

School leadership in Africa: A review of empirical research

Tony Bush^a, Felix Maringe^b, Derek Glover^a, Jef Peeraer^c, Chantal Dusabe Kabanda^c, and Jocelyne Cyiza Kirezi^{c1}

Abstract: To ignite and promote the potential of school leadership in improving quality of education in Africa, the government of Rwanda is collaborating with VVOB – education for development, to set up an African Centre for School Leadership. The Centre will support governments and governmental agencies in the education sector to build supportive school leadership systems with the objective of improving teaching and in turn learning outcomes. To lay the foundations for the Centre, this paper explores and reviews empirical research on school leadership in Africa through three research questions: (1) What key competencies and practices are associated with effective school leadership in Africa?; (2) What are key features of effective and scalable continuous professional development for school leaders as effective school leaders in Africa?; and (3) How do local, national, and regional policies in Africa promote or inhibit school leaders' leadership practices? The authors conducted a systematic review of academic and grey literature on school and educational leadership in Africa. International literature is also cited, to facilitate comparisons with global empirical evidence.

Keywords: School leadership, Literature review, Africa.

Introduction

Access to basic education has significantly increased in the majority of countries in Africa over the past two decades. However, progress towards access to quality basic education for all is still slow in the region. The World Development Report of 2018 indicates that being in school is not a guarantee for learning. Children from poor families and remote areas can expect to do the least amount of learning, particularly when they are female or have a disability (World Bank, 2018). The 2018 World Development Report attributed this learning crisis to education systems struggling to foresee in one or more of four key school-level ingredients for learning: unprepared students, poor teaching quality, focus on educational inputs that do not drive learning, and weak school management.

Effective school leadership is critical to addressing all the four key factors underlying the learning crisis. This is because an effective school leader plays a key role in supporting teachers and in ensuring effective use of resources. The Education Commission's 2019 "Transforming the Education Workforce" report indicates that teachers are at the heart of the learning process; however, the roles of school leadership and management are also strongly associated with better education outcomes. The report highlights improved school leadership as one of the key elements necessary to leverage the broader education workforce for better learning and more resilient education systems (Education Commission, 2019a). A synthesis of two decades of research on school leadership by Grissom et al. (2021) recommends that investing in successful school leadership strategies is likely to have a very large payoff given the magnitude and scope of principals' impacts on students and schools.

The report of the Education Commission (2019) also shows that this requires reorienting school leaders. Although school leaders are increasingly viewed as instructional leaders, in practice they tend to focus on administrative and supervisory activities and are rarely selected or supported to lead activities that enhance learning. The shift towards instructional leadership at the school level can be facilitated by training school leaders to undertake instructional leadership and provide the necessary tools; and strengthening decentralized educational leadership capacity to provide coaching and support for school leaders to develop instructional leadership skills. The same idea is supported by the Global Partnership for Education (2019) which states that ongoing support from head teachers and school and district leaders is necessary for sustainability of teacher training. Similarly, Global School Leaders in its evidence review report of 2020 shows that school systems are increasingly oriented toward improving the learning levels of students, and this necessitates school leaders' roles to be focused on delivering

1 a) University of Nottingham, b) University of the Witwatersrand, c) VVOB – Education for development. This article is based on a working paper available at https://rwanda.vvob.org/sites/rwanda/files/acsl_working_paper_v0.0_20220327.pdf. The authors are grateful to the editors for adapting the working paper for publication in this journal.

these outcomes which is rarely the case. Additionally, school leaders are hampered in their ability to lead toward these outcomes because, among other factors, they have limited opportunities to attend pre- or in-service training. School leaders in underperforming school systems are found to have low-level leadership skills (Global School Leaders, 2020).

The African centre for school leadership

To address these challenges in education systems in Africa and to ignite the potential of school leadership to improve quality of education, an African Centre for School Leadership (ACSL) is being set up. The Centre will support governments and governmental agencies in the education sector to build a supportive school leadership system with the objective of improving teaching and in turn learning outcomes. While the Centre will promote effective leadership at various levels in education systems on the continent, the focus of this support is at the level of schools and school leaders in these schools. As depicted in the Theory of Change (ToC) in Figure 1 below and supported by international evidence on the effects of school leadership, it is understood that supportive educational leadership at policy level will enable effective and scalable professional development of school leaders resulting in effective school leadership in schools. Effective school leadership in turn will support effective school-based teacher professional development and support, resulting into improved quality of teaching and ultimately improved learning and learning outcomes and reduced gender and other equity gaps. The Centre is currently in its foundation phase and various partners are being engaged. It is to be hosted in Rwanda, one of the key strategic partners.

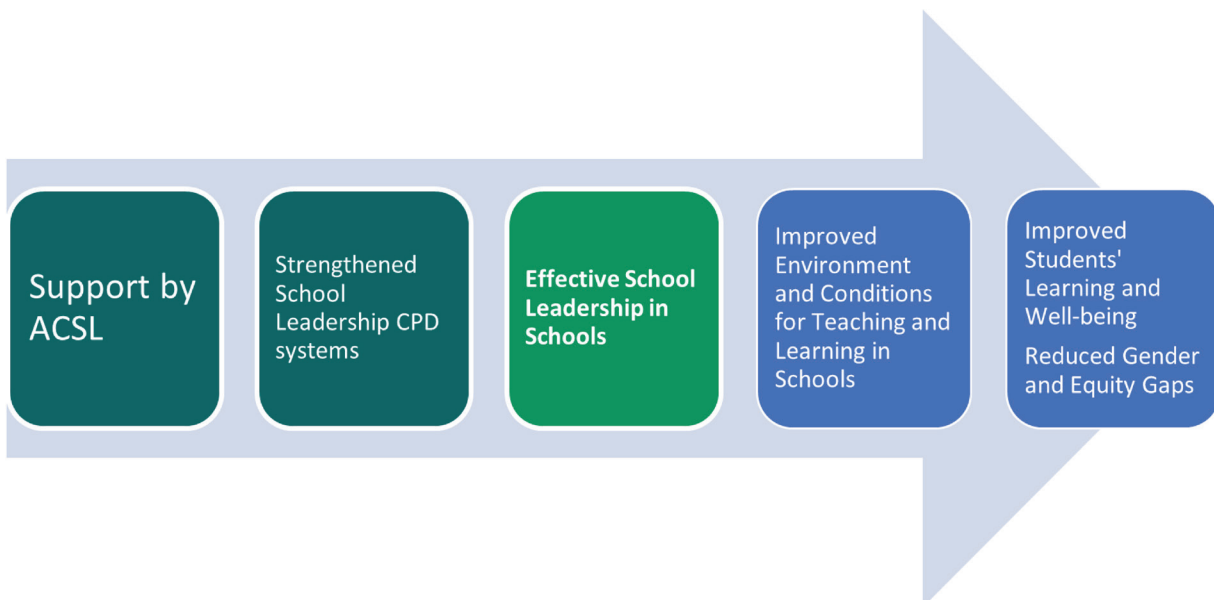


Fig. 1 Theory of change of the African centre for school leadership

Source: Authors.

Aim and research questions

Most of the literature on school leadership underlying the ToC depicted above, emanates from the global north. There is only limited research on school leadership in Africa, while there are many developing countries, with significant learning challenges, relating to resources, classroom teaching and leadership (Bush and Oduro, 2006). To lay the foundations for the Centre, the broad aim of this study is therefore to explore and review empirical research on school leadership in Africa and to identify what constitutes effective school leadership in Africa. The review started with an analysis of the current pattern of knowledge production on school leadership on the continent. The empirical evidence that has been produced on school leadership in Africa was analyzed to provide insights into what constitutes effective school leadership.

Starting from the overarching question of what is regarded as effective school leadership in Africa, the review explores three follow-up research questions:

1. *What key competencies and practices are associated with effective school leadership in Africa?* The review explores the competencies and practices associated with effective school leadership, notably in respect of

the leadership styles and models deployed by school leaders.

2. *What are key features of effective and scalable continuous professional development (CPD) for school leaders as effective school leaders in Africa?* The review examines literature on leadership preparation and continuous professional development (CPD) for school leaders, that may include both pre-service and in-service elements. It includes discussion of the content of CPD, in terms of aims, curricula and materials, as well as the wider educational context and policy aims. It also examines delivery processes, including coaching, mentoring, and networking. The review also shows which agencies (governments, universities, and national and international NGOs) provide CPD.
3. *How do local, national, and regional policies in Africa promote or inhibit school leaders' leadership practices?* The review finally examines the impact of context, defined in terms of national policy and local considerations, on leadership practice.

Methodology and approach

To address the overarching question, and the research questions, the authors conducted a systematic review of academic and grey literature on school and educational leadership in Africa. International literature is also cited, to facilitate comparisons between African and global empirical research. The selection of literature is organized thematically, focused on pre-determined search terms, and emergent topics. These are: (1) Educational leadership; (2) School leadership; (3) Principals and head teachers; (4) Deputy heads; (5) Middle leaders, including heads of departments; (6) Leadership models; (7) Leadership preparation and Continuous Professional Development (CPD); and (8) Leadership and gender. Most of these themes were pre-determined, based on the authors' extensive knowledge and understanding of school leadership in several contexts. However, the initial review of the literature showed a significant number of sources focused on leadership and gender, so this 'emergent' topic was added to the list of themes.

The academic sources reviewed for this paper emerged from the Mendeley search app, and Google Scholar. A supplementary search was conducted on the African Educational Research database. A total of 792 sources were identified and these were reviewed to establish whether they were of sufficient quality and matched the agreed brief for the review, focusing mainly on 21st century outputs. Sources reporting research findings included quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies, from all non-predatory publishers, including post-graduate theses. 227 sources that focused on school leadership, and leadership development in Africa, were included in the final report. These sources were first analyzed by country and by the eight themes identified above, with some sub-themes, notably in respect of school leadership models. Afterwards, the sources were analyzed to address the overarching question on what constitutes effective school leadership in Africa and the subsequent research questions. A separate search, using the same sources, criteria, and search topics, was used for French and Portuguese literature. Despite considerable searching, and the use of 424 French literature sources, and 105 Portuguese sources very little material was found.

The review of official (grey) literature examined the role of non-government organizations (NGOs), non-profit organizations (NPOs), and national governments and tertiary education institutions in supporting school leadership training and development on the continent. Using various search engines, especially Google, several NPOs and NGOs were identified that are working in the field of school leadership training. Google was supplemented by 'snowball' sampling where, upon identifying one NPO, there were references to other organisations involved in similar work. From the organisations found, only those operating in African countries were selected.

Knowledge Production on School Leadership in Africa

The pattern of knowledge production in and on Africa is very mixed with substantial sources in a few countries, modest outputs in other countries, and little or no evidence of academic or grey literature in most nations. Table 1 summarizes the academic sources available by theme for the 32 countries where relevant sources have been found, in rank order.

Table 1 Analysis of knowledge production by theme in 32 African countries

COUNTRY	Region	Ed. L.	Sch. L.	Principals HTs	Deputy HTs	Middle leaders	Models	Prep/CPD	Gender	Total
South Africa	South	3	3	4	0	4	13	10	4	41
Nigeria	West	0	2	5	0	0	13	6	2	28
Kenya	East	0	6	0	0	0	12	5	3	26
Ghana	West	0	2	0	0	0	8	8	1	19
Tanzania	East	1	2	0	0	0	8	4	1	16
Zimbabwe	South	1	2	0	1	0	3	1	7	15
Ethiopia	East	0	1	1	0	0	5	3	1	11
Cameroon	West	1	1	1	0	1	2	3	0	9
Botswana	South	0	1	1	1	0	4	2	0	9
Uganda	East	0	0	3	0	0	3	1	1	8
Egypt	North	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	5
Rwanda	East	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	5
Namibia	South	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	4
Zambia	Central	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	4
Lesotho	South	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
DR Congo	West	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Equatorial Guinea	West	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Eritrea	East	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Malawi	East	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Morocco	North	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Sudan	East	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Angola	Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Benin	West	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Djibouti	East	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Eswatini	South	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Guinea-Bissau	West	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Libya	North	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mozambique	East	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Senegal	West	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sierra Leone	West	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Somalia	East	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
South Sudan	East	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Overview paper	North	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Total</i>		12	27	17	2	5	87	55	22	227

Source: Authors.

Table 1 shows how knowledge production is dominated by just six countries which collectively provide almost two-thirds of all publications on Africa. A further six countries provide another 20% of the total. There may be several reasons for this dominance, for example that most of the top-ranked countries are English-speaking and that educational leadership and management as fields of study and research developed first in English-speaking countries. Global knowledge production on these themes is still dominated by the US/UK/Australia axis, with significant outputs also from Canada and New Zealand. Table 1 also shows the dominance of two leadership themes chosen by authors. More than a third of all knowledge production is focused on leadership models. This section focuses primarily on the key issue of *how* to lead, and this may explain this emphasis. Almost a quarter address leadership Continuous Professional Development (CPD), showing the growing awareness of the need for school

principals to have specialist training. In contrast, there is remarkably little research about the role of deputy heads or middle leaders, such as heads of department. This shows that knowledge production is very uneven, in terms of themes as well as countries. The next section examines how the data serve to address the research questions.

Findings

Overarching Question: What is regarded as effective school leadership in Africa?

Defining what is understood by ‘effective’ school leadership is contested, but it often refers to enhancing student outcomes, especially in public examinations. The findings from the literature on school and educational leadership in Africa reflect international research on the importance of setting direction, empowering and developing teachers, and leading teaching and learning. These are perceived to be indicators of effective school leadership. This connects to international evidence (e.g., (Leithwood et al., 2006)) that leadership accounts for up to 27% of variation in student outcomes, as measured by public examination results.

Several sources discuss the role of the principal in enhancing student achievement, for example in Namibia, Cameroon, Nigeria, Egypt, and Kenya. Two papers from Kenya address the important issue of the relationship between leadership and student outcomes. Obama et al. (2015) study established that schools which embraced more democratic and participatory leadership styles, and encouraged group work and team spirit, performed significantly better in the Kenyan examinations than those that used more autocratic leadership styles. Nzoka and Orodho (2014) found that school managers applied several strategies to improve academic performance of students, including monitoring instructional processes and student assessment, subsidizing Government funding through free day secondary education, using income generating activities, and adopting guidance and counselling programmes. Despite these efforts, however, according to the authors, the expected improved students’ academic performance was not realized, because most school managers had not undergone management training.

The notion that effective school leadership relates to enhanced student outcomes leads to a view that principals and other leaders should focus on instructional leadership Hallinger and Lee (2014) argue that ‘instructional leadership from the principal is essential for the improvement of teaching and learning in schools’. However, instructional leadership has been criticized because it focuses ‘too much on the principal as the center of expertise, power and authority’ (Hallinger, 2003). It tends to ignore or underplay the role of other leaders such as deputy principals, middle managers, leadership teams, and classroom teachers. Robinson et al. (2008) analysis of published research shows that ‘the closer leaders are to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to make a difference to students. Bush et al. (2021) overview of instructional leadership in six African countries (Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) concludes that education ministries should articulate that the role of the school principal is primarily that of a professional leader, focused on developing teaching and learning. They add that principals should introduce clear strategies for instructional leadership, including monitoring, notably through classroom observation, with constructive feedback designed to encourage beneficial change rather than to damage teacher confidence.

The sources reviewed for this overarching question indicate the increasing importance of instructional leadership in many parts of the continent. There is advocacy for this model because of its perceived benefits, for example in Nigeria (Bello, 2015) and Ghana (Abonyi and Sofu, 2019). There is also evidence of the efficacy of instructional leadership in enhancing student learning, for example in Kenya (Mutuku, 2018). However, several studies point to the challenges inhibiting principals from acting as instructional leaders. Mestry (2017a) argues that South African principals ‘repudiate’ their role in managing teaching and learning. Tedla (2012) says that the time of Eritrean principals is not focused on instructional leadership while Allieu (2019) notes that most heads in Sierra Leone are not practicing instructional leadership. Mestry et al. (2013) comment that South African principals need to balance their administrative and instructional roles appears relevant to leaders across the continent.

What key competencies and practices are associated with effective school leadership in Africa?

The review explores the competencies and practices associated with effective school leadership, notably in respect of the leadership styles and models deployed by school leaders. As noted above, there is extensive research and literature on leadership models and styles, with 87 sources reviewed, from 23 countries. As also reflected in the international literature, the most frequently discussed models are instructional, distributed, and transformational leadership.

Instructional leadership is increasingly emphasized and endorsed (Bush, 2020), especially since the direct link between instructional leadership and enhanced student outcomes, as already described in the section on the

overarching question on effective school leadership above. The notion of effective school leadership however is often defined only in respect of the principal, focusing on the most senior leader, rather than considering broader notions of leadership, embracing senior and middle leaders, and collaborative constructs such as leadership teams. This bias is reflected in the literature on Africa, where there are only two studies of deputy heads and principals and only five focused on middle leaders. Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019) claim that deputies play a ‘very significant role’ in school management in Botswana, working closely with heads and enacting tasks delegated to them by the formal leader. Mthiyane et al. (2019) study in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa notes the need for middle leaders to balance their monitoring role with support and collaboration. The three other South African papers link middle leaders to aspects of distributed leadership, in respect of teacher development (Du Plessis and Eberlein, 2018), instructional leadership (Moeketsane et al., 2021), and the role of middle leaders in school management teams (SMTs) (Bush and Glover, 2013). Ebot and Obi (2018) study in Cameroon notes the tension between hierarchy and the need to encourage participation, for example through teacher leadership.

Delegation or distribution can thus be understood as a key competence and practice for school leaders. The papers on distributed leadership scrutinized for this review indicate considerable interest in this model in Africa. Foremost, there is some advocacy for this model, for example in South Africa (Botha, 2014; Williams, 2011). As noted by Dampson et al. (2018), in Ghana, and by Sibanda (2018) in South Africa, successful adoption of distributed leadership depends on the support of senior leaders. Also, there are several barriers to distributed leadership, notably the influence of the hierarchy, in Botswana, described as MoE (Ministry of Education) ‘interference’ (Moswela and Kgosidialwa, 2019), in South Africa (Du Plessis and Heystek, 2020; Naicker and Mestry, 2012) and Ethiopia (Dagnew, 2017). Where distribution is evident, it is at an early stage of development, described as ‘emerging’ in Cameroon (Ebot Ashu, 2018), or as ‘largely allocative in Nigeria (Imoni, 2018). Some sources utilize different terms to describe leadership distribution. These include participative (Angola, Nigeria, and Uganda), collaborative (Botswana), shared (Botswana), or democratic (several countries). These models all relate to leadership that involves teachers as well as school leaders but (Grant, 2006; Mokhele, 2016), referring to South Africa, caution that teacher leadership can flourish only if supported by principals.

Several papers on transformational school leadership in Africa also discuss principals’ characteristics, skills, and practices. This is also a solo model, that includes building school vision, establishing school goals, offering individual support, creating a productive school culture, and inspiring followers to better outcomes. It has strong, heroic, and charismatic features linked to the personality of the principal and one weakness is that effectiveness is so dependent on this individual that it may not be sustained when the principal departs. Some studies report positive links between transformational leadership and school effectiveness, but these are mostly indirect, via teachers. Collectively, they show that principals’ transformational leadership practices produced positive effects on teachers’ job satisfaction, commitment, and self-efficacy. Leadership practices promoting effectiveness include monitoring, encouraging, and empowering school staff. Urrio (2012) study on school leadership in Tanzania found that the best performing leaders were able to set direction by articulating the school vision, encouraging collective decisions, engaging school communities in collaboration and teamwork, as well as developing empowerment, support, and trust. Salem (2016) survey of *Egyptian* teachers concludes that perceived effectiveness was linked to four specific leadership practices – providing an orderly environment, supporting teachers’ professional development, providing instructional resources, and developing clear instructional goals for student learning. Tesfaw (2014) found a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and teachers’ job satisfaction in Ethiopian government secondary schools. Similarly, Sabwami (2021) revealed that principals’ transformational leadership practices had a significant effect on teachers’ commitment in Kenyan public secondary schools. Ofoegbu et al. (2013) concluded that Nigerian school heads were more transformational and transactional in their preferred leadership styles and that most principals monitor, encourage and empower their staff to ensure effectiveness. Luyten and Bazo (2019) show how a combination of transformational leadership and professional learning communities increased teacher commitment in Mozambique.

The competencies and practices expected of school leaders are sometimes encapsulated in formal standards documents. One prominent African example is the Rwanda Education Board (2020) Professional Standards for Effective School Leadership. Inspired by the eight dimensions of successful leadership identified in the research of Day et al. (2009), five sets of standards are identified: creating a strategic direction for the school, leading learning, leading teaching, managing the school as an organization, and working with parents and the wider community. These topics fit what Bush and Jackson (2002) describe as an ‘international curriculum’ for school leadership preparation. The document outlines the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competences required to achieve the five standards. These are normative statements and assessing whether, how, and to what extent, they are achieved is challenging. As described by Peeraer et al. (2014), the dimensions and standards can be used to map training needs and to develop professional capacity development for school leaders. Adopting a standards-based approach

to school leadership CPD is helpful in articulating official expectations of principals, and in identifying the knowledge, skills and attitudes required of school leaders. It also provides the potential for consistency across the education system, regardless of school type or location. However, standards have also been criticized for atomizing the complex and holistic role of principals and for underestimating the significance of context (Bush, 2018).

A significant issue arising from the review is whether women lead differently from men, which might suggest different characteristics and practices. The Chile findings (Weinstein et al., 2021), that women lead more effectively than men, is reflected in research across Africa. In Zimbabwe, Moyo et al. (2020) describe that women's leadership is more collegial, collaborative and caring than that of men. Similarly, Nosike and Oguzor (2011) report that Nigerian women principals exercise more democratic styles, a view supported by Aladejana and Aladejana (2005), who state that Nigerian schools headed by women are 'better managed'. In contrast, however, Oyedele et al. (2010) argue that Zimbabwean teachers perceive women principals to be ineffective. If indeed women lead and manage more collaboratively than men, and this is perceived to be more effective, this has implications for both women and men. Further research can look for underlying causes for these differences instead of attributing it directly to (biological) differences between men and women.

The research of effective school leadership practices and competencies mainly comprises studies using international (mostly western) models. An emergent approach in Africa is Ubuntu leadership, discussed by Elonga Mboyo (2019) in respect of the DRC and by Kalabo (2017) in Zambia. Elonga Mboyo (2019) highlights unique Ubuntu operational patterns of understanding others' needs, negotiating and prioritising needs, assessing available resources, attending to others' needs, and raising expectations and commitment to organisational goals. Kalabo (2017) discusses culture, context, and perceptions in the discourses of leadership in Africa, as they relate to the Ubuntu leadership philosophy.

What are key features of effective and scalable CPD for school leaders as effective school leaders in Africa?

In most countries, school leaders begin their professional careers as teachers and progress to headship via a range of middle and senior leadership and management roles. This leads to a widespread view that teaching is their main activity, and that a teaching qualification and teaching experience are the only requirements for school leadership. Bush and Oduro (2006) note that 'throughout Africa, there is no formal requirement for principals to be trained as school managers. They are often appointed because of a successful record as teachers with the implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership'.

The review examines literature on leadership preparation (pre-service), leadership development (in-service) and continuous professional development (CPD) for school leaders in Africa. The emphasis on scalability is vital as much of the provision discussed in this review relates to small, isolated, activity, often with limited long-term benefits. There is growing realization that headship is a specialist occupation that requires specific preparation. The reasons for this paradigm shift include the expansion of the role of school principal, the increasing complexity of school contexts, recognition that preparation is a moral obligation, and awareness that effective preparation and development make a difference (Bush, 2018). This connects to shifting notions of identity, as teachers transit to leadership.

There is substantial knowledge production on leadership preparation and leaders' CPD in Africa, with 55 outputs, representing 25% of all sources reviewed for this report. Almost all these papers focus on in-service CPD, rather than pre-service preparation. The growing awareness of the need for principal development is reflected in the many papers that focus on advocacy, rather than reporting practice, including in Botswana (Pheko, 2008), South Africa (Mestry, 2017b; Naidoo, 2019), Cameroon (Okimb, 2019), Ghana (Suaka and Kuranchie, 2018), Nigeria (Arikewuyo, 2009), Ethiopia (Gurmu, 2020), Kenya (Kaume -Mwinzi, 2016), Malawi (Wamba, 2015) and Uganda (DeJaeghere, 2009). A related issue is the focus on needs analysis, evident in papers by (Ebot Ashu, 2020) in Cameroon, and (Arikewuyo, 2007). The informal nature of leadership learning is discussed in many settings, notably in Lesotho (Moorosi and Komiti, 2020), Ghana (Sofu and Abonyi, 2018), Malawi (Wamba, 2015), Kenya (Okoko et al., 2015) and Nigeria (Imoni, 2020).

Two formal leadership programmes, in South Africa and Ghana, are particularly significant. The Ghana government collaborated with the University of Cambridge, UK, to instigate a Leadership for Learning programme. Two papers (Jull et al., 2014; Malakolunthu et al., 2014) report that the programme has become 'embedded' in some Ghanaian schools. The South African Department of Basic Education established an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE School Leadership), that was piloted in six provinces from 2007. The official evaluation (Bush and Glover, 2012) offers a positive picture of this initiative, with evidence that schools participating in the programme improved their school leaving examination results twice as fast as those with no ACE graduates. There were also largely positive reports on specific features of the programme, including mentoring (Moorosi, 2012), networking

(Kiggundu and Moorosi, 2012) and the portfolios used for assessment (Chikoko et al., 2011).

Another interesting CPD initiative is provided by VVOB – education for Development, in partnership with the Government of Rwanda. A CPD Diploma Programme in Effective School Leadership was developed and initiated for a selection of school leaders in each administrative sector in 2014–2016. The Programme was scaled up and offered to all school leaders (headteachers and deputy headteachers) in basic education in 17 out of 30 districts by 2021. The CPD Diploma Programme is complemented with CPD support for school leaders in professional learning networks, facilitated by trained sector education inspectors. An evaluation report by VVOB and Education Development Trust (2017) describes that participation in professional learning networks intrinsically motivated headteachers primarily through the building of positive relationships with others both within and outside the school. The CPD Programme connects to the Rwanda Education Board (2020) Professional Standards for Effective School Leadership. These five standards relate to the Ministry of Education's strategic priority to have an effective school leader in every Rwandan school and serve to define the roles, responsibilities, and functions of school leaders.

How do local, national, and regional policies in Africa promote or inhibit school leaders' leadership practices?

National policies are important in raising awareness about leadership and leadership learning for effective schooling. In very successful education systems, for example China and Singapore, there are national principal preparation programmes, orchestrated by national government and implemented by universities or other delivery partners. However, there is little evidence of government 'ownership', or 'buy-in' for large-scale leadership CPD, across Africa. The South African principal programme is one significant exception, but this initiative was not sustained. Bush et al. (2021) study of instructional leadership in six sub-Saharan Africa countries found that there was either no policy on school leadership or that the policies were too general to provide a sound basis for leadership action. The present review of grey literature also found very few national school leadership policies. Local policies are even less common although the Gauteng province in South Africa founded and nurtured its own leadership center, the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (Bush and Glover, 2016).

Schools operate within a legislative framework set down by national governments. A key aspect of such a framework is the degree of decentralization in the educational system. Many African countries are highly centralized, with little discretion to schools and local communities. International agencies tend to recommend decentralization as a route to educational improvement. The OECD, for example, links autonomy to accountability and student outcomes. 'When accountability and autonomy are intelligently combined, they tend to be associated with better student performance' (OECD, 2011). A counterargument is that some of the most successful education systems in the world, for example in respect of Programme for Student Assessment (PISA) outcomes, are highly centralized, including China and Singapore. Five papers address decentralization in Africa, two from South Africa, one from Malawi, one from Namibia, and one on Zimbabwe. In Namibia, Pomuti and Weber (2012) discuss the implementation of decentralized cluster-based change. They examine the ideologies of school inspectors, principals, and teachers, and conclude that these participants characterize the process as authoritarian, bureaucratic, and managerial. They argue that, whereas the new reforms are based on collegiality and participatory democracy, the apartheid era reverence for authoritarianism, hierarchy and bureaucracy has not changed. The ideologies of Namibian education bureaucrats have determined how policy translates into practice. The empowerment and autonomy envisaged by school clustering has been constrained by the decisive roles the central Education Ministry and its regional officials continue to play.

Similarly, Kufaine and Mtapuri (2014) argue that the process of decentralization in Malawi is incomplete because it has not been decentralized to the school level. In contrast, South Africa's educational system has devolved significant powers to school governing bodies, comprising the head teacher, teachers, community members and parents. Bamberg (2003) argues that such committees form the indispensable link between the school and community; they turn schools into centers of community life, a government priority since the late 1990s. However, Christie (2010) comments that the new policies are underpinned by a tangled network of regulations on governance, labor relations and performance management, which bring complexity to the task of running schools. In addition, the enormous inequalities that continue to exist between schools mean that the work of principals is very different in different contexts. Chikoko (2007) comments that, while decentralized school governance in Zimbabwe has developed a sense of ownership of schools among stakeholders, factors such as the rigid national educational regulatory framework, and the uneven distribution of power within schools, hamper the decentralization process. A key decision for education systems considering decentralization is whether to empower only its own district officials or to devolve power to school leaders. District leaders are an important part of the educational landscape in many countries as they form a middle tier between national policy makers and school leaders. Bantwini and

Moorosi (2018) argue that, in South Africa, districts play a vital role in continuously collaborating, guiding, leading, and challenging schools to raise standards. Significantly, however, Lassibille (2016) research in Madagascar shows that interventions targeting schools directly are more effective than those implemented via districts. There is no evidence of a regional approach to leadership CPD.

Conclusion

This continent-wide review of more than 200 sources reveals the extent and nature of knowledge production across the continent and shows vast differences in what is known about school leadership in the 54 African countries. Knowledge production is dominated by a limited number of mostly anglophone countries. Content-wise, knowledge production on school leadership on the African continent focusses on leadership models, especially instructional and distributed approaches, and leadership CPD. This reflects a growing awareness of the importance of school leadership for quality education and the need for specialist training and professional development of school leaders. In contrast, little is known about the work of deputy principals or middle leaders such as heads of department.

Effective leadership may be defined as leadership that leads to the achievement of school goals, especially those relating to student outcomes. Effective school leadership in Africa is understood as having positive effects on student achievements and learning outcomes, through setting direction, empowering, and developing teachers, and leading teaching and learning. This reflects international research, and the focus on instructional leadership, as well as a bias towards the notion of effective school leadership being defined in respect of the principal. When zooming in on school leaders' competences, several leadership models are presented in research on school leadership on the African continent, with particular interest in instructional leadership. While this review recognizes the importance of the model and presents some evidence on the link with student achievement, there is substantive reflection on particular challenges for African school leaders to balance their administrative and instructional roles. Evidence suggests that instructional leadership is often not put into practice. Next to instructional leadership, there is some focus on transformational leadership as a leadership model. Most of the identified studies on transformational leadership report positive links between transformational leadership and school effectiveness, again mostly indirectly, via teachers. While most studies on school leadership competences align with international school leadership models, of interest is the concept of Ubuntu leadership. Ubuntu leadership could be emergent approach on school leadership in Africa highlighting unique aspects of leadership, starting from assessing available resources, attending to others' needs, and raising expectations and commitment to organizational goals. The Ubuntu school leadership model also aligns with a growing interest in the model of distributed or shared school leadership. While the research on distributed school leadership in Africa is still limited, it can indicate a normative shift away from solo leaders, towards shared leadership models.

When it comes to professional development of school leaders, it is clear that, while there is advocacy on the importance of school leadership and school leadership professional development receives significant attention in some African countries, there is limited evidence on the impact of CPD and on how CPD works. Still, from the review, the research suggests that for CPDs to influence school practice, CPDs need to be longer term initiatives in which a large number of participants engage with theory and practice extensively. For sustainability and scalability, close collaboration between CPD providers and government is important, indicating an embeddedness of CPD initiatives in education systems. While the research and insights in various school leadership models indicate the complex and holistic role of school leaders, adopting a standards-based approach to school leadership CPD seems to be helpful in this phase of promoting school leadership in Africa, as it can articulate official expectations of principals, and identify the knowledge, skills and attitudes required of school leaders.

At the level of policies, it is clear that, at the national level, there are few countries that have a school leadership policy in place, let alone clear policies that promote or inhibit school leaders' leadership practices. As such, there is little evidence of government 'ownership', or 'buy-in' for large-scale leadership CPD, across Africa. While the international agencies tend to recommend decentralization as a route to school improvement, the research on legislative frameworks and governance indicate that most African countries are highly centralized, with little discretion to schools and local communities. Several papers address decentralization in Africa but these mostly report incomplete decentralization, with devolution to district officials rather than to school level. The review found little or no evidence on regional approaches to school leadership and school leadership CPD.

Recommendations and next steps

The growing body of knowledge on school leadership in Africa and the trends reported in this review offer a good starting point for recommendations with regards to the further support on promotion of effective school leadership that will be offered by the African Centre for School Leadership. The target group of the Centre includes education policy makers and school leaders' professional development providers, in first instance government agencies, but also development partners (DP), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and Civil Society Organizations (CSO). Indirect beneficiaries will include educational leaders at decentralized levels of the education systems and school leaders, both in-service as well as aspiring school leaders. The general objective of the Centre is to assist these governments, government agencies and other partners in Africa, to build national and regional capacity in promoting effective school leadership. It will use the best expertise available in the region to ensure the delivery of high-quality professional development (PD) services, research, and policy advice. Recommendations coming from the review can be linked to the four intervention areas of the African Centre for School Leadership that are also visualized in Figure 2 below.

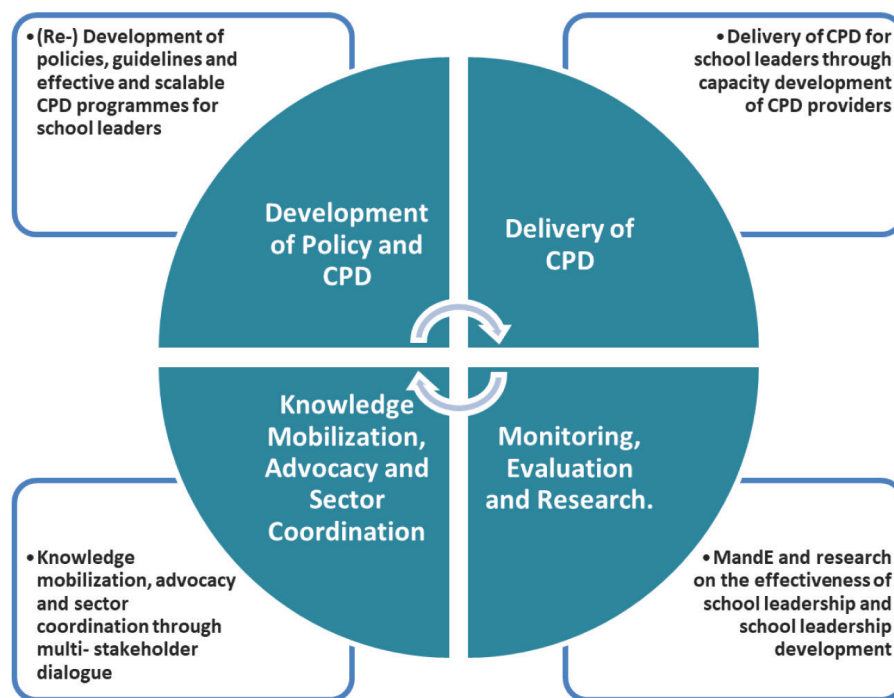


Fig. 2 Core support areas of the African centre for school leadership

Source: Authors.

Development of policy and professional development

While some countries recognize the importance of school leadership for quality of education, and many resources advocate for school leadership CPD, the review recommends engaging with governments across the continent to put school leadership 'on the map'. The Centre will begin with those countries committed to enhancing school leadership as a step towards quality education, linked to Sustainable Development Goal 4. In a next phase and based on success stories and evidence on the impact of school leadership on school improvement, a dialogue with additional countries on the continent can be initiated.

Once school leadership is put on the map, the Centre will assist and support countries in the development of clear policies that promote school leadership development amongst others by further decentralization of respective education systems. The development of standards at the regional and national levels can provide clarity on what is understood under school leadership competences and effective school leadership practices.

Based on such standards and qualification frameworks, the Centre will promote the development of CPD of school leaders that address the complexity of the roles and responsibilities of school leaders and recognize the challenges and opportunities of school leaders on the African continent. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role of effective school leaders in key education reforms on the continent, such as the introduction of competence-based curricula, play-based learning, ICT-enabled teaching, and distributed leadership.

Delivery of professional development for school leaders through capacity development of professional development providers.

The Centre will build the capacity of CPD providers to design and develop a variety of CPDs that meet the CPD needs of aspiring and in-service school leaders on the continent. Based on the evidence of what works, the Centre will assist CPD providers in the development of longer-term CPD trajectories where participants engage with both theory and practice and in the delivery of these CPDs in a variety of blended modalities that meet contextual requirements. At the same time, the Centre will bring together these CPD providers and national governments to ensure that school leadership CPDs are embedded in national education systems and offered to a significant number of school leaders in various stages of their professional development.

Monitoring, evaluation, and research on the effectiveness of school leadership and school leadership development.

To address the limited knowledge base on school leadership in Africa, the Centre will institute a continent-wide research programme that studies effectiveness of CPDs on school leadership and looks into the impact of school leadership on quality of education. Such research will apply consistent cross-country research designs, allowing for learning between partner countries of the Centre. Such research can be coordinated by a leading learning partner working in partnership with the Centre. In addition to exploring the effectiveness of various school leadership models and approaches on school leadership practice and school improvement, the Centre will play a role in the further development of school leadership models that are rooted in the African context, such as Ubuntu school leadership. To support CPD providers, a learning partner will also develop indicators and tools for consistent monitoring and evaluation of CPD initiatives on school leadership on the continent, allowing for high quality data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Knowledge mobilization, advocacy, and sector coordination through multi-stakeholder dialogue.

The African Centre for School Leadership will become the ‘go-to’ place for research and information on school leadership in Africa. Research insights and other knowledge products on school leadership in Africa will be a key input for the Centre for continued awareness-raising activities and to inform interested governments, organizations, and individuals. Such activities will include participation in relevant conferences and seminars. Hosting an annual or biennial leadership conference will be an important statement of the aims and intentions of this pan-African body. As such, the Centre will bring together scholars, policy makers and practitioners interested in school leadership and leadership CPD and build a strong school leadership network on the African continent that would be influential in sharing knowledge and enhancing leadership quality. Partnerships with governments, other NGOs, and universities, and pan-Africa bodies, such as the African Union (AU), are central in the initiative. It is with this background that this review of empirical research in school leadership on the African continent was conducted as the first foundational study of the African Centre for School Leadership. This review on school leadership in Africa offers insights into what constitutes effective school leadership on the continent, based on empirical research. The review informs on what are considered the key competencies and practices that are associated with effective school leadership, the key features of effective and scalable CPD for school leaders as well as on how local, national, and regional policies promote or inhibit school leaders’ leadership practices in Africa. In a next step, a representative panel of policy makers, CPD providers, experts and development partners on the African continent will be brought together to discuss this empirical research and to build a consensus on what constitutes effective school leadership on the continent.

References

- Abonyi, U. K., and Sofu, F. (2019). Exploring instructional leadership practices of leaders in Ghanaian basic schools. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 24, 838–854.
- Aladejana, F., and Aladejana, T. I. (2005). Leadership in Education: The Place of Nigerian Women. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 33(2).
- Allieu, J. (2019). Training of head teachers workshop in supportive supervision and instructional leadership. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Publications*, 1(10), 10–12.
- Arikewuyo, M. O. (2007). Teachers' Perception of Principals' Leadership Capacities in Nigeria. *Academic Leadership*, 5(3), 1–19.
- Arikewuyo, M. O. (2009). Professional Training of Secondary School Principals in Nigeria: A Neglected Area in the Educational System. *Florida Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 2(2), 73–84.
- Bamberg, I. (2003). School as a centre of community life. Diversification of representations and practices in a semi-rural community in South Africa. *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 43(169–170), 121–142.
- Bantwini, B. D., and Moorosi, P. (2018). The Circuit Managers as the weakest link in the school district leadership chain! Perspectives from a province in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(3).
- Bello, B., Ahmad. (2015). Towards revitalization of instructional leadership for effective implementation of universal basic education in Nigeria. *Sokoto Educational Review*, 16(1), 9–9.
- Botha, R. J. (2014). The place and role of distributed leadership in functional and effective South African schools: Towards school improvement. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20), 1225.
- Bulawa, P., and Mhlaulu, M. B. (2019). Understanding the roles and responsibilities of Deputy school Heads in Primary schools in Botswana. *Lonaka Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 10(1), 94–105.
- Bush, T. (2018). Preparation and induction for school principals: Global perspectives. *Management in Education*, 32(2), 66–71.
- Bush, T., Fadare, M., Chirimambowa, T., Eukorah, E., Musa, D., Nur, H., Nyawo, T., and Shipota, M. (2021). Instructional leadership in sub-Saharan Africa: Policy and practice. *International Journal of Educational Management*.
- Bush, T., and Glover, D. (2012). Leadership development and learner outcomes: Evidence from South Africa. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice*, 27(2), 3–15.
- Bush, T., and Glover, D. (2013). School management teams in South Africa: A survey of school leaders in the Mpumalanga Province. *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM))*, 41(1).
- Bush, T., and Glover, D. (2016). School leadership and management in South Africa: Findings from a systematic literature review. *International Journal of Educational Management*.
- Bush, T., and Jackson, D. (2002). A preparation for school leadership: International perspectives. *Educational Management and Administration*, 30(4), 417–429.
- Bush, T., and Oduro, G. K. (2006). New principals in Africa: Preparation, induction and practice. *Journal of Educational Administration*.
- Chikoko, V. (2007). Negotiating roles and responsibilities in the context of decentralised school governance: Case study of one cluster of schools in Zimbabwe. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 35(1), 22–40.
- Chikoko, V., Naicker, I., and Mthiyane, S. E. (2011). Leadership development: School principals' portfolios as an instrument for change. *Education as Change*, 15(2), 317–329.
- Christie, P. (2010). Landscapes of leadership in South African schools: Mapping the changes. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 38(6), 694–711.
- Dagnew, A. (2017). The Practice and Challenges of Distributed Leadership at Some Selected Primary Schools of Debarik District: Ethiopia. *British Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science*, 20(3), 1–10.
- Dampson, D. G., Havor, F. M., and Laryea, P. (2018). Distributed Leadership an Instrument for School Improvement: The Study of Public Senior High Schools in Ghana. *Journal of Education and E-Learning Research*, 5(2), 79–85.
- Day, C., Great Britain, and Department for Children, S. and F. (2009). *The impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes: Final report*. Dept. for Children, Schools and Families.
- Du Plessis, A., and Eberlein, E. (2018). The role of heads of department in the professional development of educators: A distributed leadership perspective. *Africa Education Review*, 15(1), 1–19.
- Du Plessis, A., and Heystek, J. (2020). Possibilities for distributed leadership in South African schools: Policy ambiguities and blind spots. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 48(5), 840–860. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219846907>
- Ebot Ashu, F. (2018). *Leadership, Management and Administrative Roles of School Leaders in Cameroon*.
- Ebot Ashu, F. (2020). *Leadership and Management Preparation and Development of School Leaders in Cameroon*. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350081178.0013>
- Ebot, T., and Obi, T. (2018). *Investigating teacher leadership practices in Cameroon Secondary Education: A case of two public schools*. [Master's Thesis in Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä]. <http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:juu-201803261851>
- Education Commission. (2019a). *Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation*. Education Commission. <https://educationcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Transforming-the-Education-Workforce-Full-Report.pdf>
- Education Commission. (2019b). *Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation*. Education Commission. <https://educationcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Transforming-the-Education-Workforce-Full-Report.pdf>
- Elonga Mboyo, J. P. (2019). Reimagining Ubuntu in schools: A perspective from two primary school leaders in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 47(2), 206–223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143217728085>
- Global Partnership for Education. (2019). *Results Report 2019*. Global Partnership for Education. <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2019-06-gpe-results-report-2019.pdf>
- Global School Leaders. (2020). *A review of Empirical Research on School Leadership in the Global South*. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58af429103596eb1eb5acace/t/5f20710484df25368418907b/1595961610688/GSL+Evidence+Review+Report.pdf>
- Grant, C. (2006). Emerging Voices on Teacher Leadership: Some South African Views. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 34(4), 511–532. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143206068215>

- Grissom, J. A., Egalite, A. J., and Lindsay, C. A. (2021). How principals affect students and schools. *Wallace Foundation*.
- Gurmu, T. G. (2020). Primary school principals in Ethiopia: Selection and preparation. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 48(4), 651–681. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219836673>
- Hallinger, P. (2003). *Reshaping the landscape of school leadership development: A global perspective*.
- Hallinger, P., and Lee, M. (2014). Mapping instructional leadership in Thailand: Has education reform impacted principal practice? *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 42(1), 6–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143213502196>
- Imoni, R. (2018). *Leadership distribution in government secondary schools in Nigeria: Fact or fiction?*
- Imoni, R. (2020). *A Review of Preparation and Development of School Leaders in Nigeria*. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350081178.0015>
- Jull, S., Swaffield, S., and MacBeath, J. (2014). Changing perceptions is one thing...: Barriers to transforming leadership and learning in Ghanaian basic schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 34(1), 69–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2013.849679>
- Kalabo, O. M. (2017). Situating school leadership in African discourses: Reflections from Zambia. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 6(11). <https://doi.org/10.21275/ART20178381>
- Kaume -Mwinzi, R. K. (2016). Administrative and leadership innovation in the 21st century: A secondary school sub-sector perspective in Kenya. *Research in Pedagogy*, 6(2), 85–94. <https://doi.org/10.17810/2015.37>
- Kiggundu, E., and Moorosi, P. (2012). Networking for school leadership in South Africa: Perceptions and realities. *School Leadership and Management*, 32(3), 215–232. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2012.688738>
- Kufaine, N., and Mtapuri, O. (2014). Education Decentralisation in Malawi: Legitimate but Incomplete Masked in Dilemmas of Leadership Roles and Responsibilities. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n23p764>
- Lassibille, G. (2016). Improving the management style of school principals: Results from a randomized trial. *Education Economics*, 24(2), 121–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09645292.2014.985288>
- Leithwood, K. A., Great Britain, and Department for Education and Skills. (2006). *Successful school leadership: What it is and how it influences pupil learning*. DfES Publications.
- Luyten, H., and Bazo, M. (2019). Transformational leadership, professional learning communities, teacher learning and learner centred teaching practices; Evidence on their interrelations in Mozambican primary education. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 60, 14–31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2018.11.002>
- Malakolunthu, S., McBeath, J., and Swaffield, S. (2014). Improving the quality of teaching and learning through leadership for learning: Changing scenarios in basic schools of Ghana. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 42(5), 701–717. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143213510510>
- Mestry, R. (2017a). Principal perspectives and experiences of their instructional leadership functions to enhance learner achievement in public schools. *Journal of Education*, 257–280.
- Mestry, R. (2017b). Empowering principals to lead and manage public schools effectively in the 21st century. *South African Journal of Education*, 37(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v37n1a1334>
- Mestry, R., Moonsamy-Koopasamy, I., and Schmidt, M. (2013). The instructional leadership role of primary school principals. *Education as Change*, 17, S49–S64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2014.865990>
- Moeketsane, M. P., Jita, L. C., and Jita, T. (2021). Correlates of South African subject leader's perspectives and their perceived competence on instructional leadership. *South African Journal of Education*, 41, 1–10.
- Mokhele, M. L. (2016). Supporting Teacher Leaders: Principals' Views in Ten Selected South African Schools. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 46(3), 264–270. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2016.11893534>
- Moorosi, P. (2012). Mentoring for school leadership in South Africa: Diversity, dissimilarity and disadvantage. *Professional Development in Education*, 38(3), 487–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2011.637430>
- Moorosi, P., and Komiti, M. (2020). Experiences of School Leadership Preparation and Development in Lesotho. In *Preparation and Development of School Leaders in Africa* (pp. 37–54). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Moswela, B., and Kgosisialwa, K. (2019). Leadership and school success: Barriers to leadership in Botswana primary and secondary schools. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 47(3), 443–456. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143217739355>
- Moyo, Z., Perumal, J., and Hallinger, P. (2020). Struggling to make a difference against the odds: A synthesis of qualitative research on women leading schools in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Educational Management, ahead-of-print*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-01-2020-0015>
- Mthiyane, N. C., C., Naidoo, J., and Bertram, C. (2019). Context matters: Heads of Department's leadership practices in monitoring and supporting teachers in schools participating in Jika iMfundo. *Journal of Education*, 75. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i75a05>
- Mutuku, M., P. (2018). *Influence of Instructional Leadership Practices on Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Machakos County, Kenya* [Doctorate Dissertation, Kenyatta University]. <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/handle/123456789/18606>
- Naicker, S., and Mestry, R. (2012). Teachers' reflections on distributive leadership in public primary schools in Soweto. *South African Journal of Education*, 33, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v33n2a715>
- Naidoo, P. (2019). Perceptions of teachers and school management teams of the leadership roles of public school principals. *South African Journal of Education*, 39, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v39n2a1534>
- Nosike, A. N., and Oguzor, N. S. (2011). UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 1(3), 10. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss.v1i1.6>
- Nzoka, J., Tabitha, and Orodho, J., Aluko. (2014). School management and students' academic performance: How effective are strategies being employed by school managers in secondary schools in Embu? *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4(9).
- Obama, M., Ouma, Eunice, L., Akinyi, and Orodho, J., Aluko. (2015). Effect of Principals' Leadership Styles on Students Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Homa-Bay County. *Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 20(3), 56–60. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-20375160>
- OECD. (2011). *School Autonomy and Accountability*. 9. <https://doi.org/10.1787/5k9h362kcx9w-en>
- Ofoegbu, F. I., Clark, A. O., and Osagie, R. O. (2013). Leadership Theories and Practice: Charting a Path for Improved Nigerian Schools. *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM))*, 41(2), 67–76. asx.
- Okimb, K., Francis. (2019). Principals' Encouragement of Teacher Collaboration and Support for Peer Coaching in Government Secondary Schools, South West Region, of Cameroon. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 3(5).

- Okoko, J. M., Scott, S., and Scott, D. E. (2015). Perceptions of school leaders in Nairobi about their leadership preparation and development. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 18(3), 279–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2013.877160>
- Oyedele, V. I., Mamvuto, A., and Nhiwatiwa, L. (2010). Teachers' Perceptions On The Effectiveness Of Women Leadership In Mutare District Schools. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, 22, 170–180.
- Peeraer, J., Zult, H., and Mugenzi, L., N. (2014). Coaching school leadership in Primary Education in Rwanda. Evolutions in Head Teachers' self-assessment. *Rwandan Journal of Education*, 2(2), 71–84.
- Pheko, B. (2008). Secondary School Leadership Practice in Botswana: Implications for Effective Training. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 36(1), 71–84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143207084061>
- Pomuti, H., and Weber, E. (2012). Decentralization and School Management in Namibia: The Ideologies of Education Bureaucrats in Implementing Government Policies. *ISRN Education*, 2012, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.5402/2012/731072>
- Robinson, V. M. J., Lloyd, C. A., and Rowe, K. J. (2008). The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 635–674. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X08321509>
- Rwanda Education Board. (2020). *Professional Standards for Effective School Leadership*. https://www.reb.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/REB/Publications/TEACHER_STANDARDS/PROFESSIONAL_STANDARDS_FOR_EFFECTIVE_SCHOOL_LEADERSHIP_IN_RWANDA.pdf
- Sabwami, K. (2021). *Influence of principals' transformational leadership practices on management of public secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia county, Kenya* [Doctoral Dissertation]. Kisii University.
- Salem, N. (2016). *Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Principal Practices in International Schools in Egypt* [Lehigh University]. <https://mobt3ath.com/uplode/books/book-76808.pdf>
- Sibanda, L. (2018). Distributed leadership in three diverse public schools: Perceptions of deputy principals in Johannesburg. *Issues in Educational Research*, 28(3), 781–796.
- Sofo, F., and Abonyi, U. K. (2018). Investigating the self-reported professional development activities of school leaders in Ghanaian rural basic schools. *Professional Development in Education*, 44(4), 521–538. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2017.1359795>
- Suaka, P. L., and Kuranchie, A. (2018). Head teachers' professional management needs and concerns: Evidence from an educational district in Ghana. *African Educational Research Journal*, 6(1), 20–29. <https://doi.org/10.30918/AERJ.61.18.002>
- Tedla, B. A. (2012). Instructional Leadership and School Climate: A Case Study of a Secondary School in Eritrea. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 846–855.
- Tesfaw, T. A. (2014). The relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction: The case of government secondary school teachers in Ethiopia. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 42(6), 903–918. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143214551948>
- Urio, P., John. (2012). *Effective leadership practices for quality improvement in public secondary schools in Morogoro, Tanzania*, [PhD (Education) Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam]. <http://localhost:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/4635>
- VVOB, and Education Development Trust. (2017). *The Impact of Professional Learning Networks on Headteacher and Teacher Intrinsic Motivation in Rwanda*.
- Wamba, N. (2015). Headteacher Preparation in Mzuzu, Malawi, Africa. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 4, 119–135.
- Weinstein, J., Sembler, M., Weinstein, M., Marfán, J., Valenzuela, P., and Muñoz, G. (2021). A female advantage? Gender and educational leadership practices in urban primary schools in Chile. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 174114322110194. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432211019407>
- Williams, C. G. (2011). Distributed leadership in South African schools: Possibilities and constraints. *South African Journal of Education*, 31(2), 190–200. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v31n2a421>
- World Bank. (2018). *World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1096-1>