instrumental leadership. Perhaps one extension to this research can be examining the efficacy of key leadership styles on higher educational institutions in different geographical and cultural contexts such as Asia, Africa, or Latin America.

Table 1

Summary of Previous Review Studies

Authors	Education Level	Range	Focus of Study	Sample	Method
Maheshwari and Kha (2023)	Higher education	2007 – 2022	A review of educational leadership research focuses on employee and organisational impacts among higher education institutions.	127	A systematic and bibliometric review of the literature using the PRISMA guidelines
Hallinger and Kovačević (2019)	K-12, and higher education institutions	1960 – 2018	To undertake a science mapping to understand the evolution of research on educational administration	22,361	Science mapping
Hammad et al. (2020)	Primary, secondary, and tertiary	2009 – 2018	A systematic review of the literature on educational leadership and management in the Arab region published in Arabic journals.	272	Followed the general methodology of a systematic literature review
Hallinger (2019)	K-12 to higher education	1965 – 2018	Examining key themes in the literature on educational leadership among Latin American, African, and Asian countries.	1,172	Science mapping, systematic, and bibliometric synthesis using the PRISMA guidelines.
Bellibaş and Gümüş (2019)	Primary and secondary	1994 – 2018	This paper focuses on examining the contribution of researchers from Turkey to the international literature on educational leadership and management	315	Descriptive content analysis
Castillo and Hallinger (2017)	Primary, secondary, and tertiary	1991 – 2017	This paper focuses on undertaking a systematic and topographical literature review among published articles from the Latin American region.	48	Systematic and topographical review
Hallinger (2017)	Primary and secondary schools	2005 – 2016	A systematic review of the literature on educational leadership in the case of Africa.	506	Systematic and topographical review
Hammad and Hallinger (2017)	K-12 to Higher education	2000 – 2016	A systematic review of literature on educational leadership and management in the case of Arab countries	62	A systematic review of articles

Overall, researchers argue that there is a growing need for research that captures the complexities of applying core educational leadership principles, theories, and practices to varied cultural and ideological circumstances (Clarke & O'Donoghue, 2017; Lopez, 2016). In keeping with this recommendation, we will continue our review by examining some key regional reviews on educational leadership and management.

Rise in Regional Reviews on Educational Leadership and Management

In keeping with findings from Hallinger (2019) and Tian and Huber (2020), there have been increasing regional studies on educational leadership from traditional Anglo-American-European countries (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2019; Oplatka, 2009). For instance, Hallinger and Bryant (2013) and Hallinger and Chen (2014) examine educational leadership and management research in Asia. Similarly, Hallinger (2017), Hallinger and Hammad (2017), Hammad and Hallinger (2017), Hammad et al. (2020), and Sellami et al. (2022) have focused on completing reviews on African and Arab countries. Castillo and Hallinger (2017) focused on reviews of educational leadership among Latin American countries. There has also been a growth in more country-specific reviews occurring in the case of Turkey and Hong Kong (Bellibaş & Gümüş, 2019; Szeto et al., 2015), as well as comprehensive comparative regional reviews such as Hallinger (2019). These reviews have captured each location's cultural, political, and socio-economic uniqueness and, by extension, broadened our understanding of the application of educational leadership and management models in these regions. For instance, in the case of Arab educators, educational leadership is seen as a collective responsibility rather than an individual one, and these educators prioritise ethical and moral values in their leadership practices (Hallinger & Hammad, 2017; Hammad et al., 2020). In Latin America, much of the research focuses on "school effectiveness" (Castillo & Hallinger, 2017) and in the case of Africa, much of the research focused on unique problems faced by educational administrators, leadership and management issues in the African context, discrimination and gender dynamics, and school outcomes such as school performance.

To the best of our knowledge there has been no reviews conducted that offers a retrospective insight into the trajectory of educational leadership within JUTLP. Hence, this review examines recent publications in JUTLP between 2008 and 2022 in higher education institutions' educational leadership and management domain. Specifically, we discuss papers published on educational leadership domain in JUTLP, and critically examine the key research findings while identifying gaps in the literature that this review will seek to contribute.

Method

A meticulous and systematic literature review was undertaken within the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP), adhering to PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines for transparency and completeness in reporting, to address the study's four pivotal research questions (Ismail et al., 2023). The primary focus of this review was to investigate publication trends, key authors, affiliations, research methods, and emerging topics within the educational leadership research domain of JUTLP. We also aimed to identify the prominent themes discussed and uncover gaps in the existing literature, guiding future research endeavors in the educational leadership domain. The search spanned from 2008 to 2022, aiming to capture a comprehensive range of published articles. The article selection process revolved around leveraging both Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) as primary

databases. While the search within WoS encompassed the entire time frame (2008 – 2022), the Scopus search was restricted to 2017 to 2022, coinciding with the period during which the journal was incorporated into the Scopus database.

The keyword string used for searching WoS database included leader* (Topic) and education* OR school* OR college* OR universit* OR lecture* OR tertiary OR academ* OR teacher* OR learn* OR student* (Topic) and "Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice" (Publication Titles). This search within WoS yielded 36 articles. While for Scopus database the keyword string used was (TITLE-ABS-KEY (leader*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (education* OR school* OR college* OR universit* OR lecture* OR tertiary OR academ* OR teacher* OR learn* OR student*) AND SRCTITLE ("Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice")) AND PUBYEAR > 2016 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 AND PUBYEAR > 2016 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 and this contributed an additional 19 articles. Following a meticulous review, it was established that all the articles identified within the Scopus database were already accounted for in the WoS database and hence there were no new articles found in Scopus database than found in WoS database. As a result, a total of $n = 36$ articles were chosen as the final sample size for subsequent in-depth analysis. In the process of selecting final papers for our review, we individually assessed the abstracts to determine their relevance to the educational leadership domain.

Results

Descriptive analysis of the paper published

As in Table 2, a total of 36 papers have been published in the journal for 15 years, indicating an annual growth rate of 12.95%. This upward trend highlights the increasing interest among scholars in publishing their work in the journal. On average, each article received 4.86 citations, resulting in a cumulative total of 1289 citations. The papers generally involved on average 3.28 co-authors, with 8 out of 32 articles (25%), excluding editorials, being single authored. Collaboration between authors at an international level was limited, accounting for only 5.6% of the total collaborations, with the majority of authors primarily collaborating with colleagues from their respective countries.

Table 2

Main information and descriptive statistics on selected papers (n = 36)

Description	Results
Annual Growth Rate %	12.95
Document Average Age	5.47
Average citations per document	4.861
References	1,289
Keywords Plus (ID)	54
Author's Keywords (DE)	120
Authors	108
Authors of single-authored documents	8

Single-authored documents	8
Co-Authors per document	3.28
International co-authorships %	5.556
Article	32
editorial material	4

Publication Trends (RQ1)

Figure 1 presents the annual scientific production, illustrating publication trends in the journal related to educational leadership. The graph also indicates the percentage of papers within this domain compared to all publications in JUTLP. The number of educational leadership publications has notably increased, particularly from 2020 onwards. The highest percentage of papers in this domain was observed in 2013 (23%), followed by 2022 (18%). Over the past three years, 19 articles, constituting 52% of the total, have been published, signifying significant growth. The surge in publications in 2022, with 11 articles, reflects an increased interest and research activity in educational leadership within the journal.

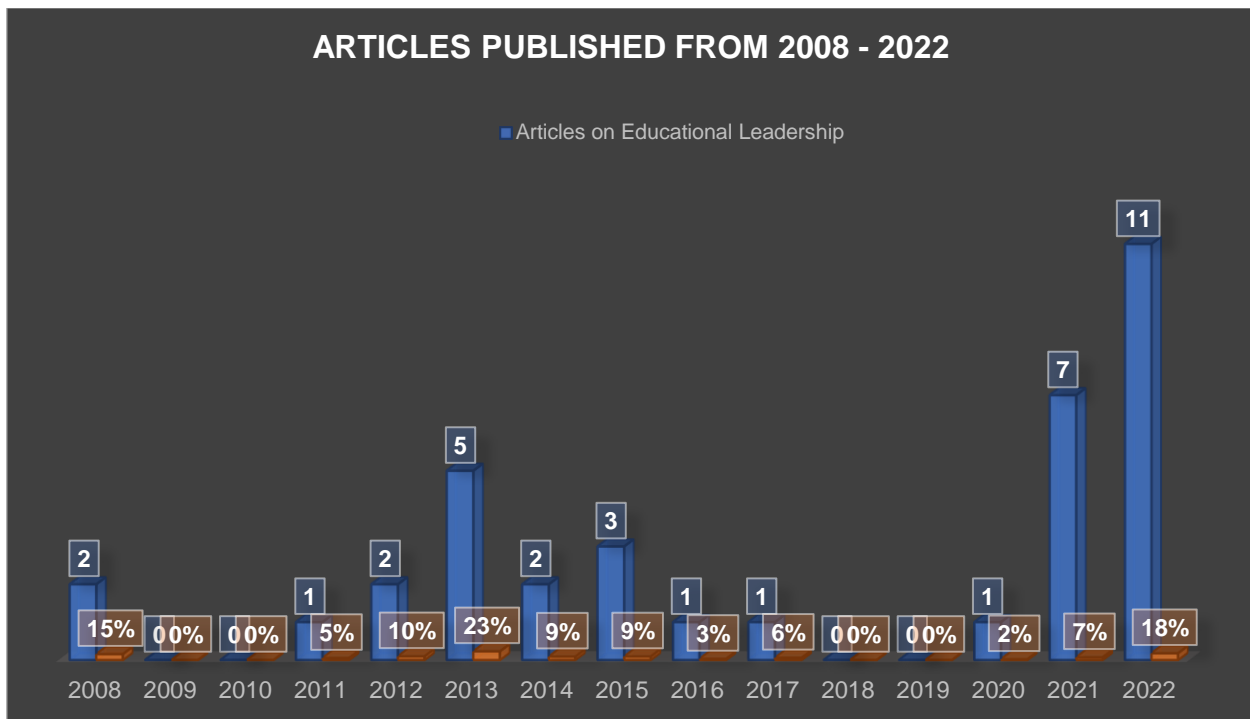


Figure 1

Annual Scientific Production in educational leadership domain and % of papers published in this domain out of total papers published in JUTLP

Top authors publishing in educational leadership domain in journal (RQ2)

Figure 2 presents the publication patterns of this journal's top 10 authors in the educational leadership domain, showcasing the volume of their publications over time. Notably, Devlin (2022) emerges as the top author in the educational leadership domain, publishing a total of three (3) articles, all in the year 2022. Following closely behind, Bui (2021), Kelly (2022), and Konyu (202)

emerged the second highest authors, each publishing two (2) articles in the years 2021, 2022, and 2022, respectively. The remaining authors have published one (1) article each in this domain. These publication patterns indicate that authors have chosen this journal as the venue for publishing in the educational leadership domain, particularly in recent years.

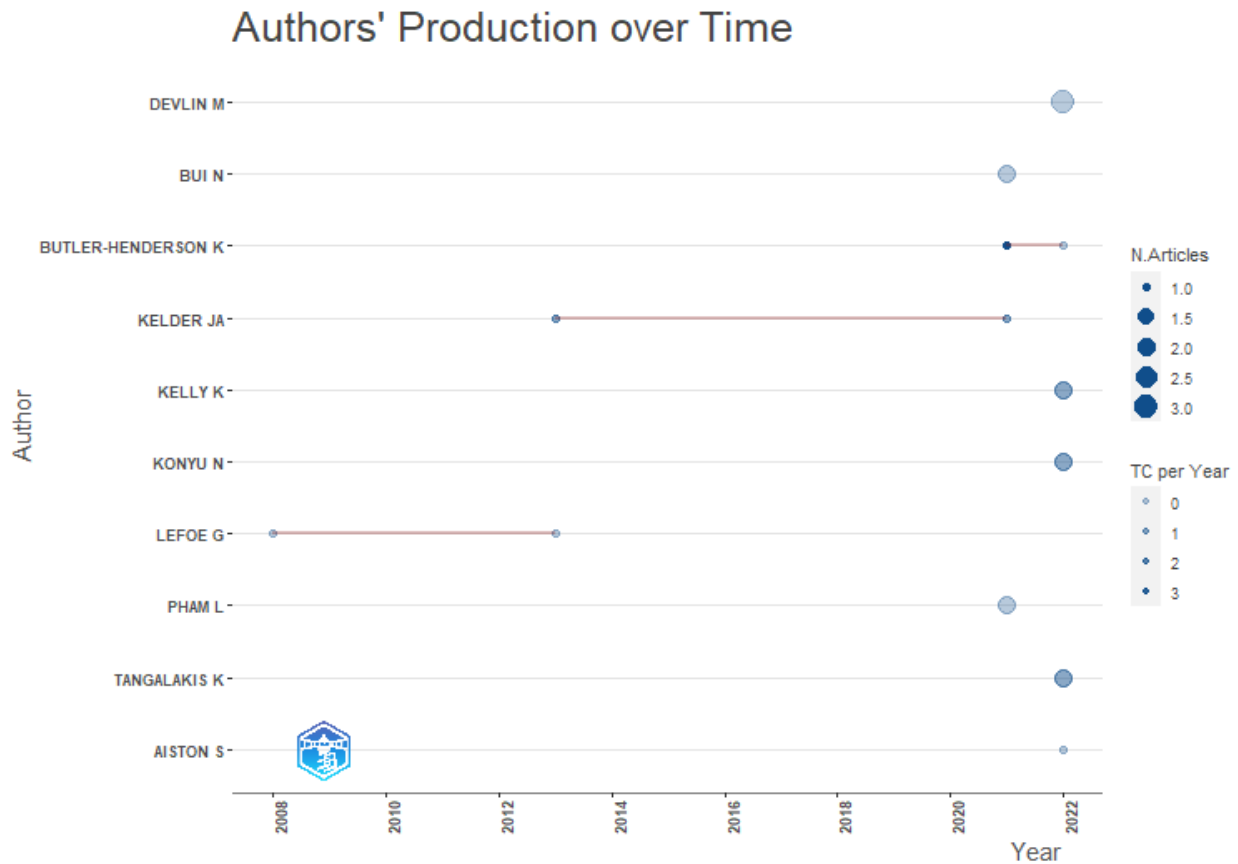


Figure 2

Research production by authors over time in educational leadership domain

Top publications in the educational leadership domain in the journal (RQ2)

Table 3 presents the top five documents based on local citations, global citations, and citations per year. Interestingly, none of the articles received local citations. However, Thomas et al. (2011) stands out with the highest global citation count of 76, demonstrating a significant impact within the research domain. On average, Thomas et al. (2011) received 5.85 citations annually, indicating sustained interest and influence over time. This notable disparity between Thomas et al. (2011) and other authors highlights the author's significant contribution and relevance in the educational leadership domain, establishing the author as a prominent figure in the field.

Table 3*Most Locally and Globally cited documents in the educational leadership domain*

Title	Author(s)	Global Citations	Avg. Citations per Year
Using self-and peer-assessment to enhance students' future-learning in higher education	Thomas et al. (2011)	76	5.85
Sessional academic success: A distributed framework for academic support and development	Hamilton et al. (2013)	14	1.27
Redefining academic identity in an evolving higher education landscape	Flecknoe et al. (2017)	14	2.00
Setting the standards for sessional staff: quality learning and teaching. Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice	Harvey and Luzia (2013)	13	1.18
A Message From The Chalk Face–What Casual Teaching Staff Tell Us They Want To Know, Access and Experience	Brown et al., (2013)	12	1.09

Top 10 affiliations and top 5 countries of research (RQ2)**Table 4***Top 10 affiliations and top 5 country-specific publications in the educational leadership domain*

Affiliation	Article n	Region	Frequency
RMIT University	5	Australia	39
University of Tasmania	5	United Kingdom	5
Victoria University	5	Canada	3
La Trobe University	3	United States of America	2
Queensland University of Technology	3	Netherlands	1
University of Wollongong	3	Vietnam	1
Deakin University	2		
Macquarie University	2		
Monash University	2		
University of Calgary	2		

Australia has emerged as the leading contributor in the research domain, publishing the most articles (39) in this field, followed by the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, which have published five (5), three (3), and two (2) articles, respectively. Additionally, there is one (1) article each from the Netherlands and Vietnam. Among the authors, a significant proportion is affiliated with Australian universities. RMIT University has the highest number of publications (*n*

= 5), except for the last university listed, based in Canada, as shown in Table 4. This observation highlights that the predominant focus of research in the educational leadership domain within this journal is on authors from Australia, while contributions from other countries remain limited.

Research methods used in the studies (RQ2)

To analyse the research methods employed in the studies, a total of 31 articles were considered after excluding five (5) editorial articles from the initial pool of 36 articles. Among these 31 articles, the majority utilised qualitative methodology ($n = 10$), indicating a preference for qualitative approaches in the research. Following qualitative methodology, case study analysis was the second most commonly used research method employed by eight articles. Fewer articles employed quantitative or mixed-method approaches, as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5

Research methods used in the studies ($n = 31$) (excluding editorials, $n = 5$)

Research methods used	<i>n</i>
Qualitative	11
Quantitative	3
Mixed method	2
Case-study Analysis (Qualitative studies)	8
Review articles/Secondary data analysis	6
Commentary	2

Authors Collaboration Network (RQ2)

The authors' collaboration network in the research domain is depicted in Figure 3, revealing two distinct collaboration networks. The largest cluster, highlighted in red, represents a collaboration of 14 authors. The second cluster comprises a collaboration among six (6) authors associated with the editorial document from RMIT University, University of Tasmania, and Deakin University. Since the editorial document is not included in the collaboration network analysis, we have only analysed one cluster. The authors in the first cluster are affiliated with Monash University and RMIT University, and their collaboration focuses on the theme of women and leadership in higher education learning and teaching. Specifically, this collaboration was featured in the 2021 issue dedicated to 'Celebrating women in higher education on International Women's Day.' In this issue, the authors from Monash-RMIT collaborated to write a paper titled 'Work like a girl: Redressing gender inequity in academia through systemic solutions.' This collaborative endeavour not only reflects the dedication of these authors to the cause of gender equity but also demonstrated the power of collective academic efforts in addressing crucial societal challenges within the academic sphere. Apart from this collaboration on one paper, there was no collaboration found across various authors. Hence, this analysis indicates that there is a need for collaboration both within Australia and internationally due to the limited collaboration observed within the country and

internationally.

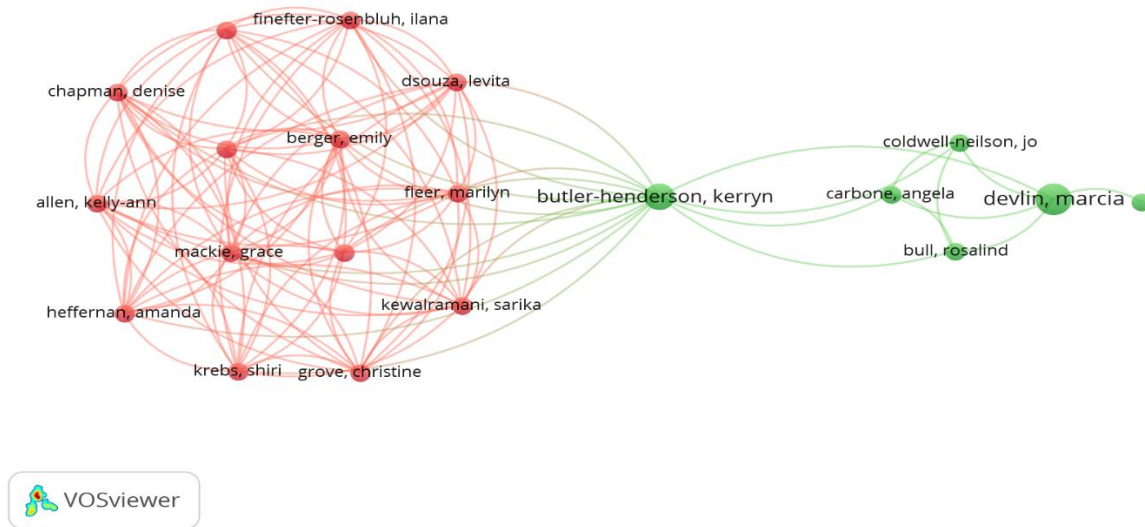


Figure 3

Authors collaborations in educational leadership domain

Trending topics in the educational leadership domain in the journal (RQ2)

By analysing authors' keywords with a minimum frequency of three (3) occurrences, the top three prominent words in the educational leadership domain of the journal were identified (as in Figure 4). The most prevalent term was leadership, appearing seven times, followed by women with five occurrences, and distributed leadership with four occurrences. Notably, the latest trending topics in the journal, observed in the year 2022, revolved around leadership and women. The section on educational leadership in the Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice (JUTLP) was introduced recently, specifically in 2022. It is essential to note that the dominance of women in leadership identified in our review is closely tied to a special issue published in Issue 1 of 2022. This special focus on women in leadership within that particular issue may have contributed to the observed prominence in our findings. The introduction of this specific section in 2022 significantly impacted the numbers of papers found and their publication dates, thus influencing the overall landscape of our review. On the other hand, discussions on distributed leadership were more prevalent from 2013 to 2017. This indicates that the journal has recently focused on the influence of leadership and women's studies in the educational leadership domain. These terms are further discussed in the subsequent section, where their repetitive usage is explored in thematic maps, evolution of themes and content analysis.

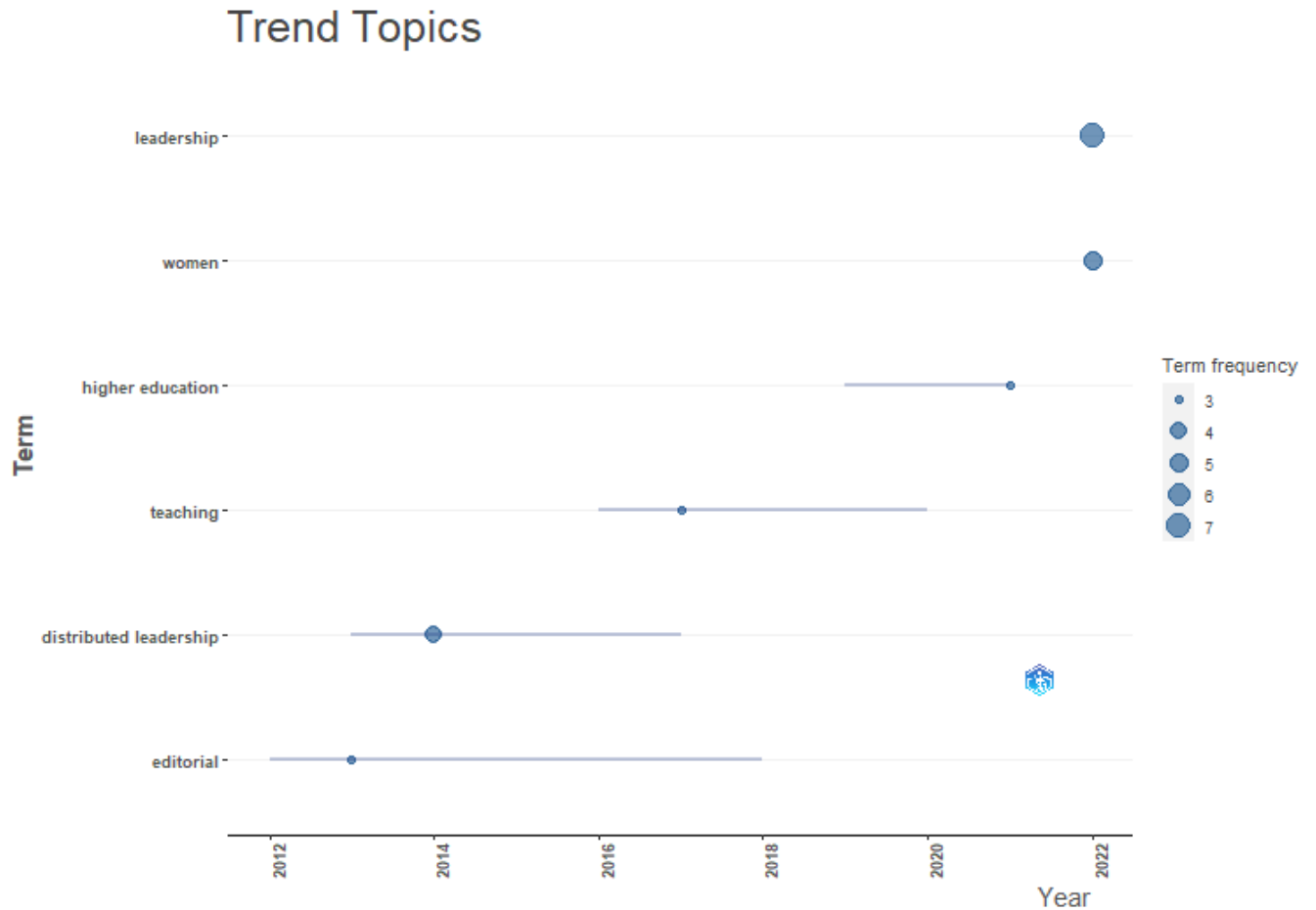


Figure 4

Trending Topics in educational leadership domain

Keyword co-occurrence network in educational leadership domain in the journal (RQ3)

In order to uncover the underlying clusters within the research domain of educational leadership, it is important to explore the relationships between the terms utilised by authors. A co-occurrence analysis was conducted using VOS Viewer, with a minimum keyword occurrence set at two (2). This analysis yielded seven (7) items and two (2) distinct clusters, as depicted in Figure 5. The first cluster prominently revolves around women's leadership, while the second cluster centres on the influence of distributed leadership on professional development. These keywords within the clusters align with the top three (3) trending topics identified in Figure 2, further emphasising their significance within the research domain.

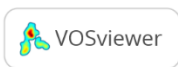
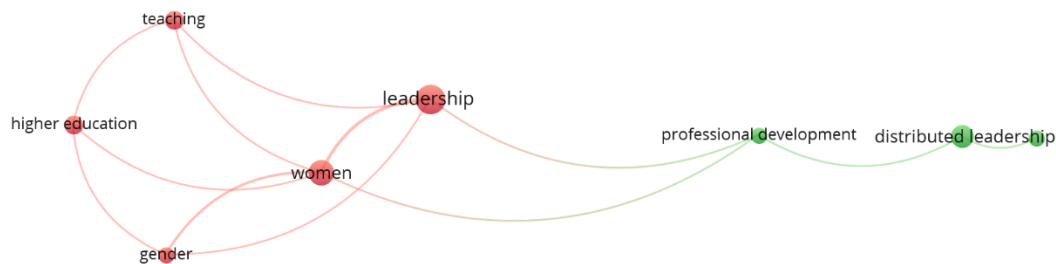


Figure 5

Keyword co-occurrence network in educational leadership domain

This first cluster – women leadership (red) – consisted of five (5) keywords, namely "gender", "higher education", "leadership", "teaching", and "women". These keywords indicate a focus on women's leadership or related studies within the journal. This finding aligns with the findings presented further in section 5.2 and section 5.3. The second cluster – Distributed leadership's influence on the professional development of staff in higher education (green) – Included two keywords: "distributed leadership" and "professional development". This indicates another research within the journal but is not specifically focused on leadership. Instead, it hints at various aspects of higher education, such as the implementation of session academic success programs, peer assessment strategies, project-based learning, and academic development units. These topics demonstrate that the journal's focus is not entirely on leadership aspects but also on other aspects of institutional development.

Thematic mapping of studies in the educational leadership domain in the journal (RQ3)

After identifying the clusters, a thematic map was created to explore further the themes related to these keywords (Figure 6). The thematic map consists of four quadrants plotted based on the degree of centrality and density. The degree of centrality indicates the level of interaction within a network among different collaborators, while the density reflects the internal strength of the network. The four quadrants on the thematic map represent four distinct themes: motor themes, basic themes, emerging or declining themes, and niche themes. The motor theme, located in the quadrant with high centrality and high density, comprises well-developed topics considered crucial to the research domain. The basic theme, situated in the quadrant with high centrality and low density, includes research topics that hold significance within the research domain but are still in

the early stages of development. The emerging or declining theme is located in the quadrant with low centrality and low density, representing underdeveloped topics with marginal presence within the research domain. Lastly, the niche theme occupies the quadrant with low centrality but high density, consisting of well-developed but relatively marginal themes within the research domain. By utilising the thematic map, these four quadrants provide insights into the characteristics and prominence of various themes within the research domain.

Figure 5 demonstrates that studies on women or gendered leadership are located within the motor theme, indicating their significance as a crucial research topic in the educational leadership domain covered by this journal. The topic of sessional staff is positioned in the central-right area, suggesting that it is marginally developed but still important within the research domain. On the other hand, the largest cluster in the central-left quadrant pertains to distributed leadership, which is also marginally developed but relatively less critical to the research domain. An emerging theme focuses on well-developed teaching topics that are considered less critical in the research domain. Therefore, based on this thematic map, it can be inferred that topics related to women's leadership are the most crucial within the research domain covered by the journal.

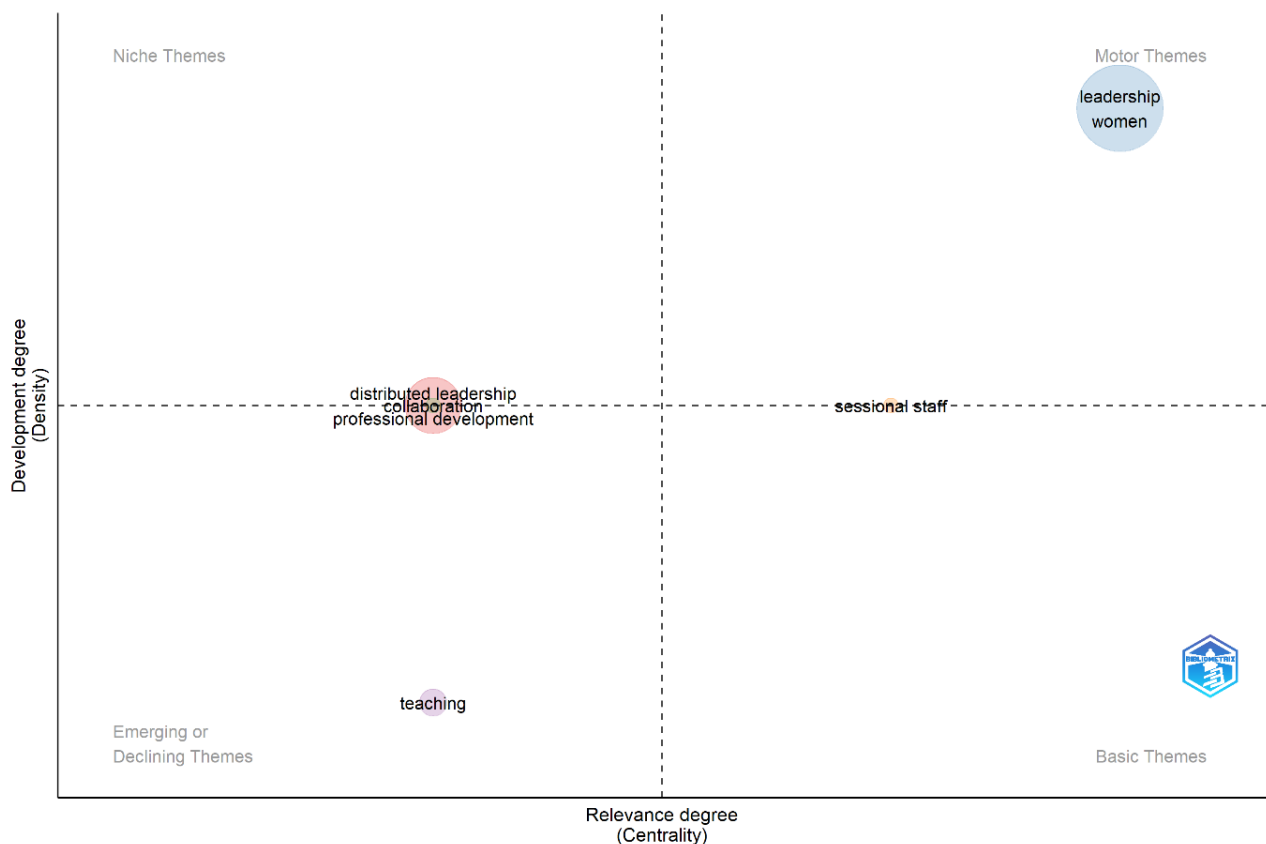


Figure 5

Thematic mapping of studies in the educational leadership domain

Content Analysis of papers published in educational leadership domain (RQ3)

In this section, a content analysis was conducted on a total of 31 papers, excluding five editorial documents. The key findings from each article have been summarised and presented in Table 5. The findings in Table 6 also include average citations per year (considering the total citations to date divided by the year it was published). The study by Thomas et al. (2011) has the highest average number of citations, but this study is not directly related to education in leadership. Instead, the study focuses on the impact of initiatives to implement self- and peer-assessment strategies.

The content analysis of 31 papers further reveals that a limited number of studies (10 out of 31) have directly addressed the influence of educational leadership influence on universities, with a notable emphasis on women's leadership evident in five of these studies primarily due to the special issue on women leadership managed by Butler-Henderson et al (2022). Among the examined papers, Lefoe et al. (2013) explored the leadership skills required by course coordinators to establish a supportive environment for sessional staff. Poitras Pratt et al. (2021) investigated the impact of collaborative leadership on fostering a collective vision within universities. Le et al. (2021) examined the leadership influence of supervisors on PhD candidates, while Nguyen et al. (2021) focused on the effects of leadership behaviour displayed by department heads on employee performance. Chappel (2022) contributed a study on the pioneering role of the first female professor of Finance in Australia and New Zealand, exploring her influence on future professors. Ryan and Goldingay (2022) provided a commentary article discussing the vital role of university leaders in fostering caring and ethical leadership in academia, particularly in Australia. Devlin (2022) delved into the challenges women face in leadership positions in the Australian context, while Nachatar Singh (2022) extended the research by examining both the barriers and advantages experienced by women leaders in Australian university settings. In another paper, Nachatar Singh (2022) explored the barriers women leaders encounter in the learning and teaching space, while Aiston (2022) investigated the barriers women leaders face in Hong Kong universities.

This analysis highlights the journal's recent engagement with educational leadership, as most papers were published in 2021 and 2022. These studies shed light on various aspects of leadership within academia, particularly in such themes as women's leadership, the role of educational leadership in curriculum development, teaching pedagogy and practice, and peer development. While the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP) continues to make significant contributions to exploring the theme of educational leadership, given the expansion of research in this theme globally in comparative education-related journals, opportunities remain to both deepen and broaden research in this area.

Based on this and to answer research question 4 (RQ4) we wish to highlight potential research areas that JUTLP could spearhead and which scholars within higher education could explore further to enrich the understanding of leadership practices, challenges, and their impact within higher education institutions.

Table 6*Findings from n = 31 papers*

Authors	Avg. citations per year	Purpose of research	Key Research Areas
<i>Chapple (2022)</i>	1	This case study investigated the pioneering role of Professor H.Y. Izan as a trailblazing figure in finance, being the first woman professor in Australia and New Zealand. It explores the various aspects of her role as a role model and compares her influence to that of other women professors appointed during the period from 1990 to 2021.	<i>Women leadership</i>
<i>Ryan and Goldingay (2022)</i>	3	This commentary article engaged in a critical reflection on the inquiry of "How can university leaders foster caring and ethical academic leadership through power sharing?"	<i>General Leadership</i>
<i>Devlin (2022)</i>	0	The article examines the book's significance within the Special Issue's theme, focusing on the difficulties women encounter in leadership positions related to teaching and learning within a sexist environment.	<i>Women Leadership</i>
Konjarski et al. (2022)	0	The paper explored the impact of the Women in First Year (WiFY) initiative, introduced in 2018, on the career advancement of women academics in the First Year College (FYC) at Victoria University. It discusses this initiative's positive outcomes on women's career progression in the FYC.	Women academics career progression
<i>Nachatar Singh (2022)</i>	3	This paper examined the significant challenges and potential advantages international women academics encounter in pursuing leadership roles within Australian universities.	<i>Women Leadership</i>
<i>Harvey and Jones (2022)</i>	1	This research tackles the obstacles women encounter in higher education to assert and showcase their leadership contributions in learning and teaching.	<i>Women Leadership</i>
<i>Aiston (2022)</i>	1	This study used quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the obstacles faced by female academics in leadership roles within the academic landscape of Hong Kong.	<i>Women Leadership</i>
Livesay et al. (2022)	0	This research investigated the representation of women and men in leadership positions within nursing education in Australia.	Leadership representation
Allinson and Mahon (2022)	0	This article investigated a collaborative project in curriculum design that embraces a transdisciplinary approach, aiming to foster a sense of institutional belonging and enhance student engagement.	Curriculum design
Tangalakis et al. (2022)	1	This research examined how remote teaching affects student evaluations of female academics in a First Year College at Victoria University in Australia.	Students' evaluation in remote teaching

Kavenuke and Muthanna (2021)	4	This study aimed to examine the utilisation of critical pedagogy in higher teacher education in Tanzania.	Teaching pedagogy
Poitras Pratt et al. (2021)	1	This study aimed to investigate the impact of a collaborative mentorship approach known as "ensemble mentorship" on decolonisation and the promotion of a collective vision of reconciliation within university teaching and learning.	Collaborative mentorship
Heard-Lauréote and Buckley (2021)	1	The article's objective was to emphasise the significance of forming collaborative partnerships and establishing emotional connections within the context of online education in higher institutions.	Collaborative partnership
Le et al. (2021)	4	The primary focus of this study was to examine how the relationship between supervisors and PhD students affects students' satisfaction with their supervisors' supervisory styles and overall skill development.	Leadership in PhD supervision
Nguyen et al. (2021)	0	The primary aim of this study was to investigate how the leadership behaviours of department heads and coworkers influence the research performance of lecturers. Additionally, the study seeks to explore the moderating effects of achievement value in this relationship.	Top Management Leadership
Allen et al. (2021)	15	This article was a comprehensive review that critically analysed the issue of gender equity in the academic field by considering the influence of personal circumstances, systemic factors, and cultural obstacles that impede women's career advancement across various significant milestones.	Review of Literature on gender equity
Gonzalez et al. (2021)	4	This study aimed to facilitate the growth of teaching practices in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, positioning educators as agents of change within the higher education system.	Teaching practices during COVID-19
Douglas et al. (2020)	13	The purpose of this article was to investigate the perspectives of facilitators in asynchronous online discussions to enhance their practices and promote student engagement in the context of higher education.	Online Teaching
Flecknoe et al. (2017)	6	This reflection aimed to explore Education-Focused (EF) positions that emphasise educational excellence, requiring a strong emphasis on high-quality teaching and associated scholarly research.	Teaching Quality
Fotinas (2016)	1	This paper aimed to examine the role and influence of a central academic development unit (ADU) in enhancing the practice of learning and teaching in vocational education and training (VET).	Vocational Education and Training
Buckmiller and Kruse (2015)	0	This paper aimed to assess the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) models.	Project-based learning
Scott (2015)	3	The objective of this study was to examine teaching methods that are proven effective.	Teaching methods

Wingrove et al. (2015)	2	This paper aimed to develop a leadership framework that facilitates the effective and long-lasting implementation of peer-based professional development in a scalable manner.	Peer-based professional development
de Jong et al. (2014)	2	This paper aimed to create an online problem-based course on leadership specifically designed for public health professionals in Europe.	Leadership curriculum
Rajendran and Andrew (2014)	3	The purpose of this study was to explore the value of using films as a tool to enhance the comprehension of the theoretical model of leadership effectiveness.	Leadership effectiveness model
Lefoe et al. (2013)	2	The purpose of this paper was to enhance the leadership skills of subject coordinators so that they can create supportive environments for sessional staff, enabling them to improve their understanding and application of teaching practices.	<i>Subject coordinators Leadership</i>
Hamilton et al. (2013)	4	The purpose of this study was to present a framework for the Sessional Academic Success (SAS) program.	Sessional Academic Success
Brown et al. (2013)	3	This article aimed to put into practice the Casual Teaching Staff Policy.	Casual Teaching staff policy
Johnson et al. (2012)	1	This study aimed to examine the perceptions of teaching and learning leadership teams involved in curriculum reform within science teaching departments.	Curriculum development
Thomas et al. (2011)	23	This study aimed to find the impact of initiatives to implement self- and peer-assessment strategies that aim to promote future-oriented learning.	Future oriented learning
Brown and Littrich (2008)	1	The purpose of this case study was to evaluate the Assessment concerning the principles of distributed leadership.	Distributed Leadership

Gaps in literature and suggestions on potential research areas (RQ4)

Diversity in Leadership

While the thematic mapping results highlight a notable emphasis on women's leadership published in JUTLP, there is potential for further exploration of diversity in leadership roles. Diversity in educational leadership is not only a reflection of the broader societal diversity but also a catalyst for transformative change within educational institutions. Women leaders often bring unique leadership styles characterised by collaboration, empathy, and relationship-building (De la Rey, 2005; Stanford et al., 1995). Studying how these approaches impact organisational culture and student outcomes can inform leadership practices.

Again, high-profile female leaders have been identified as an inspiration for other females to take up leadership positions in other fields (Ladam et al., 2018; Hoyt & Simon, 2011). In the same vein, women educational leaders could serve as role models for students and educators, inspiring them to aspire to leadership positions (Maheshwari, 2023). Studies in this area can shed light on the transformative impact of women leaders on educational environments and the aspirations of students.

International and comparative studies

The review of the available studies has shown that most of the studies conducted in the educational leadership domain and published in JUTLP are primarily within the Australian context with a limited focus on other regions. Indeed, studies such as Hofstede's (2001) and the GLOBE project (Global Leadership Organizational Behavioral Effectiveness) by House et al. (2004) have shown that countries vary by their unique institutional context, including culture. Cultural differences may produce variations in attitudes towards and the practice of leadership styles (Munley, 2011). Conducting international and comparative studies on educational leadership practices across different countries and cultures could provide insights into variations in leadership approaches, challenges, and outcomes.

Leadership during crisis and change

In a world characterised by uncertainty and rapid change, educational institutions must be equipped to respond effectively to crises and adapt to new paradigms. The review by Wu et al. (2021) also highlights the exponential growth in crisis leadership research over the past decade, utilizing bibliometric analyses to uncover intellectual and conceptual structures, identifying diverse research methods, and emphasizing the need for further investigation and advancement in understanding leadership across various crisis stages and contexts. Effective leadership is central to an institution's resilience in the face of challenges and its ability to adapt to changing times. The menace of the recent COVID-19 pandemic might be over, but it presents an opportunity to investigate how educational leaders navigate times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or major organisational changes. This would offer insights into adaptive leadership strategies, decision-making processes, and the impact on student outcomes and or educational quality. Ultimately, such research outcomes can offer actionable insights for current and future leaders on navigating crises and sudden changes.

According to Riggio and Newstead (2023), leaders, regardless of the scale or type of crisis they may encounter during their tenure, must possess essential crisis leadership competencies such as early detection, sensemaking, decision-making, effective communication, resource coordination, and facilitating learning, emphasizing the need for integrating these skills into leader selection and development in the face of the growing frequency and complexity of crises. Therefore, moving forward, studies can also focus on educational leadership in the post-pandemic era. It is understandable that the COVID-19 pandemic has irrevocably altered the landscape of education, ushering in unprecedented challenges and opportunities for educational institutions. As we transition into the post-pandemic era, JUTLP could spearhead studies that explore the evolving role of educational leaders in shaping the future of learning, addressing the multifaceted aftermath of the pandemic, and driving innovative practices that ensure resilient and effective educational systems. For instance, investigating how educational leaders address access, equity, digital divide, and mental health post-pandemic issues is essential for creating a more just and inclusive educational environment.

Technology and educational leadership

In the digital age, technology has become an integral part of the educational landscape (Sharonova & Avdeeva, 2019), reshaping teaching, learning, and administrative practices. The post-pandemic era offers an opportunity to reimagine teaching and learning approaches in the digital age. Educational leaders play a pivotal role in shaping technology integration, influencing its strategic implementation, and maximising its potential for enhancing educational outcomes. JUTLP could spearhead studies exploring how educational leaders navigate integrating educational technologies and digital transformation within the educational sector. This includes understanding the role of educational leaders in guiding technological innovation and ensuring its alignment with pedagogical goals. Again, similar studies could be conducted at the lower level of educational leadership involving program managers and course coordinators to understand how they embrace innovative educational technologies that align with pedagogical goals in the post-COVID-19 era.

Discussion

This review examined 36 articles using both bibliometric and content analysis. These articles focused on how educational leadership affects different groups like teachers, students, and other communities in higher education. One of the primary objectives of this study was to find patterns in research about educational leadership influence in the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice from 2008 to 2022. This review further aimed to understand the influence of leadership on various stakeholders, such as students, teachers, and other communities within the higher education sector. The analysis from this review suggests that the scholars have published recently (2021 and 2022) in this journal on educational leadership, mainly focusing on women's leadership. Further, most of the studies are from Australia. It was also found that most studies used qualitative methods, while only a few used quantitative or mixed methods. We employed thematic analysis to gain deeper insights into our research focus in JUTLP. This allowed us to comprehend our research area better and provide suggestions for future exploration. Figure 5 depicts the outcomes, showing that articles on women's or gendered leadership emerged as a prominent theme, highlighting its pivotal role within the educational leadership domain covered

by this journal. A significant theme was distributed leadership, which, while reasonably developed, holds a relatively lower importance in the research context. On a different note, research concerning sessional staff occupied the next tier, indicating its meaningful but not fully developed presence within the domain. Conversely, a larger cluster of papers addressed teaching topics. While these have been extensively investigated, they hold lesser importance within the research context.

This analysis distinctly emphasises that women's leadership takes the lead as the most extensively explored subject, with the remaining topics varying in their degrees of significance, especially concerning educational leadership. The literature also exhibits a substantial focus on women's leadership, underscoring its importance within the research domain (Bin & Alfayez, 2022; Chanana, 2022; Gallant, 2014; Maheshwari, 2022; Maheshwari & Nayak, 2022; Maheshwari et al., 2021; Madsen, 2012; Shahtalebi et al., 2011). This analysis further indicates an opportunity for future research to delve into the influence of educational leadership on sessional staff, a topic that, while less developed, carries significance within this research context. Recent studies by Hattam and Weiler (2022), Jones (2023), McComb and Eather (2023), have explored how leaders can empower and support sessional staff, suggesting an emerging area of investigation.

Conclusion

The study incorporated 15-year review which focused on the educational leadership domain within the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP). Recent publications (2021–2022) predominantly focused on women's leadership, with a concentration of studies from Australia. Qualitative methods were prevalent, and thematic analysis provided nuanced insights. Women's leadership emerged as a prominent theme, while distributed leadership and sessional staff research presented opportunities for further exploration. This review is valuable in pinpointing areas that need more research in the future, and it also showed the journal where it could put more attention in the coming times. Following this review, we proceed to outline the implications and avenues for future research.

Theoretical Contribution

The study's goal was to reveal the patterns in research related to educational leadership in JUTLP. This included understanding the impact of leadership on various stakeholders in the higher education sector. To the best of our knowledge, no such review is done in JUTLP. In a recent study, Moreira et al. (2023) systematically reviewed empirical articles published between 2009 and 2019. They aimed to offer an extensive and up-to-date analysis of the pedagogical competencies of higher education teachers. Another research effort by Phan et al. (2022) delved into literature from 2000 to 2020. Their focus was on utilising learning management systems within higher education contexts. Likewise, Yang and Hoque (2023) conducted a review centered on the factors influencing university teachers' job satisfaction from 2010 to 2021. Until now, the reviews published in JUTLP have spanned various research areas, excluding educational leadership. This review bridges this gap by delving into this pivotal topic within the journal's collection of articles. This provides practical guidance for the journal's future focus and stands as a noteworthy theoretical contribution to the field.

Practical Implications

This review paper possesses the potential to yield significant guidance for educational institutions seeking to enhance their leadership development initiatives and strategies. A comprehensive analysis of articles from JUTLP offers insights into the topics studied so far and their impact on the higher education sector. This review establishes benchmarks that the journal can arrange the special issues for evaluating the influence of leadership practices on different stakeholders, which is limited in the literature of JUTLP. The gaps identified from this review can help the journal to grow even further in the coming era. Hence, the review's insights can inform the future direction of the JUTLP as various gaps are highlighted in the existing body of knowledge within the journal. The review guides JUTLP in potentially expanding its coverage and fostering growth within this specific area of the research domain.

Limitations and directions for future research

While conducting the bibliometrics analysis of research papers published in the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP) there are some limitations to be noted. Firstly, we only looked at papers published between 2008 and 2022 in WoS and Scopus databases. We did not consider other databases or the journal website, so we might have missed some papers. To get a more complete picture, future studies should consider using different databases or check the journals' websites for all the available research. Next, this study in JUTLP is mainly descriptive. We did not dig deep into comparing JUTLP with other journals to provide a detailed analysis regarding the topics explored in educational leadership. Doing this with future research will provide a better idea of how JUTLP compares to other academic journals in educational leadership domain of research.

Conflict of Interest

The authors report no actual or perceived conflicts of interest. ChatGPT was not used in this article, and the intellectual property remains solely that of the authors. The authors disclose that they have not received any funding for this manuscript beyond resourcing for academic time at their respective university.

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