



EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING IN DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Tarso ^{a*}, Adian Purwo Nugroho ^b, Risnawati ^c, Betty Heryuriani ^d, Deny Hadi Siswanto ^e

^a Master of Educational Management, tarso.2024@uny.ac.id, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia

^b Master of Educational Management, adianpurwo.2024@uny.ac.id, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia

^c Master of Educational Management, risnawati.2024@uny.ac.id, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia

^d Master of Educational Management, bettyheryuriani.2024@uny.ac.id, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia

^e Mathematics Teacher, denyhadiswanto11@guru.sma.belajar.id, Muhammadiyah Mlati High School, Indonesia

*Correspondence

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of off-the-job training in enhancing leadership competence in the field of education through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The study adopts the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework to screen and analyze literature sourced from three major databases: Web of Science, SCOPUS, and ERIC, with a publication range limited to the years 2015–2025. Out of 439 identified articles, a total of 40 studies were selected based on inclusion criteria, which included document type, thematic focus, and relevance to educational leadership. The data analysis process was conducted using a thematic approach to categorize relevant findings and identify key patterns in the contributions of training. The results indicate that off-the-job training significantly contributes to improving leadership skills by developing educators' emotional, strategic, and professional competencies. The training is also proven effective in fostering transformational leadership, strengthening teaching practices, and enhancing professional collaboration within educational environments. This study recommends the implementation of continuous and institutionally tailored training programs as a strategic approach to optimize the impact of off-the-job training on the improvement of educational leadership quality in the future.

Keywords: *Off-the-job Training, Educational Leadership, Systematic Literature Review, PRISMA*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran *off-the-job training* dalam meningkatkan kemampuan *leadership* di bidang pendidikan melalui pendekatan *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR). Studi ini menggunakan kerangka kerja PRISMA (*Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses*) untuk menyaring dan menganalisis literatur dari tiga basis data utama: Web of Science, SCOPUS, dan ERIC, dengan batasan publikasi tahun 2015–2025. Dari 439 artikel yang teridentifikasi, sebanyak 40 artikel dipilih berdasarkan kriteria inklusi yang mencakup jenis dokumen, fokus topik, dan relevansi terhadap kepemimpinan pendidikan. Proses analisis data dilakukan melalui pendekatan tematik untuk mengelompokkan hasil studi yang relevan dan menemukan pola-pola penting dalam kontribusi pelatihan. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa *off-the-job training* secara signifikan berkontribusi pada peningkatan keterampilan kepemimpinan melalui pengembangan kompetensi emosional, strategis, dan profesional pendidik. Pelatihan ini juga terbukti efektif dalam mengembangkan kepemimpinan transformatif, memperkuat praktik pembelajaran, serta meningkatkan kolaborasi profesional di lingkungan pendidikan. Studi ini merekomendasikan penerapan pelatihan berkelanjutan dan berbasis kebutuhan institusi sebagai strategi yang tepat untuk mengoptimalkan pengaruh *off-the-job training* terhadap peningkatan kualitas kepemimpinan pendidikan di masa depan.

Kata Kunci: *Off-the-Job Training, Kepemimpinan Pendidikan, Systematic Literature Review, PRISMA*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental pillar in shaping high-quality and competitive human resources [1]. The quality of education is largely determined by the leadership roles of educators and education personnel who act as drivers of change. Effective educational leadership is not only reflected in administrative abilities but also in the capacity to inspire, build a shared vision, and manage the dynamic environment of schools. A good educational leader should be capable of formulating strategies, fostering a positive culture, and encouraging innovation in the learning process [2]. In this era of globalization and technological disruption, the demands for responsive and adaptive educational leadership are increasingly urgent. Therefore, enhancing leadership capacity has become a critical need for teachers, school principals, and other education leaders.

One strategic approach to improving leadership competence in education is through training and professional development programs [3]. Training conducted outside the daily work environment, commonly referred to as off-the-job training, is widely adopted [4]. This type of training provides participants with opportunities to learn in-depth without the distraction of work routines while also expanding their networks and perspectives through interaction with participants from diverse backgrounds. Forms of such training include workshops, seminars, leadership courses, intensive programs, and professional education all of which are concrete implementations of off-the-job training. These trainings are typically designed with structured curricula, delivered by expert facilitators, and combine theoretical foundations with practical applications, making them a promising vehicle for developing educational leadership.

Previous research has demonstrated that off-the-job training offers several advantages over on-the-job training. It allows for more systematic content exploration, application of active learning methods, and deeper reflective discussions [5]. Additionally, participants gain new perspectives as they are removed from the pressures of routine and monotonous work environments. Such training also provides space for strengthening soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and decision-making [6]. However, the effectiveness of off-the-job training in the context of leadership development in education has not been thoroughly mapped. Most studies have been conducted in isolation and do not offer a comprehensive picture of its long-term impact.

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the role of off-the-job training in enhancing educational leadership, a systematic research approach is needed. The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method is particularly appropriate for synthesizing reliable and relevant research findings [7]. Through SLR, researchers can identify key themes, analyze research gaps, and construct meaningful syntheses from the scattered body of literature. This method also reveals trends in the development of the topic and the scientific contributions of various studies. With a structured approach, SLR can provide a strong scientific basis for the formulation of educational policy and practice [8]. Therefore, SLR should be optimized to examine the effectiveness of off-the-job training in educational leadership contexts.

The development of national education policies such as Merdeka Belajar and the Merdeka Curriculum demands the emergence of educational leaders who are innovative, collaborative, and transformative. In this context, off-the-job training can serve as a strategic medium to shape leadership characters aligned with the spirit of educational reform [9]. Leaders who are trained outside the school's daily routines tend to be more open to change and innovation in leadership practices. They are expected to create learning environments that are adaptive to technology, student diversity, and global challenges. Moreover, critical thinking, data-driven decision-making, and the ability to build a positive school culture can also be nurtured through such training programs [10]. Hence, the role of off-the-job training in shaping educational leadership should not be underestimated.

Furthermore, off-the-job leadership training allows for improvement in crucial leadership dimensions such as visionary leadership, instructional leadership, and transformational leadership. These three aspects are essential for building high-quality education that is sustainable and responsive to changing times. This form of training also promotes deep reflection on existing leadership practices and provides inspiration for making positive changes in the workplace [11]. In addition, off-the-job training often includes post-training performance evaluations that offer constructive feedback to participants. Thus, the learning process does not stop at the end of the training but continues through real-world implementation. This makes off-the-job training a key instrument in professional leadership development in education.

Based on the aforementioned background, this study aims to conduct a Systematic Literature Review on the role of off-the-job training in enhancing leadership competence in the field of education. This review will explore and analyze various empirical findings from both domestic and international studies. The results are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of effective training types, applied approaches, and their impact on leadership practices. Additionally, this research will identify supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the success of leadership training. Therefore, the findings of this review are expected to make a meaningful contribution to improving the quality of educational leadership in Indonesia.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Off-the-job Training

Off-the-job training is a form of training conducted outside the participant's regular work environment or context. This training typically includes workshops, seminars, conferences, courses, and formal education programs aimed at enhancing knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes. According to Giantari et al. [12], off-the-job training allows participants to fully concentrate on the learning process as they are free from daily work pressures. In the educational field, this approach is particularly beneficial for teachers and school leaders as it provides space for reflection, in-depth discussions, and knowledge transfer from experts [13]. Off-the-job training also enables the exchange of experiences across institutions, thereby enriching participants' perspectives on educational issues. On the other hand, a potential drawback is the gap between the training materials and their practical application in real school settings.

Several studies have shown that off-the-job training has a positive impact on individual competence development, particularly in leadership and change management. Jasrotia et al. [14] asserts that off-site training is effective in developing strategic capabilities, communication, and visionary leadership. In the educational context, such training is often designed intensively with a structured curriculum, interactive methods, and experienced facilitators [15]. Another advantage is the opportunity for participants to build professional networks, which is crucial for fostering innovation and cross-school collaboration. Therefore, off-the-job training serves as an essential instrument in shaping adaptive educational leaders focused on improving the quality of education. With well-designed training, this strategy can significantly contribute to educational reform.

2.2. Educational Leadership

Educational leadership is the process of influencing, directing, and motivating individuals or groups within an educational institution to achieve common goals. Leaders in the education sector do not merely act as administrative managers but also as change agents who can create a supportive, innovative, and student-focused learning environment. According to Soraya [16], effective educational leadership involves the ability to build a vision, empower staff, and manage change through collaborative approaches. In practice, educational leadership is deeply influenced by the school's cultural context, national policies, and evolving global challenges. Educational leaders are required to possess a wide range of competencies, from communication and conflict management to strategic decision-making. Therefore, strengthening leadership capacity is a key element in the ongoing development of educational quality.

A study by Johnson et al. [17] emphasizes that leadership is the second most influential factor affecting student achievement, after teaching quality. Effective school leaders are capable of creating a positive school climate, boosting teacher morale, and strategically allocating resources for learning purposes. In the context of educational reform, educational leadership should also embody transformational and instructional values. Transformational leadership emphasizes cultural change and teacher empowerment, whereas instructional leadership focuses on teaching practices and student learning outcomes [18]. As times change, there is an increasing demand for leadership models that are responsive to technology, diversity, and cross-sector collaboration [19]. Thus, strengthening educational leadership is a critical investment in enhancing the overall effectiveness of educational institutions.

2.3. Professional Development

Professional development is a continuous process of enhancing individual competencies through formal and informal learning, aimed at improving performance quality and professional responsibilities. In education, professional development encompasses not only pedagogical skill enhancement but also leadership, classroom management, technology integration, and curriculum innovation. According to Nugroho [20], effective professional development should focus on improving student learning outcomes, have clear

objectives, and be supported by reflective practices and ongoing evaluation. Professional development programs may take the form of training, mentoring, community-based learning, or participation in academic conferences [21]. Through such activities, educators gain opportunities to update knowledge, share experiences, and strengthen professional networks. Hence, professional development is a foundational element in building educational quality that is responsive to contemporary changes.

In this era of digital transformation and dynamic curricula, professional development has become increasingly complex and requires adaptive approaches. Lifelong learning is now a key principle in cultivating outstanding educators [22]. In this context, off-the-job training becomes an integral part of professional development, allowing educators to explore best practices from various external sources. Additionally, a needs-based training approach should also be implemented to ensure that professional development programs align with real-world challenges and conditions. Strategically designed professional development can also drive innovation in teaching and leadership, ultimately contributing to the improvement of learning quality. Therefore, investing in professional development is a strategic step toward creating high-quality and competitive educational institutions.

2.4. Systematic Literature Review Using PRISMA Flow

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is an approach used to identify, evaluate, and interpret all relevant research findings related to a particular research question, topic, or phenomenon. Unlike traditional literature reviews, SLR is systematic, structured, and transparent, aiming to minimize bias [23]. This approach is vital in educational research as it enables researchers to comprehensively understand trends, gaps, and theoretical contributions from previous studies. In practice, SLR is used to develop theoretical frameworks, test hypotheses, and propose directions for future research. The main strengths of SLR lie in its replicability and credibility due to the use of explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria during the literature selection process.

One of the most widely used frameworks in conducting SLR is PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). The PRISMA flow diagram helps researchers document the article selection process through four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. This flow diagram provides a clear visualization of the number of articles found, eliminated, and the reasons for exclusion [24]. Thus, it enhances transparency and accountability in SLR reporting. The implementation of PRISMA in the field of education enables researchers to systematically review empirical evidence in order to address complex research questions, including the assessment of teaching method effectiveness, teacher training, and education policies.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Design

This study primarily explores the role of off-the-job training in enhancing leadership capabilities in the field of education. By consolidating, analyzing, and integrating various relevant sources, this study facilitates the assessment of specific hypotheses and the formulation of new theoretical perspectives. The methodology employed is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), with a focus on the role of off-the-job training in improving educational leadership skills. The adopted framework is the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), which includes a four-phase flow diagram encompassing identification, screening, eligibility determination, and study inclusion [25]. Particular emphasis is placed on quantitative aspects, such as the number of studies included or excluded [26]. The application of the PRISMA approach assists researchers in selecting studies that are relevant to the research questions while clearly outlining the identification steps aligned with the aim of exploring the role of off-the-job training in advancing educational leadership competencies.

3.2. Research Procedure

The research articles used in this study consist of publications sourced from the Web of Science (WoS), SCOPUS, and ERIC databases, with a publication range from 2015 to 2025. This timeframe was selected to ensure a focus on recent literature, reflecting the ongoing development and synthesis of knowledge in the digital age. Each database and the specific search criteria were carefully selected in alignment with the study's topic. The search process began with topic identification, followed by abstract screening to assess relevance to the focus of the study. If an article met the initial criteria, the full text was accessed for comprehensive review and evaluation. The keywords used in the search process included "role of off-the-job training" and "enhancement of leadership capabilities in education". The data collection process was conducted by selecting articles from various academic databases, following the PRISMA flow diagram as described below.

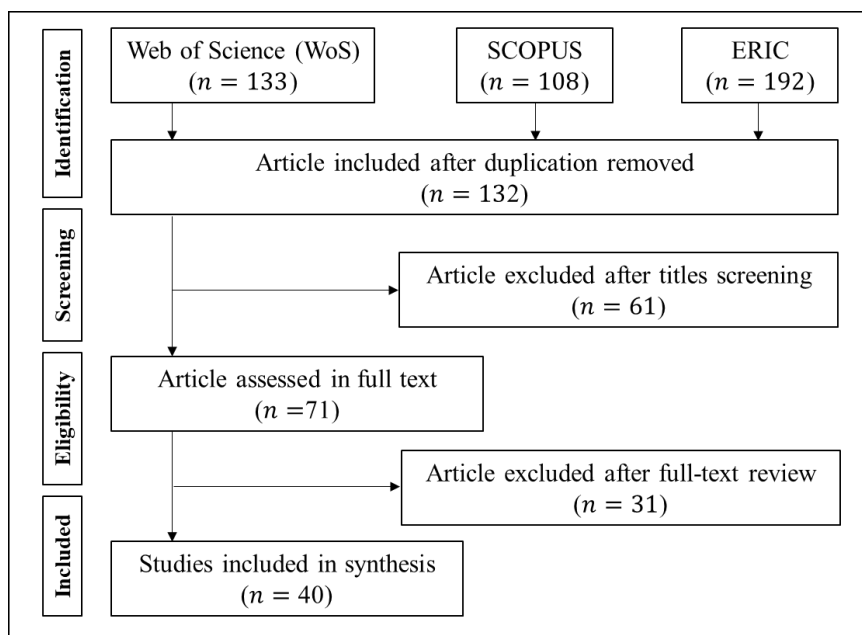


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Based on the data analysis presented in the PRISMA diagram, the initial identification process yielded 439 study reports (WoS = 133, SCOPUS = 108, ERIC = 192). After screening for duplicates and irrelevant titles, 132 articles remained for abstract review. Of these, 61 articles were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria, leaving 71 articles. A thorough full-text review was then conducted on the remaining 71 articles, and 31 of them were eliminated due to irrelevance to the topic of educational leadership or lack of focus on off-the-job training. Ultimately, 40 studies that met all the eligibility criteria were included in the final synthesis and served as the basis for analyzing the effectiveness of off-the-job training in the development of leadership in the education sector.

Table 1. Article Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exception
Publication Time	2015-2025	2014 and earlier
Document Type	Article	Books, chapters and modules
Type	Journal	Non journal
Subject	Leadership for education	Non Leadership for education

Inclusion criteria in this study selection encompassed publications issued between 2015 and 2025, while publications published in 2014 and earlier were excluded. Only journal articles were included in the analysis, whereas books, book chapters, and modules were not considered. Additionally, only articles published in peer-reviewed journals were included, with non-journal sources being excluded. The focus of the review was also limited to topics related to leadership in education; therefore, studies not addressing educational leadership were excluded from the analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data collection was conducted by extracting the titles, publication years, number of articles per year, types of research used, subjects studied, and efforts related to enhancing critical thinking in mathematics learning. Thematic analysis was used to categorize each article in alignment with the objectives of this study. The PRISMA method consists of several stages, including identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Understanding this method provides fundamental skills for qualitative researchers, enabling them to apply other approaches in data analysis. Furthermore, thematic analysis is a configurative approach that involves multiple activities, including interpretation as an ongoing process throughout data analysis and synthesis [27].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. New Study Reports

The role of off-the-job training can enhance leadership competencies in the field of education. This is due to several advantages and benefits offered by such training programs. The data used in this study underwent all phases in accordance with the PRISMA framework. The final analysis resulted in 40 new study reports being included in this research.

Table 2. Presenting and comparing selected articles

Author	Year	Research Result
Subedi [28]	2015	Transfer of knowledge and skills from training to the workplace among teachers in Nepal is still ineffective, but well-designed and implemented training can have a positive impact on the quality of education if stakeholders understand its relevance and benefits
Baporikar [29]	2015	Educational leadership is a process that engages and manages the potential of teachers, students, and parents to achieve shared educational goals, and its success depends on the extent to which such leadership is able to improve the quality of teacher education.
Taliadorou & Pashiardis [30]	2015	principals' emotional intelligence and political skills influence the leadership style they adopt and the level of teacher job satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of principals' social skills as a key aspect of effective educational leadership
Templeton et al. [31]	2016	introduces a research-based coaching model that combines situational leadership and emotional intelligence for person-centered coaching, with benefits for students, teachers, schools, and communities
Norwani et al. [32]	2016	This study formulates guiding principles in preparing future teacher leaders in Malaysia by reviewing global teacher leadership models
Kamel [33]	2016	The review concludes that professional development programs (FDPs) have a positive impact on improving teaching and learning practices in higher education, and it is recommended that lecturers regularly participate in FDPs that include social skills, leadership, and cross-disciplinary professional development.
Hoekstra & Newton [34]	2017	The leadership for learning model in vocational and professional education (VPE) that includes shared vision, instructor learning development, and educational program leadership has potential, but its implementation by department heads is highly variable and context-dependent, thus requiring more structured and contextual leadership development at the VPE department level
Hammond [35]	2017	teacher education practices in countries with advanced teacher development systems—such as Australia, Canada, Finland, and Singapore in terms of recruitment, training, induction, continuing professional development, and collective practice improvement, and comparing them with practices in the United States and global challenges in transforming teacher development systems
Wenner & Campbell [36]	2017	This review shows that since 2004, teacher leadership has largely focused on roles outside the classroom to support colleagues and policy, but lacks theoretical basis and attention to equity issues, with principals and school structures playing a significant role in supporting or limiting these roles.
Anderson [37]	2017	Demands for accountability for student performance and outcomes make school leadership crucial, requiring the development of transformational leadership styles that can drive change, increase commitment, and optimize the performance of educational organizations
García-Martínez et al. [38]	2018	instructional leadership can foster shared responsibility between teachers and principals and support professional learning communities, while addressing the technocratic training model still dominant in the Mexican and Spanish education systems
Bibi et al. [39]	2018	training, development, and supervisor support have significant effects on employee retention, with the work environment acting as a moderator in this relationship among public university lecturers in Pakistan
Fonsén & Ukkonen-	2019	an 18-month advanced training for early childhood education teachers in Finland fosters their professional development in pedagogical leadership

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Mikkola [40]		through increased knowledge, awareness of the quality of previous practice, development skills, and the ability to articulate the importance of early childhood education pedagogy
Ashagre & Furi [41]	2019	that overlapping roles, lack of shared understanding, communication problems, and resource constraints between educational inspection and supervision organizations hinder cooperation and effective policy implementation, so that role restructuring, increased school accreditation, and clear accountability are needed to improve the quality of elementary schools.
Xu & Yue [42]	2019	Effective methods include the integration of 21st century skills, collaboration, active learning, implementation of sustainable practices, peer mentoring, feedback, evaluation, and continuous development. Appropriate leadership strategies also contribute to improving teacher competence and student achievement
Iskandar & Achmad [43]	2020	Leadership, organizational commitment, and work ability have varying effects on motivation and performance, where some effects are positive but not significant, while motivation is proven to have a significant positive effect on performance.
Sahito & Vaisanen [44]	2020	The main factors that increase teacher job satisfaction include good working conditions, promotion opportunities, support, and social relationships, while dissatisfaction is triggered by authoritarian leadership, distrust, and lack of resources.
Chalikias et al [45]	2020	This study confirms that school principals play an important role as leaders and learning managers in teacher professional development, with appropriate leadership styles and training having a positive impact.
Day et al. [46]	2021	This research provides evidence-based guidance for the design and implementation of leadership training so that policy makers can select, prepare, and evaluate programs effectively.
Warman et al. [47]	2021	This study found that principals used democratic and authoritarian leadership styles to improve teacher performance, but supervision was constrained by low competence, irregular schedules, and old habits that were difficult to change.
Kadri et al. [48]	2021	This study validated leadership competencies and 21st century learning practices in Malaysian secondary schools with high results and reliable instruments.
Tazhina et al. [49]	2021	This study examined DeSTT teacher leadership training in Kazakhstan, highlighting training needs, participant enthusiasm, and sustainability plans through collaboration with national training centers to train regional instructors.
Estiani & Hasanah [50]	2022	This study showed that principals improved teacher competencies through supervision, ethics, moral integrity, and pedagogical training.
Faizuddin et al. [51]	2022	This study identifies the challenges of managing principal CPD in Indonesia and recommends a personal approach, skills development, professional recruitment, ongoing training, and optimization of school organization to improve the effectiveness of CPD.
Chaeroni et al. [52]	2023	The results showed that SLT planning was made in detail to avoid failure, the SLT organization guided participants in completing tasks, the implementation of SLT motivated participants based on self-confidence and job benefits.
Soelistya & Selamet [53]	2023	The results showed that transformational leadership directly affected teacher performance and organizational commitment, competence only affected commitment, commitment indirectly affected teacher performance, and compensation affected teacher performance through organizational commitment.
Sari [54]	2023	Managerial supervision has basic concepts and principles for improving quality, and principal performance is assessed through methods, procedures, and main function indicators according to the regulation.
Adhikari & Budhathok [55]	2023	This study examines principals' administrative skills (technical, interpersonal, conceptual) that are crucial to managing educational institutions and improving learning effectiveness and student achievement.

Martins et al. [56]	2023	This study examines the use of Augmented Reality for corporate training, finding a major focus on automotive and medical training, popular devices such as tablets and head-mounted displays and increasing publication trends.
Praneetpolkrung & Supakicco [57]	2023	This study develops an innovative online training program through R&D methods to improve teacher learning and student transformational leadership skills, which is deemed effective and ready for dissemination at Mahamakut Buddhist University.
Oluwafemi & Oko [58]	2023	The findings provide insights for improving leadership programs by integrating theory-practice, ensuring sustainability, providing resources, ongoing support, and conducting continuous evaluation and improvement for administrative effectiveness.
El-Hamamsy et al. [59]	2024	This study proposes an adapted cascade model to disseminate primary school DE teacher training widely through trained and expertly supported trainers; data shows this model effectively overcomes the limitations of traditional cascades with comparable outcomes to in-person training, and is suitable for large-scale DE reform.
Hanum [60]	2024	These results underscore the importance of professional development, leadership, and curriculum reform to improve education and provide insights for policymakers and educators in creating effective learning environments.
Garcia & Correa [61]	2024	The results show that graduate programs in Colombia emphasize soft skills such as creativity, leadership, and analytical skills as the main skills trained, while skills such as empathy, ethical thinking, and critical thinking receive less attention.
Esguerra & Quinito [62]	2024	significant relationship between professional development and school leadership management practices. The study proposes the “TEACH LEAD” workshop and the “Cultivating Excellence” policy to enhance professional development and leadership management for improved educational outcomes in the district.
Ghamrawi et al. [63]	2024	The study shows that a three-year PDM model in three Beirut private schools successfully developed teacher leadership through peer coaching with key factors changing top-down leadership to more collaborative and active.
Asbari [64]	2024	coaching improves teacher performance directly and indirectly through the development of psychological capital, so that coaching leaders play a significant role in improving teacher performance and psychological well-being
Dianawati et al. [65]	2025	The analysis shows transformational, inclusive and innovative leadership as key to fostering creativity, technology integration and collaboration in TVET, with transformational leadership most effective through vision alignment
Hibaya et al. [66]	2025	school leaders manage their roles with strategy, adaptation and commitment, fostering personal and professional growth while creating successful learning environments
Pesina [67]	2025	This study highlights the importance of integrating digital mentoring with institutional goals to support ongoing teacher development and expand knowledge sharing networks.

Based on previous studies summarized in the table above and used as references in this Systematic Literature Review (SLR), it is evident that off-the-job training plays a significant role in enhancing leadership competencies in the field of education.

4.2. Number of Articles Per Year

The number of articles published each year, as shown in Table 2 above, is illustrated in the following figure.

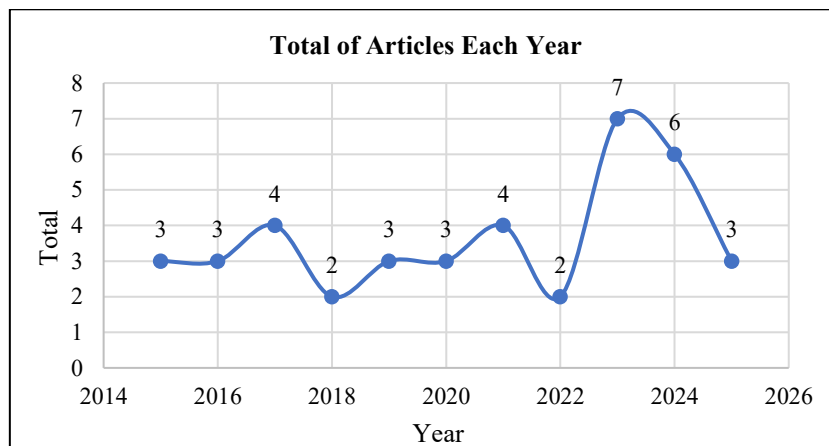


Figure 1. Total of Article Each Year

Based on the figure above, there is a noticeable fluctuation in the number of articles published each year. In 2015 and 2016, the number of articles remained stagnant at three. This number increased slightly to four articles in 2017 but then dropped significantly to two articles in 2018. In 2019 and 2020, the number stabilized again at three articles each year, followed by an increase to four articles in 2021. Another decline occurred in 2022, with only two articles published, before a sharp surge to seven articles in 2023 the highest number recorded during the observed period. Subsequently, there was a consecutive decrease, with six articles in 2024 and a sharp drop to three articles in 2025. The most significant increase occurred between 2022 and 2023, while the most notable decline was between 2024 and 2025. The years 2018, 2022, and 2025 stand out as critical points due to the sharp decreases, which warrant further evaluation.

4.3. Based on Research Location

The classification based on research location is illustrated in the following figure.

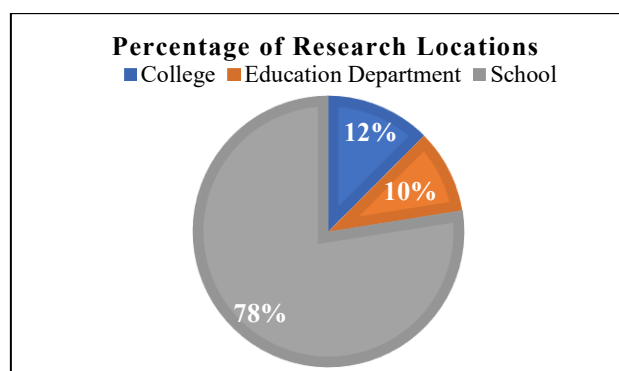


Figure 2. Percentage of Research Location

Based on the pie chart titled "Percentage of Research Locations," it is evident that the most dominant research setting is schools, accounting for 78% of the total studies. This is followed by higher education institutions (colleges) at 12%, and education departments at 10%. This indicates that the majority of research is conducted in school environments, likely due to efforts aimed at improving teaching quality, educational management, or the direct implementation of policies in the field. In contrast, the proportion of studies conducted in colleges and education departments is relatively small. This may reflect limited access, a more application-oriented research focus at the school level, or a lack of collaboration with higher education institutions and government agencies. These findings highlight the need to diversify research locations to ensure that study results are more comprehensive and have a broader impact on the overall education ecosystem.

4.4. Research Subject Targets

The research subject targets based on Table 2 are illustrated in the following figure.

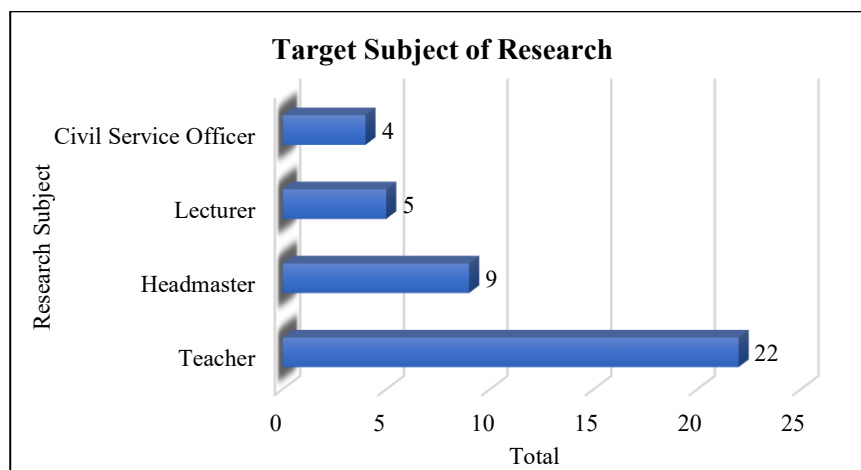


Figure 4. Target Subject of Research

The horizontal bar chart illustrates the number of research subjects categorized by profession: Teachers, Principals, Lecturers, and Civil Servants. The graph shows that teachers constitute the largest group of research subjects, with a total of 22 individuals. This is followed by principals with 9 individuals, lecturers with 5, and civil servants with 4. This indicates that the primary focus of the research is directed more towards teachers, likely due to their strategic role in the teaching process and in improving educational quality. Meanwhile, principals, as leaders of educational units, are also important targets for examining school management and leadership. Lecturers and civil servants represent smaller numbers, possibly because the research tends to be more application-oriented at the school level rather than addressing macro-level policies or higher education. These findings reflect that educational research is predominantly focused on the operational level within schools rather than at the policy or higher education levels.

4.5. Efforts to improve leadership skills in the field of education by using off-the-job training

The enhancement of leadership capabilities in the field of education has become one of the most crucial factors in supporting the achievement of optimal educational quality. Effective leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the overall performance and success of educational institutions, as it directly influences the motivation, engagement, and productivity of all stakeholders involved. According to Firmansyah [68], leadership is defined as an individual's ability to influence and direct the behavior of others within an organization. This definition highlights the critical function of leaders in guiding their teams toward shared goals. In the educational context, leaders such as school principals, supervisors, and academic coordinators are expected to possess adaptive, collaborative, and innovative leadership competencies that allow them to respond effectively to the dynamic challenges faced by schools today. Therefore, it is imperative to implement appropriate development strategies that enable educational leaders to continuously strengthen their managerial capacity and leadership skills in a sustainable manner.

One particularly effective method for leadership development is through off-the-job training, which refers to training activities conducted outside the regular workplace and away from the routine duties of participants. Tarso et al. [69] explains that off-the-job training creates an environment where learners are free from the immediate pressures and distractions of their daily work, thereby allowing them to concentrate more fully on absorbing the training material. Examples of off-the-job training programs include leadership seminars, educational management workshops, leadership character development training, and strategic case studies. These programs are designed to cultivate critical skills such as analytical thinking, effective communication, sound decision-making, and interpersonal abilities, all of which are essential competencies in the educational leadership landscape.

Research conducted by Kilag and Sasan [70] provides empirical evidence that training conducted outside the workplace, such as workshops and leadership courses, significantly enhances the self-confidence, managerial competence, and innovation capacity of school principals and other educational staff. In addition to skill development, off-the-job training also offers participants valuable opportunities to build professional networks with other educational leaders. This networking can serve as a continuous source of inspiration, support, and collaboration that extends well beyond the training period. Consequently, the implementation of off-the-job training as a strategic approach to improving leadership capabilities in education has proven to

be both effective and highly relevant in addressing the complex challenges currently faced in the educational sector.

4.6. Discussion

The findings of this study clearly indicate that off-the-job training contributes positively to enhancing leadership capabilities in the field of education. This conclusion is supported by the review of 40 research reports, the majority of which demonstrate that training conducted outside the workplace provides valuable opportunities for reflection, broader conceptual understanding, and the strengthening of managerial competencies. Off-the-job training allows participants to engage in learning within a non-formal environment, free from the constraints of their daily work routines. This setting facilitates deeper development of leadership skills that may not be as effectively nurtured during on-the-job activities [71]. These findings are consistent with the work of Tanggulangan et al. [72], who developed a coaching model based on situational leadership and emotional intelligence, which has shown significant positive impacts on students, teachers, and the wider school community. Such training environments provide space for leaders to critically evaluate their practices and to integrate new approaches, thereby fostering transformative leadership within educational settings.

Moreover, this study reinforces the conclusions of Warman et al. [47] and Apriwulan et al. [73], who emphasized the importance of leadership training design that is contextually relevant and oriented toward practical application. Successful training programs are not merely defined by the content delivered but also by how these programs are thoughtfully designed and effectively implemented. Maisaroh et al. [74] further suggests that regular, professional development incorporating social and interdisciplinary training can significantly enhance teaching and learning practices, particularly within higher education. Thus, it can be inferred that well-structured off-the-job training represents a strategic investment aimed at cultivating adaptive and innovative educational leaders who can meet evolving challenges. Such an investment is critical for sustaining educational improvement over time, ensuring that leadership development aligns with real-world demands and institutional goals.

Interestingly, the effectiveness of off-the-job training is also influenced by stakeholder engagement and the perceived relevance of the training content, as highlighted by Suryani et al. [75]. Training programs that lack institutional policy support and continuous mentoring systems risk reducing the transfer of newly acquired skills into actual workplace practice. This assertion is further supported by Faizuddin et al. [51], who stress that the backing of school principals and the presence of supportive organizational structures play vital roles in enabling teachers to apply what they have learned effectively. Therefore, leadership training must extend beyond individual capacity-building and be integrated within supportive policies and systems that promote ongoing professional learning. Without such integration, even the most well-designed training risks falling short of achieving meaningful and lasting impact within educational institutions.

Specifically, leadership training for school principals should also address emotional intelligence and political skills, which are critical for navigating complex educational environments, as discussed by Afandi et al. [76]. In this context, off-the-job training serves as a valuable platform for enhancing interpersonal abilities and strategic decision-making, competencies that are often difficult to develop fully through on-the-job training alone. Furthermore, Culajara [77] demonstrates that coaching-based training can enhance teachers' psychological capital, which directly improves their performance. This finding strengthens the argument that off-the-job training should incorporate psychological and social approaches, emphasizing holistic development rather than focusing solely on technical skills. Such an approach enables educational leaders to better manage stress, build resilience, and foster positive organizational climates conducive to learning and innovation.

In practice, the implementation of leadership training programs must also consider local cultural contexts and policy frameworks. Research by Ghamrawi et al. [78] in Beirut reveals that peer-coaching leadership development programs successfully shift leadership models from traditional top-down approaches to more collaborative styles. This underscores that the success of training initiatives depends heavily on dissemination strategies and contextual relevance. Similarly, El-Hamamsy et al. [59] and Hanama et al. [79] provide evidence that the cascade adaptation model is effective in spreading training widely, provided it is supported by mentors and expert facilitators. This model offers a strategic alternative for training providers in Indonesia aiming to develop scalable and sustainable leadership development programs. Incorporating these models

into local practices can ensure broader reach and deeper impact, fostering continuous leadership growth across educational systems.

Overall, the findings of this study align with existing literature, demonstrating that off-the-job training functions not only as a means of technical skill development but also as a crucial platform for shaping leadership character, enhancing social competencies, and designing transformational educational visions. Accordingly, educational institutions and policymakers need to formulate comprehensive, flexible, and evidence-based training policies to ensure that the outcomes of such programs genuinely contribute to the advancement of educational quality. The successful integration of training outcomes with the school's organizational culture emerges as a key factor in creating competent and impactful educational leaders. By fostering this integration, education systems can cultivate leaders who are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of contemporary education and drive sustainable improvements.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of 40 new study reports selected through the PRISMA approach, it can be concluded that off-the-job training has a significant role in improving leadership skills in education. Training outside the work environment provides various strategic benefits, such as the development of social and emotional skills. In addition, off-the-job training encourages the transformation of leadership styles from authoritarian to transformational and democratic, which has been proven to increase teacher motivation, performance, and job satisfaction. Leadership training, coaching, and professional development models have also been proven effective in improving the competence of teachers and principals, both individually and collectively, at all levels of education. The success of this training is highly dependent on the design of relevant programs, policy support, adequate supervision, and the involvement of the education community. The implication, for researchers and education practitioners, is that further research is needed to examine the long-term impact of off-the-job training on organizational culture, institutional performance, and student learning outcomes, as well as the use of study results as a reference in designing self-development and professional learning communities.

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