



The Oxford  
Character  
Project



TEMPLETON WORLD  
CHARITY FOUNDATION

2023

# Character and global leadership

A survey of character-based  
leadership education and research in  
low- and middle-income countries



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# Acknowledgements

The Character and Global Leadership Project was led by Dr Wei Wang and Dr Edward Brooks at the Oxford Department of International Development and the Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford.

A truly global research team worked together to produce this report: Dr Adeyinka Adewale, Princess Agina, Anjie Cai Anderson, Ananya Bhadauria, Ruby-Anne Birin, Gerald Chirinda, Dr Verónica Fernández Espinosa, Dr Jorge López González, Nicole Haddad, Lamide Johnson, and Ben Santhouse.

We are also grateful to Juliette Ash and Andrey Levitskiy for their research support, and Guy Cave, Maria Horning and Dr Michael Lamb for their contribution as advisors.

The Templeton World Charity Foundation has supported the work of the Oxford Character Project since 2014. We are particularly grateful to Dr Fiona Gatty, Karen Sommer Shalett, and Lashanti Jupp for their partnership and advice in this project.

The Character and Global Leadership Project was made possible through the generous support of the Templeton World Charity Foundation. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Templeton World Charity Foundation.

# Executive summary

To advance positive change and human flourishing in the face of significant global challenges requires courageous and purpose-driven leadership - understood in this report as 'character-based leadership'. Such leadership must be effective and ethical, joining the knowledge and skills that enable communication, collaboration and decision-making to fundamental qualities of character such as integrity, purpose, and hope.

This report focuses on the 137 low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) around the world, which are home to 6.65 billion people, over 80% of the global population. The leadership challenge in these nations goes beyond raising GDP to addressing poverty in all its dimensions, including such aspects as health, education, and well-being alongside socio-economic indicators.

This report and the research that underlies it joins a growing volume of work on global leadership. Its particular contribution is a focus on character-based leadership, understood as leadership that prizes moral purpose and virtues of character. The set and definition of focal leadership virtues varies across traditions and domains, but the idea of leadership resting on fundamental personal and intellectual dispositions is found across contexts and traditions around the world. Used in this way, the idea of character-based leadership is an expansive one, encompassing such theories and models as authentic leadership, ethical leadership, servant leadership, social justice leadership, spiritual leadership, values-based leadership, and virtuous leadership. It also includes numerous leadership models developed within LMIC contexts but less well-known in the Western, business-dominated academic leadership literature.

A multicultural group of researchers from eight countries applied a consistent research methodology to examine academic literature and educational programmes focused on character-based leadership, with particular attention to five regions:

- Southern and East Africa
- Central and West Africa
- Latin America
- East and Southeast Asia
- South and Central Asia

In each region, we investigated prevalent values, reviewed leadership literature, and analysed leadership development programmes.

## Key findings:

- Top values in universities and corporations across LMICs are excellence, responsibility, creativity, and integrity. The top five for universities includes 'global vision' and for companies includes 'sustainability'.
- Since 2000, there has been a consistent increase in published papers on character-based leadership across LMICs, with major increases following the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 and the COVID pandemic in 2020. Character-based leadership seems to be one of the answers people turn to when facing challenges and uncertainty.

- There is a particularly high volume of research on character-based leadership in East and Southeast Asia.
- Over half (55%) of research papers focus on the corporate sector, with education second at 22%. The most popular theme is the impact of character-based leadership, which accounts for nearly 70% of papers.
- The vast majority of papers report a positive and multilayer effect, including positive outcomes for individuals (e.g. improved work performance and job satisfaction), organisations (e.g. improved team performance and organisational culture) and society (e.g. reduction in corruption).
- Consolidating the research results on leadership attributes, the most highly valued leadership virtues across LMICs are empathy, honesty, courage, transparency, and care.
- Servant leadership is the most prominent model in academic research.
- There is a dearth of research on contextualised models of character-based leadership.
- We reviewed 724 programmes providing leadership training and identified 99 with a clear focus on character-based leadership.
- The largest provider of character-based leadership programmes is the NGO sector, followed by universities. Young people are the largest target audience. Only 5% of programmes focus on public-sector leadership.
- Central themes emphasised by character-based leadership programmes include leaders as change makers, leadership as service, and change coming from within. Prevalent ideas also include the power of leadership to transform specific sectors, contribute to the development of the nation, and change the world for the better.
- A wide range of character virtues are emphasised in educational programmes. The most prominent are integrity, responsibility, service, compassion, empathy, inclusion, courage, wisdom, perseverance and purpose.
- Common programme components and educational strategies include service-learning projects, role models, and learning communities.
- The strategic role of universities in leadership development provides a major opportunity to scale programmes amongst young people who will hold positions of responsibility and influence in the future.

# Introduction



Global challenges, including climate change, poverty, war, and inequality highlight the need for courageous, purpose-driven leadership across sectors in society and around the world. These challenges are transnational, but their impact is felt most keenly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as having a gross national income per capita of less than \$13,205. This category includes over 80% of the world's population, and challenges extend beyond economic markers to such vital areas as health, education, and standard of living. Local leadership is essential to engage these challenges, yet academic work in leadership studies and investment in leadership education has often been led by organisations in high-income nations.

Research in global leadership has sought to bridge this knowledge gap. Started in 1991, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project studied cultural practices, leadership ideals and interpersonal trust in 62 countries, categorising the perception and practice of leadership (House et al., 2004). In addition to this comparative work, there have been a number of efforts by leadership academics and educators within LMICs to build local leadership frameworks. However, these voices are often contained within regional discourses and are not well recognised globally.

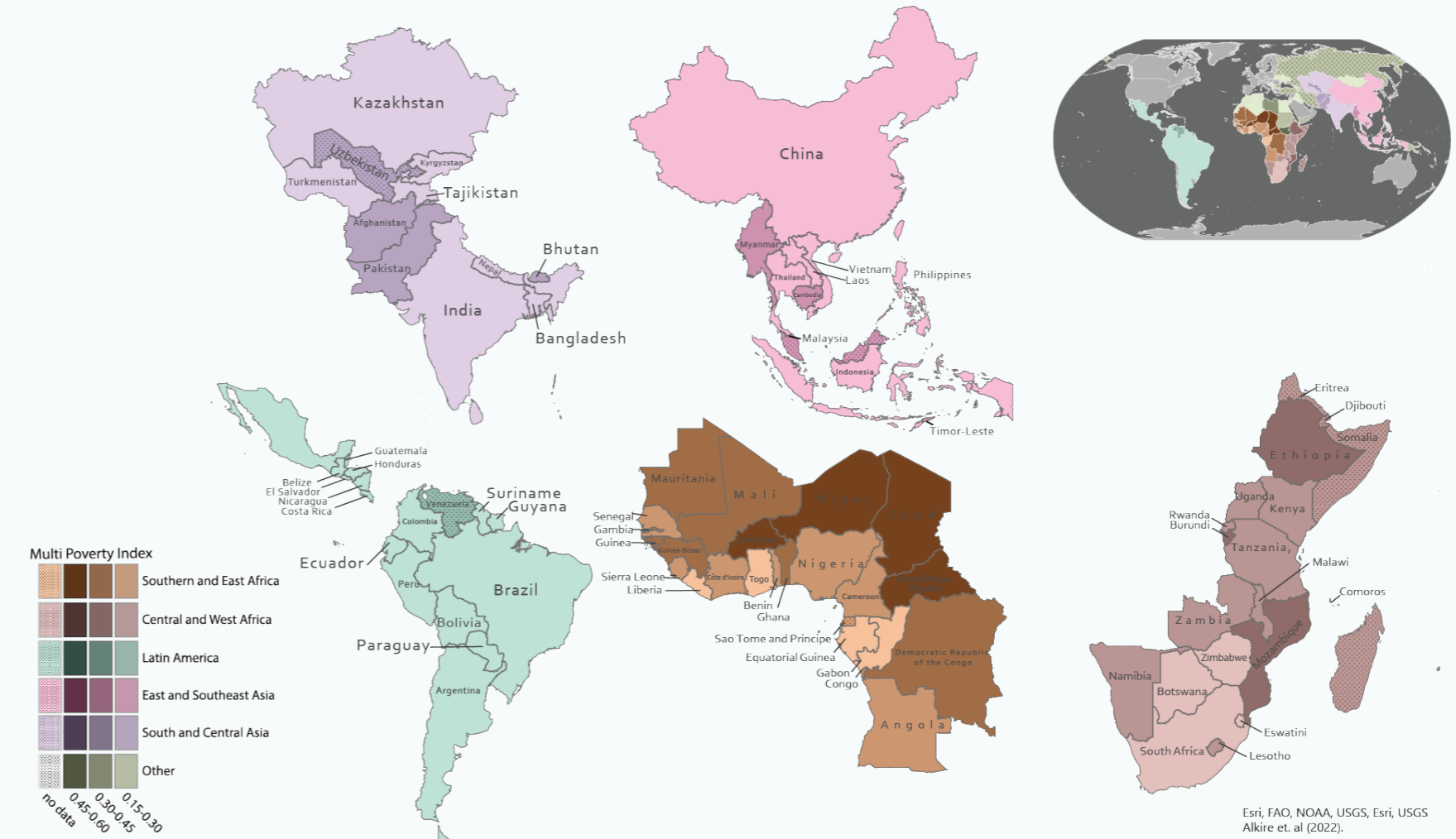
This report explores leadership research and education in LMICs with a focus on character-based leadership. An emphasis on the centrality of character for good leadership is manifested in numerous cultural

traditions and is foundational to a wide number of leadership theories and styles, such as servant leadership, authentic leadership, and values-based leadership. Importantly, the character of leaders is contextually shaped and situation-specific. Character qualities important for good leadership may vary across leadership contexts and cultures. To understand what good leadership means globally, we must examine it in the social-cultural context where leadership is practised.

To investigate the values and virtues considered important in LMICs, we surveyed the websites of 308 publicly listed companies and 226 universities. The results show a dual emphasis on excellence and character in both the corporate and education sectors across regions. Creativity, integrity, and respect are the three most frequently listed character traits, and there is an emphasis on being socially responsible and holding a global vision. What kind of leadership is needed to turn these values into action in a way that engages the challenges faced in LMICs and drives positive change?

Our research examined academic literature and educational programmes, seeking to advance understanding of character-based leadership and leadership development in LMICs. We hope the findings of our survey will further the study of global leadership and leadership development, facilitate new collaboration and partnership opportunities, and advance the design and delivery of effective leadership and character development programmes.

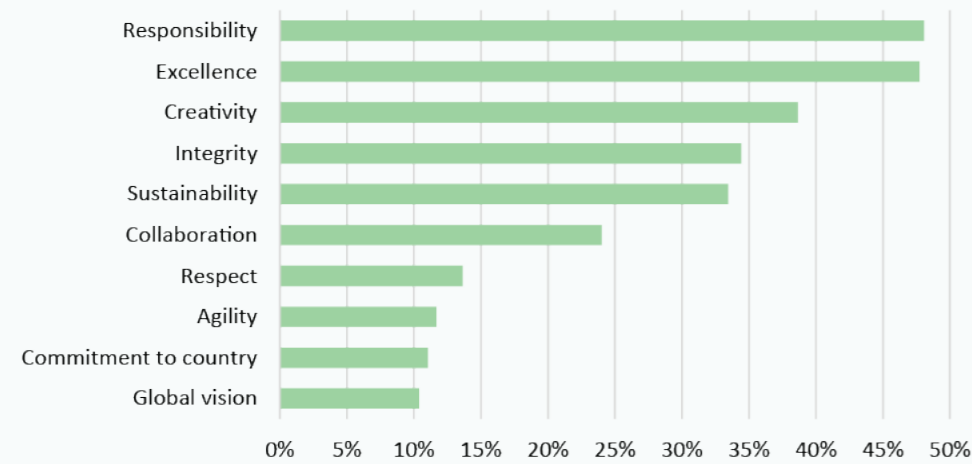
Global distribution of low- and middle-income countries



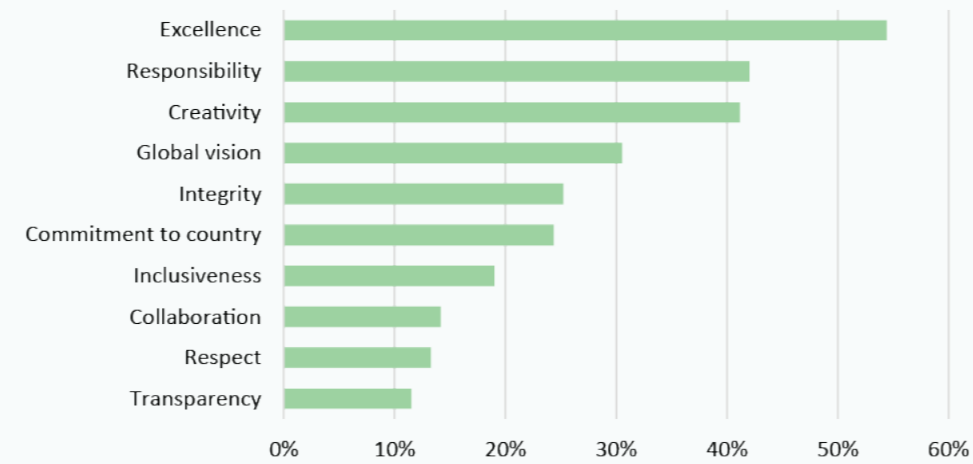
Note: The map incorporates the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) developed by the UNDP and the University of Oxford to show a comprehensive picture of these countries' multifaceted challenges, including economic, health, education, and living standards. Darker colours denote higher levels of deprivation among the population in these areas.

We surveyed the websites of 308 publicly listed companies and 226 universities to investigate what values and virtues are important in LMICs. The results show that creativity, integrity, and respect are the three most frequently listed character traits in both corporate and education sectors. There is also an emphasis on being socially responsible and holding a global vision.

**Top 10 values listed by companies in LMICs**



**Top 10 values listed by universities in LMICs**



## Research scope and methods

The Character and Global Leadership Project systematically mapped character-based leadership education and research in 137 low- and middle-income countries. These countries are home to approximately 6.65 billion people (over 80% of the global population) with diverse cultures, ethnicities, and beliefs.

We divided the countries into five focal regions:

- Southern and East Africa
- Central and West Africa
- Latin America
- East and Southeast Asia
- South and Central Asia

The remaining countries were grouped as a sixth region.

A multicultural group of researchers from eight countries worked together to develop and apply a consistent research methodology in the five focal regions. In each region, we investigated prevalent values, reviewed leadership literature, and analysed leadership development programmes. We included leadership literature and leadership development programmes that (1) emphasise the idea of character, (2) emphasise particular virtues, and (3) are based on leadership theories and models with character-based components (e.g. authentic leadership, servant leadership, ethical leadership, moral leadership, values-based leadership, and responsible leadership).

In particular, we conducted the following research activities:

1. Review of character-based leadership literature: we searched Scopus and Web of Science databases using a list of search words, including a broad list of leadership character traits (such as courage, curiosity, compassion, empathy, gratitude, and honesty) and generic terms (such as character-based, virtuous, and values-based). We also searched for publications in Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.
2. Review of character-based leadership programmes: we undertook an extensive desk review of websites, contacted regional experts and spoke directly to programme staff to learn about their approaches and associated impact.
3. Research interviews: we interviewed 30 researchers and practitioners from 17 countries to better understand the nuances of character-based leadership development in their local contexts. We adopted a semi-structured interview approach, following a standard guideline to ask about their views of good leadership, strategies and activities to develop character-based leaders, challenges, and future aspirations.

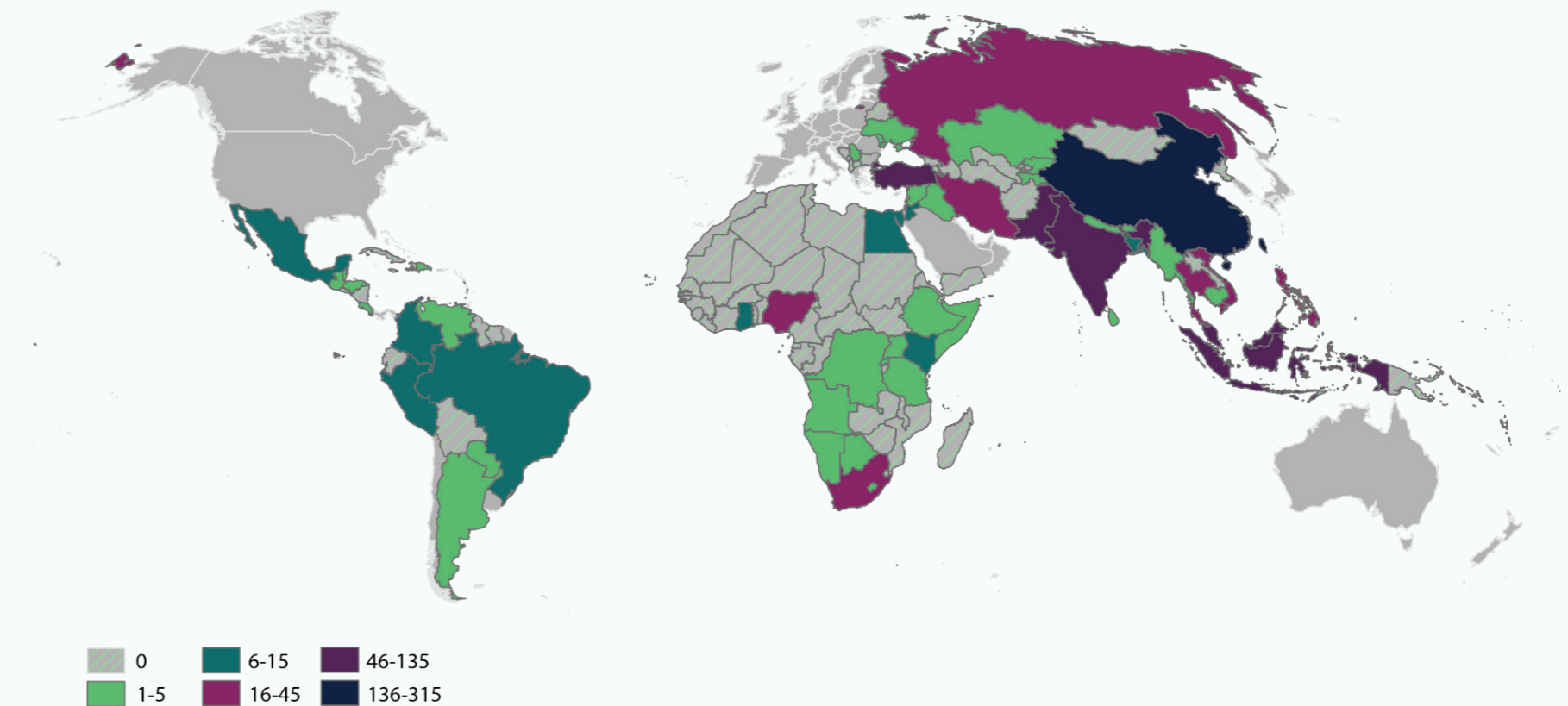
# Research overview



## Academic literature on character-based leadership in LMICs

We analysed research papers to find out the current scholarly understanding of character-based leadership in LMICs, including the research methodology used and the major findings.

Number of papers published on character-based leadership in LMICs between 1990 and 2022



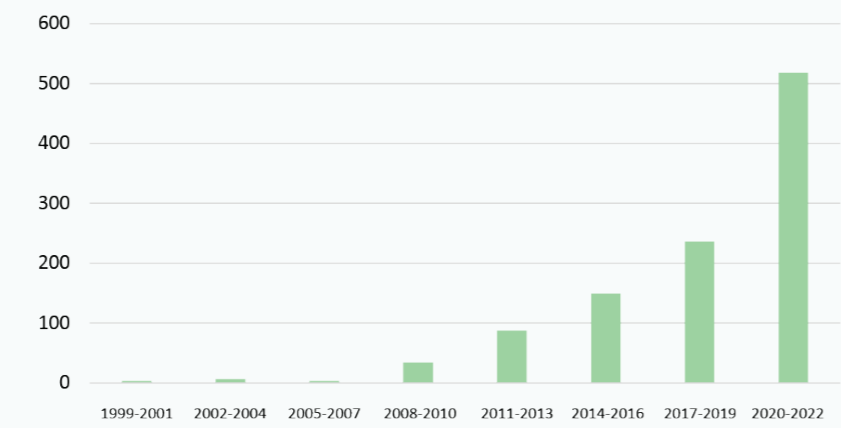
# How many papers have been published?

We identified 1,071 papers on character-based leadership in LMICs, published between 1990 and 2022. Of these, 67 were from Southern and East Africa, 41 from Central and West Africa, 53 from Latin America, 540 from East and Southeast Asia, 232 from South and Central Asia, and 138 from other LMICs.

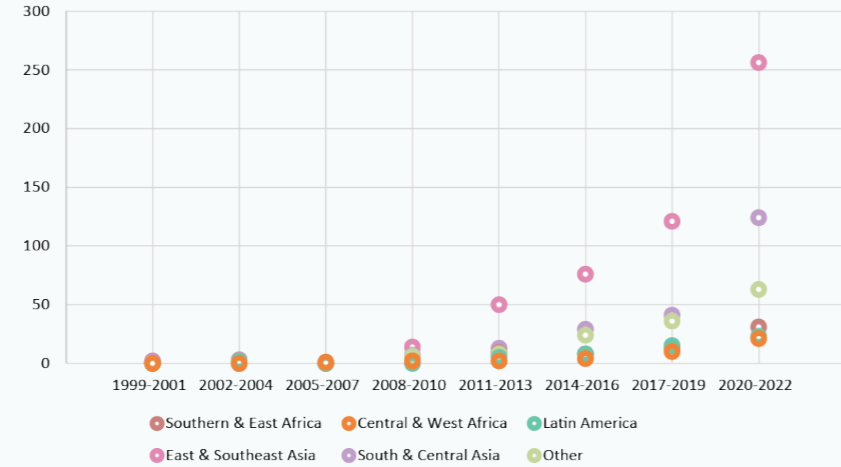
Since 2000, there has been a consistent increase in published papers on character-based leadership across all regions, with major increases following global crises in 2008 and 2020. Prior to 2008, the number of papers was low, but the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, which was widely considered to be a result of a failure of leadership and character, corresponds with a significant increase. The interest continued to grow through the 2010s and increased again following the outbreak of the COVID pandemic in 2020. This trend is particularly marked in the two Asian regions.

In the last three years, East and Southeast Asia saw the highest absolute rise in the number of papers produced moving from 121 to 256, i.e. more than doubled in volume. South and Central Asia saw a higher rate of increase but a lower absolute number, i.e. up to 121, tripling its previous 41. Although the absolute number in Latin America and Africa is generally low, it experienced a sharp increase in the pandemic compared to the previous three years. It seems that character-based leadership is one of the answers that people across the globe turn to when facing chaos and uncertainty.

**Total number of papers**



**Number of papers by region**



**Countries with the highest number of papers on character-based leadership (published between 1990 and 2022) by region**

Southern & East Africa	South Africa	42
	Kenya	8
Central and West Africa	Nigeria	17
	Ghana	14
Latin America	Brazil	13
	Mexico	11
East & Southeast Asia	China	315
	Indonesia	81
South & Central Asia	Pakistan	135
	India	79

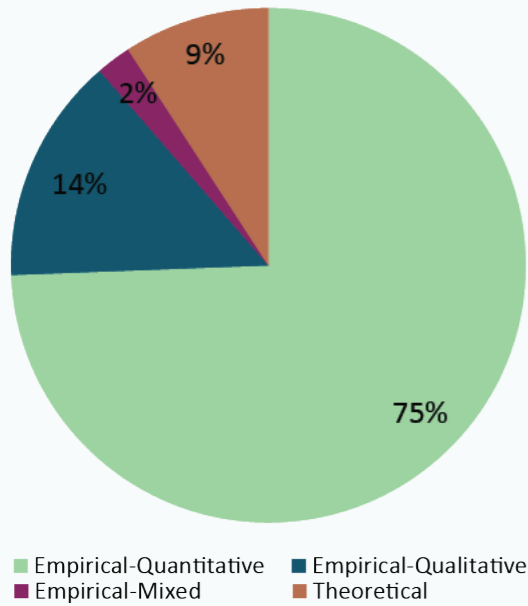


# What research methodology is most widely used?

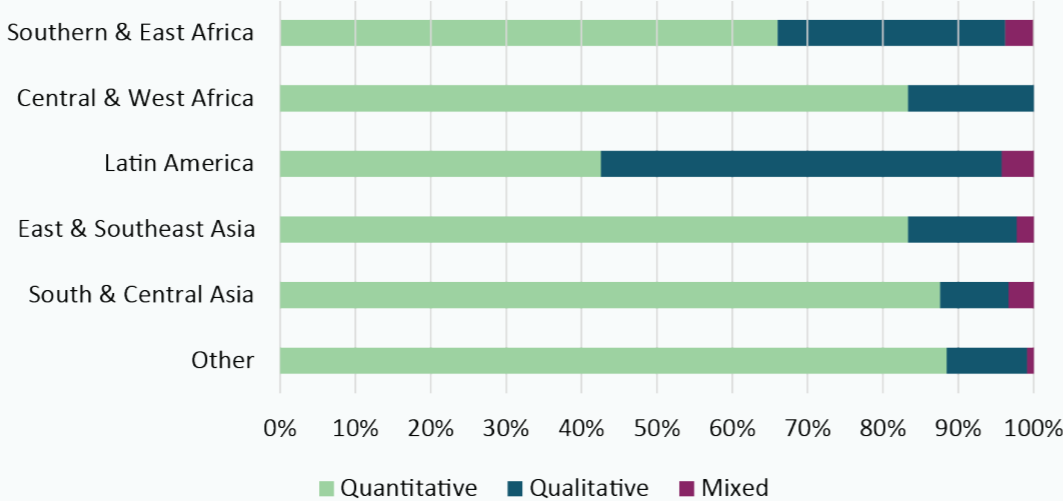
91% of the total papers are empirical, and 9% are theoretical. Among empirical papers, 82% use a quantitative methodology, 16% adopt qualitative methods, and 2% use mixed methods.

Most quantitative studies are correlational, with only a few seeking to establish causality using a quasi-experimental design. In most regions, published research is primarily quantitative, apart from Latin America, where a greater number of qualitative papers have been published.

Research methods



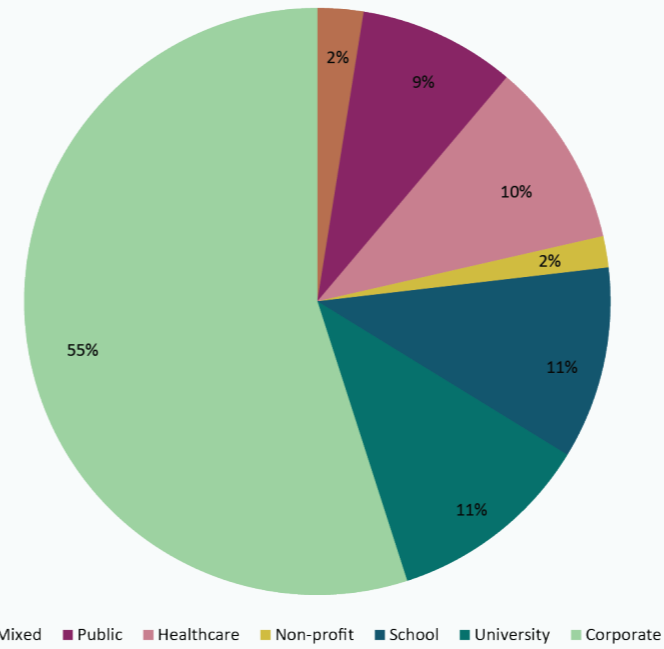
Research methodology by region



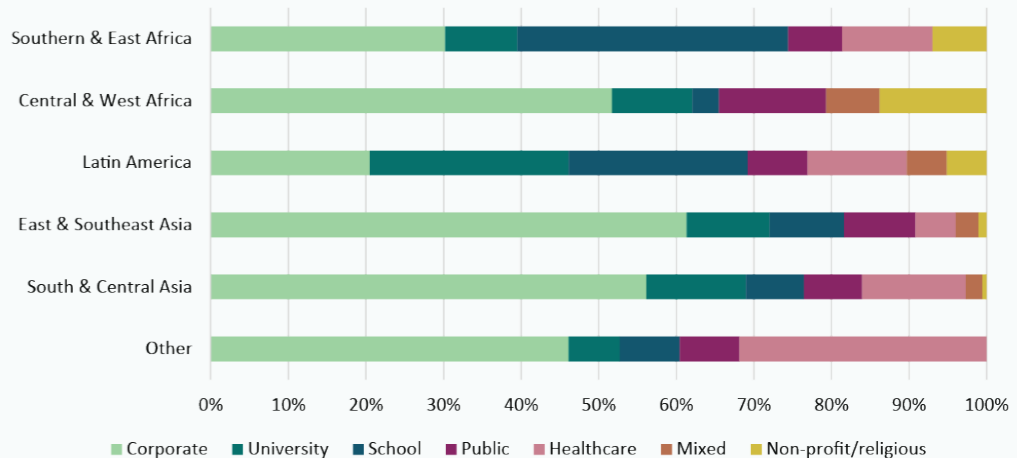
# Which sectors attract the most academic attention?

55% of the papers are about character-based leadership in the corporate sector. 22% concern the education sector, with half relating to universities and half on schools (primarily on university and school leadership and a small number on leadership development among learners). Healthcare makes up 10% of the total papers, followed by the public sector at 9%. Education is a particularly popular topic for Latin America and Southern and East Africa, with approximately half of their papers devoted to university and school leadership.

Distribution of research across sectors



Distribution of research across sectors by region

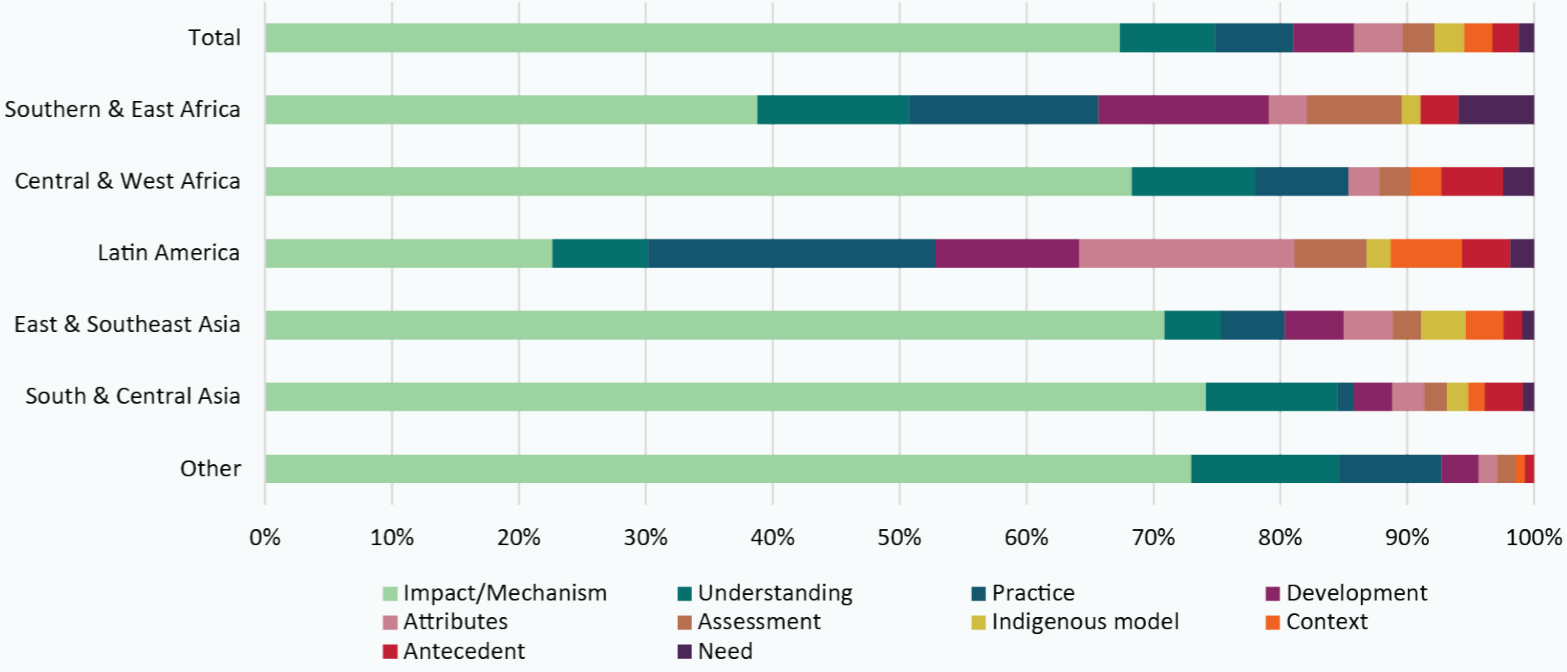


# What are the main research themes?

Examining the content of all research papers, we identified ten major themes below.

Theme	Definition
Antecedent of character-based leadership	What factors enable character-based leadership
Impact/mechanism of character-based leadership	Outcomes of various forms of character-based leadership; some papers also examine the mediators through which character-based leadership has its impact
Local leadership model	Building leadership models based on local understanding or data
Leadership attributes	What attributes are considered essential for good leaders
Leadership character development	How leaders' character is developed
Need for character-based leadership	Arguments for the need for character-based leadership
Character-based leadership and context	How a leadership model is applied to a particular cultural context
Character-based leadership assessment	How character-based leadership is measured; building or analysing measurement instruments
Character-based leadership practice	Examples of character-based leadership in practice
Character-based leadership understanding	How character-based leadership is understood in the LMIC context, often referring to local literature or philosophy

Research themes



The most popular research theme is the impact of character-based leadership, which makes up nearly 70% of papers. Each of the other themes occupies a small percentage. The only exceptions are Latin America and Southern and East Africa, where interests in different research themes are more evenly distributed. In these regions, character-based leadership understanding and practice, leadership character development, and leadership attributes are popular research topics.

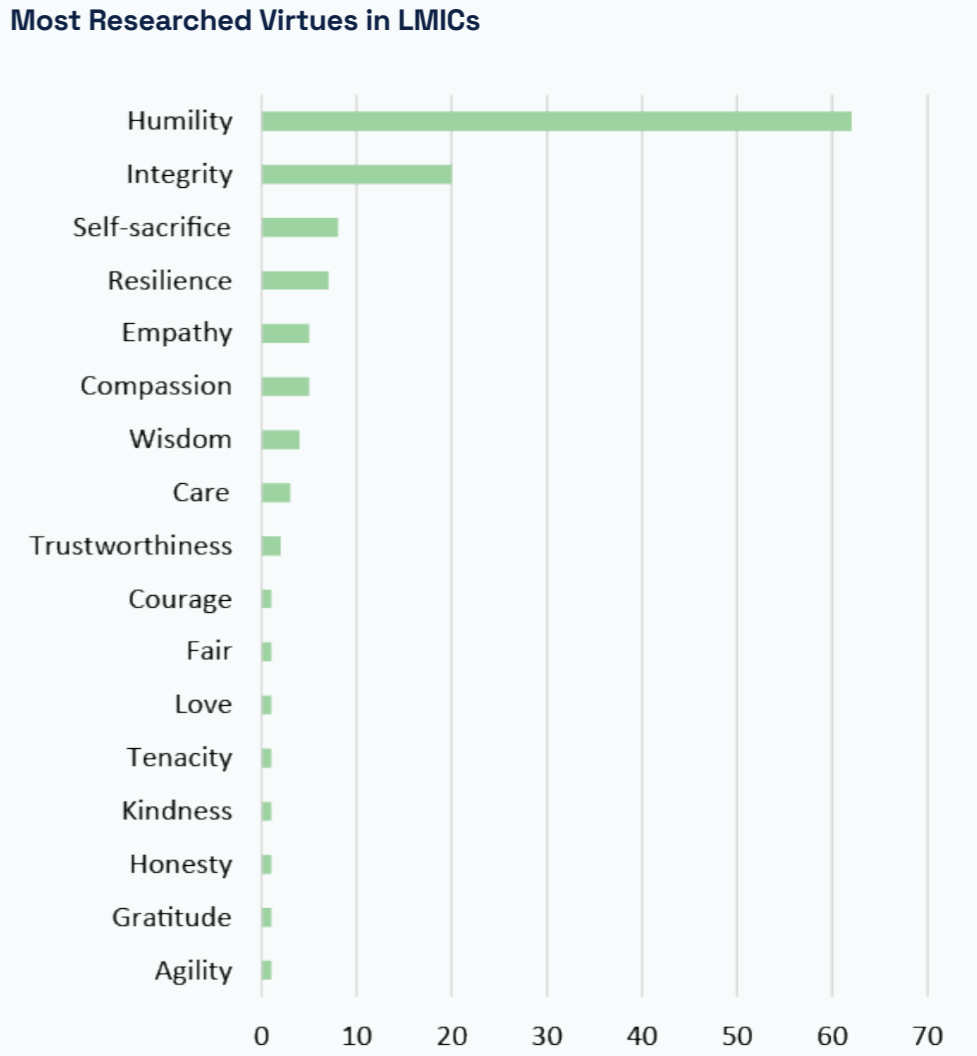
# What qualities are considered important for good leadership in LMICs?

41 papers focus on personal attributes that are important for good leadership in LMICs. By surveying the results from these papers, we found that there is generally a dual emphasis on competence and character. The most frequently mentioned virtues are empathy, honesty, courage, transparency, care, and fairness. highly desired leadership trait in LMICs.



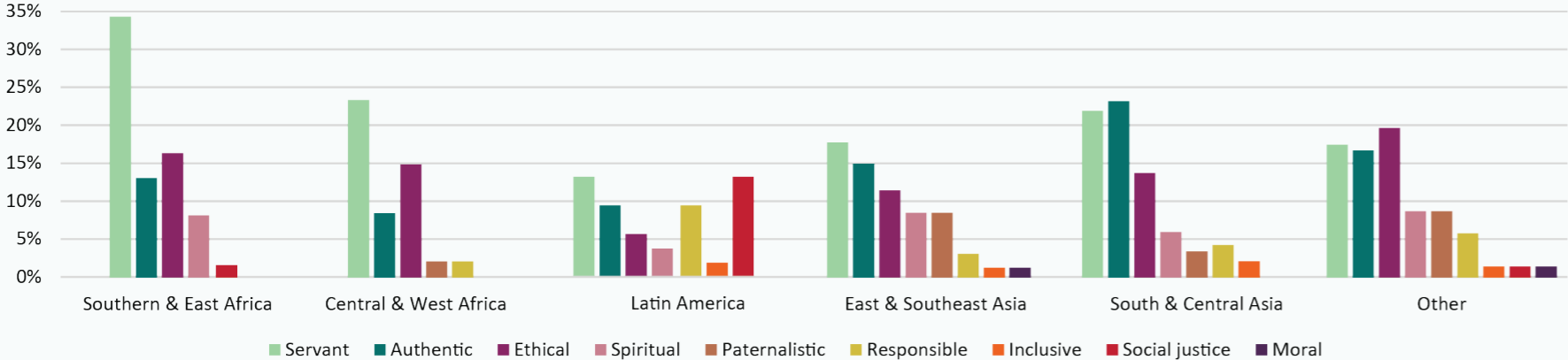
There are 124 papers directly researching particular leadership virtues (positive character qualities). The most studied virtues are humility (62 papers) and integrity (20). Other virtues researched in multiple regions include self-sacrifice (8 papers), resilience (7), compassion (5), empathy (5), wisdom (4), care (3), and trustworthiness (2).

Comparing these two lists, some highly valued but under-researched character virtues can be identified. The top five valued virtues – empathy, honesty, courage, transparency, and care – have not been well investigated except for a few papers on empathy and care. Humility has been researched the most, with 50% of the papers on leadership virtues devoted to it.



# What character-based leadership models are most researched?

Most researched leadership models by region (percentage of regional papers)



The table below shows some brief definitions of these commonly used leadership models:

	Source	Definition
Servant leadership	Greenleaf, 1977	Leaders are servants first, putting the needs of others before their own, empowering followers and inspiring them to emulate servant leadership behaviours.
Authentic leadership	Walumbwa et al., 2008	A pattern of leader behaviour that 'draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, and relational transparency.'
Ethical leadership	Brown et al., 2005	'The demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to the followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making.'
Spiritual leadership	Fry & Matherly, 2006	'Comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual well-being through calling and membership.'
Paternalistic leadership	Farh & Cheng, 2000	'A fatherlike leadership style in which clear and strong authority is combined with concern and considerateness and elements of moral leadership'; it contains three elements: authoritarianism, benevolence, and moral leadership.
Responsible leadership	Maak & Pless, 2006	A relational and ethical approach to leadership which focuses on personal character, shared purpose, and leader-stakeholder (rather than leader-subordinate) relationships.
Inclusive leadership	Ryan, 2006	'Concerned first and foremost with inclusion, both in its processes and the ends for which it strives.'
Social justice leadership	Goldfarb & Grinberg, 2002	Leaders 'actively engage in reclaiming, appropriating, sustaining, and advancing inherent human rights of equity, equality, and fairness in social, economic, educational, and personal dimensions.'
Moral leadership	Cheng et al., 2004	'Leader's behavior that demonstrates superior personal virtues, self-discipline, and unselfishness.'

We understand character-based leadership as human-centred with an emphasis on leaders' personal development and moral agency, which underlies actions and outcomes. On this understanding, character-based leadership includes a wide range of models, such as servant leadership, authentic leadership, ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, benevolent leadership, responsible leadership, inclusive leadership, social justice leadership, and moral leadership.

Servant leadership is the most popular model across all regions, with a total of 210 papers written about it between 1990 and 2022. It is followed by authentic leadership (175) and ethical leadership (141). Servant leadership is most prevalent in Southern and East Africa, with nearly 35% of regional papers using this model.

Paternalistic leadership is popular in the two Asian regions and is also present in Central and West Africa and LMICs beyond the five focal regions. It is an influential model in LMICs but not well represented in leadership discourse more widely. The benevolent component is often highlighted when this model is referred to as a character-based model.

Inclusive, responsible, and social justice leadership are also popular leadership models across regions. Because of the huge diversity within many LMICs, being aware of one's own biases and inclusivity has been seen as an essential virtue of leaders. It is also often emphasised that good leaders in LMICs seek to address social issues and work towards a good cause, often framed in terms of sustainability or social justice (Silva et al., 2017). Social justice leadership is particularly prevalent in Latin America, with 13% of regional papers adopting this model.

Most of these commonly used leadership models originate in North America and Europe. However, there have been a number of efforts at building local leadership theories, either from a normative approach, drawing leadership principles from ancient religious, philosophical, or literary texts, or by using an inductive approach, summarising the common themes from empirical data. Examples are listed in the table below. It should be noted that most of these models have not been widely used and do not have well-established and tested measurement instruments. Some models have regional influences (e.g. CPM, Nurturant-task, and RARE) but are not as influential as paternalistic leadership.

#### Brief definitions of local character-based leadership models in LMICs

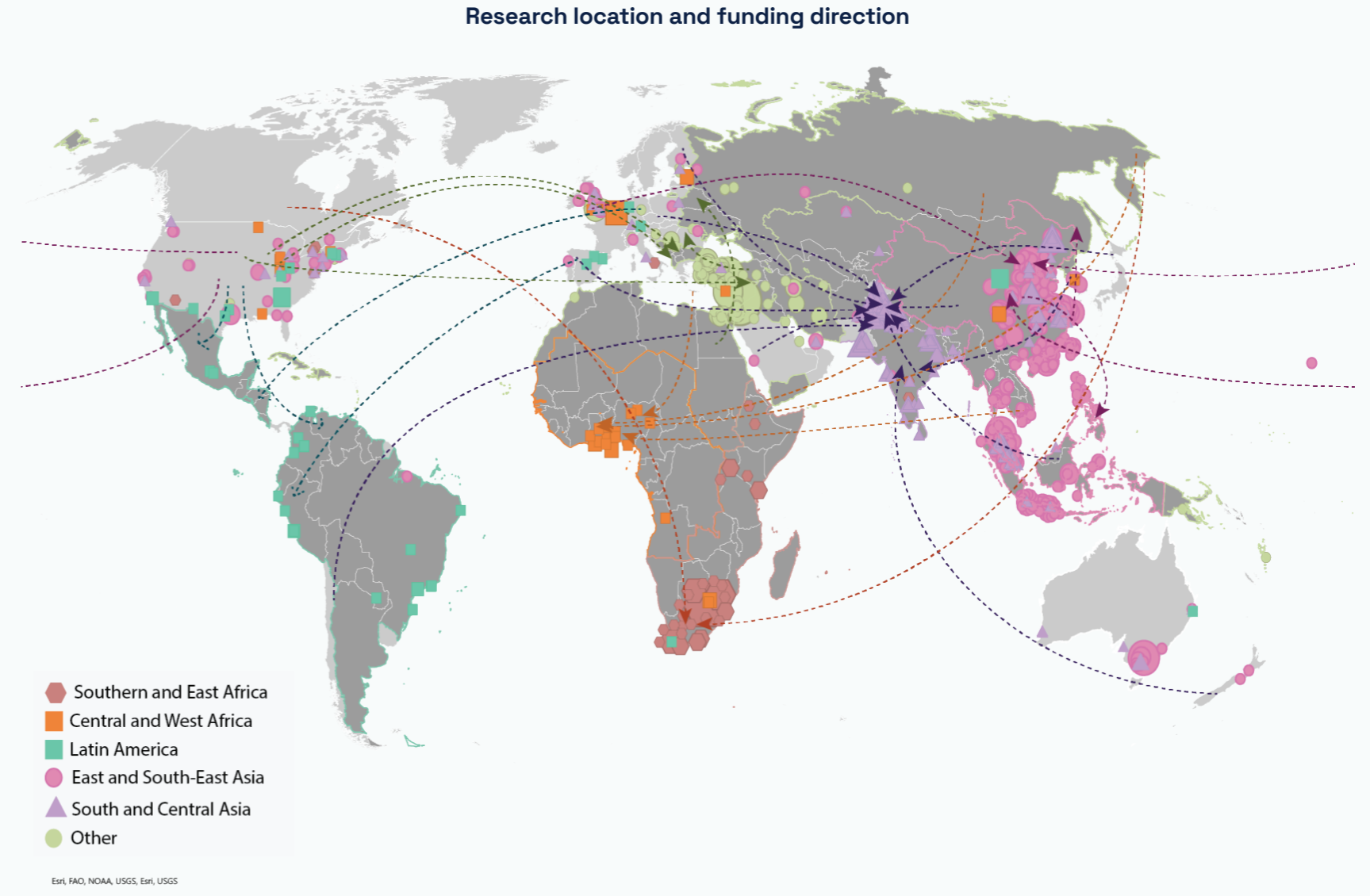
		Source	Definition
CPM model	China	Ling & Fang, 2003	Adds a 'C' factor (moral character) to the traditional 'P' (performance) and 'M' (maintenance) model as essential leadership behaviours.
Implicit change leadership theory	Philippines	Magsaysay & Hechanova, 2017	Five competencies of ideal change leaders: strategic and technical competencies, execution competencies, social competencies, character, and resilience.
Co 'uy leadership	Vietnam	Truong & Hallinger, 2017	'Combines the use of legitimate and moral authority in order to achieve subordinates' obedience, trust, respect, commitment and emulation'.
Nurturant task model	India	Sinha, 1980	An ideal leader is both nurturing and task-oriented.
Linked-leadership model	India	Simpson & Cunha, 2021	'Link' means connection and is derived from the Sanskrit word 'yoga'; the model's four components are self-leadership, servant leadership, holistic systems, and higher purpose.
RARE leadership model	Pan-African	Ngambi, 2011	Four components of good leadership: responsible, accountable, relevant, and ethical.

# Which journals are publishing the most papers on character-based leadership in LMICs?

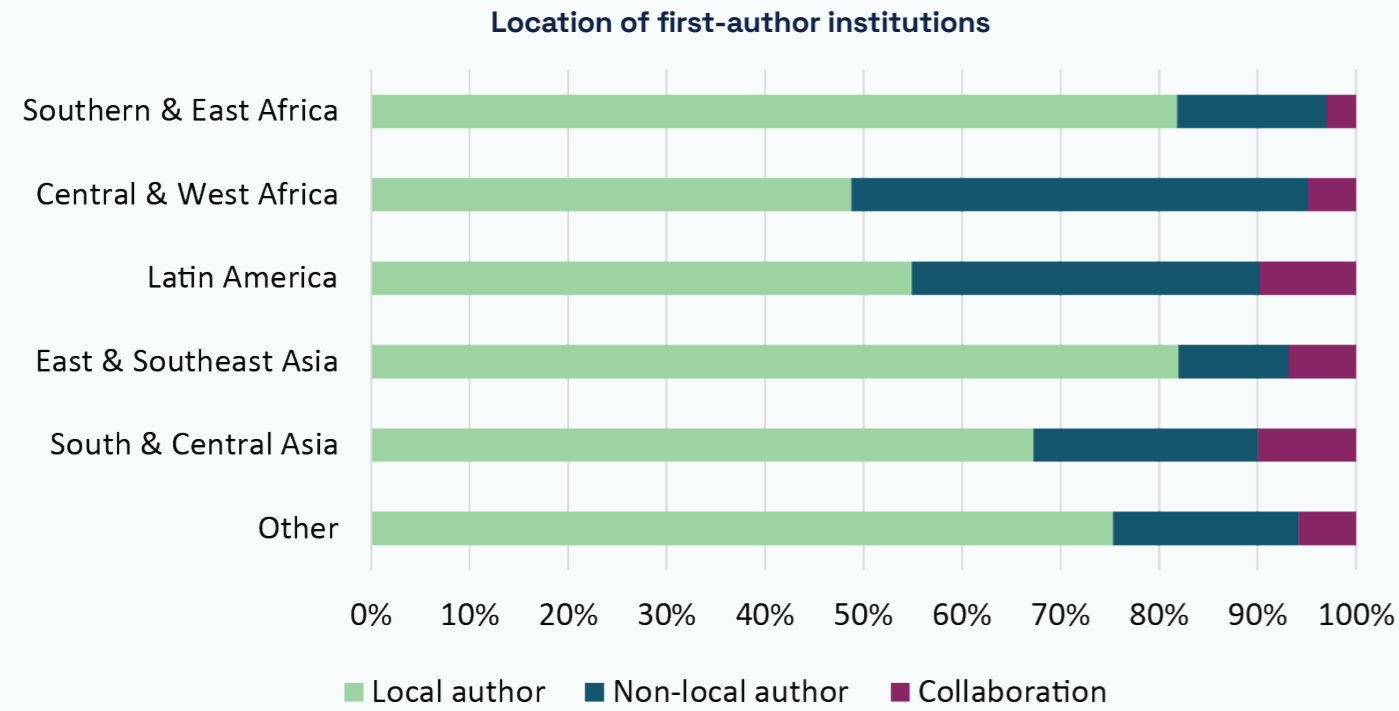
Top 10 journals publishing the most papers across all regions between 1990 and 2022

Frontiers in Psychology	45
Leadership and Organization Development Journal	44
Journal of Business Ethics	31
Sustainability (Switzerland)	16
Personnel Review	13
Current Psychology	12
Journal of Management Development	12
Pedagogika	11
Social Behavior and Personality	11
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	10

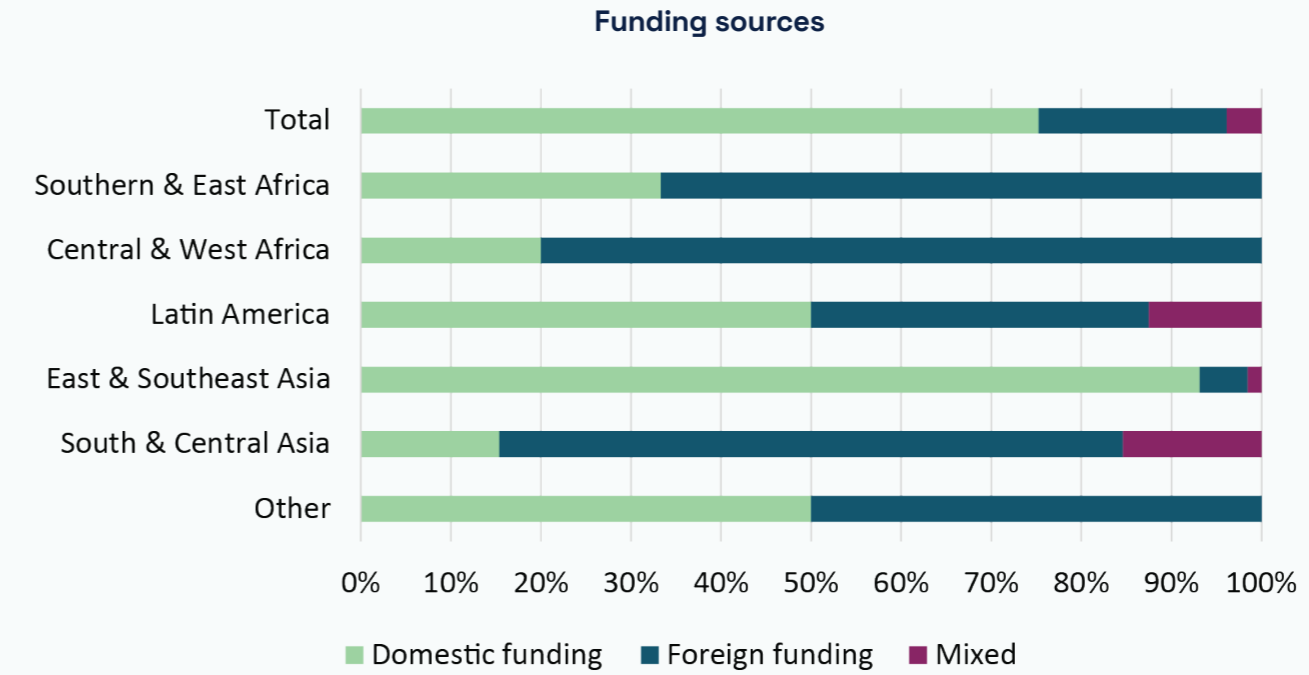
# Where are first-author institutions located?

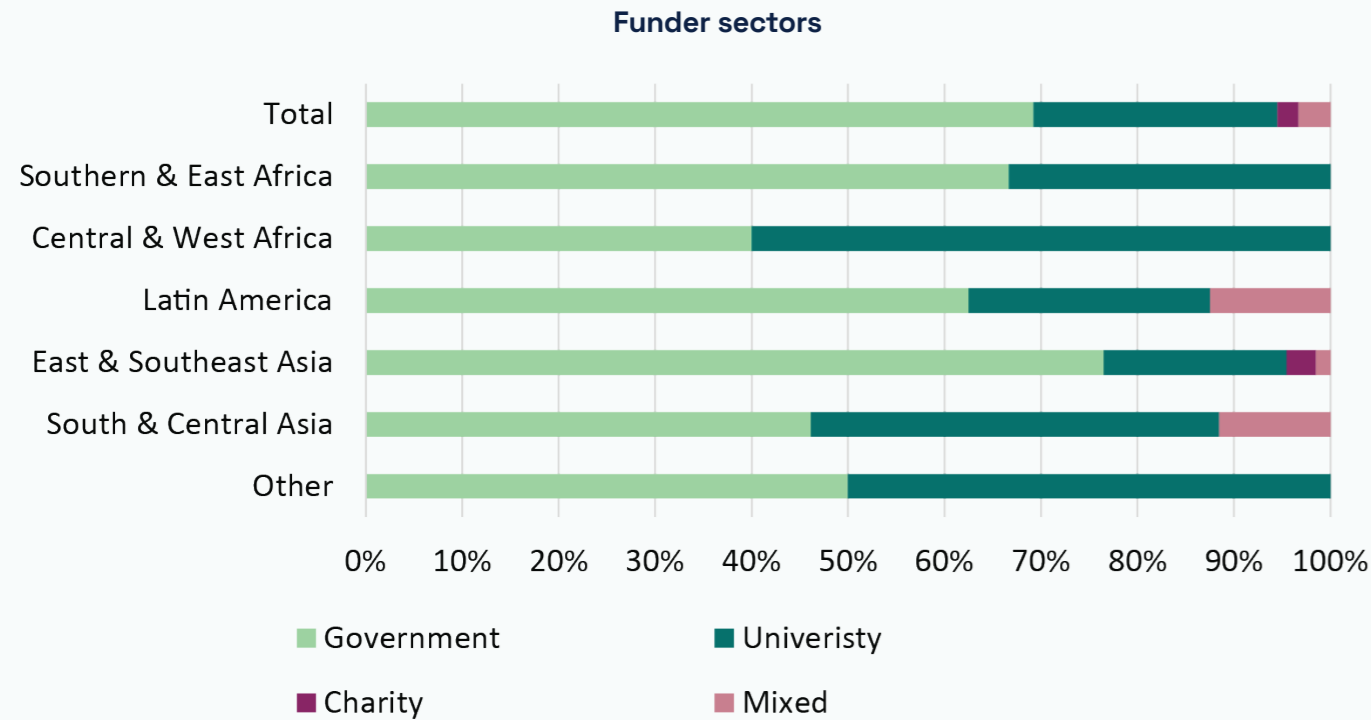


Character-based leadership has been studied by researchers based at both domestic institutions in LMICs and international institutions. In most regions, the majority of first authors come from institutions inside the region. A smaller number of papers are published by authors outside the region or in collaboration between local and foreign authors. The local author percentage is the highest in East and Southeast Asia and Southern and East Africa (more than 80%), while Central and West Africa has the largest percentage of foreign first authors (nearly 50%).



## Who is funding the research?





Of the 1,071 papers we identified, 17% are funded. Of the funded papers, 75% received domestic funds, 21% received funding outside their countries, and 4% received a mixture of domestic and foreign funding. Governments fund the most papers (69%), followed by universities (25%). Charities/foundations support a small percentage of papers (2%).

There are noticeable regional differences. Some regions (East and Southeast Asia, and Latin America) rely primarily on domestic funding. In contrast, foreign funding has a more significant impact in South and Central Asia and African regions.

Funding can provide a helpful perspective to understand differences in the quantity of papers across regions. For example, the government is driving research on character-based leadership in China. 35% of the 315 papers are funded, and 83% of the funding is from the government. The funding is likely responsible for the boom in the number of papers

produced by local authors. Besides increased domestic interest, China has also funded research in this area in other countries, such as research projects in the Philippines, Pakistan, and Ghana.

Pakistan has the second-largest number of papers concerning character-based leadership (135 papers) among LMICs. 16% of them are funded, but in contrast to the Chinese model, 91% of the funded papers have either received funding exclusively or partially from overseas. China is the largest foreign funder in Pakistan, with 59% of the funded papers receiving funding from them.

133 out of 182 funded papers focus on the impact or outcomes of various forms of character-based leadership. The most popular topics include servant leadership (36 papers), authentic leadership (30), humble leadership (30), and ethical leadership (19).



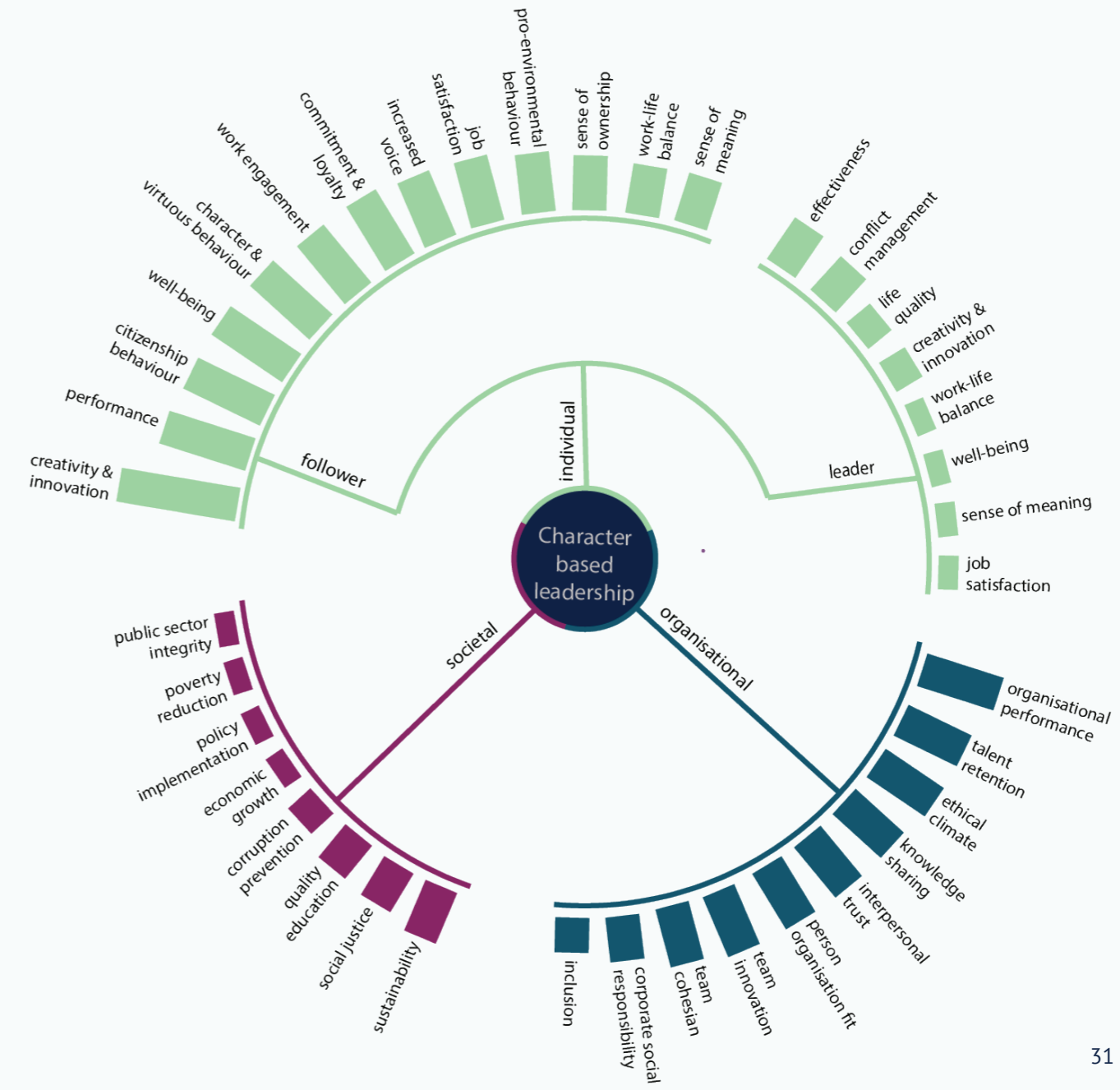
# What is the impact of character-based leadership?

The impact of character-based leadership is the most popular research topic in all regions, with 720 out of 1,071 papers. The vast majority of these papers report a positive and multilayer effect, including individual outcomes (such as followers' character formation, work performance and

job satisfaction), organisational outcomes (such as team performance, organisational culture, and corporate social responsibility), and societal outcomes (such as contributing to the national economy, increasing the effectiveness of policy implementation, and corruption prevention).



Impact of character-based leadership at the individual, organisational and societal level



# Programmes



## Character and leadership development programmes in LMICs

We reviewed 724 programmes providing leadership training in LMICs and identified 99 focusing on character development of current or emerging leaders, including country-specific programmes (60), regional programmes covering two or more countries within the same region (10), and global programmes which impact LMICs (29).

**Country-specific programmes** are often initiated from within the country to address a particular social issue. Their approach often draws on culturally relevant values and traditional wisdom. For example, Wikasatrian, a training centre in Indonesia, aims to develop virtuous leaders characterised by Indonesian wisdom.

**Regional programmes** often have multiple programmes in various countries inside the same region based on the successful experience of its tested model. Or in some cases, the purpose when setting up such programmes is to impact the whole region by building a network.

This model is most prevalent in Africa. We have identified seven pan-African programmes focusing on character-based leadership: the Archbishop Tutu Fellowship, the Africa Leadership Initiative (as part of the Aspen Global Leadership Network), the Abundant Leadership Institute, LEAP Africa, the Mandela Washington Fellowship, the Obama Foundation Leaders Africa, and the Young Women's Academy for Conscious Change by Global Grassroots.

**Global programmes** seek to educate leaders in and for LMICs. They follow a range of different models: (1) branches around the world, such as the Virtuous Leadership Institute; (2) scholarships provided in university contexts, such as the Rhodes Scholarship at the University of Oxford and Schwarzman Scholars at Tsinghua University; (3) programmes in universities covering participants from multiple countries, such as the Global Leadership Challenge organised by the Oxford Character Project; (4) fellowships such as the Ashoka Fellowship; (5) online resources, such as the Building Leadership Character course provided by eCornell.

## Type of organisations providing character-based leadership programmes

- **NGOs and philanthropic foundations** – NGOs and philanthropic foundations represent more than half of the total organisations delivering character-based leadership development programmes. The work of NGOs is vital in ensuring that programmes are available to grassroots and marginalised groups. For example, most NGOs running character-based leadership development programmes typically target youth, women and children. Philanthropic foundations play a significant role in funding leadership training institutes, programmes, research projects, and local NGOs.
- **Universities** – Tertiary institutions are one of the key providers of leadership development programmes. University research centres lead research and provide courses and executive training (e.g. the Allan Gray Centre for Values-based Leadership at the University of Cape Town, South Africa). Universities also offer programmes to cultivate character among future leaders. For example, the Service Learning Project was designed by Hong Kong Polytechnic University and adopted by universities in mainland China and Indonesia. Such programmes often have a regional or global influence since universities (especially postgraduate courses) attract students from around the world.
- **Corporate consultancies** – Programmes from these organisations are often wide-ranging and designed to cater for executives and entrepreneurs. Beyond training, many offer interventions such as coaching and mentoring. Good Leaders Online aims to transform the corporate recruitment process by adding character measures to executive selection. It also provides assessment and training based on its self-developed MVP model (mental agility, values, and passion) to executives and the whole company.
- **Other** – A small percentage of programmes are provided directly by schools as part of the embedded curriculum. A few programmes are provided by governments or intergovernmental organisations, such as the UNODC Global Integrity Education supplied by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.

## Target audiences

- Youth people are the biggest target audience for character-based leadership training. Nearly 40% of the programmes aim to develop school students, university students, or youth in general. 16% of the programmes focus on school children, primarily secondary school, with a few exceptions focusing on younger children and pre-schoolers. University students also attract much attention (11%), as the university has increasingly been recognised as an important place for character cultivation among future leaders.
- Corporate executives are the second most popular target group (12% of the total programmes), and the training is mostly provided by private sector consultancies or business schools through executive education.
- 6% of programmes focus on school leaders. For example, Cultivating Virtue in Kenyan School Leaders help educational leaders understand and cultivate servant leadership that will enable them to thrive and transform the school environment.
- 5% of programmes focus on government leaders. An example is the Emerging Public Leaders programme, focusing on helping young government officials become ethical leaders in Liberia, Ghana, and Kenya. The Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute is based in the U.S. and provides public sector training in multiple countries worldwide. One flagship programme is helping all public servants in Bhutan increase self-awareness and compassion through reflection and mindfulness.
- Women empowerment programs: Six out of 99 programmes are dedicated to developing character-based leadership among women. The Young Women's Academy for Conscious Change by Global Grassroots provides vulnerable high school girls in Rwanda, Uganda, South Sudan, and Kenya with the opportunity to design an individual venture regarding a social issue and launch their ideas in real life. Through this process, young women are empowered with a sense of agency, courage, and power to act for societal change.

# Vision statements of character-based leadership organisations

We surveyed the mission and vision statements of organisations delivering character-based leadership programmes and found the following common themes:

## Leader as a change maker

- ‘allows them to truly serve, be effective and become society’s game changers’
- ‘continually empower the next generation of leaders who will make towering impacts in their communities, by becoming change agents and making positive solutions to challenging scenarios around them’
- ‘mobilizes a global community that embraces these new frameworks to build an everyone a changemaker world’

## Leadership as service

- ‘service leaders within their communities’
- ‘awaken and promote the inner greatness of each person with the help of deep learning experiences, which confer the necessary strength to assume and develop their leadership through service to others’
- ‘gather, train, and mentor Afghans from all sectors of society to become servant leaders’

## Change starts from within

- ‘compassionate leaders have a deeper understanding of what others are experiencing and with that ability, they are able to make better decisions, build strong relationships, and inspire others to do good as well’
- ‘develop leaders in both character and competency to become transformed leaders who transform societies’
- ‘help leaders develop the character they need to navigate the challenges of our time and make an impact for good’

## Transform specific sectors

- ‘connect and develop good leaders for good business’
- ‘enable hospital staff and management to reconnect with their cultural value of compassion for all life as basis for providing quality care to their patients’
- ‘equip mayors with the competencies of an effective, ethical and empowering leader, believing that enhancing their leadership will manifest in their public service and local government units’

## Contribute to the development of the nation

- ‘transform impoverished kids into passionate, engaged young leaders who will work to transform their own communities and country’
- ‘prepare the next generation of leaders to actively and positively contribute to the development of Uzbekistan’
- ‘empower a generation of Congolese youth who will be the sources of their country’s best solutions to its most pressing issues’

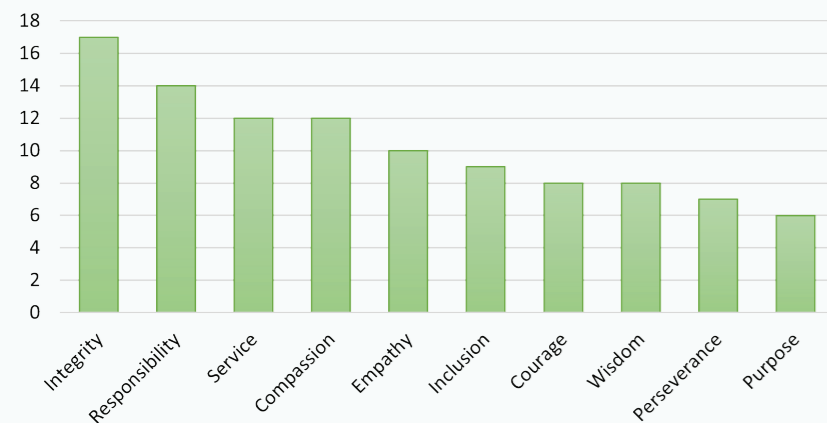
## Change our world for the better

- ‘to create world peace and abundance by developing enlightened leaders through children’
- ‘promotes responsible leadership and inspires leaders worldwide to work towards a more peaceful, just and regenerative future’
- ‘unleash a new generation of social innovators and leaders with the determination and grit to build a more just, inclusive and sustainable world’



## Character traits being developed

Out of 99 programmes, some use generic terms such as developing ethical leaders, values-based leaders, character, virtuous leaders, and moral leaders. The top ten focused character traits include integrity (17 programmes), responsibility (14), service (12), compassion (12), empathy (10), inclusion (9), courage (8), wisdom (8), perseverance (7), and purpose (6).



## Programme components and character development strategies

The majority of organisations provide leadership training through established curricula, including courses, workshops, and seminars. Other popular development strategies include service projects/experience-based learning, friendship/learning community, fellowship/alumni network, and exchanges/field trips/outdoor learning.

Curriculum (course/workshop)	79
Social projects/experience-based learning	11
Mentoring	10
Friendship/learning community	10
Fellowship/alumni network	9
Exchanges/field trips/outdoor learning	7
Coaching	6
Scholarships	5
Conference	3
Publications	2
Digital platform	2

38 Programmes

### Developing character through service – social projects and experience-based learning

11% of programmes mention that service projects are an important tool to develop leaders' character. In most cases, these projects are designed to address particular social issues in the country. For example, Cambodian Children's Fund encourages teenagers to 'teach younger students, feed malnourished community children, visit the homes of those in need and care for the elderly'. It features the Granny Program, which connects young students with some of the most impoverished elderly women in the community. This has a dual purpose: elderly women receive care and pass on the traditional Khmer customs, family values and community responsibility to young people. This programme is considered 'a much-needed bridge to instil Khmer wisdom and values into the new generation'.

### Developing character in relationships – role models and friendships

20% of programmes mention the importance of developing the character of leaders in relationships. The School of Leadership and Governance connect young local government leaders in the Philippines with former mayors in a similar field to receive relevant guidance. A key element mentioned about learning in friendships is diversity. Many organisations intentionally recruit participants from various cultural backgrounds. Exposure to a broader range of views and engaging

in meaningful conversations is an important approach for character development among future leaders. Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre unites youth from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds because embracing diversity is essential for good leadership. They hope to strengthen prosperity, justice, and inclusiveness in society by developing open-minded leaders. Questioning Your Own Notions in India also encourages participants to be exposed to a wide range of worldviews by conversing with others who might hold different views. Their ultimate goal is to develop people to build a nurturing and compassionate world.

### Developing character in a lifelong learning community – fellowships and alumni networks

Some organisations try to build fellowship networks. One example is the Responsible Leaders Network set up by The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt. Connecting more than 2,100 responsible leaders around the world, the network provides its members opportunities to share knowledge and experiences, collaborate and co-create new initiatives, and support each other's activities. The network tries to strengthen the sense of belonging, mutual trust and friendship between members through various network activities. Members are located in more than 100 countries and are highly diverse in their backgrounds or professions, but they are united by a shared goal of working towards 'a more peaceful, just, and sustainable future'.

39 Programmes

## Funding sources

38% of organisations fund their programmes through consultancy or tuition fees. 62% of organisations rely on donations or grants. Named major sponsors include:

- Corporate funders, including the Morningside Group and DAI.
- Government agencies, such as the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation, the South Korean government, and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.
- Philanthropic foundations, including the Anschutz Foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies, the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, the Carnegie Foundation, the Crown Prince Foundation, the Dalio Foundation, the Fred J. Hansen Foundation, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, the Gates Foundation, the Global Peace Foundation, the John Templeton Foundation, the Kalinangan Youth Foundation, the Mastercard Foundation, the McCall MacBain Foundation, the Obama Foundation, the Schmidt Family Foundation, the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Stephen A. Schwarzman Foundation, and the Templeton World Charity Foundation.
- International organisations, such as the Council of Europe and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.



# Voices from practitioners



We interviewed 30 researchers and practitioners in 17 countries (Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Colombia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Philippines, and South Africa). We asked them about their views of good leadership in their contexts, their organisations and activities to develop leaders with character, challenges, and future aspirations. The following were prominent findings:

**Understanding: good leaders are character-based change makers**

The prevalent understanding of leadership can be summed up by the word 'influence'. All participants seemed to agree that leadership is the ability to work with people towards a common objective or direction. What was evident from the perspectives of the respondents is that

leaders show a strong sense of responsibility, whether they have a position or not. Implicit in this view is the acknowledgement of leaders' influence at any level, and the need for leaders to be uncomfortable with the dysfunctional status quo. Good leadership was seen as based on good character, integrity, compassion and having a good heart. Good leaders were also described as change makers, guiding other people in search of the common good, 'lighting a fire for others and giving them courage and hope', and generating positive change not only in their close circle, but in the community and society more widely.

**Context: character-based leadership is not at the forefront of leadership development**

There was a consensus that though needed, character-based leadership is not necessarily at the forefront of leadership development in the



interviewees' local contexts. While there are a lot of leadership development programmes, the majority of them have a primary focus on competence.

Almost all interviewees expressed an urgent need for character-based leadership in their context. Many expressed concern that although moral ideals have been upheld very highly in the past, traditional values have been eroded and need to be restored. They also expressed the need for leaders who do not seek self-interest and are generous in 'sharing resources rather than withholding for themselves'.

**Qualities: most essential leadership qualities identified by practitioners**

When asked to name the top three most important qualities for leaders in their context, interviewees mentioned a wide range of character traits. The most frequently mentioned quality was integrity which was considered essential by five out of 30 interviewees. Courage and humility were mentioned three times. Compassion, passion, patience, perseverance, service, authenticity, and wisdom were all mentioned twice.

Integrity has frequently been highlighted as important in LMICs. According to the interviewees, this is due to high levels of corruption and unwholesome practices seen in leaders across every level of society. Courage and patience were also identified as important. Courage is

needed to make bold moves to change the status quo, while it is also important to be patient because change often takes time and is non-linear.

**Impact: long-term investment, short-term measurement**

Practitioners often take a long-term view on the impact of their programmes, acknowledging that character formation is a gradual process and the full impact of people investment often manifests itself after decades. However, they also expressed a desire to monitor programme effectiveness better. Except for a few participants, most interviewees mentioned that there are no systematic ways of measuring the impact of their activities. In most cases, people use participant feedback forms to provide a reference for future improvement. The programmes receiving donations tend to include a combination of summative numbers (e.g. the number of activities or people being influenced), participant reflections and stories of change, which are often published in the annual reports. In a few cases, external researchers publish papers on specific programmes as case studies.

**Challenges: justifying importance, overcoming isolation**

The challenges highlighted were varied. The most frequent was the lack of awareness of the importance and necessity of character-centred leadership education. Some agreed that there is a lot of competition

with other leadership training in the market, and preference is often given to those focusing on business efficiency. So culturally, it is hard for these practitioners to justify the relevance or importance of their work to stakeholders. The lack of effective impact measurement has contributed to this problem. In most cases, while understanding that it takes time for the full impact to show, stakeholders also would like to know the immediate benefits of participating in or funding these programmes.

Another common theme is isolation. Most interviewees struggled to identify peer organisations doing similar kinds of work with an emphasis on character. While this reflects the rarity of such endeavours, it also demonstrates the need for more networks or collaborative efforts.

#### **COVID: difficulties and new opportunities**

The COVID pandemic was a challenging time for educational programmes. Although many programmes continued online, the personal nature of the programmes relies on trust, which is hard to develop in virtual environments. This is more evident among grassroots programmes where lived experiences are more important than pre-established curricula for participants.

However, some interviewees mentioned that the pandemic had pushed them to develop online resources, therefore reaching a far wider range of audiences than previously. By breaking down the geographical and practical barriers, it is much easier to reach those unable to attend in-person programmes. These interviewees expressed a willingness to continue their programmes both in person and online.

#### **Aspirations: future visions and dreams**

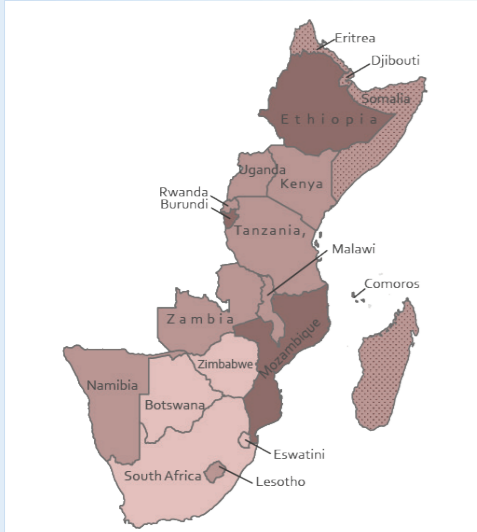
Asked about future aspirations, an interviewee immediately responded, 'I hope to see one of the girls from our programme one day becoming our president.' Behind this expression is the hope to see participants being empowered, becoming leaders willing and able to rise to the challenges of our time, take responsibility, and make a significant impact on society.

Another common theme is the desire to raise awareness of the importance of leader character education, including through media exposure. A small number of interviewees mentioned that they would like their programmes to be standardised as part of academic or professional curricula.

# Regional reports







**Population**

517 million

**Featured programmes**

Ethical Leadership and Public Accountability Course (South Africa)

Emerging African Leaders Programme (South Africa)

Cultivating Virtue in Kenyan School Leaders (Kenya)

Women of Integrity, Strength, and Hope (Kenya)

The Allan Gray Centre for Values-Based Leadership (South Africa)

Albert Luthuli Leadership Institute (South Africa)

Centre for Responsible Leadership Studies (South Africa)

# Southern and East Africa

There are 21 LMICs in the Southern and East Africa region with a total population of 517 million: Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Djibouti.

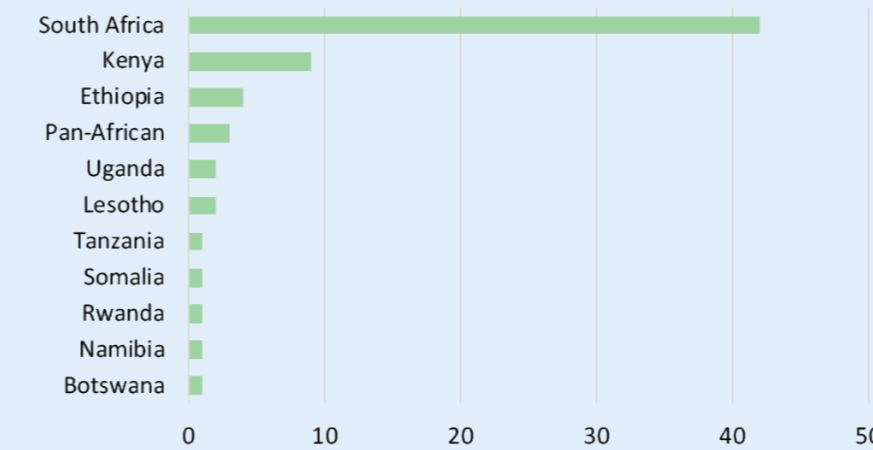
Most countries in the region are former British colonies that achieved independence in the latter half of the 20th century, with the horn of African countries and island states being the main outliers. There is a larger cultural and historical distinction between these two groups and the central and southern countries, with some broad similarities within each sub-group. Few of these countries are ethnically and culturally homogenous: except for Botswana, Lesotho and Eswatini, none of them is built around a singular nation with a shared past, identity and worldview. They are instead composed of diverse linguistic and ethnic groups with varying traditions and worldviews, though with some broad cultural commonalities and overlapping histories.

Given the common history of colonial oppression and neo-colonial marginalisation, a primary socio-economic and political pursuit of many of these countries is economic development and advancement at the individual, communal and national level. These countries' experience of a radical reorganisation of their political systems during the 20th century has also led to crises of political leadership and legitimacy as various government institutions have been imposed, adapted, innovated, and revised. Conversations about leadership are thus coloured with the economic and political concerns of improving communal standards of living and achieving a level of power sharing and participation - the approaches of the traditional systems that preceded the modern state and democratic process.

# Findings from our review of academic research

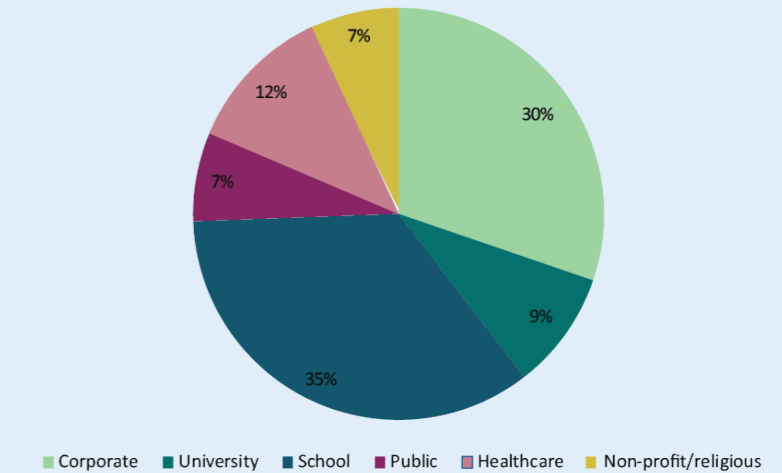
## Number of papers by country

There are 67 character-based leadership papers focusing on particular countries in this region. The majority of papers focus on South Africa (42 papers), followed by Kenya (9) and Ethiopia (4).



## Research subject sector distribution

The sectors that attract the most research attention in Southern and East Africa are schools (35% of papers) and the corporate sector (30%). Papers on character-based leadership in schools primarily concern school leadership rather than leadership development among learners.

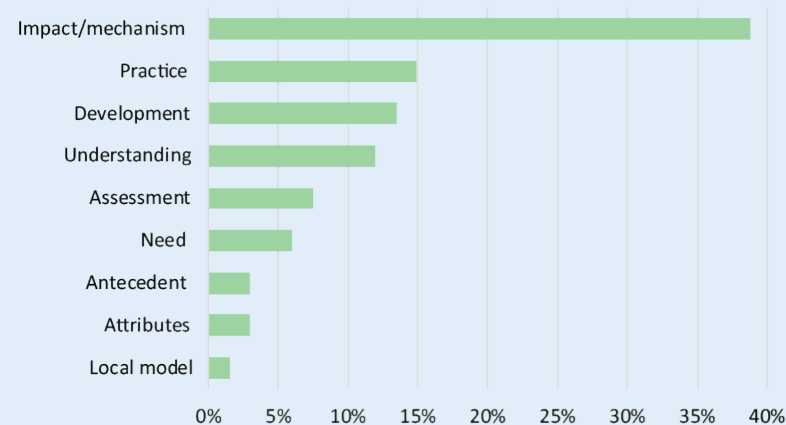


## Research methods

79% of all papers in the region are empirical papers, and 21% are theoretical papers. Among the empirical papers, 66% use a quantitative method, 30% use a qualitative design, and 4% use a mixed method.

## Research themes

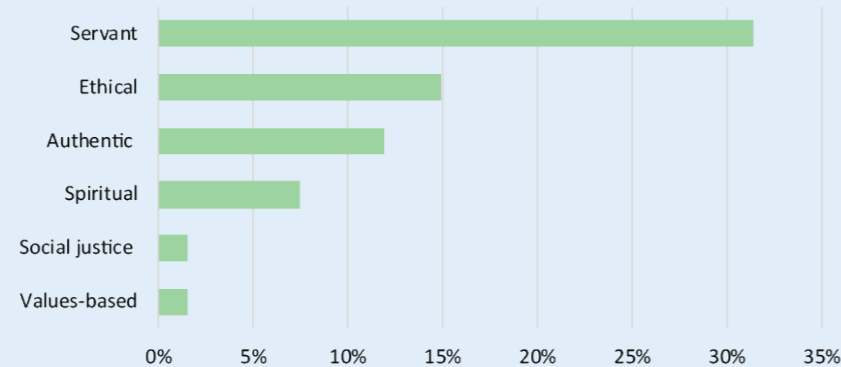
The largest percentage of papers in this region (39%) examine the impact of various forms of character-based leadership or the mechanism through which it has such an impact. 15% of papers focus on examples or case studies of character-based leadership in practice. 13% of papers are about how character-based leaders are being developed in the region.



## Leadership models

Servant leadership is the most popular model being researched in this region, with more than 30% of papers using this model. The second most popular model is ethical leadership (15%), followed by authentic leadership (12%).

Six papers focus on particular character traits: care (two papers), integrity, compassion, courage, and fairness.



## Local leadership models

Ngambi (2011) proposes a new model – RARE (responsible, accountable, relevant, and ethical) leadership – as a response to incompetent or unethical leadership associated with African development challenges. In the model, responsibility refers to envisioning and becoming a catalyst for change. Accountability is related to establishing achievable goals and outcomes, gaining commitment and buy-in, building a high-performance culture, monitoring results, and providing feedback and consequences. Relevance is related to awareness of the environment and trends and developing emotionally intelligent responses. Ethical leadership is centred on integrity and service.

Some researchers argue for the importance of building local leadership models. For example, Bolden and Kirk (2009) explain how African scholars are reticent to cite and apply Western theories for fear of underrepresenting and overlooking local context, values, and knowledge. There is an emphasis on recognising that different societies can have vastly different worldviews and foundational paradigms on which their knowledge systems are built. Thus, African scholarship on leadership must be ‘built from the ground up’, beginning with African assumptions and ways of thinking to accurately reflect regional understandings and practices of leadership. However, local models are still underrepresented in the area of character-based leadership.

## Local understanding of character-based leadership

Ubuntu is a collectivist ethic permeating Bantu and Bantu-related societies across most of sub-Saharan Africa. It is central to the local understanding of character-based leadership. Ubuntu is identified as the overarching expectation or positive character trait espoused by communities across the region, drawing on traditional norms and collectivist cultural leanings. The underlying conception of good is implicitly the common good. Virtues are perceived as relational qualities, and leadership is assumed to incorporate group input, consultation, and consensus building, rather than reflecting heroic individual accomplishment and visionary direction of passive followers.

As an umbrella concept for virtue, Ubuntu is a broad term, but the spirit is often expressed in the maxim of ‘a person is a person through other persons’ or ‘I am because we are’. This idea stems from what may be referred to as ‘clan culture’ since this perspective often derives from pre-colonial African contexts and communities where kingdoms and clans were the social order of that era. This doctrine is held together within a strong sense of community, called communitarianism. It is this type of communitarianism that gave rise to African proverbs such as – ‘it takes a whole village to raise a child’, implying that any child born into an African community is the collective responsibility of the entire village.

and not just the parents alone. For instance, a proverb of the Igala people (a tribe in the middle belt of Nigeria) says ‘ko kma defu ichai iye, iye fubi imudeyi ja’, meaning ‘a child in the womb belongs to the mother, after birth, it belongs to the society’ (Egbunu, 2014).

The peaceful coexistence and welfare of others have always been considered vital to the sustenance of African societies, which informs fundamental values that bound pre-colonial indigenous African society together, such as the ethical values of compassion, solidarity, reciprocity, cooperation, interdependence, hospitality, primacy of the person, respect for life, sense of the sacred, familyhood, brotherhood, solidarity and social well-being. These are counted among the principles of the communalistic life of an African person, which primarily impose duties on the individual concerning the community and its members. In this setup, moral duties are induced by a consciousness of needs rather than of rights. In other words, people ought to fulfil duties to others not because of the rights of these others, but because of their needs and welfare. Masango (2002) highlights bravery, group orientation, care, and supportiveness as virtues associated with the Ubuntu value system.

Leadership within such a tradition demands the duty to see public office as service to the collective interests of ‘our’ people. This must be done beyond seeking any one individual’s interests or benefits. It is both a social and moral duty/responsibility. Leaders are expected to use their office to advance common collective interests. The focus of leaders is always expected to be on ‘all of us’ and not ‘me’.

**‘Africans have this thing called Ubuntu. It is about the essence of being human, it is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being able to go the extra mile for the sake of others. We believe that a person is a person through another person, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours.’**

- Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town

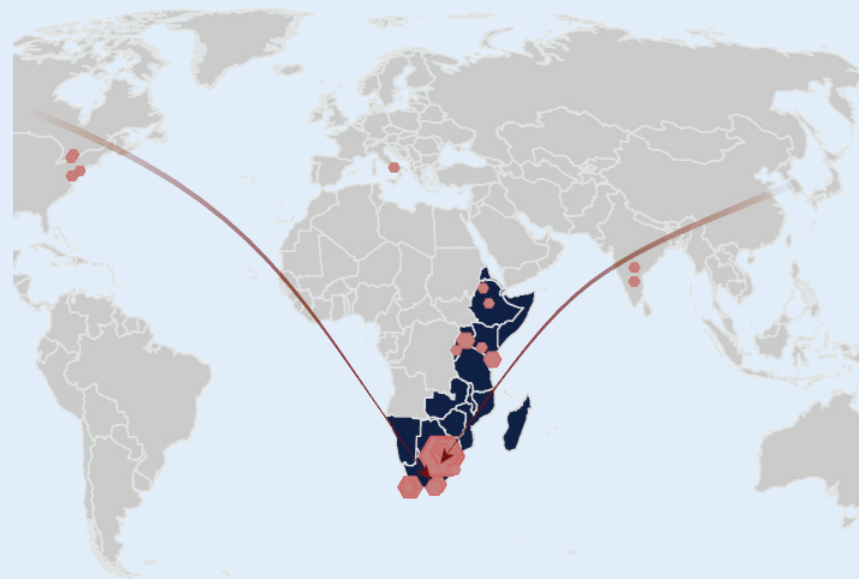
## Journals publishing most papers

### Journals publishing more than two papers in the region between 1990 and 2022

SA Journal of Industrial Psychology	7
SA Journal of Human Resource Management	4
European Business Review	2
Frontiers in Psychology	2
HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies	2
Journal of Management Development	2
Journal of Psychology in Africa	2
Koers	2
South African Journal of Education	2

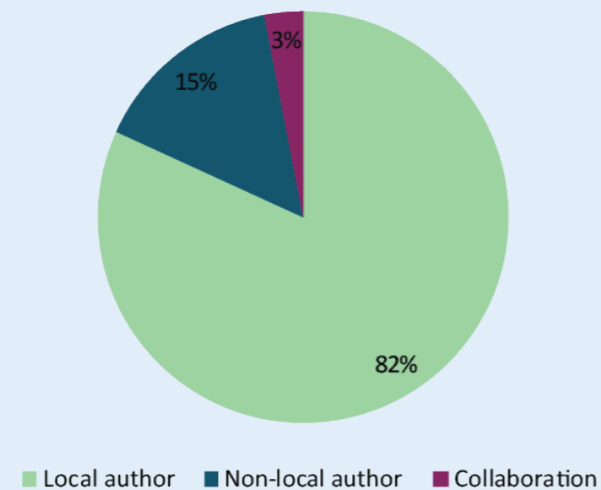
## First-author institutions

Although it takes a more complex measure to determine the impact, there are some apparent clusters regarding the number of papers published. In Southern and East Africa, North-West University in South Africa produced nine papers, followed by the University of South Africa (6 papers), Stellenbosch University (4), and the University of Johannesburg (4).



Note: Hexagons represent the locations of first-author institutions, and the size indicates the number of papers published. Lines with an arrow represent the funding direction.

82% of papers have local first authors. For 15% of papers, first-author institutions are based outside the region. 3% of papers are the results of collaborative efforts.



## Funding sources

Only three out of 67 papers are funded (fewer than 5%). One paper is funded by Ethiopian Civil Service University, and two papers are funded by international sources from the Ministry of Education of Korea and the Canadian government.

## Programmes

We have identified ten organisations delivering 11 character-based leadership development programmes in this region. The organisations are from four countries, including South Africa (5 organisations), Kenya (3), Rwanda (1) and Tanzania (1).

Four out of ten organisations are universities, three are NGOs, two are schools, one is in the private sector, and one is a government agency.

As for the audiences, more than half of the programmes (7) focus on young people, including school children (2 programmes), university students (2), and youth without specifying age groups (3). The others focus on a wide range of diverse audiences, including school leaders, mid-career professionals, mid-career government leaders, and senior executives.

Among the 11 programmes, eight are delivered in person, two use both online and in-person formats, and one is an online course.

## Featured programmes and institutions

**Ethical Leadership and Public Accountability (ELPA)** module is provided as part of the Public Leadership and Governance course of the professional Masters in Development Policy and Practice (MDPP) at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town. This course seeks to explore public governance through the lens of ethical leadership and public accountability with sessions focused on ethical awareness, ethical blindness, ethical decision-making and

ethical dilemmas, as well as whistleblowing. The interaction between individual and institutional integrity is examined in the light of a critical evaluation of current international efforts to counter corruption.

The course has 12 sessions and can either be offered as part of a professional master's programme, or as an executive course packed into four days. The course can be delivered in person to a cohort-based class of ideally 25 participants and during the pandemic was adjusted to also provide an online offering.

Website: <https://commerce.uct.ac.za/school-public-governance/building-bridges/ethical-leadership-and-public-accountability>

**Emerging African Leaders Programme (EALP)** was founded in 2014 as part of the Building Bridges leadership development platform at the University of Cape Town. It is a two-week residential programme seeking to 'identify the next generation of African leaders and equip them with the skills, knowledge and networks that will enable them to operate more effectively in their chosen spheres of influence.' The long-term goal is to 'build a strong cohort of innovative and courageous African leaders committed to public service, with vision, ethics and the necessary skills to bring about change.'

The participants of EALP are early to mid-career African professionals (aged 25-35) with a minimum of 3-5 years' work experience. The programme includes two weeks of intensive training, group sessions, and

one-on-one coaching. Approximately 25 participants have completed the programme every year, and now there are over 100 alumni from ten African countries who are still well connected.

Website: <https://commerce.uct.ac.za/school-public-governance/building-bridges/emerging-african-leaders-programme>

**Cultivating Virtue in Kenyan School Leaders** (CViL in Kenya) is funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation. It is a collaborative effort between the Centre for Character and Leadership (CCL) and the U.S. developers of CViL from the Center for Character and Citizenship, University of Missouri-St. Louis. It is offered to Kenyan school principals and their leadership teams, aiming to develop servant leadership virtues among them and skills necessary to lead school transformation. School Principals and teachers participate in a 4-day CViL Academy where they learn about servant leadership, its application in schools, including how to enhance virtue internalisation and practice among the learners. Afterwards, the participants return to their individual schools and establish Servant Leadership Teams (SLTs). The SLTs develop an implementation plan on how to extend the CViL programme to other staff members and learners within the school community.

It is hoped that in the long term, the participants of the CViL programme might ascend to policy and leadership positions within the education system more broadly, thus paving the way for systemic change. The pilot

project included a 4-day CViL professional development retreat; one year of monthly expert follow-up sessions, and peer-to-peer networking opportunities for 100 principals and teachers from 31 public schools.

Website: <https://www.characterandleadership.org/index.php/character/cultivating-virtues-in-leaders/>

**Women of Integrity, Strength, and Hope (W.I.S.H.)** is a leadership and empowerment programme at Daraja Academy, a girls' high school in Kenya. Daraja means bridge in Swahili.

After the violent 2008 elections in Kenya, the American couple Jason and Jenni Doherty, along with Kenyans Victoria Gichuchi and Charles Mbuto, decided to found a school for impoverished girls. The programme is implemented over the four years of high school, including teaching sessions (one hour per week) and community services. The theory of change is that 'when girls have the awareness, skills, and opportunities to be changemakers in their communities, they are empowered to reduce poverty and conflict in their lives, families, and community.' Beyond the Daraja Academy, the W.I.S.H. curriculum is currently being taught in 6 public high schools, reaching 690 girls annually. Daraja's vision is to expand this W.I.S.H. curriculum to over 5,000 girls by 2025.

Website: <https://daraja.org/wish/>

**The Allan Gray Centre for Values-Based Leadership** is a major research centre in the region, dedicated to exploring new ways of doing business based on purpose, sustainability and responsible practices that create dignity and belonging. The Allan Gray Centre's research focuses on 'challenging organisations and individuals with purpose, resilience, and responsible practices.'

It offers an online course – Values-based Leadership, aiming to 'help senior executives and managers create a world-class, values-driven organisation, and cultivate a business culture of sincerity, loyalty, and self-sufficiency to enhance team productivity.' The course content includes the Management by Values (MBV) approach.

Website: <https://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/allan-gray-centre/>

Other research institutions in South Africa include the **Albert Luthuli Leadership Institute** (aiming to 'reimagine leadership' towards social, environmental, and economic justice and offers a one-year masters course in responsibility leadership) and the **Centre for Responsible Leadership Studies (Africa)** at the Stellenbosch Business School (aiming to promote knowledge of responsible leadership to enhance leadership for sustainable organisational and institutional effectiveness, especially in Africa).

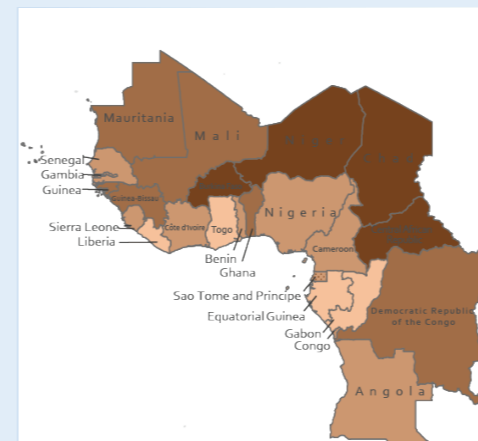
Websites: <https://www.up.ac.za/albert-luthuli-leadership-institute>  
<https://www.stellenboschbusiness.ac.za/research/centre-responsible-leadership-studies-africa>

# Regional strategic considerations

The most common research gap identified by researchers has been seeking an African voice while recognising diversity within the region. There is a concern about preserving African identity and tradition in the face of globalisation and the cosmopolitan homogenisation of culture, held in balance with the recognition of potentially useful concepts, mechanisms, and institutions that Africans can use to improve their position in the world, adapt their local politics to global governance institutions and navigate global norms and expectations.

Also, researchers caution using Africa as a singular context and call for a contextualised understanding of leadership. For example, Fourie et al. (2017) emphasise the importance of context, nuance, and specificity in theorising leadership across Africa: ‘We found that research on leadership in Africa covers an extremely wide range of themes, and that it is not possible to speak of a distinctly African theory of leadership. We are, in fact, not convinced that it is sensible to attempt to synthesise the data into one distinctly African theory of leadership. Such a project would run the risk of glossing over the socio-cultural, economic, and political diversity of the continent and its more than a billion inhabitants.’

The main areas for development recognised by the literature are context-based theorisation of leadership, a greater focus on practical applications and implications of leadership concepts in the public sector, and a greater African voice in comparative studies. Further research on traditional leadership approaches would also be beneficial in theorising leadership from an African perspective, such as the contrast between consensus-building and majority-rule concepts of public choice and participation, and the potential of traditional approaches to checks and balances in filling the accountability gaps of modern state institutions. In the private sector, case studies on the connection between character or virtue and competency and effectiveness as measured by industry KPIs would be helpful, considering that virtue is often perceived as a limiting factor in career progression in the public and private sectors. Moreover, a joint action research project on political leadership, focused on innovations to support context-relevant governance institutions and political processes, could be developed across regional universities.



## Population

608 million

## Featured programmes

Emerging Public Leaders (Liberia, Ghana and Kenya)

Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy (Nigeria)

Congo Leadership Initiative (Congo)

Christopher Kolade Centre for Research in Leadership and Ethics (Nigeria)

Archbishop Tutu Fellowship Programme (Pan-African)

The Mandela Washington Fellowship (Pan-African)

Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability & Professionalism (LEAP) Africa (Pan-African)

Young Women’s Academy for Conscious Change (Pan-African)

# Central and West Africa

This report covers 24 LMICs in the Central and West African region: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Central and West Africa is a vast region with different tribes, cultures and beliefs, accounting for approximately 608 million people and half of Africa’s entire population. The vast human capital within this region is matched by a wealth of natural resources, including oil, diamonds, and cobalt. Countries in this region are some of the world’s leading producers, exporters, and suppliers of essential commodities such as oil (Gabon, Nigeria, Republic of Congo), cocoa (Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana) and cotton (Benin, Burkina Faso) (World Bank, 2022). The agriculture and food sector provides income and employment opportunities to around 17% of the population in the region. Despite this potential, the region faces significant developmental challenges. There are persistent gaps in education, health, and skills resulting from the inability of infrastructure development to meet rapid population growth and urbanisation. Extreme poverty levels in the region rose by 3% in 2022, largely due to the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, with other developmental challenges

such as internal conflicts and food insecurity resulting in the weakening of the region’s development (United Nations, 2022). High levels of corruption and nepotism across society have also been seen as a major development and leadership challenge in the region, with governments losing the battle against endemic corruption in both public and private sectors.

The paradox of Central and West Africa as a region is summed up in the exciting prospect of the region’s vast potential on the one hand and the realities of continuous mismanagement of resources and opportunities on the other. At the heart of this leadership challenge are important contextual questions – what kind of leadership is needed in African contexts? And what leadership values and virtues can help emerging leaders successfully navigate the African leadership terrain? These questions address the 3rd and 5th goals of the African Union Agenda 2063:

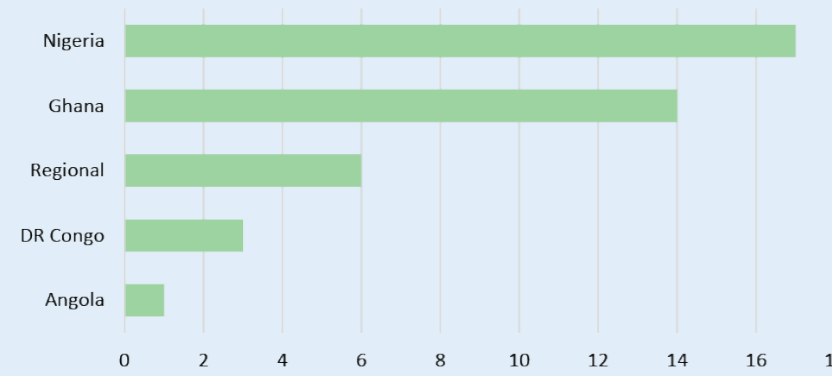
- Goal 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law.
- Goal 5: An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values, and ethics.

Africa’s future depends on leaders who are willing to rise to the challenge and embrace integrity and authenticity as the new normal.

# Findings from our review of academic research

## Number of papers by country

There are 41 papers focusing on particular countries in this region. The majority of papers focus on Nigeria (17 papers) and Ghana (14). Most countries do not have any paper addressing character-based leadership in their contexts.

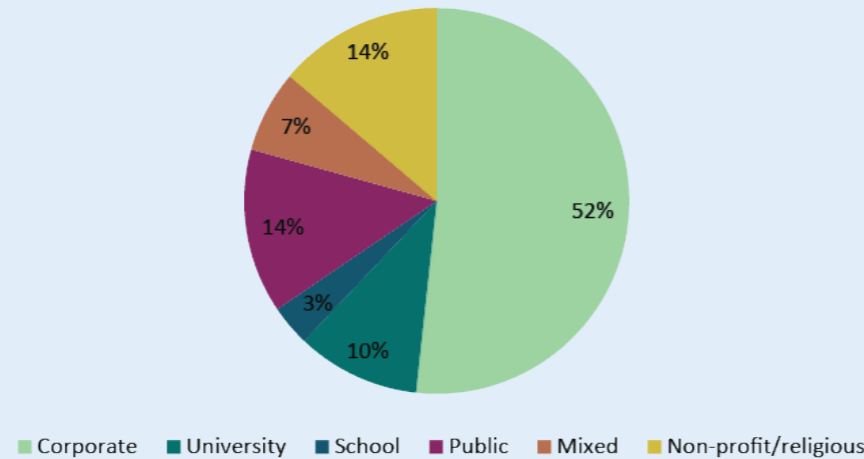


## Research methods

88% of all papers in the region are empirical papers, and 12% are theoretical papers. Most of the empirical papers use quantitative methods (83%), and 17% use a qualitative design.

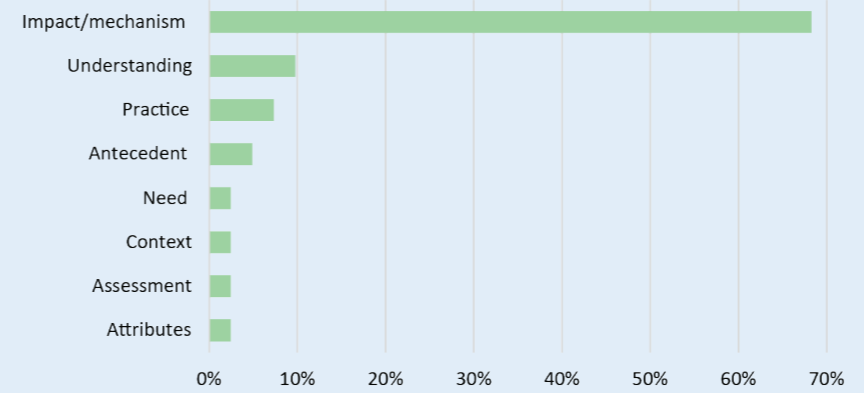
## Research subject sector distribution

The corporate sector attracts the most research attention in Central and West Africa, with more than half of the papers focusing on this sector. 14% of papers focus on the public sector and an equal number focus on the non-profit or religious sector.



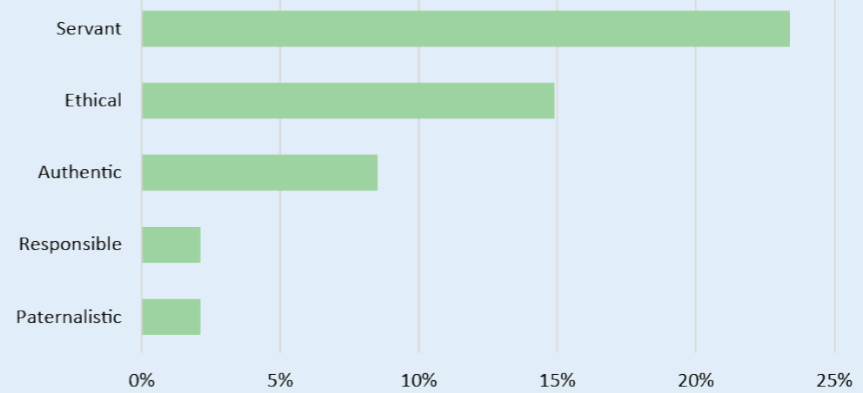
## Research themes

Nearly 70% of papers in this region examine the impact of various forms of character-based leadership or the mechanism through which it has such an impact. 10% of the papers focus on understanding character-based leadership, and 7% focus on examples or case studies of character-based leadership in practice.



## Leadership models

Servant leadership and ethical leadership are the two most popular models being researched in this region, with 24% and 15% of the total papers focusing on this model, respectively. 9% of regional papers use the authentic leadership model. There are also two papers focusing on particular character traits of leaders: integrity and compassion.



## Local leadership models

Most studies use leadership models predominantly developed in North America and Europe. However, some scholars have used inductive methods to understand leadership in their local contexts, mainly investigating what attributes are considered essential for excellent leadership. For example, Bulley et al. (2017) conducted a comparative study of leader character in Nigeria and Ghana. Their results suggest that being results-oriented, committed, courageous, hardworking, operating with integrity, educated, knowledgeable, trustworthy, sociable,

and persevering are the most salient leadership characteristics in both contexts. Adewale (2020) used thematic analysis to codify key virtues exemplified by leaders within the context of an indigenous Nigerian company. His findings identified four primary African virtues: truthfulness, humility, humanity, and courage.

There are very few established local leadership models, except the RARE (responsible, accountable, relevant, and ethical) leadership model – a pan-African model proposed by Ngambi (2011) as detailed in the Southern and East African report.

## Local understanding of character-based leadership

Similar to Southern and East Africa, Ubuntu is identified as the overarching expectation or positive character trait espoused by communities across the region, drawing on traditional norms and collectivist cultural leanings. Detailed explanations about Ubuntu can be found in the Southern and East Africa section.

Other local sources for understanding character-based leadership include:

Virtue	Tribe/Country of Origin	Meaning
'Iwa', 'Omoluabi'	Yoruba, Nigeria	'Character' and 'one who is born by the master of character'. Such an individual is often seen as excellence personified in both conduct and character
'Agwa'	Igbo, Nigeria	'Character' (e.g. 'onwe ghi ezi agwa' means a person having no character)
'Ujinyinmwem' 'Omwenmwanta' 'Imuegberiotu'	Edo, Nigeria	'Character', 'honesty,' 'humility'
'Udama'	Igala, Nigeria	'Team spirit'
'nnoboa'	Akan, Ghana	'Collaboration' (e.g. helping each other on the farm)
'oye onipa paa'	Akan, Ghana	'A real human being' referring to someone with good character
'nonomo mele si o'	Ewe, Ghana	'A person who has no character'
'Alingi mpe bosembo'	Lingala, Congo	'Reign for truth and justice'



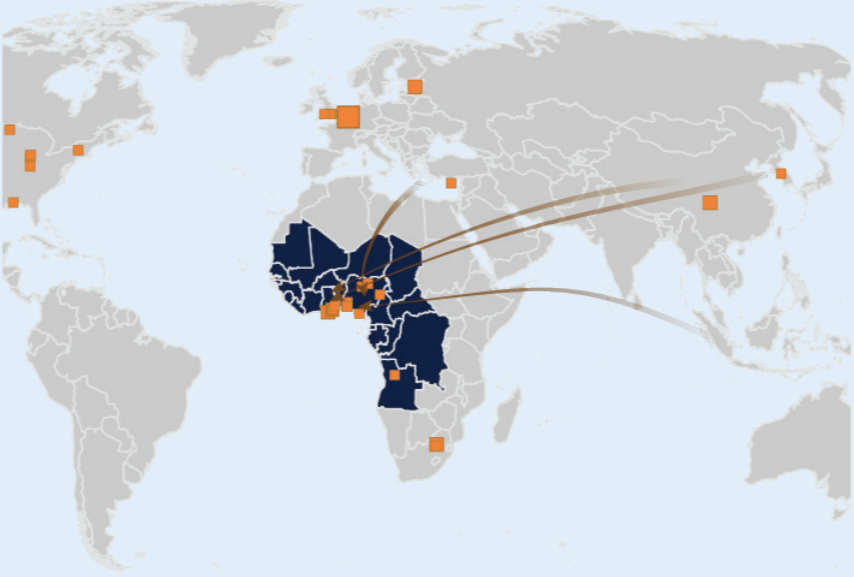
### Journals publishing most papers

#### Journals publishing more than two papers in the region between 1990 and 2022

Journal of Psychology in Africa	4
Leadership	3
Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing	2
African Journal of Economic and Management Studies	2

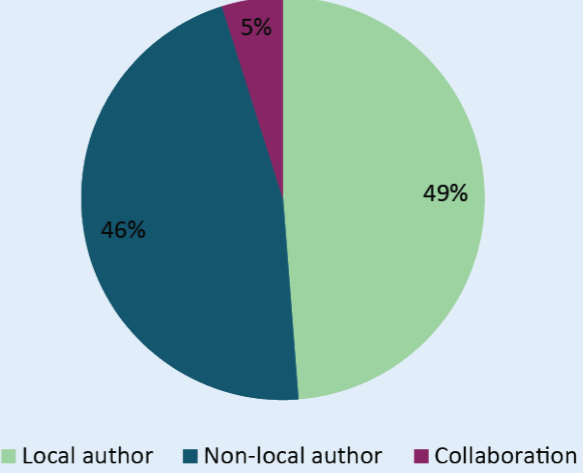
### First-author institutions

The only prominent cluster in West and Central Africa comes from KU Leuven in Belgium (4 papers), and papers are more or less evenly distributed among other institutions.



Note: Squares represent the locations of first-author institutions, and the size indicates the number of papers published. Lines with an arrow represent the funding direction.

49% of papers have local first authors. A large percentage of papers (46%) have first authors based outside the region. 5% of papers are the results of collaborative efforts.



### Funding sources

Only five out of 41 papers are funded (12%). Three papers are funded by universities (Eastern Mediterranean University in Cyprus, Gachon University in South Korea, and Universitas Indonesia). Two papers are funded by governments: Ghana and China.

# Programmes

We have identified eight organisations delivering character-based leadership development programmes in this region. Six of them are in Nigeria, one programme is in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and another one has presence in three countries (Liberia, Ghana, and Kenya). The majority of these organisations are NGOs, with only one exception being the local government.

As for the audiences, almost all programmes focus on young and emerging leaders, including school children (3 programmes), young professionals (2), and youth without specifying age groups (3).

Seven of eight programmes are delivered in person, and one uses both online and in-person formats.

## Featured programmes and institutions

**Emerging Public Leaders (EPL)** is a Liberian programme created in 2016 to replicate and adapt the Public Service Fellowship model first implemented by the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP) in Liberia in 2009. EPL is a two-year public service fellowship providing a pathway for talented recent university graduates (younger than 35 years old) to enter the civil service at the federal level. It aims to nurture competent and ethical public leaders committed to social impact who will act as catalysts to drive systemic change in Africa's public sector. The programme includes professional development training, mentoring, and community service projects. EPL/PYPP has trained more than 140 fellows in Liberia, and 86% remain employed in Liberia's civil service.

EPL has replicated its model in Ghana and Kenya. EPL Ghana was established in 2018, working in partnership with the Government of Ghana to recruit and place 20 fellows per year across 14 government agencies. In Kenya, the Public Service Emerging Leaders Fellowship (PSELF) was launched in November 2021, led jointly by the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Kenya, Emerging Leaders Foundation, and EPL. The first batch has selected 50 fellows who will undergo one year of training including ethics cultivation.

Website: <https://www.emergingpublicleaders.org>

**Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy** is a programme for emerging public leaders in Nigeria. Initiated by the Lagos State Government, it is a one-year fellowship programme aiming to develop future leaders (under 35 years old) to positively influence the public service and instil in them the ethics and values of purposeful leadership through mentoring and on-the-job training. The programme involves work experience for six months in one of the government departments or agencies, leadership development training, and community service. Fellows join at least one international policy trip to nations that have overcome development challenges. Fellows will also join a youth network and benefit from peer-to-peer coaching and learning opportunities. The fellowship was launched in 2022, and the first cohort has 30 fellows.

Website: <https://www.ljla.academy>

**Congo Leadership Initiative** aims to 'empower a generation of Congolese youth who will be the sources of their country's best solutions to its most pressing issues'. The programme began in 2010 and involves hundreds of youths each year. It caps each cohort size at 30, including at least 15 girls. The leadership values emphasised are ethical, selfless, servant leadership, and local leadership. The development strategies include classroom training, mentorship, and community-oriented projects. These projects create real changes in the communities and provide jobs and services for others. Many initiatives continue to run after the programme finishes. Since 2010, more than 6,500 young leaders have completed the training programme, and participants have launched more than 500 businesses and social projects.

Website: <https://www.congoleaders.org>

**Christopher Kolade Centre for Research in Leadership and Ethics (CRLE)** is part of Lagos Business School, Nigeria. It was launched in October 2013 with the primary aim of positively influencing the Nigerian and African environment through research in leadership and ethics.

Website: <https://ckcrle.lbs.edu.ng>

## Pan-African programmes

One unique feature of leadership development in Africa is that there are many large-scale regional programmes. We have identified seven pan-African programmes that contain elements of character-based leadership, including the Archbishop Tutu Fellowship, the Africa Leadership Initiative (as part of the Aspen Global Leadership Network), the Abundant Leadership Institute, LEAP Africa, the Mandela Washington

Fellowship, the Obama Foundation Leaders Africa, and the Young Women's Academy for Conscious Change by Global Grassroots.

The target audiences include youth (4 programmes), mid-career professionals (1), Christian leaders (1), and senior business and public leaders (1).

**Archbishop Tutu Fellowship Programme** is the flagship leadership development programme of the African Leadership Institute (AFLI). It draws together 25 of the highest potential young leaders in Africa between 30 and 40 years of age from various sectors. The 25 people are selected from over 300 high-calibre applicants nominated by alumni, partners, or other influential leaders. The programme was designed and is delivered in partnership with the University of Oxford. It runs over six months on a part-time basis, including two 9-day in-person convenings, one in South Africa and the other in the UK (Oxford and London). In between, they must also write an essay on leadership, conceptualise a community project and, in groups, develop scenarios of Africa in 2050. The values-driven programme emphasises 'accountable servant leadership, Ubuntu, integrity, justice and courage.' On completing the programme, the Fellows will join the broader alumni network and are expected to support each other in their leadership journeys, collaborate and catalyse change together and hold each other accountable.

Website: <https://alainstitute.org/our-programmes/archbishop-tutu-fellowship-programme>

**Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders** is the flagship program of the U.S. Government's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). Established in 2014, the Mandela Washington Fellowship has enabled nearly 5,800 young African leaders (between 25 and 35 years old) to receive academic and leadership training in the United States. The Fellows are accomplished innovators and leaders in their communities and countries. In the summer of 2023, 700 young leaders will go to the United States for a comprehensive executive-style programme, including a six-week leadership institute, a leadership summit, and professional development. The Fellows will join the alumni network upon completing the programme.

Website: <https://www.mandelawashingtonfellowship.org>

**Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability & Professionalism (LEAP) Africa** was founded in 2002 and is a youth-focused leadership development organisation. Its work has been built on the premise that Africa's transformation rests on young, dynamic, innovative, ethical leaders and entrepreneurs. It has multiple programmes, including iLEAD (engaging youth in public secondary schools) and Youth Leadership Development Programme (for university students). They also support social entrepreneurs to build systems and structures crucial for business sustainability, contributing to livelihoods, and social and national development. With a footprint in over 26 states in Nigeria and recent programming in eight African countries, LEAP Africa seeks to raise

leaders that will transform Africa. LEAP has equipped 24,000 students through public secondary school programmes over the last 20 years. It has also built an online resource centre, 'Live, Learn, Lead', including free and paid courses.

Leap Africa manages the Nigeria Youth Futures Fund (NYFF) of \$5 million invested by the MacArthur Foundation and Ford Foundation, seeking to support youth leadership movements in Nigeria.

Website: <https://leapafrika.org>

**Young Women's Academy for Conscious Change (YWA)** operates a social venture incubator, providing vulnerable high school girls in Rwanda, Uganda, South Sudan, and Kenya the opportunity to develop social impact ventures. Their mission is to support women and girls as leaders of conscious social change in their communities. The programme lasts seven months during the gap year between high school graduation and university enrolment, for young women to implement change initiatives of their own design in their home villages, benefiting other women and girls. Since 2012, Global Grassroots has trained 218 young women to become change leaders within their communities. In the past few years, they have also established a new Virtual Engagement Program to offer ongoing fellowship, conscious change training, and seed funding for new endeavours among alumni.

Website: [http://www.globalgrassroots.org/young\\_womens\\_academy.html](http://www.globalgrassroots.org/young_womens_academy.html)

## Regional strategic considerations

One possible future research direction is leadership theory development in the region. The Ubuntu philosophy from Southern and East Africa is heavily represented in the current leadership literature. The Central and West region is similarly rich in traditions and philosophies relating to character and virtue that are well documented but still underdeveloped in the mainstream leadership literature. For example, the 'omoluabi' philosophy from the Yoruba tradition in West Africa is widely studied and can potentially inform character-based leadership.

Future studies could also explore what character-based leadership development methodologies rooted in African virtues look like. The leadership literature on character and virtue has yet to explore this in great detail as much as it has been observed in practice. Another body of work that reviews how character development occurs within the region from both the traditional and contemporary perspectives could offer a good basis to begin to explore how methodologies such as storytelling, use of proverbs and wise sayings are practised within the African traditions and how these can be deployed in character-based leadership development programmes. This understanding will contribute to designing more effective programmes relating to lived experience in a way that is especially important in programmes for community leaders.

High levels of corruption across society foreground the importance of investing in character-based public leadership. An immediate step might be organising a working group involving leaders of such programmes to discuss needs and exchange best practices.





# Latin America

There are 17 LMICs in Latin America, covering a total population of 584 million: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela.

All of these countries were European colonies (or parts thereof), occupied in the process of conquest that began at the end of the 15th century with the arrival of the Spanish in America and ended, for the most part, in the first third of the 19th century. The majority of the population today is racially mixed, but a significant indigenous population maintains their original language. Most countries experienced a wave of immigration during the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, generally from Europe. In a number of countries, including Caribbean nations and Brazil, the transatlantic slave trade brought population from Africa. Waves of migration and subsequent miscegenation have shaped the prominent multiculturalism that is a feature of Latin American societies.

## Population

584 million

## Featured programmes

Educational Leadership and Innovation Program (Latin America)

I LEAD (Paraguay)

Transformation Tables (Paraguay)

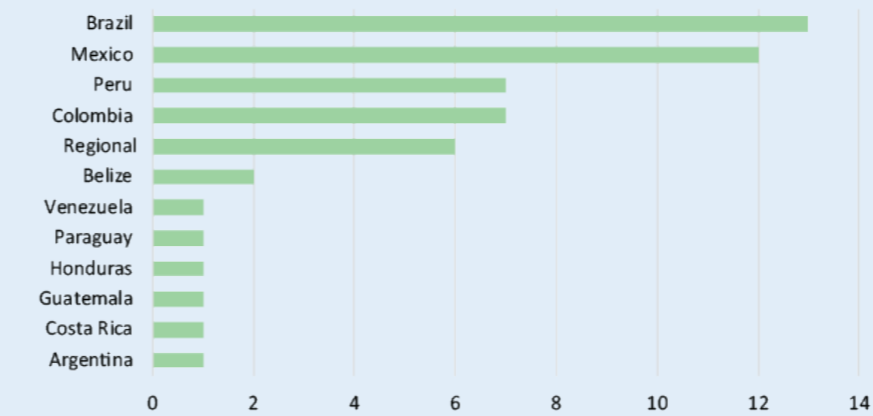
Leadership Programme in Character Education for Mexican Public Schools (Mexico)

Spanish is the predominant language in the region (14 of the 17 countries are former Spanish colonies), and the Catholic religion is the most widespread, although other Christian religious denominations have grown rapidly in recent years. Brazil, one of the countries with the largest populations in this region, was a Portuguese colony and retained Portuguese as its official language. Suriname was colonised by the Netherlands and France and has Dutch as its official language. Belize and Guyana were English colonies, and their official language is English. The United States, for geopolitical reasons, maintains a strong presence and cultural influence in the subcontinent. Some challenges common to the region include high rates of poverty and inequality (more than 30% of the population is below the poverty line, according to data released by Statista in 2023) and drug-related violence. Challenges in public institutions and governance hinder the economic and social development of Latin America.

# Findings from our review of academic research

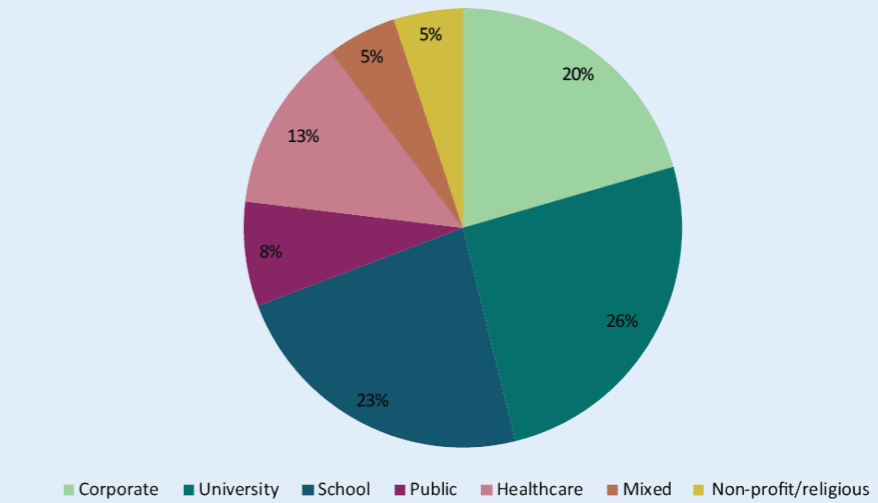
## Number of papers by country

There are 53 character-based leadership papers focusing on this region. The majority of papers focus on Brazil (13 papers) and Mexico (12). There are seven papers in Peru and Colombia, respectively, and six papers cover two or more countries in Latin America.



## Research subject sector distribution

Three popular sectors that attract research attention in Latin America are universities (26%), schools (23%) and the corporate sector (20%).

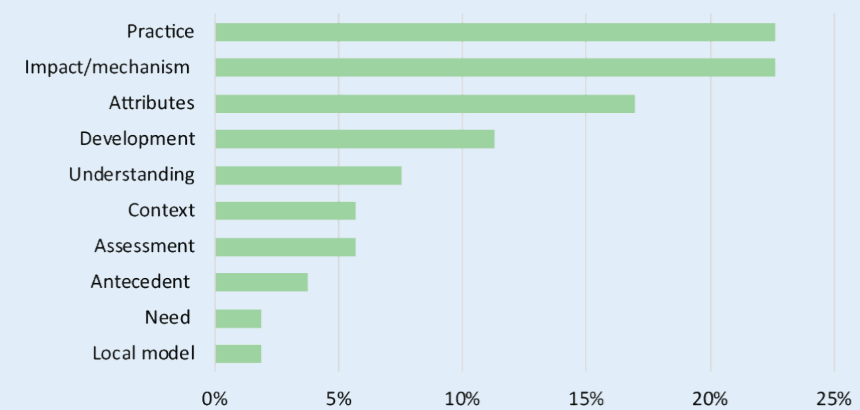


## Research methods

89% of all papers in the region are empirical papers, and 11% are theoretical papers. Among the empirical papers, 43% use a quantitative method, 53% use a qualitative design, and 4% use a mixed method.

## Research themes

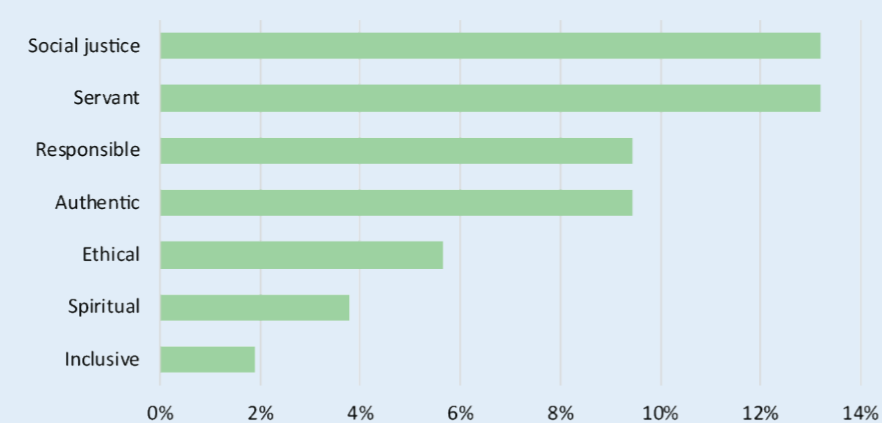
The most popular research themes in Latin America are examples or case studies of character-based leadership and the impact/mechanism of character-based leadership, both having 23% of regional papers devoted to them. 17% of papers examine what attributes are considered essential for good leaders in Latin America, and 11% focus on how character-based leaders are developed in the region.



## Leadership models

Social justice leadership and servant leadership are the most popular leadership models being researched in this region, each having 13% of regional papers using this model. 9% of papers are about responsible leadership, and an equal number examine authentic leadership.

Five papers also focus on particular character traits of leaders, including resilience (two papers), compassion, empathy, and love.



## Local leadership models

The review of doctoral theses on leadership in Mexico points to the existence of three paradigms on the conception of leadership that are prevalent in Latin America (González, 2022). The first of these is a functionalist paradigm that conceives leadership with a view to the good functioning and productive balance of organisations, the second is a political paradigm that considers leadership as a form of oppression and proposes a path of liberation from it, and the third paradigm is humanist and sees leadership as a service and a way of relating that furthers the common good.

There is a tendency to adopt leadership models developed in North America and Europe. Migratory flows between Latin America, Spain and the United States are still very important today, as are links with educational institutions in these countries. This might have contributed to the popularity of imported leadership models. Locally developed character-based leadership models are under-represented.

## Journals publishing most papers

Journals publishing more than two papers in the region between 1990 and 2022

Frontiers in Psychology	2
Journal of Business Ethics	2
Journal of Educational Administration	2

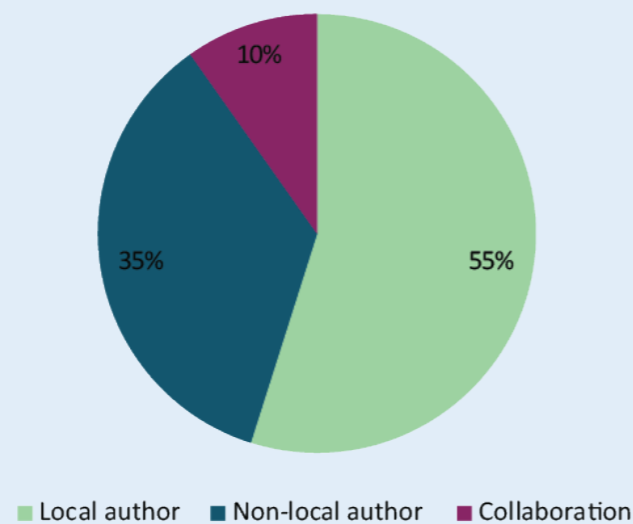
## First-author institutions

Our research suggests no major institutional clusters for research on character-based leadership in the region. Georgia Gwinnett College in the United States produced three papers. Both California State University in the United States and Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico produced two papers.



Note: Squares represent the locations of first-author institutions, and the size indicates the number of papers published. Lines with an arrow represent the funding direction.

55% of papers have local first authors. 35% of the papers are written by first authors outside the region. 10% of papers are collaborative results between international first authors and local co-authors.



## Funding sources

15% of the papers are funded (8 out of 53). Half of the funded papers received domestic funding, and the other half received foreign funding. In terms of funder sectors, five papers received funding from the government, two from universities and one received mixed funding from a philanthropic foundation and a university.

# Programmes

We have identified 14 organisations delivering 15 character-based leadership development programmes in this region. These organisations are more or less evenly distributed among countries from Brazil (3 organisations), Mexico (2), Peru (2), Belize (1), Colombia (1), Ecuador (1), El Salvador (1), and Paraguay (1). Two other programmes have regional influence.

Among these organisations, seven are NGOs, six are universities, and one is in the private sector.

As for the audiences, seven programmes do not specify the audience, while the others focus on school leaders (3 programmes), corporate executives (2), university students (1), school students (1), and religious leaders (1).

Six programmes are delivered in person, five are delivered online, and four use both online and in-person formats.

## Featured programmes and institutions

**The Varkey Foundation** is an organisation established since 2016. Its mission is to ensure every child has a great teacher. The foundation focuses on building teaching capacity and promoting educational excellence through targeted initiatives. Collaborating with governments and partner organisations, the Varkey Foundation designs innovative programs to cultivate strong school leaders, empower teachers, and achieve positive outcomes across different educational domains.

**Educational Leadership and Innovation Program** (known as PLIE, its acronym in Spanish) is a programme started by the Varkey Foundation in 2016. The PLIE programme consists of an intensive six-week training course attended by a director and a teacher from the same institution. Each module takes five days and takes place in a specialised training centre. Participants engage with local experts and design an improvement project for their school. PLIE is supported by the Ministry of National Education and the provincial Ministries of Education in Argentina. It has also been implemented in Uruguay and Ecuador. More than 7,100 directors and teachers from 3,700 schools have completed the programme.

The Varkey Foundation is also building a Global School Leadership Network bringing together school principals and experts to strengthen leadership roles in schools. The group focuses on understanding the characteristics of effective school principals and their main challenges while empowering them to become effective change agents. The creation of the network is an initiative of the Varkey Foundation and Global School Leaders, part of the Teacher Task Force promoted by UNESCO.

Website: <https://www.fundacionvarkey.org/>

**Transformación Paraguay** is a non-profit organisation that impacts the lives of Paraguayan children, youth and adults through dynamic and free-of-charge programmes that promote education in values, soft skills and leadership. It was born out of the initiative of Gaby Teasdale (president of the organisation), who was inspired by leadership expert John Maxwell to join his vision of reaching other countries with materials based on the formation of values, virtues and leadership. The organisation provides two main programmes: I LEAD for youth and Transformation Tables for companies and organisations.

**I LEAD** focuses on the formation of values and leadership among young people. It believes that young people with strengthened values will become transformative leaders who enable their country to prosper. So far, 300,000 young people from 2,000 schools and colleges have completed the programme.

**Transformation Tables** provide weekly spaces for a group of five to eight people to learn about values and leadership and undertake an action project. The programme lasts 16 weeks, each meeting taking about 40 minutes directed by a facilitator. In each session, members analyse a specific value and identify an action to develop it. 2,000 companies and organisations are involved, and 180,000 Paraguayans have completed the programme.

Website: <https://transformacion.org/>

**Leadership Programme in Character Education for Mexican Public Schools** is funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation. It is organised by a team of researchers from the Universidad Panamericana and the Universidad de Navarra. It is a collaborative effort of the Secretary of Education of Jalisco and the Center for Character and Citizenship of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The programme consists of adapting, implementing and evaluating three Anglo-Saxon initiatives aimed at school management teams, including the Leadership Academy in Character Education (LACE), the PRIMED model, and the Cultivating Virtue in Leaders (CViL) project.

The programme mainly uses the servant leadership model and cultivates humility, courage, gratitude, compassion, empowerment, stewardship, and foresight among five leadership teams from Jalisco, Mexico. The programme includes a one-week character education workshop followed by ongoing monthly sessions, a curriculum of collaborative reflections with expert feedback, and the design and implementation of a character education initiative in each school. At the end of the project, a National Forum on Character Education is held to share project results and generate support for their integration into school communities.

Website: <https://educaracter.com/proyecto/>

## Regional strategic considerations

There is a need for more context-specific character-based leadership theories in Latin America. New research is needed to explore the design of character-based leadership initiatives and measurement instruments with a specific focus on Latin American culture and traditions. Comparative studies between Latin American countries as well as between Latin America and other regions could contribute to understanding how character-based leadership is practised in Latin America and any context-relevant character traits.

Universities have a high level of social credibility in Latin American culture and can be seen as strategic places to host character-based leadership programmes not only for students but also for corporate

executives and public leaders. Establishing academic centres at universities to promote character-based leadership education can be strategic to bringing different social actors together in a unified movement.

Moreover, there are a few large-scale initiatives cultivating character-based school leaders. Organising annual international congresses and meetings in Latin America on character-based school leadership would develop connections between programmes, enabling them to share best practices and enhance their transformative impact.





**Population**  
2.1 billion

**Featured programmes**

Morningside Cultural China Scholars Programme (China)

Service Leadership Programme (China)

Good Leaders Online (China)

KALFI LEAD (Philippines)

Malaysia Stay and Build (Malaysia)

# East and Southeast Asia

East and Southeast Asia has 10 LMICs with about 2.1 billion people, equating to 25% of the world's population. The LMICs in this region are Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. The region is culturally, ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse. Confucianism has a significant impact on China and Vietnam. Malaysia and Indonesia are Muslim-majority countries, and Theravada Buddhism is prominent in Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. The majority of the population in the Philippines and Timor-Leste are Christians. Heterogeneity is also a feature within many countries. For example, Malaysia has four major ethnic groups, including Malay, Chinese, Indian, and Orang Asli (indigenous group), each with its own religious and cultural norms. In such

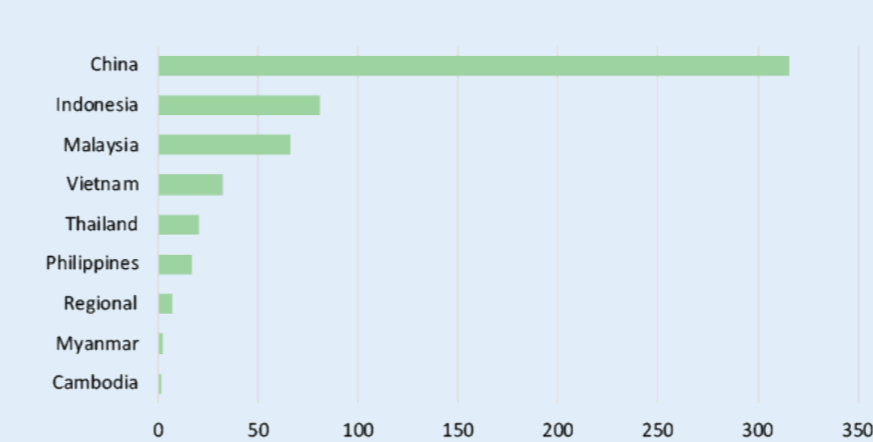
multicultural contexts, leaders must be able to navigate societal differences, avoid conflicts and maintain peace and harmony.

Another leadership challenge in this region is widening inequalities. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) report in 2022, southeast Asia has made huge progress towards economic development and innovation. However, it has also seen widening inequality. While leadership is often associated with power and position in this region, there are frustrations with leaders who are seen to exploit resources to benefit themselves. There is a need for leaders who are willing to share resources and use their power to create a fairer society.

# Findings from our review of academic research

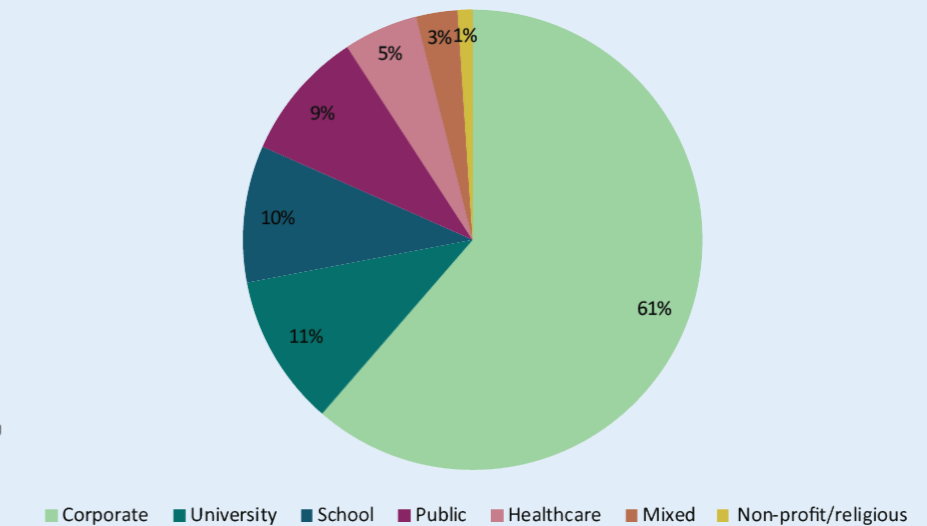
## Number of papers by country

There are 540 character-based leadership papers focusing on particular countries in this region. The majority of papers are about China (316 papers), followed by Indonesia (81) and Malaysia (66).



## Research subject sector distribution

The majority of papers in this region focus on the corporate sector (61%). 11% of papers are about university, and 10% are about school. 9% of papers examine character-based leadership in healthcare.



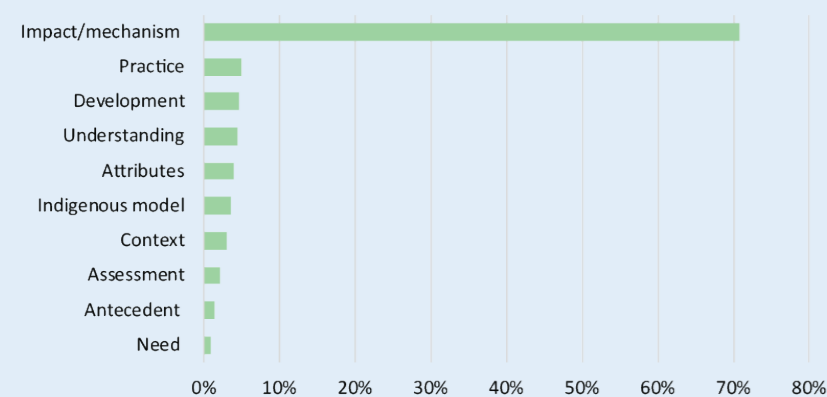
## Research methods

92% of all papers in the region are empirical papers, and 8% are theoretical papers. Among the empirical papers, 83% use a quantitative method, 13% use a qualitative design, and 4% use a mixed method.



## Research themes

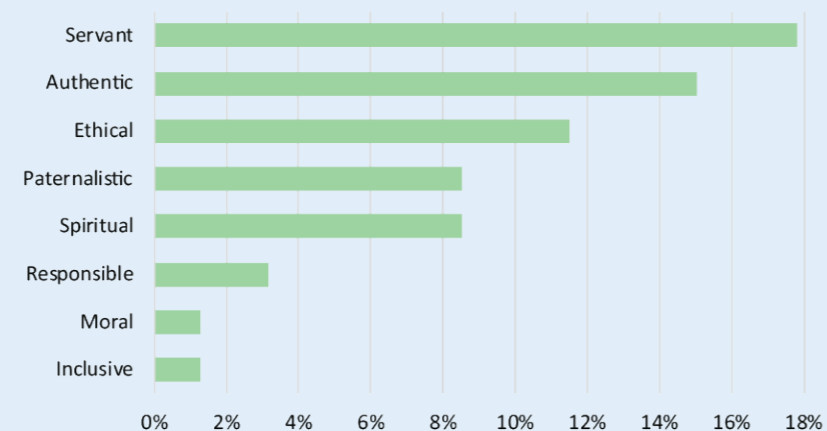
More than 70% of papers in this region examine the impact or mechanism of various forms of character-based leadership. All the other themes attract much less research attention, with 5% of papers or fewer devoted to each of them.



## Leadership models

The most popular leadership models are servant leadership (18% of regional papers), authentic leadership (15%), and ethical leadership (12%).

There are 78 papers focusing on particular character traits of leaders. The most researched character traits are humility (49 papers), integrity (9), and self-sacrifice (6). Other researched traits include resilience, empathy, compassion, care, trustworthiness, agility, gratitude, honesty, kindness, and tenacity.



## Local leadership models

Paternalistic leadership is the most prominent leadership model developed in this region. Paternalistic leadership has often been misunderstood because of its name and association with authoritarianism; however, it also emphasises two other components:

leader benevolence and moral leadership (Farh & Cheng, 2000). Its cultural roots in the father-son relationship in Confucianism mean it has also gained popularity in other countries with a Confucian influence or where a hierarchical, collective and familial culture is prevalent. Other efforts in the region building leadership models relevant to the local context are detailed in the table below.

		Source	Definition
CPM Model	China	Ling & Fang, 2003	Emphasises the 'C' factor - moral character in addition to traditional 'P' (performance) and 'M' (maintenance) aspects of leadership
Chinese Implicit Leadership	China	Ling, 2000	An ideal Chinese leader should have traits including personal morality, goal effectiveness, and interpersonal competence
Daoist Big-five Leadership	China	Lee et al., 2013	Daoist Big Five (i.e., altruism, modesty, flexibility, honesty, and perseverance) leadership dimensions
Harmonious Leadership	China	McElhatton & Jackson, 2012	Five elements of 'intellect, mastery of paradox, mastery of continuity, moral strength and benevolent organisational environment'
Implicit Change Leadership	Philippines	Magsaysay & Hechanova, 2017	Five competencies of ideal change leaders: strategic and technical competencies, execution competencies, social competencies, character, and resilience
Co úy leadership	Vietnam	Truong & Hallinger, 2017	'Combines the use of legitimate and moral authority in order to achieve subordinates' obedience, trust, respect, commitment and emulation'

## Local understanding of character-based leadership

Rich historical and philosophical traditions inform the understanding of character-based leadership in this region. A wide range of ancient texts and philosophical traditions are mentioned in the literature, including Confucius values, Daoist philosophy, I-Ching, Lüshi Chunqiu in China; Komunikasih (meaning communication with compassion and affection) in Indonesia; Budi-Islam values in Malaysia.

As one of the most prominent Chinese philosophers in history, Confucius has greatly impacted people in China, Vietnam and other countries with a large Chinese population. According to Confucius, the ideal person is called 'junzi', meaning a person of virtue. The five cardinal virtues a junzi should possess include benevolence (ren), righteousness (yi), ritual propriety (li), wisdom (zhi), and trustworthiness (xin). Being a junzi is a necessity of being a leader, however, it is not reserved for those with leadership titles. Confucius thinks that everyone should strive to become junzi through self-cultivation and education.

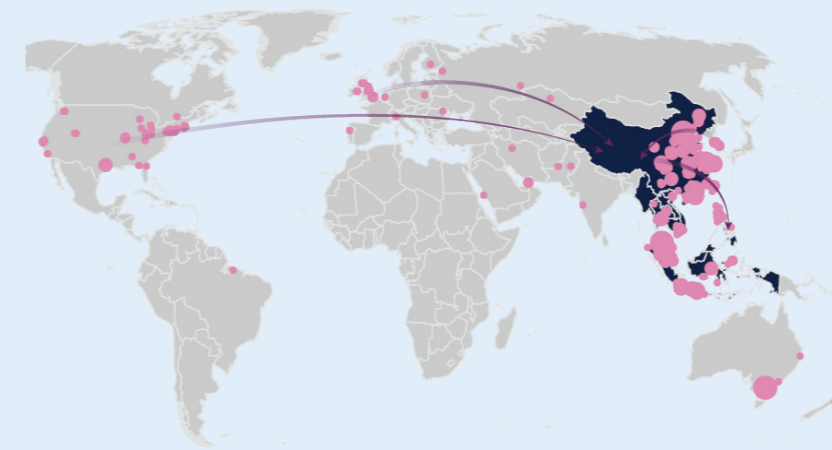
## Journals publishing most papers

Journals publishing more than seven papers in the region between 1990 and 2022

Frontiers in Psychology	29
Leadership and Organization Development Journal	21
Journal of Business Ethics	17
Pedagogika	11
Asia Pacific Business Review	8
Current Psychology	8

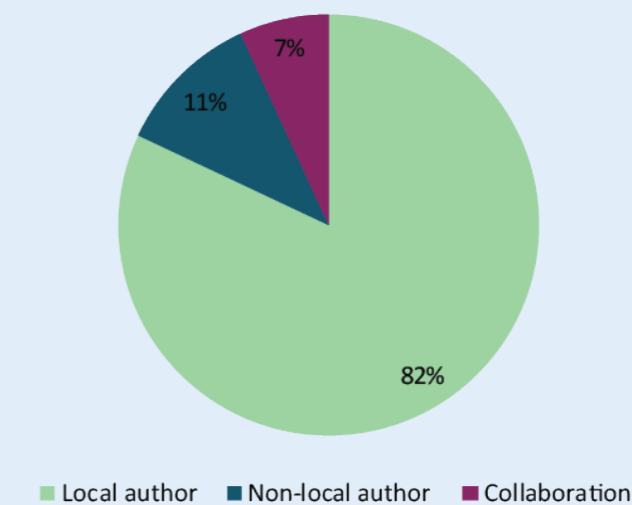
## First-author institutions

In East and Southeast Asia, the institutions producing the largest number of papers include Swinburne University of Technology in Australia, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Renmin University of China, and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, with each of them producing more than ten papers.



Note: Dots represent the locations of first-author institutions, and the size of circles indicates the number of papers published. Lines with an arrow represent the funding direction.

82% of papers have local first authors. 11% of papers have the first author based outside the country. 7% of papers are the results of collaboration between local and foreign authors.



## Funding sources

A high percentage of papers in this region are funded (30%). Among funded papers, the majority (93%) received domestic funding, 5% from overseas, and the remainder from a mixture of domestic and overseas funding. 79% of these papers are funded by governments, 20% by universities, and a very small number (about 1%) received a mixture of funding from different sectors.

# Programmes

We identified 20 programmes focusing on character and leadership development from the Philippines (6 programmes), Cambodia (4), China (4), Malaysia (3), Indonesia (1), and Myanmar (1). There is also a programme having regional influence.

The programmes are delivered by NGOs (11 programmes), private consultancies (4), schools (3), and universities (2).

As for the audiences, the highest number of programmes (5) are aimed at school children. Other audiences include university students (4 programmes), corporate executives (4), young professionals (2), government leaders (2), community leaders (1), medical professionals (1) and general audiences (1).

The majority of the programmes (17 out of 20) are delivered in person, with only one providing online courses and two using a mixed format.

## Featured programmes and institutions

**Morningside Cultural China Scholars Programme** at Zhejiang University was established in 2008 by Professor Shengchun Zhou from Zhejiang University and Professor Weiming Tu from Peking University. The vision of Morningside Scholars is to build a new generation of Chinese leaders who are socially responsible, honest, open-minded, and have a strong moral centre. The programme is rooted in traditional Chinese cultural values while having a global perspective.

Each year a cohort of 30 students from diverse backgrounds are selected to take part in an intensive 2-year extra-curricular programme, which focuses on building community and character development. The core curriculum includes Chinese history and ancient literature, frequent exchange visits with overseas scholars and institutions, and social service projects. Over the last 14 years, the programme has built an alumni community of over 400 graduates who remain highly involved.

Website: <http://www.ccsper.com>

**Service Leadership Programme** was born out of Hong Kong Polytech University. The programme is designed to nurture holistic development in students, enabling them to become service leaders with 'expert service leadership competencies, moral character and caring dispositions'. There are credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing programmes. In credit-bearing programmes, students engage in role-play, group discussion, debate, drawing and other class activities. Students must also develop, design and implement service programmes for disadvantaged groups in related organisations. The programme has collaborated with other educational institutions to offer non-credit-bearing programmes. Examples include the Global Youth Leadership Programme at Peking University and Silk Road Youth Leadership Programme at Xi'an Jiaotong University in mainland China.

Website: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/sllo/>

**Good Leaders Online (GLO)** is a consultancy aiming to 'connect and develop good leaders for good business'. It helps select and develop responsible leaders in the global service economy with a particular

focus on China. GLO provides two main types of services to companies: recruitment and training. Through character assessment and interview, GLO provides companies with a deeper understanding of potential candidates' values and character strengths, complementing the focus on expertise and competence. It also offers character development programmes to senior executives and the whole company based on its MVP model, which covers three aspects of character traits: mind agility, values-based thinking and behaving, and passion.

Website: <https://www.glo-china.com>

**KALFI LEAD** is a four-year leadership programme for female high school and first-year university students in the Philippines. Established in 2011, the vision of the programme is to support the development of a new wave of female leaders who will contribute to society. The programme has a 4-year curriculum that includes classroom learning, individual mentoring, and service projects. There is an emphasis on the importance of learning from role models. KALFI LEAD is inspired by the social teachings of the Catholic Church and is open to students, volunteers and staff regardless of religious or cultural background.

Website: <https://kalfilead.org>

**Malaysia Stay and Build (MS&B)** is a programme designed by the Global Institute for Tomorrow (GIFT), an independent pan-Asian think tank. Holding the belief that solutions to Malaysia's challenges must come from the next generation of young Malaysians, the aim of the programme is to inspire active citizenship by focusing on purpose development among young professionals across sectors with 10-20 years of work experience. Participants in the programme will be exposed to deep insights into socio-economic development issues in Malaysia while building a network of connections. The final output recommendations will be implemented by the partner organisation. The model was tested in Hong Kong in 2021, and Malaysia Stay and Build will be an inaugural programme in July 2023. It is cohort-based, limiting participation to a maximum of 30 people.

Website: <https://global-inst.com/stay-and-build-malaysia/#>

# Regional strategic considerations

Three strategic suggestions have emerged from reviewing the literature and programmes in this region.

First, more efforts need to be made to examine how a leader's character is developed. Since there are some well-established programmes in the region, research projects could be launched to gather longitudinal data or set up quasi-experimental research to determine the effect of change and possible mechanisms. Such research would also help these programmes measure impact and evaluate curriculum design.

Second, there is an opportunity to build a regional network for knowledge sharing and community. Isolation has been mentioned as a common challenge faced by practitioners in this region. 'How did you find me?' was the first question asked by a programme leader

after the researcher got in touch with them. A network connecting researchers and practitioners would serve as a platform for support and mutual learning. During this research project, multiple practitioners have expressed interest in joining such a network. Organising regular workshops, meetings and annual conferences would help build and nurture an impact-oriented learning community.

Third, cross-cultural dialogue can facilitate resource-sharing between regions and enrich the intellectual understanding of character-based leadership. Insights and developmental strategies from collectivist cultures and philosophical traditions such as Confucianism can be productively brought into conversation with prevalent Neo-Aristotelian approaches to character education and strategies such as those identified by the Oxford Character Project (Lamb et al., 2021).



# South and Central Asia

The South and Central Asia region includes 13 LMICs, with a total population of nearly 2 billion, similar to the population size in East and Southeast Asia.

South Asia includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Occupying about 10% of the geographical area of Asia, South Asia is the most densely populated area in the world. Among the region's challenges, inequality has intensified significantly in recent decades, with the share of national income owned by the top 10% growing by 30% in the last three decades to 2021 (Chancel & Moshrif, 2020). Traditional cultural and structural hierarchies based on caste and gender have also contributed to societal inequality.

Central Asia mostly includes post-Soviet states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). Although the population is relatively small (77 million) compared to other regions, it has grown rapidly over the last 20 years, with an increase of almost 38% since 2000. The sudden increase means that Central Asia is a highly young region. For example, nearly one-third of the current population in Tajikistan is under 15 years old (World Bank, 2021). This increase in the youth population presents challenges regarding access to education and job opportunities. Investment in young people, who are the future leaders of the country, is extremely important.

### Population

2 billion

### Featured programmes

Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (Bangladesh)

Civil Service Reform and Anti-Corruption (Nepal, Bangladesh)

Search Inside Yourself Leadership Programme (Bhutan)

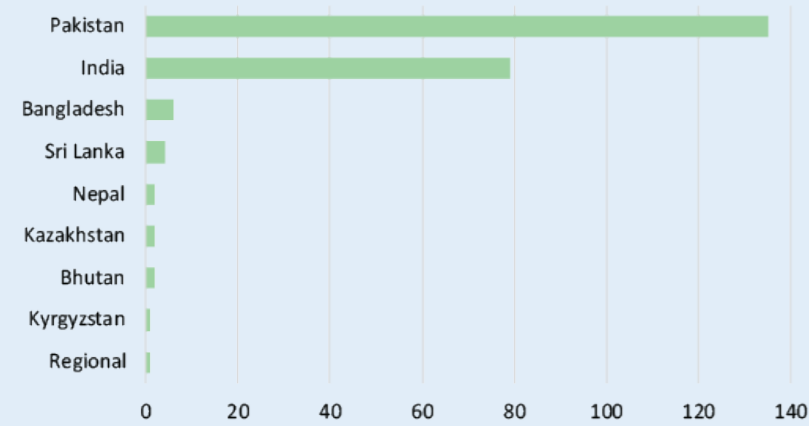
LEAdership, Personal Growth, and Social Responsibility (Sri Lanka)

Question Your Own Notions (India)

# Findings from our review of academic research

## Number of papers by country

There are 232 character-based leadership papers from this region. The majority of papers focus on Pakistan (135 papers) and India (79). All the other countries have fewer than ten papers written about them.

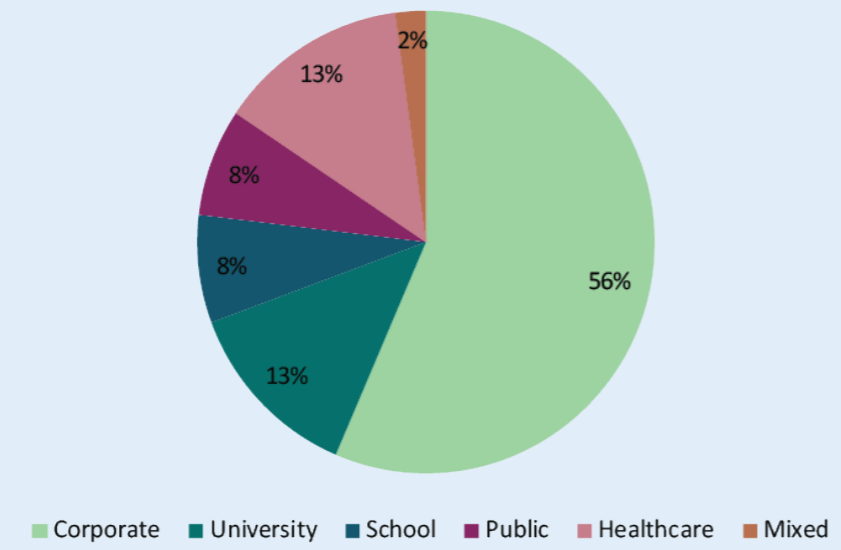


## Research methods

91% of all papers in the region are empirical papers, and 9% are theoretical papers. Among the empirical papers, 88% use a quantitative method, 9% use a qualitative design, and 3% use a mixed method.

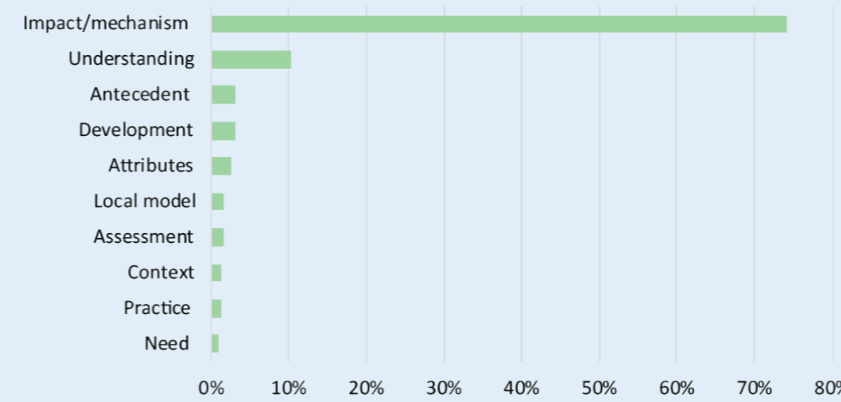
## Research subject sector distribution

The majority of papers focus on the corporate sector, with 56% of regional papers examining character-based leadership in this area. 13% of papers focus on university, and an equal number focus on healthcare.



## Research themes

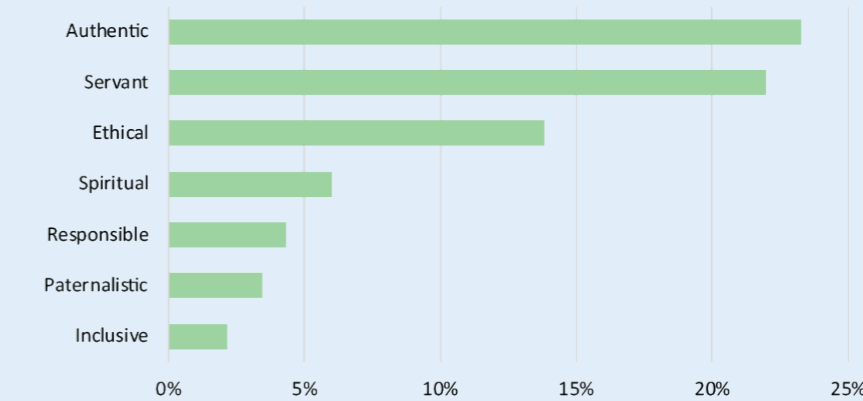
74% of papers in this region examine the impact of various forms of character-based leadership or the mechanism through which it has such an impact. 10% of papers focus on the understanding of character-based leadership. There are very few papers focusing on other research themes.



## Leadership models

Authentic leadership and servant leadership models are popular in this region: 23% of papers are about authentic leadership and 22% are about servant leadership. 14% of regional papers use the ethical leadership model.

There are also 21 papers (9% of total regional papers) focusing on particular character traits of leaders. Humility is the most popular (9 papers), followed by integrity and wisdom (3 papers each). Two papers are about resilience. Other researched traits include self-sacrifice, compassion, empathy, and trustworthiness.



## Local leadership models

There are two local leadership models in this region, both from India. The first one is the nurturant-task leadership model proposed by Sinha (1980, 1995). This model suggests that an ideal leader in India is both competent (task-oriented) and character-based (nurturing). Key characteristics of nurturant-task leaders include being considerate, affectionate, caring, and committed to followers' growth.

The second model, also from India, is the linked leadership model developed by Simpson and Cunha (2021), which drew on ancient wisdom from Bhagavad Gita. The name 'link' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'yoga', meaning connection. It has four components: self-leadership, servant leadership, holistic systems, and a higher purpose.

## Local understanding of character-based leadership

A number of papers apply the wisdom from ancient texts to modern leadership practice. Most of these studies adopt a normative approach and are based on texts and traditions such as Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads, Arthashastra by Kautilya, Karma-Yoga, and Mahabharata. Others focus on leadership values from role models such as Ashoka, Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi, and Rajarshi.

Varghese et al. (2017) point out three main ideas from Indian wisdom that can contribute to understanding character-based leadership in the global context – dharma, karma-yoga, and ahimsa. Dharma is the universal law governing an individual's conduct, encompassing ideas such as duty, responsibility, uprightness, and justice. Karma-yoga means fulfilling one's duty and responsibility selflessly for the benefit of others and without concerns for personal benefits. Ahimsa means nonviolence or non-injury and is an ancient Indian virtue stemming from the belief that all life is part of the divine.

In the context of Bhutan, the concept of *tha damtshig* plays a unique role in creating a sense of moral identity among contemporary Bhutanese. *Tha damtshig* means the highest promise. This concept describes an ideal to be striving for, and the content of such an ideal or promise is based on Buddhist teachings, such as the commitment to love and honour others (Whitecross, 2010).

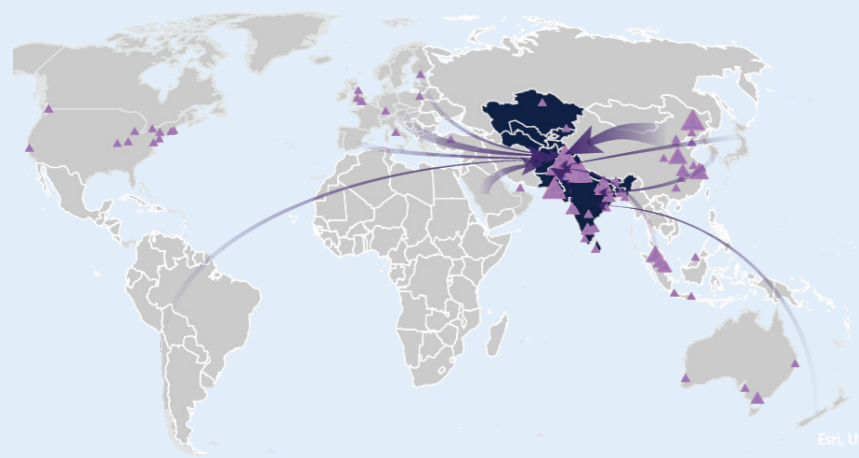
## Journals publishing most papers

Journals publishing more than three papers in the region between 1990 and 2022

Leadership & Organization Development Journal	15
Frontiers in Psychology	11
Journal of Business Ethics	6
Sustainability (Switzerland)	6
Current Psychology	4
European Journal of Innovation Management	4
International Journal of Leadership in Education	4
Personnel Review	4
Psychology Research and Behavior Management	4

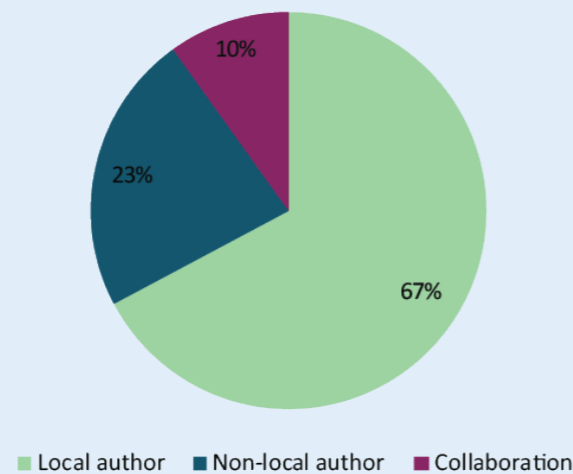
## First-author institutions

In South and Central Asia, authors at COMSATS University Islamabad in Pakistan have published the largest number of papers related to this region (12 papers), followed by two Chinese institutions: Harbin Institute of Technology and Zhejiang University, each producing five papers.



Note: Triangles represent the locations of first-author institutions, and the size indicates the number of papers published. Lines with an arrow represent the funding direction.

67% of papers have local first authors, and 23% have international first authors. 10% of papers are the results of collaborative efforts.



## Funding sources

26 out of 232 papers are funded (11%). Among the funded papers, 69% received funding from outside the country, 15% from domestic funding, and another 15% received a mixture of domestic and foreign funding. China is the biggest foreign funding country, funding 13 papers in this region. Both Czechia and Saudi Arabia funded two papers, respectively. Other foreign funding countries include Chile, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, and Finland.

46% of funded papers are funded by governments, 42% received funding from universities, and 12% from both governments and universities.

## Programmes

We have identified nine organisations delivering character-based leadership development programmes in India (2 programmes), Afghanistan (2), Bangladesh (1), Bhutan (2), Sri Lanka (1), and Uzbekistan (1).

Five organisations are NGOs, and others include a university, a school, a government agency, and a private company.

The majority of the programmes (7 out of 9) focus on young people, including school children (3 programmes), university students (1), and youth without specifying age groups (3). One programme focuses on public leaders, and one other programme does not specify a particular audience.

Five programmes are delivered in person, three use both online and in-person formats, and one is an online course.

## Featured programmes and institutions

**Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC)** aims to 'prepare youth to lead with courage, compassion, and competence'. BYLC emphasises the idea that leadership can be exercised by anyone regardless of background or formal position. The essential ingredients of leadership are heart and ability. BYLC develops leadership in young men and women in Bangladesh through skills training and instilling values of empathy, tolerance, and inclusiveness.

A cornerstone of BYLC's approach is diversity, uniting youth from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds. BYLC was started in 2008

and has reached 6,232 leadership programme graduates and 4,607 office of professional development graduates through its various programmes. 136,178 people have enrolled in BYLCx – the organisation's online course. BYLC Ventures supports 19 startups.

Website: <https://bylc.org>

**Civil Service Reform and Anti-Corruption** – Can ethics training reduce corruption in the Civil Service? As part of the Global Integrity Anti-Corruption Evidence Programme, the research project is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. It was started in 2021 and completed recently.

This project builds on the results of the Civil Service Reform and Anti-Corruption Project, which conducted civil service surveys in 10 countries with 23,000 participants. However, the results show that ethics training is not correlated with ethical or corrupt behaviours. Therefore, this new project was launched to conduct a field experiment to provide more evidence of the effectiveness of such training. 1,200 civil servants in Nepal and Bangladesh participated in a one-day training course (30 people per session) facilitated by two trainers. The main components of the training include providing models of positive and negative behaviour, providing guidance on rules, codes and methods and opportunities for practical application, and raising ethical awareness.

Website: <https://ace.globalintegrity.org/projects/ethics/>

**Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute (SIYLI)** was born out of

Google and is based in the US, providing public sector training in multiple countries worldwide. SIYLI aims to help people develop the skills of mindfulness, empathy, compassion, resilience, and overall emotional intelligence to create the conditions for individual and collective thriving. Their flagship programme is helping all public servants in Bhutan increase self-awareness and compassion through reflection and mindfulness.

In 2018, SIYLI teamed with the Ministry of Education in Bhutan to train and certify 125 of its educators to teach the Search Inside Yourself (SIY) programme. These 125 certified teachers have delivered the SIY programme to all 10,000 educators in Bhutan since 2019. The programme was recognised by the Minister of Education as enabling educators to be more empathetic, understanding, and tolerant. The Bhutan Royal Civil Services Commission has also invited SIYLI to train all its civil servants. The plan is to identify and certify 125 government employees who will then instruct the programme to all 18,000 civil servants in the country.

Website: <https://siyli.org/bhutan-government-employees/>

**LEAdership, Personal Growth, and Social Responsibility (LEAPS)** is funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation. Started in 2020, it is a collaboration between the University of Kelaniya and the University of Toronto with the Western Province Department of Education. The project aims to develop a character development intervention for early adolescents in Sri Lankan schools. Students between 12-14 years old use a web application to go through ten modules designed to promote the development of specific character strengths. The results will help the

team design a culturally relevant and age-appropriate web application to develop character strengths in Sri Lankan adolescents, which has great potential to enable low-cost character education for millions of adolescent school children.

Website: <https://medicine.kln.ac.lk/depts/psychiatry/index.php/leaps>

**Question Your Own Notions (QYON)** is an initiative to cultivate good leaders through self-discovery and values exploration in India. Qyon is a Hindi word which means 'why'. Founded by Preeti Mann and Saurabh Mittal, the initial questions that inspired the establishment of the organisation are what brings true happiness and meaning, and how to help leaders make good decisions. They believe providing space and opportunities for intentional questioning, reflecting, and dialoguing is the key.

QYON is a leadership initiative for anyone who is open to change and wants to be a change agent in their field. It has various programmes such as QYON Quest (two to three days residential retreat), QYON Prism (a week-long immersive programme), and QYON Converse (one-on-one coaching sessions). These programmes mainly help participants become aware of one's own values through reflection and introspection, and be exposed to multiple perspectives by taking lectures and conversing with others. The ultimate goal is to develop people to build a nurturing and compassionate world. Since founded in 2017, about 30 organisations and 3000 individuals have completed programmes at QYON.

Website: <http://www.qyon.org>

## Regional strategic considerations

Strategic considerations from reviewing literature and programmes in this region are as below.

First, while there is a sizeable literature on character-based leadership, the majority of papers adopt leadership models developed in Western countries. Considering the rich cultural traditions in this region that can contribute to the understanding of leadership character and character development, further research is needed to determine what good leadership means in various cultures.

Second, there is great potential in increasing investment in the character formation of public servants as an approach to combatting corruption. The Civil Service Reform and Anti-corruption project has found encouraging results regarding how a one-day training course could effectively change participants' ethical attitudes in a short time. Including a focus on character formation would support ongoing transformation. While governments across different regions are eagerly looking for effective ways to curb corruption, conducting similar field experiments using a programme focusing on character formation in LMICs might be able to shed light on how to design such intervention programmes for public servants worldwide.





# Strategic considerations



## Research

High-quality theoretical and empirical research is important to establish and refine the practice of character-based leadership. The benefits of such research include the following:

- Theoretical understanding of character-based leadership and models necessary to inform the development of programme curricula.
- Conceptual clarity (for example, on the meaning of different virtues) that can focus leadership education and practice.
- Contextual paradigms of character-based leadership suitable for specific cultural contexts.
- Theoretically and/or empirically grounded pedagogical approaches to character-based leadership education.
- Empirical support for character-based leadership through studying its benefits in different contexts.
- Empirical support for programme interventions through longitudinal studies.

We identified a large number of papers on character and leadership, but there are some significant research gaps. In order to advance the practice of character-based leadership in LMICs, there may be strategic value in incentivising research in the following areas:

### 1. Context-specific approaches to character and virtue, character-based leadership, and character-based leadership education.

- There is a lack of investigation into the meaning and application of character-based leadership as a whole and specific virtues of character. To develop leaders with character who are able to lead effectively, it is essential to understand what these character traits mean in the local context. Further work to connect character and leadership with prevalent philosophical, cultural and religious traditions will provide an important resource for educational programmes. This is particularly relevant in Central and West Africa and Latin America.
- There is a lack of empirical research on character-based leadership models rooted in non-Western cultural traditions. Where it exists, such research is published in local rather than international journals, hindering the potential for productive global dialogue and mutual learning.
- Not even a single paper on the importance and application of character-based leadership has been identified in many countries.

**2. Empirical research focused on women in leadership:** Given the major barriers women face in many LMICs, developing and empowering women leaders is an important priority. However, only 1% of papers address gender differences. A better understanding of such

differences in the understanding and practice of leadership, the virtues that are particularly relevant for emerging women leaders to develop is required.

### 3. Empirical research on character-based leadership in the public sector:

Results from interviews show a high level of frustration towards leaders in the public sector across regions, and it has been a struggle for interviewees to name any public leaders as role models. However, only 9% of empirical papers focus on public sector leaders. There is an urgent need to conduct more research in this area.

### 4. Examination of how leader character is developed in LMICs:

While nearly 70% of papers focus on the impact of character-based leadership in LMICs, only 5% focus on character development strategies. More emphasis has been given to the outcomes of character-based leadership rather than how to develop such desired leader attributes. In particular, there is a lack of investigation of the character development strategies rooted in local virtue traditions in LMICs.

In light of these gaps, we propose the **following research directions**. Regional conferences, working groups, special editions of journals, and

funded research projects might be established to investigate:

- Differences in the meanings of leadership virtues in different cultural and sectoral contexts. Suggested virtues include integrity, humility, compassion, courage, empathy, and honesty, which are the most desired leaders' attributes discovered by research in LMICs and highly rated by practitioners.
- Cultural differences of desired leadership attributes and determining the most relevant virtues for leaders to develop.
- The development of indigenous leadership models and instruments.
- Gender differences in character and leadership, and cross-cultural comparisons in this area. Because of the various states of gender equality in different societies, comparative studies might shed light on how the societal supporting structures or barriers influence women's leadership development.
- Leadership in the public sector, for example, how public leaders are being developed in various countries, what virtues are most relevant for this area, and the effective ways to develop them.
- Effective character and leadership development strategies drawing on both empirical data and local virtue traditions.

## Programmes

We have identified the following areas where increased investment would be strategic to advance character-based leadership:

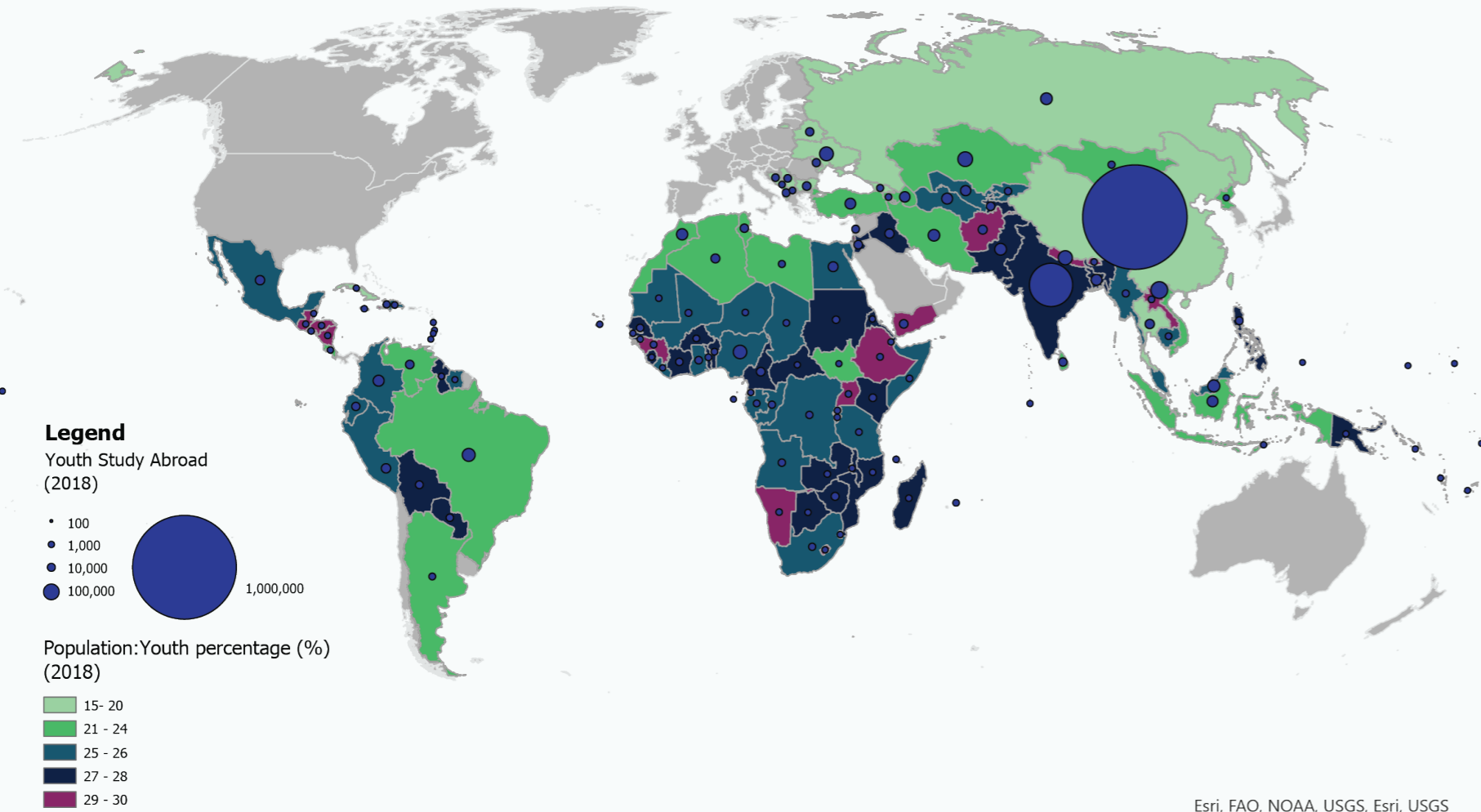
### 1. Character and leadership development among university students from LMICs.

Although university students are the third largest target audience among the character-based leadership programmes (11% of them focus on university students), universities' strategic role in character formation among emerging leaders cannot be underestimated. University students are the future leaders in LMICs, and many will go on to hold prominent positions. Universities provide a natural context for character education and the development of social networks. Leadership character and peer cohorts formed in university years will often be carried into the world of work. Supporting leadership and character development in students and beyond university through alumni networks has significant strategic potential.

Investment in character and leadership development for emerging LMIC leaders should be considered both within and outside their home countries. Many top talents from LMICs study abroad for a period of time during their lifetime, in most cases for postgraduate education. Some of these students are already part of scholarship communities, but the intentional leadership development opportunities they receive vary widely, and many are not part of a scholarship cohort at all. It would be a missed opportunity not to invest in these students intentionally and strategically.

Further research could comprehensively map leadership modules and extra-curricular programmes in tertiary institutions across different countries to evaluate the extent to which virtue and character development are embedded within these activities. Building from this, a collaborative effort between researchers and practitioners could explore curriculum development for character-based leadership development in universities and how to reach and connect students from specific LMICs for strategic impact.

Percentage of population classed as 'youth (15-29 yrs) ' and number of students studying overseas by country (2018 sample)



**2.Character and leadership development for the public sector.**

Alongside the research gap, there needs to be more emphasis on developing character among public sector leaders. Apolitical Foundation recently published a report mapping political leadership incubators and identified 420 such organisations around the world (Apolitical, 2022). In line with our research, very few of these political leadership programmes in LMICs focus on character and ethics. Investing in the character formation of emerging leaders has great potential in shaping the future ethical environment of the public sector worldwide. Another possibility is to establish a working group bringing the leaders of such public leadership programmes together to share knowledge of best practices and discuss specific needs and opportunities.

**3.Character and leadership development for women leaders.**

A small number (6%) of programmes focus specifically on character and leadership development among women. However, historical inequalities and particular challenges women face in LMIC contexts mean that more attention needs to be given to resourcing women leaders through mentoring, networks, and specific programmes.

**4.High-quality digital educational resources.**

Online programmes cannot replace the in-person interaction that is central to character development, but they have many advantages, especially regarding accessibility and reach. The number and quality of online courses have increased dramatically in the last few years, and many practitioners interviewed have found online programmes can be effective if well-designed and facilitated. Of the 99 character-based leadership programmes we identified, nearly 40% mention specifically that they either have online or hybrid programmes. Further investment in online programmes, digital tools, and exchange of best-practice has the potential to expand access to character-based leadership education at a relatively low per-person cost.

# Networks

The development of a global network of character-based leadership researchers and practitioners would serve multiple purposes:

- 1. Exchange of knowledge, resources, and best practices.
- 2. A platform for collaborative research and programmatic activity.
- 3. Provision of interpersonal and financial support.

Potential activities include online and in-person conferences to bring researchers and practitioners together, focused workshops to increase knowledge sharing, and the establishment of structured communities of practice. Such activities could be themed by regions, sectors, or facilitate cross-cultural learning.



# Conclusion

The aim of this project has been to systematically map research and educational programmes focused on character-based leadership in low- and middle-income countries. Through extensive desk research, consultation, and research interviews, we identified 1071 papers and 99 programmes with a focus on character and leadership in LMICs.

Our analysis indicates that there has been an increase in character-based leadership research and education in recent years, especially since the pandemic. This trend might suggest that character-based leadership is viewed as an important source of hope in an uncertain world. Perhaps this trend is unsurprising. To address transnational challenges and advance positive change there is an urgent need for courageous, character-based leadership.

However, our analysis also suggests that the intentional and systematic development of leader character is rare amongst leadership programmes. Strategic investment of time and resources is vital to support existing programmes, develop a reliable understanding of effective practice, and enable the development of contextualised approaches. A network of researchers and practitioners would facilitate the exchange of knowledge and necessary resources.

The findings in this report are based on a mapping exercise involving a global group of collaborators over six months. Further work is needed to better understand the nuances within each region, and systematically analyse areas and languages we have not been able to analyse in detail.

We hope this report will enable further exploration, dialogue, and collaboration, as well as increased investment in character-based leadership around the world.

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## Appendix - list of programmes

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
REGION: SOUTHERN & EAST AFRICA								
Kenya	Cultivating Virtue in Kenyan School Leaders	Centre for Character & Leadership	Ruaka, Kenya	In person & online	School leaders	Help educational leaders understand and cultivate the virtue based practices that will help them thrive.	Templeton World Charity Foundation	<a href="https://www.characterandleadership.org/index.php/character/cultivating-virtues-in-leaders/">https://www.characterandleadership.org/index.php/character/cultivating-virtues-in-leaders/</a>
Kenya	Women of Integrity, Strength, and Hope (W.I.S.H.)	Daraja Academy	Nanyuki, Kenya	In person	School girls	Equip learners with skills to develop a positive sense of self-identity, effectively communicate with others, practice leadership, and become changemakers and grassroots leaders.	Personal donations	<a href="https://daraja.org/w-s-h/">https://daraja.org/w-s-h/</a>
Kenya	Leadership Development Program	Emerging Leaders Foundation	Nairobi, Kenya	In person	Youth	A conviction that leadership matters, and our belief in the potential of values-based leadership to deliver social, economic and political transformation for the benefit of individuals, communities and nations.	Donations	<a href="https://elfafrica.org/leadership-development/">https://elfafrica.org/leadership-development/</a>
Rwanda	Children's Peace Education Network	Transformational Leadership Centre	Kigali, Rwanda	In person	School children	Develop character and leadership by linking inner values with everyday actions in interpersonal relationships; to see a positive transformation and sustainable peace promotion among the children of Rwanda.	Donations	<a href="http://tlcrwanda.org/">http://tlcrwanda.org/</a>
South Africa	Centre for Responsible Leadership Studies (Africa)	Stellenbosch Business School	Cape Town, South Africa	In person	University students and executives	Promote knowledge of responsible leadership to enhance leadership for sustainable organisational and institutional effectiveness, especially in Africa.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.stellenboschbusiness.ac.za/research/centre-responsible-leadership-studies-africa">https://www.stellenboschbusiness.ac.za/research/centre-responsible-leadership-studies-africa</a>
South Africa	Values-Based Leadership Online Short Course	Allan Gray Centre for Values-based Leadership, University of Cape Town	Cape Town, South Africa	in person, 1 year	Executives	Help senior executives and managers create a world-class, values-driven organisation, and cultivate a business culture of sincerity, loyalty, and self-sufficiency to enhance team productivity.	Course fees	<a href="https://www.gsbuct.ac.za/executive-education/values-based-leadership/">https://www.gsbuct.ac.za/executive-education/values-based-leadership/</a>

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Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
South Africa	Advanced Certificate in Leadership	School of leadership	Quezon City, Philippines	In person	Youth	Develop the character and leadership skills of young people, empowering them to change our world for the better.	Programme fees	<a href="https://solafrica.co.za/">https://solafrica.co.za/</a>
South Africa	Master in Responsible Leadership	The Albert Luthuli Leadership Institute	Pretoria, South Africa	In person	University students	Pursuing scholarship, education and societal engagement that reimagine leadership towards social, environmental, and economic justice.	Tuition fees	<a href="https://www.up.ac.za/albert-luthuli-leadership-institute">https://www.up.ac.za/albert-luthuli-leadership-institute</a>
South Africa	Emerging African Leaders Programme	The Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town	Cape Town, South Africa	In person	Early and mid-career professionals	Build a strong cohort of innovative and courageous African leaders committed to public service, with vision, ethics and the necessary skills to bring about change.	Initial phase funded by UKAID, IDRC, and Ford Foundation	<a href="https://commerce.uct.ac.za/school-public-governance/building-bridges/emerging-african-leaders-programme">https://commerce.uct.ac.za/school-public-governance/building-bridges/emerging-african-leaders-programme</a>
South Africa	Ethical Leadership and Public Accountability Course	The Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town	Cape Town, South Africa	In person & online, 12 sessions	Mid-career public leaders	This course seeks to contribute to the task of restoring effective governance and public integrity through a programme of seminars on critical contemporary public ethics issues, executive courses, case study research and leadership colloquiums. The programme culminates in a cutting edge and practical online course on ethics and leadership.	Tuition fees for professional masters, donations for short courses (three courses were funded by British High Commission)	<a href="https://commerce.uct.ac.za/school-public-governance/building-bridges/ethical-leadership-and-public-accountability">https://commerce.uct.ac.za/school-public-governance/building-bridges/ethical-leadership-and-public-accountability</a>
Tanzania	The Growing Leaders Initiative	Lead Tz	Arusha, Tanzania	In person	Youth	Help develop healthy character and leadership development amongst youth and young adults.	Part of Lead Missions International	<a href="https://leadtz.org/">https://leadtz.org/</a>
REGION: CENTRAL & WEST AFRICA								
DR Congo	Ethical Leadership	Congo Leadership Initiative	Orchard Park, New York	In person	Youth	Develop the next generation of leaders to be catalysts for peace and prosperity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://www.congoleaders.org/what-we-do">https://www.congoleaders.org/what-we-do</a>

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Liberia, Ghana, Kenya	Public Service Fellowship	Emerging Public Leaders	Washington, D.C., U.S.	In person, 2 years	Young professionals under 35	Drive Africa's development by creating a new generation of public servants committed to social impact. Support in-country programs that recruit Africa's most promising future leaders and place them into meaningful civil service position.	Financial support from Mastercard Foundation and Chandler Foundation. Partner with local governments	<a href="https://www.emergingpublicleaders.org">https://www.emergingpublicleaders.org</a>
Nigeria	Various programmes	Centre for Values in Leadership (CVL)	Lagos, Nigeria	In person	General	Equip generations of young people with values and leadership skills, which will make them become effective, values-driven leaders that will serve as catalysts for improvement of the quality of life in our society.	Donations	<a href="https://cvl.com.ng/">https://cvl.com.ng/</a>
Nigeria	Victor Nwankwo Leadership Academy	Victor Nwankwo Leadership Academy	Okigwe, Nigeria	In Person	School students	Produce ethical and servant-leaders of the future, raise future leaders that will have humane, family values, civil responsibility, ethical living, self-sacrifice and servant leadership.	Tuition fees	<a href="https://victornwankwoleadershipacademy.africa/">https://victornwankwoleadershipacademy.africa/</a>
Nigeria	Generalkopho Leadership Programme	Generalkopho Leadership Programme	Lagos, Nigeria	In person & online	Youth	Create opportunities for young people to become transformational leaders—to discover and build purpose, and make a difference in their communities.	Donations	<a href="https://glpng.org/">https://glpng.org/</a>
Nigeria	Girls Interactive Initiative for Rekindling Learning Of Social Values	GirlsHub Africa	Lagos, Nigeria	In person	School girls	Help shape the character of our female young adults today for tomorrow.	Donations	<a href="http://girlshub.org.ng">http://girlshub.org.ng</a>
Nigeria	Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy	Lagos State Government	Lagos, Nigeria	In person, 1 year	Young professionals under 35	Develop future leaders by equipping them with the requisite skills to positively influence the public service and instill in them the ethics and values of purposeful leadership through direct mentoring and on-the-job training.	Government funding	<a href="https://www.ljla.academy">https://www.ljla.academy</a>



Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Nigeria	Value-Based Leadership Training	International Centre for Leadership Development Nigeria	Lagos, Nigeria	In person	School students	Empower the next generation of leaders who will make towering impacts in their communities, by becoming change agents and making positive solutions to challenging scenarios around them.	Part of the International Institute of Global Leadership (IIGL) USA, partner with Lagos State Government	<a href="https://icldng.org">https://icldng.org</a>
REGION: PAN-AFRICAN								
Pan-African	ALI Fellowship Programme	Africa Leadership Initiative	Johannesburg, South Africa	In person	Mid-career professionals	Develop the next generation of values-based African leaders who will not only impart knowledge and share opinions, but also guide and lead their countries with integrity.	Part of Aspen Global Leadership Network	<a href="https://www.africaleadership.net">https://www.africaleadership.net</a>
Pan-African	Archbishop Tutu Fellowship	Africa Leadership Institute	Johannesburg, South Africa	In person	Mid-career leaders between 30 and 40 years old	Build a critical mass of visionary, strategic, self-aware and ethical leaders across the continent who together become the catalysts for change and transformation of Africa.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://al institute.org/our-programmes/archbishop-tutu-fellowship-programme">https://al institute.org/our-programmes/archbishop-tutu-fellowship-programme</a>
Pan-African	Young Women's Academy for Conscious Change	Global Grassroots	Portsmouth, U.S.	In person	School girls	Catalyse women and girls as leaders of Conscious Social Change in their communities.	Multiple donors including NoVo Foundation, Imago Dei Fund, ERM Group Foundation, etc.	<a href="http://www.globalgrassroots.org">http://www.globalgrassroots.org</a>
Pan-African	Abundant Leadership Institute	Kurumbuka Leadership Solutions	Kigali, Rwanda	In person & online	Christian leaders	Help Africa's most promising Christian leaders bring lasting solutions to Africa's biggest challenges.	Tuition fees; connected with Wellspring Foundation for Education in Canada	<a href="https://www.kurumbuka.org/abundant-leadership-institute">https://www.kurumbuka.org/abundant-leadership-institute</a>
Pan-African	Various programmes (ILEAD, Youth Leadership Development Programme)	LEAP Africa	Lagos, Nigeria	In person	Youth	Raising leaders that will transform Africa. Inspire, empower and equip a new cadre of African leaders by providing the skills and tools for personal, organizational and community transformation.	Multiple donors including MacArthur Foundation and Ford Foundation	<a href="https://leapfrica.org">https://leapfrica.org</a>

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Pan-African	Obama Foundation Leaders Africa Program	The Obama Foundation	Chicago, U.S.	In person & online	Young leaders	Build a growing network of innovative and values-based changemakers who will drive positive change in their communities, the continent, and the world.	Donations	<a href="https://www.obama.org/africa-2023/">https://www.obama.org/africa-2023/</a>
Pan-African	Mandela Washington Fellowship	Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI)	Washington D.C., U.S.	In person	Young leaders (25-35)	Invest in the next generation of African leaders. Support young Africans as they spur growth and prosperity, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance peace and security across Africa.	U.S. Government	<a href="https://www.mandela.washingtonfellowship.org">https://www.mandela.washingtonfellowship.org</a>
REGION: LATIN AMERICA								
Belize	Liderazgo (Leadership)	BrightSity	San Francisco, U.S.	Online, 18 hours over 8 weeks	General	Bridge leadership and compassion.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.brightsity.com/es/programs/liderazgo/">https://www.brightsity.com/es/programs/liderazgo/</a>
Brazil	Character Education Program	Instituto Champrett (Character education)	São José, Brazil	In person & online	General	Develop Character Education to form better people.	Connected with change.org	<a href="https://institutochamprett.org.br/">https://institutochamprett.org.br/</a>
Brazil	Liderança Ética E Mais Humana (Ethical and More Human Leadership)	Instituto Wilson Britto (Wilson Britto Institute)	Belo Horizonte, Brazil	In person & online	Organisations, schools leaders.	Ethical and more humane leadership.	Programme fees	<a href="https://institutowilsonbritto.com.br/">https://institutowilsonbritto.com.br/</a>
Brazil	Various programmes	Instituto Católico de Liderança (Catholic Institute of Leadership)	São Paulo, Brazil	Online	Catholics	Train Catholic leaders to transform society; authentic leadership.	Programme fees	<a href="https://iclbrasil.org/">https://iclbrasil.org/</a>
Colombia	Liderazgo para todos (Leadership for All)	Universidad Católica de Colombia (Catholic University of Colombia)	Bogotá, Colombia	Online, 7 sessions	University students	Exercise of the classical virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance; Acquire the specific virtues of the authentic leader: magnanimity and humility.	Use Alexander Harvard's Virtuous Leadership model	<a href="https://www.ucatolica.edu.co/porta/curso-liderazgo-para-todos/">https://www.ucatolica.edu.co/porta/curso-liderazgo-para-todos/</a>

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Ecuador	Liderazgo auténtico & inteligencia emocional (Authentic leadership & emotional intelligence)	Universidad San Francisco de Quito USFQ (San Francisco University of Quito)	Quito, Ecuador	Online, 45 hours	General	Improve performance through practical experiences to start transformation towards authentic leadership.	Programme fees	<a href="https://escueladeempresas.ec/programas/liderazgo-autentico/">https://escueladeempresas.ec/programas/liderazgo-autentico/</a>
El Salvador	Programa Influyentes (Influential Programme)	Avales	El Salvador	In person	General	Character development; applying leadership principles based on their values.	Programme fees	<a href="https://avales.org/index.php/programas/">https://avales.org/index.php/programas/</a>
Mexico	Educaracter: Programa de Liderazgo en educación del carácter para escuelas públicas mexicanas (Leadership program in character education for public secondary schools in Mexico)	Universidad Panamericana and the Universidad de Navarra	Mexico City, Mexico	In person	School leaders	Cultivate the necessary virtues to exercise their leadership in service to all members of their school community.	Funded by Templeton World Charity Foundation; organised by Universidad Panamericana and Universidad de Navarra	<a href="https://educaracter.com/proyecto/">https://educaracter.com/proyecto/</a>
Mexico	Liderazgo orientado al florecimiento humano (Leadership oriented to human flourishing)	TecdeMonterreyX	Monterrey, Mexico	Online	General	Describes the elements of the Human Flourishment Oriented Leadership model to develop leaders who achieve better results.	Free access; optional course certification fees	<a href="https://www.edx.org/es/course/liderazgo-orientado-al-florecimiento-humano">https://www.edx.org/es/course/liderazgo-orientado-al-florecimiento-humano</a>
Paraguay	Mesas de Transformación (Transformation Tables)	Transformación Paraguay (Transformation Paraguay)	Asunción, Paraguay	In person, weekly 40 mins meeting over 16 weeks	Companies and organisations	Weekly spaces to learn about values, leadership and take action.	Programme fees	<a href="https://transformacion.org/mesas-de-transformacion/">https://transformacion.org/mesas-de-transformacion/</a>
Paraguay	Yo Lidero (I lead)	Transformación Paraguay (Transformation Paraguay)	Asunción, Paraguay	In person, toolkit facilitated by teacher	School students	Focus on personal growth, the formation of values and leadership, in order to make a transformation in their society.	Ministry of Education and Sciences	<a href="https://transformacion.org/yo-lidero-2/">https://transformacion.org/yo-lidero-2/</a>

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Peru	Centro de Liderazgo para el Desarrollo (Development Leadership Centre)	Universidad Católica San Pablo (Saint Paul Catholic University)	Arequipa, Peru	In person	Various programmes for youth and executives	Virtue is the dynamic force that people require to achieve their leadership and thus contribute to the common good.	Programme fees	<a href="https://ucsp.edu.pe/liderazgo/">https://ucsp.edu.pe/liderazgo/</a>
Peru	Centro de Liderazgo, Ética y Responsabilidad Social (CLERS) (Centre for Leadership, Ethics and Social Responsibility (CLERS))	Universidad del Pacífico (Pacific university)	Lima, Peru	Various	General	Contributes to the training of responsible leaders and the promotion of human and sustainable development through the construction, promotion and dissemination of an ethical culture and social responsibility.	Programme fees	<a href="https://cers.up.edu.pe">https://cers.up.edu.pe</a>
Latin America	Various programmes	Federación Internacional de Inteligencia Interpersonal y Liderazgo Ético (FILE) (International Federation for Interpersonal Intelligence and Ethical Leadership (FILE))	San José, Costa Rica	In person & online	General	Train ethical leaders and building more efficient and collaborative cultures.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.lideretico.com">https://www.lideretico.com</a>
Latin America	Educational Leadership and Innovation Programme (PLIE)	Varkey Foundation	Buenos Aires, Argentina	In person, 6 weeks	School leaders	Provide new tools and strengthening the capacities of directors and teachers of schools in the country.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://www.fundacionvarkey.org/">https://www.fundacionvarkey.org/</a>
REGION: EAST & SOUTHEAST ASIA								
Cambodia	Student Leadership Programme	Singapore (Cambodia) International Academy	Phnom Penh, Cambodia	In person	School students	Invigorate a passion for leadership among the students who will be able to use their position to encourage positive social change in the future.	Tuition fees	<a href="https://scia.edu.kh">https://scia.edu.kh</a>

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Cambodia	Leadership	Cambodian Children's Fund	Phnom Penh, Cambodia	In person	Impoverished kids	Transform impoverished kids into passionate, engaged young leaders who will work to transform their own communities and country.	Donations	<a href="https://www.cambodianchildrensfund.org">https://www.cambodianchildrensfund.org</a>
Cambodia	Compassion-based Quality Improvement for Health-care System	Healthy Developments Initiative	Kampot & Kep Provinces, Cambodia	In person	Healthcare leaders	Reconnect with compassion for all life as basis for providing quality care to their patients.	German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation	<a href="https://health.bmz.de/stories/compassion-based-quality-improvement-for-cambodias-healthcare-system/">https://health.bmz.de/stories/compassion-based-quality-improvement-for-cambodias-healthcare-system/</a>
Cambodia	Various programmes	Liger Leadership Academy	Phnom Penh, Cambodia	In person	Economically disadvantaged students	Educate promising youth of today to develop socially conscious and entrepreneurial leaders of tomorrow.	Donations	<a href="http://www.ligeracademy.org">http://www.ligeracademy.org</a>
China	Various programmes	GLO: Good Leaders Online	Shanghai, China	Online	Executives, whole company	Connect and develop good leaders for good business.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.glo-china.com">https://www.glo-china.com</a>
China	Morningside Cultural China Scholars	Zhejiang University	Hangzhou, China	In person, 2 years	University students	Cultivate future leaders with high ideals, who uphold the spirit of Chinese culture and have a global perspective.	Morningside Group and other donors	<a href="http://www.ccsper.com">http://www.ccsper.com</a>
China	Leadership Training	China Service Ventures	Arden Hills, U.S.	In person	Frontline workers	Develop service leaders within their communities.	Donations	<a href="http://www.chinaserviceventures.org/leadership-training">http://www.chinaserviceventures.org/leadership-training</a>
China	Service Leadership Programme	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)	Hong Kong	In person	University students	Nurture holistic development in students, including competencies, moral character and caring disposition.	Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, Tin Ka Ping Foundation	<a href="https://www.polyu.edu.hk/en/sillo/">https://www.polyu.edu.hk/en/sillo/</a>
Indonesia	Wikasatrian	PT Wijaya Karya Tbk	Kabupaten Bogor, Indonesia	In person	Executives	Develop modern virtuous leaders characterized by Indonesian wisdom.	PT Wijaya Karya Tbk	<a href="https://aim2flourish.com/innovations/develop-modern-virtuous-leaders-characterized-by-indonesian-wisdom">https://aim2flourish.com/innovations/develop-modern-virtuous-leaders-characterized-by-indonesian-wisdom</a>

Country	Programme	Organisation	Location	Format/Length	Target audience	Mission/Vision	Funder/Partner	Website
Malaysia	Leadership Preschool	Leaderland	Penang, Malaysia	In person & online	Pre-school children	Help children build up their character and habits through early childhood education.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.leaderland.com.my">https://www.leaderland.com.my</a>
Malaysia	Malaysia Stay and Build (MS&B)	GIFT Global Institute for Tomorrow	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	In person	Young professionals	Motivate Malaysians to become effective leaders and active citizens with a new vision for Malaysia.	Programme fees	<a href="https://global-inst.com/stay-and-build-malaysia/">https://global-inst.com/stay-and-build-malaysia/</a>
Malaysia	Leadership Development Program	Outward Bound Malaysia	Perak, Malaysia	In person	General	Work towards physical fitness and display tenacity, resilience and competence while participating in adventure-based activities.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.outwardbound.my/courses/leadership-development-program/">https://www.outwardbound.my/courses/leadership-development-program/</a>
Malaysia	Kids leadership programme	HANKidz	Selangor, Malaysia	In person & online	Pre-school & primary school children	Create world peace and abundance by developing enlightened leaders through children.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.hankidz.com/little-leaders-virtual-emotional-management-kit">https://www.hankidz.com/little-leaders-virtual-emotional-management-kit</a>
Myanmar	Graduate Diploma in Leadership	Myanmar Leadership Institute	Yangon, Myanmar	In person	Young professionals	Develop leadership capabilities for the transformation of society in line with the values of justice, solidarity and option for the poor.	Tuition fees	<a href="https://www.mliygnetu.com/courses/graduate-diploma-in-leadership">https://www.mliygnetu.com/courses/graduate-diploma-in-leadership</a>
Philippines	KALFI LEAD Youth Leadership Programme	Kalinangan Youth Foundation	Quezon City, Philippines	In person, 4 years	Senior high school - University women	A leadership platform for young university women that allows them to truly serve, be effective and become society's game changers.	Donations	<a href="https://kalfilead.org/">https://kalfilead.org/</a>
Philippines	Leaders for Excellence and Public Service (LEAP) Mayors' Fellowship Program	Kaya Natin and San Miguel Corporation	Quezon City, Philippines	In person	Incumbent mayors	Equip mayors with the competencies of an effective, ethical and empowering leader, believing that enhancing their leadership will manifest in their public service and local government units.	San Miguel Corporation	<a href="https://www.kayanatin.ph/leap/">https://www.kayanatin.ph/leap/</a>
Philippines	Youth Leadership Academy	Kaya Natin	Quezon City, Philippines	In person	University students	Create and become leaders who have the three Es of leadership: ethical, empowering, and effective.	Donations	<a href="https://www.kayanatin.ph/programs/leadership-development/">https://www.kayanatin.ph/programs/leadership-development/</a>

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Philippines	School of Leadership and Governance (SLG)	Kaya Natin	Quezon City, Philippines	In person, 5-month fellowship	Young local government leaders	Train and develop young local government leaders to become effective, ethical, and empowering public servants that will work towards addressing their various local government units' social problems.	Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) and others	<a href="https://www.kayanatin.ph/programs/leadership-development/">https://www.kayanatin.ph/programs/leadership-development/</a>
Philippines	Compassionate Leadership Course	Knowles Training Institute Philippines	Philippines	In person	Executives	Develop compassionate leaders who are able to make better decisions, build strong relationships, and inspire others to do good as well.	Programme fees	<a href="https://knowlesti.ph/the-compassionate-leadership-training-course-in-philippines/">https://knowlesti.ph/the-compassionate-leadership-training-course-in-philippines/</a>
Philippines	Executive Coaching Services	LEAD OUT Coaching & Consultancy	Malina, Philippines	In person	Executives	Create a flourishing corporate culture.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/leadoutcc/">https://www.facebook.com/leadoutcc/</a>
REGION: SOUTH & CENTRAL ASIA								
Afghanistan	School of Leadership	School of Leadership Afghanistan (SOLA)	Rwanda	In person	School girls	Help Afghan girls grow to become compassionate, curious, confident women, who will become members of the generation that one day lead a peaceful and united Afghanistan.	Donations	<a href="https://www.sola-afghanistan.org/">https://www.sola-afghanistan.org/</a>
Afghanistan	The Institute for Leadership Development (ILD)	Morning Star Development	Colorado Springs, U.S.	In person & online	University students	Develops leaders in both character and competency to become transformed leaders who transform societies.	Donations	<a href="https://msdev.org/leadership-development/">https://msdev.org/leadership-development/</a>
Bangladesh	Various programmes	Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre	Dhaka, Bangladesh	In person & online	Youth	Build leadership skills in youth from diverse backgrounds by instilling values of empathy, tolerance, and inclusiveness in them.	Programme fees	<a href="https://bylc.org">https://bylc.org</a>
Bhutan	GNH Youth Leadership Programme	GNH Center Bhutan	Thimphu, Bhutan	In person	Youth	Groom, guide and make the young Bhutanese realise their potential as future leaders.	Donations	<a href="https://www.gnhcentrebhutan.org/project-1-gnh-youth-in-action/">https://www.gnhcentrebhutan.org/project-1-gnh-youth-in-action/</a>

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Bhutan	Programs for Public Service	Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute	San Francisco, U.S.	In person & online	Public sector leaders	Offer mindfulness-based trainings in partnership with communities to support the work of those on the front lines of society: civil servants, public & mental health workers, nonprofits, and educators.	Programme fees, donations	<a href="https://siyli.org/bhutan-government-employees/">https://siyli.org/bhutan-government-employees/</a>
India	Youth Leadership Program	People for India	Westborough, USA; Telangana, India	In person	Youth	Fosters youth to evolve as competent leaders under the guidance of experienced professionals and emerge as power to address backlogs.	Donations	<a href="https://www.peopleforindia.org/lead-with-values-tracking/">https://www.peopleforindia.org/lead-with-values-tracking/</a>
India	Various programmes	Question Your Own Notions	India	In person	General	Cultivate good leaders through self-discovery and values exploration in India.	Programme fees	<a href="http://www.qyon.org">http://www.qyon.org</a>
Sri Lanka	LEAdership, Personal Growth, and Social Responsibility (LEAPS)	University of Kelaniya, University of Toronto, the Western Province Department of Education	Kelaniya, Sri Lanka	Online	School children	Aim to develop a character development intervention for early adolescents in Sri Lankan schools.	Templeton World Charity Foundation	<a href="https://medicine.kln.ac.lk/depts/psychiatry/index.php/leaps">https://medicine.kln.ac.lk/depts/psychiatry/index.php/leaps</a>
Uzbekistan	Presidential Schools	Agency for Presidential Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan (PIIMA)	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	In person	School children	Prepare the next generation of leaders to actively and positively contribute to the development of Uzbekistan.	Government funding, in partnership with Cambridge University	<a href="https://www.cambridge.org/partnership/research/PIIMA-the-limitless-presidential-schools-changing-education-in-Uzbekistan">https://www.cambridge.org/partnership/research/PIIMA-the-limitless-presidential-schools-changing-education-in-Uzbekistan</a>
REGION: GLOBAL								
Global	Acumen Fellows	Acumen Academy	New York, U.S.	In person	Young professionals	Build the next generation of social sector leaders by providing them with skills, tools and opportunities to reach their full leadership potential.	Donations	<a href="https://acumenacademy.org/fellowship/">https://acumenacademy.org/fellowship/</a>

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Global	The Path of Moral Leadership Course	Acumen Academy	New York, U.S.	Online	General	Unleash a new generation of social innovators and leaders with the determination and grit to build a more just, inclusive and sustainable world.	Free access; resources for sale	<a href="https://acumenacademy.org/course/the-path-of-moral-leadership/">https://acumenacademy.org/course/the-path-of-moral-leadership/</a>
Global	Ashoka Fellows	Ashoka	London, U.K.	In person	Social entrepreneurs	Address root causes of global and local social problems to fundamentally disrupt them, thereby changing systems.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://www.ashoka.org/en-gb/ashoka-fellows">https://www.ashoka.org/en-gb/ashoka-fellows</a>
Global	Aspen Fellowship	Aspen Institute	Washington, D.C., U.S.	In person	Mid-career leaders	A growing, worldwide community of entrepreneurial leaders from business, government and the nonprofit sector – currently more than 3,000 Fellows from over 60 countries – who share a commitment to enlightened leadership and to using their extraordinary creativity, energy and resources to tackle the foremost societal challenges of our times.	Donations	<a href="https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/aspens-global-leadership-network/">https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/aspens-global-leadership-network/</a>
Global	The Atlantic Institute	Atlantic Philanthropies	Oxford, U.K.	In person & online	General	Provide long-term resources and opportunities to connect, learn and work together in order to tackle inequity.	Atlantic Philanthropies	<a href="https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/about/the-atlantic-institute/">https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/about/the-atlantic-institute/</a>
Global	Leadership, Ethics and Social Responsibility	Barca Innovation Lab	Barcelona, Spain	Online	General	For leaders to use different theoretical frameworks from leadership studies and the global philanthropic outlook in order to consider corporate social responsibility, how business leaders resolve ethical issues, and the role business professionals play in the process of leading (managing) the organization so that prioritizing the common good can be optimized personally and professionally to make a social and market impact.	Programme fees	<a href="https://elearning.barcainnovationhub.com/product/leadership-ethics-and-social-responsibility/">https://elearning.barcainnovationhub.com/product/leadership-ethics-and-social-responsibility/</a>
Global	BecomingX	BecomingX Ventures Limited	London, U.K.	Online	Education leaders	Create a world where everyone can realise their potential.	BecomingX Foundation	<a href="https://www.becomingx.com">https://www.becomingx.com</a>

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Global	Responsible Leaders Network	BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt	Berlin, Germany	In person	Responsible leaders	Promote responsible leadership and inspires leaders worldwide to work towards a more peaceful, just and regenerative future.	The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt	<a href="https://bmw-foundation.org/en/">https://bmw-foundation.org/en/</a>
Global	LAP- Leadership Academy Programme	Council of Europe	Strasbourg, France	Online	Public sector leaders	An interactive training programme for public authorities of all levels that seeks to develop leadership for organisations, leadership for strategy and leadership for capacity building.	Council of Europe	<a href="https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/lap#">https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/lap#</a>
Global	Values-Based Engineering Leadership	Ecornell	New York, U.S.	Online	Engineering leaders	Help leaders learn not only how to tune into their own values, but also how to communicate and live those values in all aspects of life.	Course fees	<a href="https://ecornell.cornell.edu/courses/leadership-and-strategic-management/values-based-engineering-leadership/#_">https://ecornell.cornell.edu/courses/leadership-and-strategic-management/values-based-engineering-leadership/#_</a>
Global	Building Leadership Character	Ecornell	New York, U.S.	Online	General	Build leadership character.	Course fees	<a href="https://ecornell.cornell.edu/courses/leadership-and-strategic-management/building-leadership-character/">https://ecornell.cornell.edu/courses/leadership-and-strategic-management/building-leadership-character/</a>
Global	Freedom Rising	The Freedom Fund	London, UK; New York, U.S.	In person & online	Community leaders	Elevate emerging leaders, especially those who have traditionally been excluded from positions of leadership such as women and survivors.	Multiple trust and foundation donors	<a href="https://freedomfund.org/programs/community-building/freedom-rising/">https://freedomfund.org/programs/community-building/freedom-rising/</a>
Global	The GABV Leadership Academy	Global Alliance for Banking on Values	Amsterdam, Netherlands	In person & online	Bankers	Provide leaders in values-based banks with tools to lead and innovate during periods of disruption and high complexity.	Partner with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Co-Lab and Presencing Institute	<a href="https://www.gabv.org/transforming-finance/leadership-academy/">https://www.gabv.org/transforming-finance/leadership-academy/</a>
Global	Young Leadership Development/ Women's Leadership Development	Global Peace Foundation	Lanham, U.S.	In person	Youth, women	Promote an innovative, values-based approach to peace-building.	Donations	<a href="https://www.globalpeace.org">https://www.globalpeace.org</a>

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Global	Leadership Training	Hansen Leadership Institute	San Diego, U.S.	In person	Youth	Provides training in the principles, practices, and psychology of effective, ethical and visionary leadership.	Fred J. Hansen Foundation	<a href="https://hansenleadershipinstitute.org">https://hansenleadershipinstitute.org</a>
Global	Leadership Coaching	Lead with virtue	Eltham, New Zealand	In person & online	Companies and organisations	Gain the mindsets and tools to help you become the best leader you can be, the leader that people want and need to follow.	Programme fees	<a href="https://leadwithvirtue.org">https://leadwithvirtue.org</a>
Global	Education leadership training	Living Values Education	New York, U.S.	In person	Education leaders	Support teachers, facilitators, trainers and learners, wherever they are, who wish to place and keep values at the heart of their work and life.	Donations	<a href="https://livingvalues.net">https://livingvalues.net</a>
Global	Maxwell Leadership	Maxwell Leadership	Duluth, U.S.	Online	General	Lead powerful, positive change through values-based leadership training.	Programme fees	<a href="https://www.maxwellleadership.com">https://www.maxwellleadership.com</a>
Global	Leadership Programmes - McCain Global Leaders	McCain Institute	Washington, D.C., U.S.	In person & online	Young leaders (25-40)	Advance character-driven leadership both in the U.S. and throughout the world.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://www.mccaininstitute.org/programs/leadership-programs/">https://www.mccaininstitute.org/programs/leadership-programs/</a>
Global	Global Leadership Initiative/Challenge/Summer School, Leading with Character online course	Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford	Oxford, UK	In person & online	University students, general audience	Help leaders develop the character they need to navigate the challenges of our time and make an impact for good.	John Templeton Foundation, Legatum Foundation, and Templeton World Charity Foundation	<a href="https://oxfordcharacter.org">https://oxfordcharacter.org</a>
Global	Rhodes Scholarship	Rhodes Trust, University of Oxford	Oxford, UK	In person	University students	Identify young leaders from around the world who, through the pursuit of education together at Oxford, would forge bonds of mutual understanding and fellowship for the betterment of mankind.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/the-rhodes-scholarship/">https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/the-rhodes-scholarship/</a>
Global	Rise Scholarship	Schmidt Futures and Rhodes Trust	Oxford, UK	In person & online	Youth (15-17)	Finds brilliant people who need opportunity and supports them as they work to serve others for life.	The Eric and Wendy Schmidt Fund	<a href="https://www.risefortheworld.org">https://www.risefortheworld.org</a>

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Global	Schwarzman Scholarship	Tsinghua University	Beijing, China	In person	University students	Develop leaders and form global relationships that can be activated over a lifetime.	Stephen A. Schwarzman and other donors	<a href="https://www.schwarzmanscholars.org">https://www.schwarzmanscholars.org</a>
Global	Various programmes	Students Shoulder to Shoulder	Edwards, U.S.	In person	School students	Grow a global network of ethical leaders.	Donations	<a href="https://shouldertoshoulder.com">https://shouldertoshoulder.com</a>
Global	Values Based Leadership Course	TCM group	London, UK	In person & online	General	Empower people and organisations to adopt purpose-led, person-centred and values-based approaches to culture change, conflict and complaints resolution, human resources, people management and leadership.	Course fees	<a href="https://thetcmgroup.com/tcm_course/values-based-leadership/">https://thetcmgroup.com/tcm_course/values-based-leadership/</a>
Global	Rhodes Scholarship	Rhodes Trust, University of Oxford	Oxford, UK	In person	University students	Identify young leaders from around the world who, through the pursuit of education together at Oxford, would forge bonds of mutual understanding and fellowship for the betterment of mankind.	Multiple donors	<a href="https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/the-rhodes-scholarship/">https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/the-rhodes-scholarship/</a>
Global	UNODC Global Integrity Education	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime	Vienna, Austria	In person	University students	Equip young graduates with ethical mindsets at the start of their careers in the private sector and empower them to become a driving force for ethical business.	Funded by Siemens Integrity Initiative	<a href="https://businessintegrity.unodc.org/bip/en/projects/global-integrity-education.html">https://businessintegrity.unodc.org/bip/en/projects/global-integrity-education.html</a>
Global	Various programmes	Values Based Leadership Developing Inspirational Leaders	Ross-On-Wye, UK	In person & online	General	Develop inspirational leaders across the world.	Programme fees	<a href="http://www.valuesbasedleadership.co.uk">http://www.valuesbasedleadership.co.uk</a>
Global	The Virtues Project Leadership Training	Virtues Project International Association	Calgary, Canada	In person	Companies and organisations	Inspire people of all cultures to remember who we really are and to live by our highest values.	Programme fees, donations	<a href="https://www.virtuesproject.com">https://www.virtuesproject.com</a>
Global	Various Institutes Worldwide	Virtuous Leadership Institute	Washington, D.C., U.S.	Online	General	Ignite hearts for greatness and raise up a new generation of virtuous leaders empowered to transform life – business, family and culture.	Programme fees	<a href="https://hvli.org">https://hvli.org</a>



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