



Leader development in South Africa: The lived experience of the senior executive

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35683/jcm21109.232>

KAREN MARSHA MILNER*

University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Email: karen.milner@wits.ac.za

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2788-6564>

*corresponding author

ELIZABETH WARREN (deceased)

University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: Despite the substantial investment in leadership development made by corporates around the world, limited research has focussed on the leaders' lived experiences of their development opportunities. The aim of the study was to explore leader development through the lived experience of a sample of senior executives in South Africa.

Design/methodology/approach: The research adopted a lifespan approach to understanding leader development. In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 "C-suite" executives across the financial services industry in South Africa. The interview transcripts were analysed using conventional content analysis, using Atlas-ti.

Findings: Three key themes emerged from the analysis - the influence of parents, bosses and coaches; the importance of childhood leadership opportunities, including overcoming childhood adversity and poverty; and low emphasis on formal development programmes, compared to inherent leadership characteristics, developed in childhood and honed through early career opportunities and experiences.

Recommendations/value: The results supported the theoretical premises of the lifespan approach to leader development. The results indicate the value of incorporating a lifespan framework into research on leader development, as many of the participants' key development experiences occurred before they even entered the work-force. A lifespan perspective is particularly useful in South Africa, where the leadership talent pool still needs to be diversified

Managerial implications: Schools need to provide many more leadership opportunities for learners – extending the number of leadership positions available in the school, providing opportunities for leadership at lower levels and rotating opportunities for leadership at school. Similarly, organisations can look at extending opportunities for exposure to leadership roles as early and as widely as possible. Encouraging networking and formal and informal mentorship is key. This point is particularly pertinent now, as remote working has left new organisational entrants without informal access to leaders, leadership opportunities and role models.



Keywords

Leadership; Leader development; Life cycle approach

JEL Classification: M12

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, there is a need for competent, effective leaders, at all societal levels, including organisations. Since leaders are made not born (Tourish, 2019), the need to understand the most effective ways in which such leaders can be developed is key. The issue of leader development is particularly relevant in South Africa, where the legacy of apartheid has created an accelerated demand for leaders from previously disadvantaged, under-represented groups, to take their place at the helm of South African organisations. The purpose of this research was to explore the leader development experiences of senior South African executives from diverse backgrounds and the extent to which such experiences contributed to the leaders' success in reaching the executive suite.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the definitions and concepts used in this research will be presented, followed by the theoretical foundation on which the study was based. Finally, an overview of selected empirical studies in this area is provided.

2.1 Definitions and concepts

Brungardt and Crawford (1996:83) define leadership development as “*every form of growth or stage of development in the life cycle that promotes, encourages and assists the expansion of knowledge and expertise required to optimize one’s leadership potential and performance*” Leader development considers the development needs of the individual, and leadership development the broader development and change requirements of the whole organisation. Both are required for a systemic attempt to improve leadership effectiveness in an organisation (Dalakoura, 2010). Leader and leadership development, include a range of interventions, including leadership development training programmes; executive coaching; mentoring; peer coaching; action learning; stretch assignments and 360 degree feedback. Engagement in a variety of development interventions is critical for developing the adaptability required of today’s leaders (Orvis & Ratwani, 2010). Yet research on the effectiveness of leader and leadership development is limited (Holt *et al.*, 2018).

2.2 Theoretical foundation

The theoretical foundation of this study is leader development through a lifespan perspective. *“The lifespan perspective is an integrative meta-theory that originated from the field of developmental psychology. It focuses on general principles of intraindividual development, interindividual differences in developmental trajectories, and malleability of development at different ages”* (Rudolph *et al.*, 2018:52). A number of theorists have proposed a lifespan approach to leadership, including Zacher *et al.* (2015) and Murphy and Olson (2011). More recently, Liu *et al.* (2020:4) expanded on this developmental perspective and proposed a theory of *“leader development through experiential windows across the lifespan”*.

This lifespan theory conceptualises leader development *“as the process by which one increases his or her ability to exercise influence in leadership situations that become increasingly more complex and varied, during the lifespan process with multiple developmental stages and various contexts”* (Liu *et al.*, 2020:4). The underlying assumptions of the theory are that that leader development is dynamic, non-linear and contextual. In other words, leader development does not follow a static, set, step by step process, but is influenced by the different contexts in which leaders find themselves – from childhood through to late adulthood. The fundamental premise of the theory is that different life stages provide windows of opportunity for leader development but in order for these opportunities to be translated in to leadership, the individual leader needs to process these opportunities; practice the skills they have learnt and apply them in a leadership context. In addition, within these windows of opportunity the leader needs to recognise that they have developed important leadership skills (leader self-awareness); build confidence in their leadership abilities (leader self – efficacy) and recognise their own identity as a leader. According to Liu *et al.* (2020) there are six leader development window opportunities which correspond to different life stages. The lifespan stages and the leader development opportunities they present are as follows:

The first phase is the Preschool (nascent development phase). From their earliest years, children can be exposed to leader development opportunities through their family and educational systems. At the preschool stage, attachment styles and opportunities for play provide the nascent leader development windows. The second stage is Childhood. During this stage, opportunities to take responsibility at home (doing simple household tasks), collaborative learning and family interactions provide the leader development windows. Initially, children are entirely dependent on parents, teachers and other adults to provide them with the opportunities and building blocks for future leadership competencies. Hence this stage is termed the externally driven leader development phase. On entering adolescence, the

individual begins to exercise more choice in the leadership activities in which they engage, as they experiment with their identities and their ideas of the type of person they want to become (Stage 3; experimental exploration development phase). The leader development opportunities at this stage include extra-curricular activities, peer interactions and role models. The move into early adulthood (Stage 4) represents a change in context as leader development is now driven by the working organisation system and the young adult's emergent family situation. Early adulthood is still an important developmental stage but is more self-focussed and self-driven than the previous stages. Here the leader development opportunities include leadership training, internships, and leading in activities. Stage 5 - the middle adulthood phase is where individuals on an organisational leadership path typically experience leadership development opportunities that are provided by the organisation. As they move through organisational hierarchies, their work becomes more complex and their developmental focus tends to shift from technical skills to values and meaning making (purpose driven development phase). Finally, the move into late adulthood signals another shift in leader development, as leaders focus outward and look to coach and develop others (Legacy development phase) (Liu *et al.*, 2020).

The importance of taking a lifespan approach to understanding leadership, specifically in South Africa has been articulated by Nkomo and Kriek (2011). They explored South African business leaders' role in creating the changes needed to meet the challenges of a post-apartheid South Africa. They established that that it was necessary to understand leaders' life stories in order to fully comprehend the leaders' interpretation and responses to the changes required of them and their organisations. They concluded that leaders' life stories can be an important source of information in understanding leadership dynamics in South Africa. The current research builds on these two approaches and assesses South African executives' leader development experiences from a life span perspective through hearing their life stories.

2.2.1 Overview of empirical studies

There is some research which looks in an integrated manner at leadership development, but it has typically not addressed leaders' perceptions of their development experiences from a lifespan perspective. In the case of Groves (2007:239), the purpose was to "*present a best practices model for optimal development of the leadership pipeline*", but the focus was on the effective integration of leadership development and succession planning, rather than the selection of efficacious intervention types. Much existing research focuses on the efficacy of specific leadership development interventions, or on specific development needs such as

creativity or authenticity (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Such research focuses on types of leadership or leadership competencies, rather than on holistic leader development. The research to date that has explored leadership develop from a more holistic perspective suggests that much leadership development takes place through allowing high potential employees to take risks, be given challenging assignments and learn through experience (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Boyatzis, 2008); that effective leadership development requires challenges, set-backs and failures, and adversity (McCall, 2004); that “trigger” life events create heightened self-awareness for leaders that leads to significant leadership development, (Luthans & Avolio, 2003); and that family environment, school experiences, work experience and bosses (Conger, 2004) are important to fully understand leadership development. Thus, it is clear that although many leadership interventions are focused on adult development, the leadership development process tends to start at a young age and is partly influenced by parental modelling (Day *et al.*, 2014). In a study of West Point cadets, it was found that those who had more leadership experience at school had higher initial leadership performance at West Point (Hall, *et al.*, 2004). Researchers contend that early leadership experiences create the leadership foundations. As leaders gain greater leadership efficacy and confidence, they are more likely to engage in leadership experiences which will in turn increase their leadership capabilities (Murphy & Oson, 2011). Based on such findings, Murphy and Oson (2011) proposed a theory of leader development which takes a longitudinal perspective and takes into account early influences such as parenting style, sports and school leadership experiences. More recently, Reitan and Stenberg (2019) undertook a study with data from 7719 boys from 6th grade through to adulthood. Using this cohort’s data from various points at school through to officer suitability assessments, the researchers established significant relationships between, social class, leadership aspirations in childhood, birth order, self-regulation in school, parental support, and participation in extracurricular activities and the officer suitability assessments. They conclude that a life cycle approach is strongly recommended with regard to leadership development research.

3. METHODOLOGY

The challenges facing senior corporate leaders in South Africa are immense. In addition to dealing with a highly challenging economic context, there is a pressing need to diversify the top leadership cohort across companies and industries. In order to address this problem, it is necessary to understand the leader development experiences, interventions and opportunities that have helped the current cohort of senior leadership in this country get to the positions they are in. Given the diverse backgrounds of current leaders in South Africa, and the need to

intensify that diversity, it is important to take a lifespan approach to understand their development as leaders, by hearing their life stories - from childhood through to their current organisational position. The objective of the study therefore was to explore leader development through the lived experience of a sample of senior executives in South Africa.

The research study was structured on a constructivist-interpretivist tradition which emphasizes the lived experience of the research participants (Day *et al.*, 2014). There was an acceptance in the study that there could be multiple perspectives in the minds of the research participants, and there was no attempt to determine a single “truth” from the experiences of the participants.

The sample comprised 12 senior executives (all C-suite level leaders), based in Johannesburg or Pretoria within the financial sector. Of the 12 interviewees, 10 were from listed companies and two were from state owned enterprises. Eighteen senior executives were invited to participate in the research, and twelve were interviewed, at which point saturation was reached. Whilst no quota was established for racial diversity, the racial mix was representative of senior executives in South Africa corporates. Since the leaders are well known within their field, it is not possible to provide further biographical information without identifying them. To maintain strict anonymity, the respondents are identified by random letters (A, B, E, G, L, M, O, J, Z, K, V, and Y) rather than by names.

The interviews lasted approximately two hours. Interviews were transcribed and the transcripts were coded in Atlas.ti. Conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) was used to analyse the interview transcripts. The research included de-briefing at the end of each interview to test the understanding of the researcher and confirm the validity of the data collected through the interview discussion. The researcher also kept analytic memos and the data coding process was automated, creating a reviewable audit trail. Ethics approval for the research was obtained from the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Three key themes emerged from the analysis:

1. Role models and sources of support across the life span: parents, bosses and coaches;
2. Learning while growing: early opportunities to take responsibility and lead;
3. You make your own sunshine - low emphasis on formal programmes/attributions of success to personal qualities;

4.1 Role models and sources of support across the life span: parents, bosses and coaches

The respondents clearly saw that strong, positive role models were key to their development. Reviewing their life stories, it was evident that they attributed much of their current success to the foundations prepared by their parents:

My father didn't buy this idea of us being the lost generation, or marginalised youth...and through all the difficulties...I was able to matriculate and go on to university...I (also had) the good fortune of working in the first democratic Government and watched some of the key ministers and the President in action. And the things my father instilled in me, values of service, you know, humility, hard work, all those things, I could now bring them forward in a work context (Z).

I grew up in a family that was heavily involved in the anti-apartheid struggle in politics for several generations. When I was born my uncle was on Robben Island...So I grew up in a political family and became an activist in high school and my father had the view that I must do something in the sciences as at some point we would liberate South Africa and would need scientists (A).

My dad would test me to the limit but there were also many times that he would pull me back...I learnt more from my dad, because he had laid the foundation so if you got back and you got 50%, he wasn't happy. He was interested in you, you know. And things about how to treat people and all of those things. (Z)

Mothers (and grandmothers) played a particularly strong role here, as their strength and determination laid the foundations for many of these very successful leaders to “make something of themselves”.

My mom was one of the first black area managers of a retail store. My mom was an Indian woman, worked by day. She had to cook, she had to take care of us. So you know, you model behaviour, you see all of that and I think the ambition, my mother, nothing was impossible. I think if she was just a stay at home mother maybe I wouldn't be as driven as I am (E).

My mom was a huge and is a huge inspiration to me because we are of Portuguese descent, so when my dad passed away, she was really an immigrant in South Africa. She could hardly speak the language (L).

B also commented that *“My mum worked from six to six in a clothing factory to put us through varsity”*. He went on to say that this had created in him a determination to succeed to fulfil his mother’s expectations.

As the participants continued with their life stories, it was evident that the early role modelling and high expectations of parents were augmented and solidified by more formal and informal mentoring relationships:

I think that is prize one actually, if you have a boss who can coach you, that is better than having an external coach probably because you are all on the same team and trying to achieve the same thing...I have been so lucky, all my life I had good bosses. I had bosses who were keen for me to succeed (O).

L also had a boss who both provided guidance and opportunity

She was a fantastic mentor because she was older and she took me under her wing and she gave me a lot of opportunity which was fantastic... I’ve worked with XXX now for most of those years and the ability to debate and being heard has for me been crucial.

V believes that what he is today had a lot to do with an inspirational early boss *“I found that a lot of my development and my inspiration around what I do today came from discussions with [my boss], and he formed my world view, both at a personal level and a professional level.”* J had also found bosses who provided opportunities and from whom he could learn

I was again blessed with great opportunities and great leaders that I’ve worked for...learning different things from each one...I’ll go in and take the best of what I think a leader stands for and I will tailor to what I think is right...When I look at leaders like XXX, he commands power, but he says very little to command power and he taught me a lot about that.

“He was both boss and mentor...and he took unbelievably good care of me” (Y).

I probably learnt more about managing people from XXX than anyone else...he is able to bring the best out of people. He is one of those managers that people in his team would be prepared to walk through fire for him (A).

The empowerment, the trust, the challenge, the testing, I know at times made me a better person...He would challenge my own fears. He would say ‘I’m going to say some harsh things to you, but you have to listen to them because you have to hear them’...His own example of life taught me a lot about self-awareness and introspection and self-criticism (Z).

Female bosses were mentioned positively by male research participants, just as they had mentioned the influence of their mothers.

I had the most amazing boss. She brought some of the diversity that women bring, less ego, less testosterone... and she taught me some skills which I probably don't use enough, on how to get things done without needing to win every argument (V).

Similarly, executive coaches, especially women coaches, were perceived as very helpful.

It was brilliant. She brought a completely different perspective, brutal to be honest. It was a trusted and nurtured environment...not as beneficial as working for [my boss] but probably a good look in the mirror (Y).

As much as I was a kind of rising star...I had certain personal deficiencies which were holding me back...she helped me get over those things...I think the woman (coach) I had at Company X helped me to understand myself so that I could adjust (V).

"I am very supportive of coaching because it is a reflection process, it helps people to understand" (K).

I thought I'm going to go in there and they're gonna tell me how to do things and just be spoon-fed and I'd go out and apply. But the questioning technique meant that I have never felt so empowered in my life. And it was a great soundboard because that person would also give me feedback (E).

"All the coaching I did with her was giving me self-belief. To believe that you can achieve anything you want to achieve." (J)

There was also a view that coaching was for times of transition or particular challenge, and when you did not have an internal coach.

In that transition role it was difficult to cope with everything simultaneously so I had someone, I would call it more mentoring...I think what really helped is that she helped me to put everything into perspective so that you can see the bigger picture and take that few steps back and look. She also helped me to explain how people operate and why they do certain things (K).

O also found the benefits of coaching to be situational *"I think it is dependent on where you are...either in a difficult job or a new job...and you have not got someone within the organisation to talk to."*

4.2 Learning while growing: early opportunities to take responsibility and lead

Once again, early life experiences were seen by the participants to have played a significant role in their development as leaders. The previous theme dealt with parents, setting the groundwork for the ambition and drive to succeed that the respondents' perceived as key to their success. But it was not only parental roles that were perceived to have set the scene for the respondents' success. Early life opportunities to take responsibility and lead were also key:

L was sent to school when her father died and her mother had to find work as a forklift truck driver, working shifts to support her children.

So she worked shift work so my brothers and I went off to boarding school. We grew up in boarding school and I loved it. I think the good thing about boarding school was that, from a very young age, we had to be self-sufficient...I think that life [boarding school] shaped me because I don't wait for anybody to solve anything and also, never think that something is somebody else's role.

"You don't really live close to your family (at boarding school). So you don't really come to your family for advice. You learn to stand on your own two feet at a very early age" (G).

Y argued that being good at sport enabled adolescents to practice the skills of leadership, as the best sports players were given leadership roles irrespective of their leadership potential

The default in the young sports field is normally to the more talented irrespective of their capabilities to lead people. There were leadership positions associated with almost everything that I did...I was captain on the cricket side, vice-captain of the rugby team. I was the lead in the school play...I think that that just gave me an incredible amount of confidence that I can now reflect on.

"I was Captain of our team when I was twelve and the people in the team were fifteen. But it's only later on that you realize why, you know, that you've been really on this leadership journey" (Z).

A, who came from an impoverished family, nevertheless found that he could find the opportunities to develop and build confidence through extra-curricular activities at school as he was *"selected by the principal to go on camps and things and I have been privileged to go on a lot of those things."*

What really struck me when I went to Harvard was just how much wider, even in my early thirties, my knowledge base was compared to other people on the programme. Because they were all coming from more developed economies they were specialist and already I had a whole bunch of different things... (O).

“At the age of twenty two I had four hundred men in my shift and when you go down, you have 400 lives you have got to take care of.” (B)

4.3 You make your own sunshine - Low emphasis on formal programmes

The research participants gave very mixed feedback on formal leadership development programmes. They found such programmes to be most beneficial when they determined their development requirements and self-selected the programme.

Many were frustrating for me because they were abstract. I fully agreed with them but they were not helping people deal with what they have to deal with and that was frustrating for me. So I fear that some of the interventions are not getting to the core of the problems that people face (Z).

“It was the old-style classroom form of download of factual data and so it helped for a period of time...but did it have significant impact? No, it didn’t” (J).

“I find a lot of it actually very academic to be honest...I am not a big fan of courses and degrees because it is very much reading a book on “how to” instead of...” (K).

Even those who supported formal leadership development programmes see the generic programmes as sub-optimal - *“I do believe that leadership development is crucial. I think that sometimes we are misguided in terms of what the right programme is again because we try to do a one size fits all approach.” (L)*

Many of the participants attended international executive programmes and all found these to be beneficial. However, the benefits did not primarily arise from the course content but rather were found in the opportunities for networking, learning from peers, building self-awareness and for self-reflection.

O expressed the views of several of the participants when he said

I went to Harvard on one of those executive programmes and it was fabulous. It was less what I actually learned formally in the classroom but it was just the fact that you were with different people from different countries, doing case studies, arguing, going drinking in the evenings.

“What made Harvard different was that I was ready to learn more from myself by just learning from 150 different people and just building relationships with them” (Z).

A pivotal point in my career was my experience at Duke...it wasn't “death by case study”. It was about listening, thinking about the world. It taught me a lot about having a life-philosophy as an executive and bringing that back to work every day in how you lead. That was by far one of the most profound interventions I've had in my career (J).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given how little faith the respondents placed in formal leadership development, they mostly attributed their leadership success to their own hard work and intrinsic drive.

Y actually suggested that leaders are born although they can be further developed to fulfilment. *My thesis is that leaders are born and then they are nurtured to fulfilment...You can't take a non-leader and turn them into a leader. You are naturally born or gifted into a moment that you can allow to be developed (Y).*

“It is the X-factor. It is like in sports teams when the pressure is on, where some people can score goals and other people who cannot... some people just do not quite have it” (O).

It is up to you to create your own sunshine and make your career work and I think people do not get that...Only one person is responsible for your career and that is yourself” (K).

I also believe God gave you hands at the end of these arms...so you've got to mobilise... I just never gave up” (Y).

It is clear from the results above, that the participants attributed their success in attaining their executive leadership positions to childhood experiences and opportunities, the provision of opportunities to lead in their early/mid-career stages and to the mentors and managers, and to some extent coaches, who supported them. They also perceived their success to be due to their own innate characteristics of perseverance, hard work and willingness to take on the challenges of leadership, rather than to the formal leadership development opportunities afforded to them through the course of their careers.

In childhood, parental and other adult influencers were found to be critical in developing the sense of purpose, values, drive and ambition which would be the foundation for their leadership development. Many of the research participants had come from disadvantaged backgrounds, but, unlike research which has suggested that disadvantaged children have more negative than positive experiences which adversely impact their development (Usinger & Smith, 2010), the participants in this study typically used negative experiences, such as the

loss of a parent, to build determination to overcome such adversity. This positive reaction to adversity was supported by mothers who created positive role models for them. The unique circumstances of South Africa in the dying days of apartheid also supported childhood leader development, with several of the participants coming from activist families who explicitly encouraged the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes which would be enable successful leader development.

Given the importance the research participants placed on parental influence in their development as leaders, it is perhaps not surprising that they also placed importance on mentoring and coaching. Leaders with whom followers form emotional relationships function in many respects like parents (Popper & Mayseless, 2003). This similarity between authoritative parents and transformational leaders is apparent in a number of areas, including both being sensitive and responsive; providing opportunities; and positive role models. This similarity also appears to include the ability to allow the child or follower to learn from their mistakes and develop self-confidence and self-awareness as a result of the process.

From a theoretical perspective, this study supports Liu *et al.*'s (2020) model of leader development across the lifespan. There is clear evidence that these respondents, who had attained the highest levels of leadership within their large and influential corporate contexts, saw their leadership as emerging from their life experiences and life opportunities rather than only from specific, explicit leadership development programmes. Their responses support the proposition that early childhood and adolescent contexts provide the building blocks for later leader potential to emerge. They also reinforce the notion that in emerging and middle adulthood, leaders take advantage of, and seek out development opportunities, finding mentors, coaches and role models and identifying challenging opportunities. There was little mention of outward focus associated with the end of career years, probably due to the fact that these respondents were in the prime of their careers, not in the end stage.

4.4 Limitations and implications

There are a number of implications and caveats to these findings. Perhaps the most important caveat is that the respondents were looking back on their leadership journeys and crafting the telling of their life stories through the lens of their current leadership identities. Shamir and Eilam (2005) suggest that leaders' self-stories contribute to their ongoing development. By constructing, developing and revising their life-stories, leaders gain self-knowledge, self-concept clarity and person-role-merger While this sense-making process is an important component of a life span approach to leader development, it suggests that the respondents' stories are curated by them, to provide a coherent, sensible whole, when the reality may have

been more ambiguous and chaotic. Future researchers interested in this life span approach could track those who had taken leadership roles in childhood and early adulthood (using school records to identify sport captains, and members of SRCs/prefect bodies) and move from that early point to where those early leaders are today i.e. track forward rather than backward.

The practical implications of taking a lifespan approach to leader development are quite far-reaching. All sectors in South Africa are crying out for leaders but starting leader development only in the early to middle career years may be too late – the net can be cast far wider, far sooner. Schools need to provide many more leadership opportunities for learners – extending the number of leadership positions available in the school, providing opportunities for leadership at lower levels and rotating opportunities for leadership at school. Similarly, organisations can look at extending opportunities for exposure to leadership roles as early and as widely as possible. Encouraging networking and formal and informal mentorship seems key. This latter point is particularly pertinent now, as remote working has left new organisational entrants without informal access to leaders, leadership opportunities and role models.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to explore senior executives' experiences of leader development from a lifespan perspective. The results indicate the value of incorporating a lifespan framework into research on leader development, as many of the participants' key development experiences occurred before they even entered the work-force and continued in formal and informal ways throughout their careers, within the workplace as well. A lifespan perspective is particularly useful in South Africa, where the leadership talent pool still needs to be diversified. Identifying and recognising the ways in which leadership development opportunities exist in both the privileged and disadvantaged contexts from which South African leaders may be drawn, can only strengthen and enrich the field.

REFERENCES

- Avolio, B.J. & Hannah, S.T. 2008. Developmental readiness: accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 60(4):331–347. [<https://doi.org/10.1037/1065-9293.60.4.331>].
- Bass, B.M. & Avolio, B.J. 1994. *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.
- Boyatzis, R.E. 2008. Leadership development from a complexity perspective. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 60(4):298–313. [<https://doi.org/10.1037/1065-9293.60.4.298>].

-
- Conger, J.A. 2004. Developing leadership capability: what's inside the black box? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 18(3):136-139. [<https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.2004.14776188>].
- Day, D.V., Fleenor, J.W., Atwater, L.E., Sturm, R.E. & McKee, R.A. 2014. Advances in leader and leadership development: a review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25:63-82. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leafqua.2013.11.004>].
- Brungardt, C. & Crawford, C.B. 1996. A comprehensive approach to assessing leadership students and programs: preliminary findings. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 3(1):37-48. [<https://doi.org/10.1177/107179199600300105>].
- Dalakoura, A. 2010. Differentiating leader and leadership development: a collective framework for leadership development, *Journal of Management Development*, 29(5):432-441. [<https://doi.org/10.1108/02621711011039204>].
- Groves, K.S. 2007. Integrating leadership development and succession planning best practices, *Journal of Management Development*, 26(3): 239-260. [<https://doi.org/10.1108/02621710710732146>].
- Hall, R.J., Lord, R.G., Ritter, B., Swee, H.Y. & Dubois, D.A. 2004. Nonlinear latent growth curve modelling of the development of leadership skills. Working Paper. University of Akron.
- Holt, S., Hall, A. & Gilley, A. 2018. Essential components of leadership development programs. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 30(2):214-153.
- Hsieh, H.F. & Shannon, S.E. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9):1277-1288.
- Liu, Z., Venkatesh, S., Murphy, S.E. & Riggio, R.E. 2021. Leader development across the lifespan: a dynamic experiences-grounded approach. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32(5):101382. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leafqua.2020.101382>].
- Luthans, F. & Avolio, B.J. 2003. Authentic leadership development. In Cameron, K.S., Dutton, J.E. and Quinn, R.E. (eds). *Positive organizational scholarship: foundations of a new discipline*. San Francisco, Ca: Berrett-Koehler.
- McCall Jr, M.W. 2004. Leadership development through experience. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 18(3):127-130. [<https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.2004.14776183>].
- Murphy, S.E., & Johnson, S.K. 2011. The benefits of a long-lens approach to leader development: understanding the seeds of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(3):459-470. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leafqua.2011.04.004>].
- Nkomo, S.M. & Kriek, D. 2011. Leading organizational change in the 'new' South Africa. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 84(3):453-470. [<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.2011.02020.x>].
- Reitan, T. & Stenberg, S.Å. 2019. From classroom to conscription. Leadership emergence in childhood and early adulthood. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 30(3):298-319. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leafqua.2018.11.006>].
- Rudolph, C.W. Rauvola, R.S. & Zacher, H. 2018. Leadership and generations at work: a critical review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(1):44-57.
- Shamir, B. & Eilam, G. 2005. What's your story? a life-stories approach to authentic leadership development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3):395-417.
- Orvis, K.A. & Ratwani, K.L. 2010. Leader self-development: a contemporary context for leader development evaluation. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(4):657-674. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leafqua.2010.06.008>].
- Popper, M. & Mayselless, O. 2003. Back to basics: applying a parenting perspective to transformational leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(1):41-65. [[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843\(02\)00183-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(02)00183-2)].
- Usinger, J. & Smith, M. 2010. Career development in the context of self-construction during adolescence. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 76(3):580-591. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.01.010>].

Zacher, H., Clark, M., Anderson, E.C. & Ayoko, O.B. 2015. A lifespan perspective on leadership. In: Bal, P., Kooij, D., Rousseau, D. (eds) *Aging Workers and the Employee-Employer Relationship*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-08007-9_63-319-08007-9_6].