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A Research on the Concept of Visionary Leadership in Education

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Abstract

Visionary leadership emphasizes the ability of leaders to lead organizations, motivate them, and make strategic decisions. The concept of vision is at the heart of these processes and is critical for leaders to be able to navigate effectively. These leaders not only manage the current situation, but also anticipate future opportunities and challenges, develop strategies accordingly, and lead the organization in accordance with this vision. The concept of visionary, which includes many features including formal differences, stands out more clearly than other elements such as creativity. This study conducted a search of the Web of Science database to analyze academic publications on visionary leadership. 278 publications were reached and publications; types, years, countries and universities with the most publications. The findings showed that the most studies on visionary leadership were conducted in the USA and the vast majority of publications were doctoral dissertations. While the number of publications has increased since the 2010s, 2019 has come to the fore as the year with the most publications. The results reveal that visionary leadership is an important area of research on a global scale.


INTRODUCTION

Visionary leadership is critical to success in today's dynamic and complex business environments. Visionary leaders create a clear vision to lead their organizations into the future, develop innovative strategies, and achieve high performance by influencing their followers. This leadership style is linked not only to individual leadership traits, but also to elements such as the motivation of teams, change

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management and sustainability. In recent years, academic interest in visionary leadership has increased. This interest is due to factors such as changing business conditions, technology, and globalization. However, more information is needed about the scope and trends of the existing literature in this area. In this context, this study aims to reveal the developments in the academic literature, the differences between countries and the institutions that publish the most by examining the publications on visionary leadership. The research focuses on the analysis of 278 publications through a search of the Web of Science database. The findings will help to understand the academic body of visionary leadership and shed light on future research in this area.

Leadership

The concept of leadership is of great importance in the field of management science and is one of the topics that has been studied intensively recently. The human being, who is the basic element of all organizations, must be organized effectively in order to meet their needs and achieve their goals; This increases the importance of leadership and management. Changes on a global scale have made it necessary for organizations to develop leadership approaches suitable for these new conditions. Leadership allows a group of people to come together for a common goal and act effectively towards that goal. In this process, leaders provide direction and motivation, manage group dynamics, and guide the way to achieving goals. Leaders don't just set vision and strategy; At the same time, they encourage individuals to believe in this vision and take the necessary steps to achieve the goals. If there is no leadership role, the group is made up only of individuals who are gathered together, and this can limit the effectiveness and success of the organization or group. Leadership is a process that unites people, gives them direction, and motivates them to achieve common goals. Therefore, effective leadership is critical to the success of a group or organization.

Management aims not only to achieve certain goals, but also to maximize the potential of individuals by ensuring harmony and cooperation within the team. Effective managers increase the motivation of the team with their communication skills and ensure the sustainability of the organization with their ability to quickly adapt to changing conditions. In visionary leadership, vision content and vision communication are stated as the 2 most basic elements (Van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014; Stam et al., 2010 as cited in Liu et al., 2022). In addition, they develop innovative approaches and problem-solving strategies and create a continuous development and learning environment. As a result, management, as a dynamic process, plays a critical role not only in managing day-to-day operations, but also in developing a vision for the future and bringing this vision to life together with the team. Successful management is the key to both individual and collective success.

Vision

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ability to quickly adapt to changing conditions. In visionary leadership, vision content and vision communication are stated as the 2 most basic elements (Van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014; Stam et al., 2010 as cited in Liu et al., 2022). In addition, they develop innovative approaches and problem-solving strategies and create a continuous development and learning environment. As a result, management, as a dynamic process, plays a critical role not only in managing day-to-day operations, but also in developing a vision for the future and bringing this vision to life together with the team. Successful management is the key to both individual and collective success.

The concept of vision has been discussed with different and various definitions through academic studies. The differences in these definitions do not affect the basic structure of the concept, but reflect the differences in the areas in which it is applied. Approaches that meet on a common ground in the concept of vision have come to the fore as individual characteristics who can reach the desired goals and achieve these goals. Vision is a set of strategies and skills necessary for organizations and individuals to achieve their goals. The fact that it is a developable concept allows it to have a dynamic structure; In this way, it not only responds to current problems, but also offers proactive solutions to future challenges. Thus, visionary thinking facilitates quick and effective decisions in moments of crisis. Another important aspect of vision is the ability to foresee the future. This is made possible by analyzing existing data and interpreting trends accurately. The strategic plans created as a result of these analyzes provide a solid foundation for the future direction of the organization. The accuracy of predictions directly affects the success of the vision; Accurate forecasts provide significant advantages in the process of effective use of resources and achieving goals. Vision is a tool that is not limited to the current situation but shapes the future. It requires the ability to think strategically in order to produce solutions to problems and to create positive developments when there is no problem. This versatility makes it easier for organizations to grow sustainably and adapt to change. It is stated that visionary leadership still does not have enough information about how and when it encourages employees to take responsibility with a follower-centered perspective (Liu et al., 2022).

Individuals with leadership qualities can concretely reveal the potential within the organization thanks to their visionary skills. These leaders must develop a shared vision, taking into account not only their own goals, but also the key goals and objectives of everyone within the organizational structure. In this process, engaging individuals and capturing their attention plays a critical role; Leaders create employees' vision perception with effective communication and an inspiring approach, ensuring that everyone unites around a common goal. Thus, thanks to a strong vision, employees see themselves as part of this goal and perform with a higher level of commitment. The psychological dimension of leadership is a critical element that shapes not only individual success but also overall organizational success (Campos et al., 2020). Leaders must engage all stakeholders by using different

communication methods to effectively communicate their vision. In this process, adopting an open and transparent communication approach reinforces the sense of trust of the employees and prepares the ground for the adoption of the vision.

Visionary Leadership

Visionary leadership stands out as a powerful ability that can influence not only individuals, but also groups and organizations; These leaders have the ability to create an inspiring vision and communicate that vision effectively. In this process, visionary leaders understand the shared values, needs, and goals of their communities and blend these elements to paint a picture of an attractive and achievable future. A good vision shapes people's mindset and behavior; Thus, employees and followers are motivated to follow the path set by their leaders. Visionary leaders communicate these goals clearly and concisely through their communication skills; This creates a sense of commitment and belonging within the team, allowing people to unite around a purpose. Visionary leadership is a source of power that can mobilize individuals and guide them towards a common goal, which plays a critical role in the sustainable success of organizations. A visionary leader gives his employees flexibility and responsibility in decision-making processes while setting the strategic goals of the organization. This autonomy improves employees' creativity and problem-solving skills, as well as increases their motivation. Visionary leadership, supported by autonomy, provides the ability to adapt to rapid changes and ensures that employees act in line with corporate goals. This, in turn, allows the organization to react more flexibly and proactively to external environmental demands (Maran et al., 2022).

Visionary leaders are individuals who set goals by thinking about the future and carry out their actions in this direction. A visionary leader identifies and analyzes the problems he encounters while carrying out his actions and develops solutions and effective strategies in cooperation with the members of the organization.

Visionary Leadership in School Administrators

Visionary leadership on school leadership (Harris & Jones, 2023) positively impacts students' academic and social achievement by creating an institutional vision in the life of the school environment; This situation shows how the visionary approach of the school administrator has an impact on school life. While visionary leaders make dysfunctional structures within the school more dynamic, they also lead studies to understand the causes of success or failure in social life; This is the beginning of the vision process. All non-functional units of the institution, that is, the school, begin to have a functional structure in the process in line with the determined ideal vision expectations. The vision acts as a catalyst, ensuring the integration of all components of the school as a whole. In this context, the progress of all items in the vision policies in accordance with the goals and needs emerges

as a critical step on the way to the success of the school. Therefore, visionary leadership not only increases academic achievement, but also contributes to the development of the entire school community, creating a sustainable learning environment.

With their visionary approach, educational leaders can direct school employees to operational goals; This strengthens the motivation and commitment of team members. In addition to his knowledge, the visionary education manager evaluates the knowledge and experience of all stakeholders in the school and determines vision-oriented actions. In this process, leaders care about the effects of teacher leadership (Nguyen et al., 2020) by opening channels of collaboration and communication. In this context, visionary training managers mobilize employees verbally within the framework of the vision criteria they have determined within the corporate structure and provide a spontaneous orientation process on target behaviors.

Method

In this study, a search was carried out in the Web of Science (WoS) database in order to analyze academic publications on visionary leadership. Web of Science (WoS) was preferred in order to carry out the scope of the research in a large and multidisciplinary database. WoS is a database that offers a wide range of publications in many fields from social sciences to natural sciences. In order to target publications related to education and management, "Education" and other management-related fields were selected using relevant filters on the WoS platform.

During the scan, the keyword "visionary leadership" was used in the topic section. The focus is on the studies in both the title, abstract and keywords of this keyword. As a result of the search conducted on 01.08.2024, a total of 278 academic publications were reached. These results are; It consists of publications of various types such as articles, theses, meeting papers, books.

The 278 publications were analyzed according to their types, the countries in which they were published, the years they were published and the universities they were affiliated with. The distribution of publications was examined and it was determined which types of studies were done the most (for example, theses, articles, papers, etc.).

The change of publications over time was analyzed, and how the academic interest of visionary leadership developed over the years was examined. The countries and universities with the most publications were listed, and regional and institutional trends were evaluated on these data. The obtained data are presented in the form of graphs and tables, and trends and remarkable points are interpreted in detail. This research method was conducted to understand the current academic background on visionary leadership and to reveal the trends in this field.

Findings

Table 1. Publication Trend by Year

Publication Years	N
2023	4
2022	10
2021	6
2020	13
2019	17
2018	10
2017	7
2016	13
2015	10
2014	9
2013	10
2012	9
2011	8
2010	7
2009	9
2008	7
2007	8
2006	9
2005	9
2004	4
2003	11
2002	6
2001	6
2000	10
1999	3
1998	10
1997	12
1996	8
1995	6
1994	5
1993	6
1992	1
1991	4
1990	6
1989	1
1988	3
1985	1
Total	278

Looking at the Publication Trend by Years in Table 1:

- 1990s and Before: Between 1985 and 1990, there were very few publications (1-6 per year). Since the 1990s, it is seen that studies on the concept of visionary leadership have increased. The fact that there were only one publication in 1992 and 1989 suggests that the concept was not yet fully recognized or a popular research topic in the early 1990s.
- Late 1990s (1995-1999): During these years, publications on visionary leadership increased markedly. Especially in 1997, there was a significant jump with 12 publications. This period can be considered as a period when theoretical studies on leadership began to diversify. We can say that we have entered a period in which visionary leadership is being studied more by researchers as part of leadership theories.
- Early 2000s (2000-2009): This is a period when research on visionary leadership accelerated. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of publications generally varies between 6 and 10 each year. This shows that the subject has now started to mature and has found more space in the academic literature. Research that peaked with 11-12 publications in years such as 2003 and 2007 shows that the subject attracted more attention in those years.

Trends in the Last Decade (2010-2023)

- Between 2010-2015: Since 2010, we see that studies on visionary leadership vary between 7-13 every year. This indicates that the issue continues to be studied regularly by researchers, but there has been no significant jump or fall. This period is a period in which visionary leadership occupies a prominent place among leadership theories and continues as a stable research area.
- Between 2016 and 2020: Between 2016 and 2020, we see that the intensity of research increased again, with an average of 10-17 publications each year. The year 2019 was the most productive year of this period, with 17 publications. This increase coincides with a period of time when digital transformation, global uncertainties and new generation leadership approaches are discussed. In these years, visionary leadership may have gained more attention in terms of adapting to the changing business world and technology.
- Pandemic Period (2020-2023): As of 2020, we see that research on visionary leadership is high with 13 publications. With the pandemic, there have been significant changes in the business world and leadership approaches. Visionary leadership may have stood out as a key leadership style to guide businesses and develop forward-looking strategies during these uncertain times.
- Last Years (2021-2023): 10 publications were made in 2022 and 4 in 2023. The decrease in 2023 can be explained by the fact that academic interest turned to other subjects after the pandemic. However, this period shows that research in general is still ongoing. This decrease may be temporary, and we may see an increase again in the coming years.

Overall Rating

- **Increasing Popularity of Publications:** We see that research on visionary leadership has been increasing, especially since the mid-1990s. This shows that visionary leadership is increasingly accepted as an innovative and forward-looking leadership style in leadership approaches.
- **Increase in the 2020s:** In the 2020s, visionary leadership has been the subject of more research due to global uncertainties and changing business conditions. Especially during the pandemic period, the efforts of leaders to get their organizations out of the crisis and prepare them for the future may have made this issue more popular.
- **Stagnant Periods:** In some years (especially in the late 1980s and early 1990s) there were very few publications. This was a time when the concept of visionary leadership had not yet come to the fore in leadership theories. However, since the mid-1990s, there has been a steady increase in the number of studies in this field.

Table 2. Publication Types

Document Types	N
DISSERTATION THESIS	200
ARTICLE	51
MEETING	12
OTHER	5
BOOK	3
EDITORIAL MATERIAL	3
REVIEW	3
EARLY ACCESS	1
Total	278

The largest category in Table 2 is "DISSERTATION THESIS" with 200 publications, accounting for approximately 72% of the total publications. This shows that a large part of the work done in the field of visionary leadership consists of academic research, such as doctoral and master's theses. Young academics and researchers often prefer to work in this format to produce new knowledge on this subject. The second most common type of publication is articles (51 publications). Articles play an important role in conveying the results obtained from theses to a wider audience. Articles published in academic journals bring theoretical frameworks and practices in the field of visionary leadership to the wider academic and professional community. The 12 publications in the "Meeting" category represent conferences and symposium papers on visionary leadership. This marks important events where academics and professionals exchange ideas on this topic. Conferences are often places where new ideas are discussed and theoretical approaches are combined with practice.

Table 3. Affiliations with the Most Publications

Affiliations	N
UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE	9
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA LINCOLN	8
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY	5
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY	5
THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS	5
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA	5
BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY	4
DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY	4
DRAKE UNIVERSITY	3

According to Table 3, most of the universities are institutions in the United States. Schools such as the University of La Verne (9 publications), the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (8 publications), and Fordham University (5 publications) are among the institutions that publish the most on visionary leadership. This shows that the academic infrastructure in the United States is strong and that there is intensive research in the field of leadership. A wide range of institutions, from established universities such as the University of Southern California and George Washington University to smaller universities such as Dallas Baptist University, contribute to studies in this field. This diversity shows that visionary leadership research is not limited to large universities, but universities of different scales are also active in this field. There is a significant difference between the institution with the most publications (University of La Verne) and other institutions. This shows that the vast majority of institutions that publish on visionary leadership produce relatively few publications. For example, the University of La Verne tops the list with 9 publications, while many other institutions are ranked between 3-5 publications. This difference suggests that certain institutions are more focused on this area, but the number of publications in general is relatively limited.

Table 4. The 10 Countries with the Most Publications

Countries/Regions	N
UNITED STATES	223
TURKEY	9
CANADA	8
ENGLAND	6
SOUTH AFRICA	5
MALAYSIA	4
THAILAND	3
INDIA	2
INDONESIA	2
MEXICO	2

In Table 4, the U.S. is by far the country with the most studies (223 in total). The fact that the USA has a strong academic background on management sciences and leadership, and that it has extensive research funds and resources is one of the main reasons for this leadership. At the same time, universities and research institutions in the U.S. are prominent in management and leadership research around the world. Although Turkey has a lower number of publications with 9 publications, it performs remarkably among developing countries. It can be said that Turkey's academic interest in the field of leadership and management has increased and more studies can be done in this field. Countries such as Canada (8), the United Kingdom (6) and South Africa (5) draw attention with their well-developed academic infrastructures. The presence of South Africa's work in this field may reflect the importance given to leadership studies on the African continent. Countries such as Malaysia (4), Thailand (3), India (2), and Indonesia (2) may be an indication of the growing interest in visionary leadership on the Asian continent. Especially developing Asian countries have started to play a greater role in leadership studies. This distribution shows the weight of developed countries in the academic world and their interest in leadership studies. While countries such as the USA, England and Canada have a large volume, the contributions of countries such as Turkey and South Africa in terms of leadership are also remarkable.

Results

Developable vision can be perceived as a contract that increases the work performance of employees in school life; This creates a structure that strengthens the motivation and commitment of employees to achieve the school's mission and goals. These unwritten norms, which can be applied inside and outside the school, actually shape the cultural dynamics of the institution, while also creating a common understanding and expectation among employees. This study aimed to examine the development of academic publications on visionary leadership over time, the countries, universities and publication types that publish the most in this field. The 278 publications obtained as a result of scanning the Web of Science (WoS) database are a reflection of the growing academic interest in visionary leadership. Research on visionary leadership has increased, especially since 2010. The year 2019 stood out as the year with the highest number of publications. This increase can be attributed to a growing interest in modern leadership approaches. However, by 2023, there has been a slight decrease in the number of publications. This decline may be due to the effects of the post-pandemic period. The United States is far ahead in the ranking of countries with the most publications on visionary leadership. In the USA, universities such as the University of La Verne and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln stand out in this field. Among the types of research, the largest share is taken by doctoral theses that deal with the subject of visionary leadership. This shows that visionary leadership has a wide place especially in academic research and master's/doctoral theses. Articles and meeting papers also draw attention as another important type of publication. This finding shows that visionary leadership finds a place in both in-depth academic research and academic debates. These findings

reveal that visionary leadership is a research area that is gaining importance at the global level. Large-scale events such as the change in leadership understandings, technological transformation and pandemics, especially in the globalizing business world, may have triggered academic interest in this subject. Future research will enable a more detailed examination of these tendencies, expanding the body of knowledge on visionary leadership.

Suggestions

Increasing interest in visionary leadership and encouraging more academic publications, especially for countries other than the United States, can accelerate the development of this field. International symposia and conferences can serve this purpose. More books and reviews can be done on visionary leadership. This will allow the concept to reach a wider audience and increase knowledge in the field. Post-2020 Research Opportunities: Although there is a decrease in the number of publications in 2023, the topic of visionary leadership may gain importance again with the changing dynamics in the post-pandemic business world. Therefore, more research can be done on visionary leadership, especially in the context of digitalization, sustainability and crisis management. Opportunities to Increase the Number of Publications: More books and reviews-type publications on visionary leadership can be made. In addition to theoretical frameworks, practical research can also diversify publications in this field, visionary leadership research has undergone steady development over the years, and with global events such as the pandemic, it has been at the center of leadership research. Further research in this area may be especially important to create solutions for the future of work.

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