



ASEAN Journal of Education

Journal homepage: <https://so01.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/AJE>



Transformational Leadership in Schools in Asian-Pacific Countries: An Integrative Review

Oliver S. Crocco^{1*}, Emily Rose Hoefling², Maria Cseh³ & Anna Field¹

¹ School of Leadership and Human Resource Development, Louisiana State University, Louisiana, 70803 USA

² Independent Researcher, Indiana, 47501 USA

³ Department of Human and Organizational Learning, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, 20052 USA

Article info

Article history:

Received: 19 January 2021

Revised: 18 June 2021

Accepted: 30 June 2021

Keywords:

Transformational leadership,
School leadership, Asia & the
Pacific, Literature review

Abstract

In K-12 education contexts around the world, increased regulation and quality assurance measures have made school leadership more transactional and compliance-oriented. Research shows that an alternative approach to school leadership, transformational leadership (TL), has positive outcomes in overall school climate, teacher satisfaction and student outcomes. However, the majority of research on TL in schools has been done on western populations, specifically the United States and United Kingdom. Little is known about the literature on this phenomenon for populations in countries in Asia and the Pacific. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to present the state of the scholarly literature on TL in schools in Asia and the Pacific using integrative literature review methodology, which conducts a systematic and comprehensive collection of available sources. The five stages of data collection included planning, article identification, screening, analysis and reporting. After the review of 45 peer-reviewed journal articles from 16 countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific, findings show that there are many contexts in which TL leads to positive outcomes in schools in terms of climate and even modest but largely indirect contributions to student performance. Empirical and non-empirical methods were found to study TL in these contexts with most studies using quantitative methods ($N = 32$) and relying on a form of the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire ($N = 13$). Implications related to facilitating the use of TL practices, role-modelling TL in higher education when preparing school leaders and training and development programs geared towards developing TL are discussed.

Introduction

Effective school leadership is vital for the success of schools yet full of complex challenges. School leaders are responsible for establishing clear and compelling

visions for their schools, providing effective staff professional development with ongoing support, improving instructional programmes and being responsive to teacher, student and parent needs. School leaders must

also navigate complex regulatory environments (te Riele, 2012; Helgøy, 2007). Around the world, increased regulation and quality assurance measures in K-12 educational contexts have made school leadership more transactional and compliance-oriented (Valli & Buese, 2007). Research shows that an alternative approach to school leadership—transformational leadership (TL)—has positive outcomes in overall school climate, teacher satisfaction and student outcomes (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

Conceptual framework

Transformational Leadership Theory emerged in the United States in 1978 with the publication of Burns (1978) seminal text *Leadership* in which he highlighted the role of leaders in connecting with the motivations, needs and humanity of followers. Bass (1990) added to the literature by differentiating TL from transactional leadership. This led to the design of the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire* (MLQ), which was developed to measure transformational and transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1990). TL focuses more on fostering intrinsic motivation in followers through role modelling and promoting followers' whole person development (Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders are more oriented towards long term goals and empowering followers (Northouse, 2018). More specifically, TL is theorised as the combination of the following interconnected factors in leaders: "idealized influence", serving as ethical role models; "inspirational motivation", inspiring followers through positivity and high expectations; "intellectual stimulation", challenging others to be more innovative; and, "individualized consideration", providing one-on-one feedback and support to followers (Northouse, 2018).

Despite the growing relevance of TL within school contexts, most articles on this phenomenon use samples from western contexts, specifically the United States and United Kingdom (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) and thus does not represent the cultural, political and economic realities of non-western countries and regions such as Asia and the Pacific. Bass (1997) recognised that different countries have unique cultural beliefs, behaviours and paradigms, but argued that people universally prefer TL over transactional leadership. Since Bass' assertion (1997), there have been a collection of articles published that test and explore TL in non-western school contexts; however, no review has been conducted to synthesise these studies and understand how TL theory emerges in those contexts.

A review such as this is especially relevant considering the ways school systems differ around the world (Schleicher, 2012). Similarly, differences in leadership across cultures have been widely documented (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010), which may impact TL practices in different cultural contexts. Although Bass (1997) posits that TL benefits different populations around the world in a similar way as those in the west, there are no literature review studies in Asia and the Pacific that support this assumption.

Regions (i.e., groupings of countries and territories) are inevitably "imagined" groupings based on a variety of criteria (Smouts, 1998, p. 22). Thus, Asia and the Pacific, or the Asian-Pacific, can be conceptualized in a variety of ways. This is largely because there are inherent complexities in describing a broad grouping of countries. One of these complexities is cultural. For example, given that Russia and Turkey are both technically partially in Asia despite aligning culturally more with Europe (and both include land in Europe and Asia), the World Bank (n.d.) excludes them from their Asian grouping and instead uses the term "East Asia and the Pacific" (para 1). Another complexity is political. For example, as a result of longstanding political disagreements about national sovereignty and UNESCO's stance towards China, Hong Kong and Taiwan (also referred to as the Republic of China) are not included in UNESCO's (n.d.) list of countries and territories in Asia and the Pacific. The last complexity is geographical. Complex geographic regions such as the Pacific are difficult to categorize given the breadth of geography included and the varied levels of sovereignty of particular island communities.

Despite these complexities and the challenges associated with studying the Asia-Pacific region, one common arrangement according to UNESCO (n.d.) and Salmon (2018) includes the following 51 countries and territories: "Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri-Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste,

Tonga, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Macao (China), New Caledonia and Tokelau” (UNESCO, n.d.). While this study employs this UNESCO (n.d.) conceptualization of Asia and the Pacific, it seeks to be as inclusive as possible and recognizes that other arrangements exist.



Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Objective

The purpose of this study is to understand the state of the scholarly literature on TL in schools (K-12) in countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific. The following research questions (RQs) directed this study:

RQ 1: What empirical and non-empirical research explores the phenomenon of TL in schools from samples from countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific?

RQ 2: What methodologies and instruments/scales have been used to study TL in countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific?

This paper first outlines the methodology used to search, identify and analyse the literature. Then, synthesise the findings to address both research questions. And finally, provides a critical dialogue about the findings in relation to the study of education in Asia and the Pacific as well as offer implications for practice and areas for further research.

Research methodology

To accomplish this purpose, this article employs an integrative literature review methodology. An integrative literature review article “reviews, critiques and synthesizes the representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated” (Torraco, 2016). Integrative literature reviews are advantageous for topics that are in need of review because they are either saturated in the literature or newly emerging (Torraco, 2016). This paper is an integrative literature review of TL in schools, which has a wide body of literature; however, this study focuses on the literature of this topic as it relates to Asia and the Pacific, which is growing in significance and worthy of review. Integrative reviews, also called scoping reviews, are well-positioned to address broad and descriptive research questions (Wang, 2019). The selection and review strategy for this

paper was informed by Briner & Denyer’s (2012) five stages for literature reviews and included planning, structured searching based on criteria, screening, analysing articles and then reporting results.

In the planning stage, articles were read with the keyword “transformational leadership” in journals related to education in Asia and the Pacific including the *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher* and *Asia Pacific Education Review*. From this initial planning, we identified viable search terms and criteria for inclusion in the review. To be considered for review in this paper, the articles had to meet the following eligibility criteria: (a) published between January 1995 and September 2018; (b) include the concept of TL as it relates to a school context within one or more of the countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific; (c) published in the English language; and (d) published in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. The date range was selected based on the first article that addressed TL as related to the Asia-Pacific region (Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995). All articles related to tertiary education and international schools were excluded from selection. To reduce publication bias (Wang, 2019), the articles were searched in all peer-reviewed journals that were available in academic databases beginning with ERIC (EBSCO) and ProQuest databases. Then, a broader search was conducted to include databases such as Academic Search Complete, Education Source, Bibliography of Asian Studies, Web of Science, PsycINFO and SocINDEX, which were accessed using the library systems at Louisiana State University and the George Washington University.

To identify articles for this review, a structured examination of the literature that included a Boolean search according to the aforementioned search criteria that included the terms “transformational leadership” AND “school” AND each of the 51 countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific according to UNESCO (n.d.) and Salmon (2018). Other iterations of the country/territory names were also used, for example, Burma was searched as an alternative to Myanmar; East Timor was searched as an alternative to Timor-Leste; and, Hong Kong and Taiwan were searched in addition to China. Irregular adjectival forms of the countries were also searched such as Turkish, Filipino and Burmese.

The search revealed 65 articles that met the search criteria. In the article screening stage, analysis of abstracts were conducted of the 65 articles. Then, 22 articles were removed from consideration for not meeting the

eligibility criteria, particularly those that did not demonstrate a clear connection between TL and schools in Asia and the Pacific. The remaining 43 articles were reviewed in full. During the screening, two additional articles were found in the references of the papers that fit the search criteria but were not contained in the original search. This left 45 articles for the analysis (39 empirical articles and 6 non-empirical articles). The analysis stage organised empirical articles according to their purpose, theoretical framework, methodology, sample, country and findings while also tabulating the non-empirical articles according to purpose, theoretical framework and findings.

In the final stage of the review, reporting of results, we created tables to present the results of the integrative review, synthesised the findings of the reviewed articles and provided a discussion with implications.

Results

To answer the first research question, this first section presents the articles reviewed in this study and

the two main findings from the synthesis of findings. Then, to answer the second research question, a table of methodologies employed in the empirical articles is presented along with the instruments and data collection methods employed.

In analysing the articles for this review, studies included samples from 16 different countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific (See Table 1). This means that no studies were found with samples from the other 36 countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific according to UNESCO (n.d.). There were articles from 29 different journals with the top journals being *Asia Pacific Education Review* (seven articles), *School Leadership & Management* (four articles) and *Journal of Educational Administration* (three articles) (see Table 1). Twenty-nine articles primarily focused on the theme of TL and various components of school climate, nine related to TL and the theme of student outcomes and seven related to other aspects of TL in schools.

Table 1 Reviewed Articles

Primary Theme	Country of Sample/Interest	Author(s) / Year	Journal
TL and School Climate	Afghanistan	Khawary & Ali (2015)	Improving Schools
	Australia	Batiste, Walker, & Smeed (2015)	Leading & Managing
		Browning (2014)	International Journal of Leadership in Education
	China	Dou, Devos, & Valcke (2016)	Asia Pacific Education Review
		Dou, Devos, & Valcke (2017)	Educational Management Administration & Leadership
		Liu (2015)	Journal of Educational Administration
	Hong Kong; Taiwan; Australia	Lam (2002)	School Leadership & Management
	Hong Kong	Lam & Pang (2003)	The Learning Organization
		Li (2015)	Early Childhood Education Journal
		Lo (2005)	Social Sciences/Socialiniai Mokslai
		Poon-McBrayer (2017)	Journal of Educational Change
	Iran	Sayadi (2016)	Management in Education
		Zeinabadi (2013)	International Journal of Educational Management
	India	Krishnan (2005)	Leadership & Organization Development Journal
	Indonesia	Hariri, Monypenny, & Prideaux (2014)	School Leadership & Management
		Hariri, Monypenny, & Prideaux (2016)	School Leadership & Management
	Malaysia	Ibrahim, Ghavifekr, Sii Ling, Siraj, & Azeez (2014)	Asia Pacific Education Review
		Tajasom & Ahmad (2011)	International Journal for Leadership in Public Services
		Wahab, Fuad, Ismail, & Majid (2014)	International Education Studies
	Philippines	Edano, Punzalen, & Tumutod (2017)	International Journal of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences
	Singapore	Retna & Ng (2008)	Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice
	South Korea	Jeong, Hsiao, Song, Kim, & Bae (2016)	Human Resource Development Quarterly
		Kang & Printy (2009)	Asia Pacific Education Review

Table 1 Reviewed Articles

<i>Primary Theme</i>	<i>Country of Sample/Interest</i>	<i>Author(s) / Year</i>	<i>Journal</i>
	Taiwan	Hsiao & Chang (2011)	Asia Pacific Education Review
		Chin (2007)	Asia Pacific Education Review
	Turkey	Aydin, Sarier, & Uysal (2013)	Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice
		Balyer & Özcan (2012)	Eurasian Journal of Educational Research / Egitim Arastirmalari
		Demir (2008)	Eurasian Journal of Educational Research / Egitim Arastirmalari
		Cemaloglu (2011)	Journal of Educational Administration
	TL and Student Outcomes	Sun, Chen, & Zhang (2017)*	Education Sciences
	Hong Kong	Hui & Cheung (2006)*	Asia Pacific Journal of Education
		Lai & Cheung (2013)	School Leadership & Management
		Kwan (2016)	Asia-Pacific Education Researcher
		Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi (2002)	Journal of Educational Administration
	Malaysia	Bush, Hamid, Ng, & Kaparou (2018)*	International Journal of Educational Management
		Jones, Adams, Tan Hwee Joo, Muniandy, Perera, & Harris (2015)	Asia Pacific Journal of Education
	New Zealand	Jayavant (2016)	Education Sciences
	Singapore	Koh, Steers, & Terborg (1995)	Journal of Organizational Behavior
	Other	Liu (2017)*	International Studies in Educational Administration
		Jimlan (2017)	International Journal of Arts & Sciences
		Parco-Tropicales, & Guzman (2014)	Asia Pacific Education Review
		Retna & Ng (2009)*	Journal of School Leadership
		Kallapadee, Tesaputa, & Somprach (2017)	International Education Studies
	Thailand	Kantabutra (2005)*	Asia Pacific Education Review
		Somprach, Tang, & Popoonsak (2017)	Educational Research for Policy and Practice

* Non-empirical article

Transformational leadership and school climate

With regard to the synthesis of the findings, the empirical articles that studied TL in schools in Asia and the Pacific looked at a host of issues related to this topic. The majority of articles (29) investigated the relationship between TL and school climate. School climate, broadly understood, encompasses the quality of relationships between organisational members in schools, particularly between the school leader and the teachers and staff (Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011). School climate also has to do with the structure of the schools as organisations and how that structure influences affective dimensions within the schools (Hoy, Tarter, & Bliss, 1990). Of the 29 articles with findings related to school climate, 26 found that TL practices have a significant positive outcome on school climate in areas such as teacher self-efficacy, trust, retention, autonomy, organisational learning and innovation. More specifically, seven studies found a positive relationship between TL and outcomes of school climate associated specifically with teachers (Balyer & Özcan, 2012; Batiste, Walker, & Smeed, 2015; Demir, 2008; Dou, Devos, & Valcke, 2016; Liu, 2015;

Retna & Ng, 2008; Sayadi, 2016). For example, TL practices of school leaders led specifically to increases in teacher self-efficacy (Batiste, Walker, & Smeed, 2015; Dou, Devos, & Valcke, 2016) and empowerment (Retna & Ng, 2008). Similarly, TL by school leaders led to the school having a more established vision (Balyer & Özcan, 2012) and a sense of a more collaborative culture (Demir, 2008; Edano, Punzalan, & Tumutod, 2017). The practice of TL by school leaders also contributed to teacher retention (Sayadi, 2016) and commitment to the teaching profession (Edano, Punzalan, & Tumutod, 2017; Ibrahim, Ghavifekr, Sii Ling, Siraj, & Azeez, 2014) which are correlated with other positive outcomes of school climate. In addition to collaborative culture and retention among teachers, Edano, Punzalan, & Tumutod, (2017) also found that TL led by school leaders brought about more learning by teachers. In essence, the more school leaders exhibited TL practices, the more positive effects on these various aspects of school climate.

Continuing in this vein, 10 TL practices were found to contribute to the growth of trust between school leaders and their teachers in Australia (Browning, 2014).

These included when a leader “openly admits mistakes, offers trust to staff, actively listens, provides affirmation, makes informed/consultative decisions, is visible around the school, remains calm and level-headed, mentors and coaches staff, cares for staff and keeps confidences” (Browning, 2014). Similarly, in Turkey, TL practices by school leaders led to increases in organisational health via the decline of the presence of bullying (Cemaloglu, 2011).

Several studies showed that TL was also associated with organisational factors including autonomy, innovation and organisational learning. For example, one study in China found that the autonomy of teachers amplified the positive outcomes of TL on school climate (Dou, Devos, & Valcke, 2017). In a study in Taiwan, TL practices had a significant impact on organisation-level learning and innovation (Hsiao & Chang, 2011). And in Hong Kong, TL practices were found to be more significant than external environment factors and contextual variables in promoting a climate of organisational learning (Lam & Pang, 2003). Overall, TL also appeared to be linked to overall school effectiveness. In studies in the Philippines (Edano, Punzalan, & Tumutod, 2017) and Taiwan (Chin, 2007), the presence of TL contributed to the perception of increased school effectiveness.

One feature in several studies was to compare TL with transactional leadership practices. Five studies in this review made this comparison, four of which found TL practices to be more successful than transactional practices in creating a positive school climate (Aydin, Sarier, & Uysal, 2013; Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995; Sayadi, 2016; Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011). The fourth revealed transformational and transactional practices to be most effective in concert (Poon-McBrayer, 2007).

The timeframe when TL practices were used by school leaders also appeared to be an important aspect in predicting constructive contributions of TL to school climate (Kang & Printy, 2009; Krishnan, 2005). In schools in India, for example, Krishnan (2005) found that the duration of TL practices moderated the positive impact of TL on “terminal value system congruence between leader and follower” and “identification with the organization”. Of the articles that did not find a significant positive relationship, one found only a moderate positive relationship between TL practices and teachers’ “commitment to change” amidst reform in China (Liu, 2015) and another found no statistically significant relationship between TL and work engagement

in South Korea (Jeong, Hsiao, Song, Kim, & Bae, 2016).

Transformational leadership and student outcomes

Finding factors that predict student performance is a common preoccupation of administrators and education policymakers. The vast majority of studies in this review either did not try to find a connection between TL in schools and student outcomes or did not find such a connection. However, four articles in this review showed that TL practices had a significant positive, but primarily indirect, effect on student outcomes (Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995; Kwan, 2016; Lai & Cheung, 2013; Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2002). For example, in Singapore, TL practices had only an indirect effect on student performance (Koh, Steers, & Terborg); however, the authors note that transformational leader behaviour is expected to have an effect on student performance “via intermediate variables such as organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior” of teachers. The connection between TL and student performance occurred more obviously when TL practices were found alongside instructional leadership. Instructional leadership, which has many similarities with transactional leadership occurs when school leaders “[exercise] strong and directive leadership attending to curricular and instructional matters” (Kwan, 2016). For example, Kwan (2016) shows that TL practices in Hong Kong worked congruently with instructional leadership and had a significant positive relationship with student outcomes in terms of academic performance (measured by grades, problems on homework and whether students went on to university) and non-academic performance (measured by students’ self-assessment of their motivation to learn and behaviour). This positive link, however, did not hold true in low-trust schools (Kwan, 2016). The study offered empirical evidence that “instructional leadership by the principal [school leader] would not have an impact on student outcomes unless the principal intentionally sought and fostered teachers’ engagement and innovation through transformational leadership behaviors” (Kwan, 2016). Further commenting on the integration of transformational and instructional leadership in Hong Kong K-12 education, Lai & Cheung (2013) revealed that instructional leadership without TL did not lead to increased student achievement. School leaders must also display strong visionary leadership and empower teachers to make instructional decisions and participate in collaborative learning communities, all of which are connected to TL practices (Lai & Cheung,

2013). Similarly, Bush, Hamid, Ng, & Kaparou (2018) reviewed leadership practices in Malaysian schools and discovered emerging evidence that a positive relationship between the TL practices of school leaders and student outcomes exists.

Methodologies and instruments

A review of the methodology employed in the empirical studies shows a strong reliance on quantitative methodologies (see Table 2). In particular, predictive models that sought to understand the relationship between TL practices and some measure of school climate made up the majority of empirical studies. Three different qualitative methodologies were employed including case study, basic qualitative design and ethnography.

Table 2 Empirical methodologies

Quantitative	Number of articles	Qualitative	Number of articles
Regression	10	Case study	5
ANOVA	5	Basic qualitative design	1
Structural Equation Modelling	4	Ethnography	1
Factor Analysis	3		
Correlation	3		
Path analysis	2		
Meta-analysis	2		
Hierarchical Linear Modelling	1		
Hierarchical Regression	1		
T-test	1		
Total	32		7

The instruments/scales used to measure TL in these studies also varied (see Table 3). The most common measurement tool was a version of the MLQ, which was used in 13 of the 32 studies. Some authors such as Kwan (2016) who studied TL in Hong Kong adapted the questionnaire from Hong Kong's Education and Manpower Bureau (2002) because they could not justify using the MLQ as it had not been validated in that context. There were also seven empirical studies in this review for which the method of measuring TL was opaque or unstated.

Additionally, qualitative methods used to collect data related to TL revealed a spectrum of data collection methods in the seven qualitative studies. These included three studies that used interviews, one study that used interviews and document analysis, one study that used observations and interviews, one study that used observations, interviews and focus groups and one study that used observations, interviews and document and artefact analysis.

Table 3 Quantitative instruments/scales employed in empirical studies

Quantitative instruments/scales	Source	Number of articles
Multifactor leadership questionnaire form 5X	Bass & Avolio (1995)	6
Multifactor leadership questionnaire	Bass (1985); Bass & Avolio (1990)	5
Organizational conditions and school leadership survey	Leithwood & Jantzi (1999)	4
Six factor transformational leadership	Podsakoff et al. (1990)	1
Multifactor leadership questionnaire form 6S	Bass & Avolio (1992)	1
Multifactor leadership questionnaire form 5S	Bass (1985)	1
Transformational leadership and teacher commitment questionnaire	Ibrahim et al. (2014) based on MLQ	1
Distributed leadership inventory	Hulpia et al. (2009)	1
Cross-cultural adaptation of headmasters' transformational leadership scale	Moolenaar et al. (2010)	1
Adapted questionnaire	Fullan (2007)	1
Adapted questionnaire	Kouzes & Posner (2012)	1
Adapted questionnaire	Education and Manpower Bureau (2002)	1
Adapted questionnaire	Bycio et al. (1995)	1
Not stated		7
TOTAL		32

Discussion

In the discussion of these findings, the following areas emerged from this review: the transferability of TL to schools in Asia and the Pacific; the limits of TL in Asian-Pacific contexts; and, the definition and measurement of TL for Asia and the Pacific. The first two areas discuss findings related to the first research question and the third area discusses findings related to the second research question. Following this discussion, implications for future research are presented.

Regarding the first research question on the state of the research on TL in schools in Asia and the Pacific, it is important to ask if the concept of TL is, in fact, transferrable to schools in these contexts. Most of the studies acknowledged that research on the level of implementation and efficacy of TL practices in Asia and the Pacific is relatively new; within the last 15 years. This suggests the answer to this question will require further studies with larger sample sizes and longitudinal designs before any definitive conclusions can be drawn. There is also the issue of treating Asia and the Pacific as one entity. It is virtually impossible, even in a review of this scope, to make overarching declarations about the state of TL in such a diverse region. That said, since early studies of TL practices in these contexts are, in fact, revealing positive outcomes in terms of school climate and some even in terms of student performance, it is

worth synthesizing and presenting these results as a means of providing a platform for additional research. For example, the aforementioned examples of TL practices provided by Sun, Chen, & Zhang (2017) are more aligned with the theory of servant leadership (Northouse, 2018) than they are with traditional understandings of TL theory. This conflation makes future research in this area necessary to explore the varied conceptualizations of effective leadership in schools in Asian-Pacific contexts.

Additionally, while there is a growing number of studies in this area, Hui & Cheung (2006) point out that TL as a construct can be problematic in that it is often oversimplified and prone to leading practitioners to focus on a few simplistic leader qualities instead of understanding the complex ecosystems in which schools' function. Focusing on the practices of TL can result in leaders lacking the often more important characteristics of educational leadership and competence within their particular cultural and educational system. There are also instances, as pointed out by Bush et al. (2018), when TL can be a proxy for the imposition of the leader's or government's values. It is a possibility that a charismatic leader, in a conflation with the ideals of TL, uses their status to carry out their own or another's agenda. One critique here is that TL is seen in often too narrow of terms. If understood as intended by Bass (1985), TL in a school context should include the aspects of educational leadership as described by Hui & Cheung (2006). This was further convoluted by neglecting to clarify the difference between TL as a process and a transformational leader who exhibits TL practices. The latter was the preferred mode of communicating about this phenomenon, which meant that there tended to be an oversimplification of TL as a process into whether or not the school leader display behaviours that could be designated transformational. Additionally, the relationship between TL and other leadership styles, models and theories important for schools is also unclear. Several articles (e.g. Kwan, 2016; Poon-McBrayer, 2017) discussed the role of TL as one piece in an integrated leadership model for school leadership. This is in line with Hallinger (2003) who asserts the importance of integrating TL with instructional leadership in contexts in Asia and the Pacific. Again, we have a need to clarify the different meanings of concepts such as school leadership and how these meanings can be compared across cultures.

Regarding the second research question about

methodologies and instruments/scales used to study TL in countries/territories in the Asia-Pacific, the most common measurement tool of TL was a form of the MLQ, which was designed to measure TL as conceptualised by Bass (1990) in the United States. Despite using the MLQ or a modified version of it, only five articles made the comparison between transformational and transactional leadership. The fact that the MLQ was used in these studies also means that they based their analysis and interpretation of the results from a largely western conceptualization of TL. There was one study where a Chinese researcher who knew TL theory contributed to the development and implementation of the "Chinese transformational school leadership questionnaire" (Liu, 2015). While admirable, it would be important to understand to what extent the instrument developers were also operating with the same western conceptualizations of the construct and considering that Liu himself received his degree from Canada. Considering the cumulative nature of scholarly research and the importance of mutual understanding and replicability, it is important for higher education training on research to emphasise the importance of transparency in data collection methods in scholarly writing.

Implications

Integrative reviews such as this can offer a variety of important contributions to scholarly discourse. In addition to scoping the literature on a particular phenomenon, they can provide important agendas for research (Torraco, 2016). Several implications for research emerged from this review of articles that provide a roadmap for scholars interested in TL in schools in Asian-Pacific contexts. These include research of non-English language articles, indigenous theory-building and methodological expansions.

In this review, only articles published in English were considered. While English-centrism is a common feature in literature reviews by scholars in primarily English-speaking countries, the use of only English-language articles in literature reviews such as this serves as a source of publication bias (Wang, 2019). Two articles found in this review were meta-analyses of studies on TL in schools in Turkey and Taiwan; however, many of the individual articles that made up these meta-analyses were not included in this review because they were either not published in English or appeared in graduate school dissertations and thesis, which did not satisfy the inclusion criteria. A reality of literature review articles

is that it is virtually impossible to account for all scholarly literature around the world, especially when conducting research published in countries other than one's own. However, to account for more of the available literature on this topic, scholars could expand on the knowledge available on TL in schools in these contexts by conducting collaborative reviews with scholars from multiple cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Having multi-national collaborative reviews would provide access to a broader literature base than an English-centric review such as this. This is especially important considering the fact that the countries and territories within Asia and the Pacific represent the variety of recognised official languages in which publications are made in those countries. Further expansion to include graduate dissertations and thesis as well as papers in conference proceedings would allow a larger sample of studies to inform future reviews.

Education itself has been, and arguably continues to be, a colonial mechanism (Burns, Nolan, Weston, & Malcolm, 2016). In research on the cultural nature of human development, Rogoff (2003) notes, there is a history of “schooling as a colonial tool” which should be taken into account when researching education across complex cultural legacies. Considering the western origins of TL theory, which was developed with samples from individualistic cultures and leadership styles, scholars interested in this area could contribute to the field through a series of studies that sought to do indigenous theory building around what a transformational leader in school contexts throughout Asia and the Pacific looks like. In fact, even the word “transformational” may not represent an apt conceptualization for the effective leadership in other cultural contexts. Grounded theory studies would allow scholars to explore the operating phenomena of empowering effective leaders in schools from an emic perspective. As discussed above, there may be TL practices unique to the contexts such as China as a result of its connection to Confucian thought and it is likely the case that Confucian thought has influenced these perspectives. While they may be less present in western contexts as cultural analysis finds, it is also likely that these would not be exclusive to China but apply in comparable contexts. Future research should seek to tease out which practices lead to the desired leadership outcomes in each context and which are unique to specific contexts. Future studies could also use cultural analysis to uncover the cultural origins and present-day

salience of these practices.

The studies reviewed in this article were largely quantitative using instruments and scales developed in western countries to measure TL in these school contexts. Many of the articles articulated detailed processes of translation and back translation to ensure that teachers and school leaders who did not speak English would be able to take the appropriate survey. However, translation of words does not ensure that the appropriate meaning and context was conveyed. A salient example of this was the use of the word “autonomy.” It is not clear how words like autonomy are being defined and if the meaning in context is comparable to meanings. What does it look like for a school leader to give autonomy to teachers in a school context in China vs. a school context in Australia or Thailand? For example, teachers may experience autonomy in their method of instruction and materials but not in content and learning outcomes.

As recommended above, qualitative methodologies such as grounded theory, ethnography and case study would be particularly important for those countries without representation in the existing research. That said, two of the studies that used case study as a methodology relied exclusively on interviews, which is arguably not sufficient for understanding complex phenomenon within bounded cases. Normally, more than one data collection method is used to ensure a well-rounded set of data with which to understand the phenomenon of interest. Additionally, as the findings showed, the studies in this review were centralised around 16 countries/territories. Therefore, to understand this phenomenon, future studies should explore this phenomenon in schools in the countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific not currently represented in the literature. They can also use more longitudinal designs and indigenous studies where possible to deepen understanding how, if at all, TL, school climate and student outcomes are related.

Although TL has been shown to make a positive contribution to school climate, school climate was measured with different instruments and it is important in the future to seek out comparative methodologies. There should be indigenous studies to see what is important for leadership in these contexts and have this build into a larger comparative project on the impact of TL on school climate. This type of largescale, cross-cultural comparative research has been done in the GLOBE study of culture and leadership (House et al., 2004). With regard to TL, a group of researchers could work on methods of unearthing indigenous ways that

focus on meaning and transformational practices and what it means to be a transformational school leader and then creating a methodology that will allow for comparisons across cultures. There may be ways to do this even within subsets of Asia and the Pacific such as in Southeast Asia. Considering the role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in regional integration, which includes a common official language of English (Crocco & Bunwirat, 2014), having a regional understanding of transformational school leadership could have important potential for regional educational policy and practice.

References

- Aydin, A., Sarier, Y., & Uysal, S. (2013). The effect of school principals' leadership styles on teachers' organizational commitment and job satisfaction. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 13(2), 806–811.
- Balyer, A., & Özcan, K. (2012). Cultural adaptation of headmasters' transformational leadership scale and a study on teachers' perceptions. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 49, 103–128.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York City, NY: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M. (1990). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Organizational Dynamics*, 18, 19–31.
- Bass, B. M. (1997). Does the transactional-transformational leadership paradigm transcend organizational and national boundaries? *American Psychology*, 52, 130–139.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1990). *Multifactor leadership questionnaire*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1992). *Multifactor leadership questionnaire-short form 6S*. Binghamton, NY: Center for Leadership Studies.
- Bass, B. M. and Avolio, B. J. (1995). *Multifactor leadership questionnaire: Rate form 5X*. Redwood City, CA: Mind Garden.
- Batiste, W., Walker, S., & Smeed, J. (2015). The relationship between teachers' perceptions of school leadership and their perceptions of the implementation of the national curriculum. *Leading & Managing*, 21(1), 69–85.
- Briner, R. B., & Denyer, D. (2012). Systematic review and evidence synthesis as a practice and scholarship tool. In D. M. Rousseau (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of evidence-based management* (pp. 112-129). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Browning, P. (2014). Why trust the head? Key practices for transformational school leaders to build a purposeful relationship of trust. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 17(4), 388–409.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bush, T., Hamid, S. A., Ng, A., & Kaparou, M. (2018). School leadership theories and the Malaysia Education Blueprint. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 32(7), 1245–1265.
- Burns, J., Nolan, J., Weston, E., Jr., & Malcolm, A. (2016). Indigenous education, colonization, neoliberal schools, and narratives of survivance. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, 14(2), 100–129.
- Bycio, P., Hackett, R. D., & Allen, J. S. (1995). Further assessments of Bass's (1985) conceptualization of transactional and transformational leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 80, 468–478.
- Cemaloglu, N. (2011). Primary principals' leadership styles, school organizational health and workplace bullying. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49(5), 495–512.
- Chin, J. M. (2007). Meta-analysis of transformational school leadership effects on school outcomes in Taiwan and the USA. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 8(2), 166–177.
- Crocco, O. S., & Bunwirat, N. (2014). English in ASEAN: Key effects. *International Journal of the Computer, the Internet and Management*, 22(2), 22–27.
- Demir, K. (2008). Transformational leadership and collective efficacy: The moderating roles of collaborative culture and teachers' self-efficacy. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 33, 93–112.
- Dou, D., Devos, G., & Valcke, M. (2017). The relationship between school autonomy gap, principal leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 45(6), 959–977.
- Dou, D., Devos, G., & Valcke, M. (2016). The effects of autonomy gap in personnel policy, principal leadership and teachers' self-efficacy on their organizational commitment. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 17(2), 339–353.
- Edano, D. C., Punzalan, E. M. D., & Tumutod, N. L. (2017). Transformational leadership styles of public elementary school principals in relation to school social organizational factors in Region Iii, Philippines. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences*, 3(3), 113–121.
- Education and Manpower Bureau. (2002). *Performance indicators for Hong Kong schools*. Hong Kong: Quality Assurance Division, Education Department.
- Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. (4th ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 329–351.
- Hariri, H., Monypenny, R., & Prideaux, M. (2014). Leadership styles and decision-making styles in an Indonesian school context. *School Leadership & Management*, 34(3), 284–298.

- Hariri, H., Monypenny, R., & Prideaux, M. (2016). Teacher-perceived principal leadership styles, decision-making styles and job satisfaction: How congruent are data from Indonesia with the anglophile and western literature? *School Leadership & Management*, 36(1), 41–62.
- Helgøy, I., Homme, A., & Gewirtz, S. (2007). Local autonomy or state control? Exploring the effects of new forms of regulation in education. *European Educational Research Journal*, 6(3), 198–202.
- Hsiao, H., & Chang, J. (2011). The role of organizational learning in transformational leadership and organizational innovation. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 12(4), 621–631.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. (3rd ed.). London: McGraw-Hill.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds.). (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hoy, W. K., Tarter, C. J., & Bliss, J. R. (1990). Organizational climate, school health, and effectiveness: A comparative analysis. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 26(3), 260–279.
- Hui, S. K., & Cheung, H. Y. (2006). A re-examination of leadership style for Hong Kong school-based management (SBM) schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 26(2), 173–187.
- Hulpia, H., Devos, G., & Rosseel, Y. (2009). The relationship between the perception of distributed leadership in secondary schools and teachers' and teacher leaders' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 20(3), 291–317.
- Ibrahim, M. S., Ghavifekr, S., Ling, S., Siraj, S., & Azeez, M. I. K. (2014). Can transformational leadership influence on teachers' commitment towards organization, teaching profession, and students learning? A quantitative analysis. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 15(2), 177–190.
- Jayavant, S. (2016). Mapping the complexities of effective leadership for social justice praxis in urban Auckland primary schools. *Education Sciences*, 6(11), 1–25.
- Jeong, S., Hsiao, Y., Song, J. H., Kim, J., & Bae, S. H. (2016). The moderating role of transformational leadership on work engagement: The influences of professionalism and openness to change. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 27(4), 489–516.
- Jimlan, J. T. (2017). Heart-centered management training program for public secondary school principals in the island of Panay, Philippines. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 10(2), 337–388.
- Jones, M., Adams, D., Joo, M. T. H., Muniandy, V., Perera, C. J., & Harris, A. (2015). Contemporary challenges and changes: Principals' leadership practices in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 35(3), 353–365.
- Kallapadee, Y., Tesaputa, K., & Somprach, K. (2017). Strengthening the creative transformational leadership of primary school teachers. *International Education Studies*, 10(4), 179–186.
- Kang, Y. T., & Printy, S. (2009). Leadership to build a democratic community within school: A case study of two Korean high schools. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 10(2), 237–245.
- Kantabutra, S. (2005). Improving public school performance through vision-based leadership. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 6(2), 124–136.
- Khawary, O., & Ali, S. (2015). The causes and effects of English teachers' turnover: A case from Afghanistan. *Improving Schools*, 18(1), 20–34.
- Koh, W. L., Steers, R. M., & Terborg, J. R., (1995). The effects of transformational leadership on teacher attitudes and student performance in Singapore. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16, 319–333.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2012). *LPI: Leadership practices inventory development planner* (Vol. 270). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Krishnan, V. R. (2005). Transformational leadership and outcomes: Role of relationship duration. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 26(6), 442–457.
- Kwan, P. (2016). The effect of trust on the relationship between instructional leadership and student outcomes in Hong Kong secondary schools. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 25(1), 111–121.
- Lai, E., & Cheung, D. (2013). Implementing a new senior secondary curriculum in Hong Kong: Instructional leadership practices and qualities of school principals. *School Leadership & Management*, 33(4), 322–353.
- Lam, Y. L. J. (2002). Defining the effects of transformational leadership on organisational learning: A cross-cultural comparison. *School Leadership & Management*, 22(4), 439.
- Lam, Y.L. J., & Pang, S.K. N. (2003). The relative effects of environmental, internal and contextual factors on organizational learning: the case of Hong Kong schools under reforms. *Learning Organization*, 10(2), 83–97.
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D., (2005). A review of transformational school leadership research 1996–2005. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 4(3), 177–199.
- Leithwood, K. & Jantzi, D. (1999). The relative effects of principal and teacher sources of leadership on student engagement with school. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 35(5), 679–706.
- Li, Y. (2015). The culture of teacher leadership: A survey of teachers' views in Hong Kong early childhood settings. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 43(5), 435–445.
- Liu, P. (2015). Motivating teachers' commitment to change through transformational school leadership in Chinese urban upper secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 53(6), 735–754.

- Liu, P. (2017). Comparing Chinese and Canadian transformational school leadership practices: A cultural analysis. *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM))*, 45(1), 37–54.
- Lo, J. W. (2005). The influence of leadership style on schools' development into learning organisations. *Social Sciences (1392-0758)*, 47(1), 16–25.
- Moolenaar, N. M., Daly, A. J., & Slegers, P. J. C. (2010). Occupying the principal position: examining relationships between transformational leadership, social network position, and schools' innovative climate. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(5), 623–670.
- Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (8th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Parco-Tropicales, M., & de Guzman, A. B. (2014). A structural equation model (SEM) of the impact of transformational, visionary, charismatic and ethical leadership styles on the development of wise leadership among Filipino private secondary school principals. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 15(4), 547–559.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H., & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 1(2), 107–142.
- Poon-McBrayer, K. (2017). School leaders' dilemmas and measures to instigate changes for inclusive education in Hong Kong. *Journal of Educational Change*, 18(3), 295–309.
- Retna, K. S., & Ng, P. T. (2008). The perception of staff on the effects of transformational leadership in a Singapore school. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice*, 32(1), 64–77.
- Retna, K. S., & Ng, P. T. (2009). The need for transformational leadership in Singapore's school-based reform. *Journal of School Leadership*, 19(1), 33–48.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Salmon, A. (Ed.). (2018). *Highlights from Asia-Pacific 2016-2017*. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO.
- Sayadi, Y. (2016). The effect of dimensions of transformational, transactional, and non-leadership on the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teachers in Iran. *Management in Education*, 30(2), 57–65.
- Schleicher, A. (2012). *Preparing teachers and developing school leaders for the 21st Century: Lessons from around the World*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing.
- Smouts, M. (1998). The region as the new imagined community? In Le Galès, P., & Lequesne, C. (eds.), *Regions in Europe: The paradox of power* (pp. 22–28). London: Routledge.
- Somprach, K., Tang, K., & Popoonsak, P. P. (2017). The relationship between school leadership and professional learning communities in Thai basic education schools. *Educational Research for Policy & Practice*, 16(2), 157–175.
- Sun, J., Chen, X., & Zhang, S. (2017). A review of research evidence on the antecedents of transformational leadership. *Education Sciences*, 7(15), 1–27.
- Tajasom, A., & Ahmad, Z. A. (2011). Principals' leadership style and school climate: Teachers' perspectives from Malaysia. *International Journal of Leadership in Public Services*, 7(4), 314–333.
- te Riele, K. (2012). Challenging the logic behind government policies for school completion. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 44(3), 237–252.
- Torraco, R. J., (2016). Writing integrative literature reviews: Using the past and present to explore the future. *Human Resource Development Review*, 15(4), 404–428.
- UNESCO (n.d.). *Asia and the Pacific*. Retrieved January 5, 2021, from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/worldwide/asia-and-the-pacific/>
- Valli, L., & Buese, D. (2007). The changing roles of teachers in an era of high-stakes accountability. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(3), 519–558.
- Wahab, J. A., Fuad, C. F. M., Ismail, H., & Majid, S. (2014). Headmasters' transformational leadership and their relationship with teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' commitments. *International Education Studies*, 7(13), 40–48.
- Wang, J. (2019). Demystifying literature reviews: What I have learned from an expert. *Human Resource Development Review*, 18(1), 3–15.
- World Bank (n.d.). *The World Bank in East Asia Pacific*. Retrieved January 5, 2021, from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eap>
- Yu, H., Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2002). The effects of transformational leadership on teachers' commitment to change in Hong Kong. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 40(4), 368–389.
- Zeinabadi, H. R. (2013). Social exchange outcomes of transformational leadership: Comparing male and female principals of public primary schools in Iran. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 27(7), 730–743.