

Review Article

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School Governance: Its Characteristics and Policy Implications

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Abstract

Background/purpose. School governance seems to be the most exciting research topic for many researchers these days; it can be because it provides the best ways of organizing schools in more complex contexts than ever before, and conversely, it can be so sophisticated that it can meet all the challenges of the contexts.

Materials/methods. By employing the bibliometric method and extracting 227 documents from the Web of Science, this paper focuses on the primary features of the picture of school governance that have been researched by scientists over the past four decades.

Results. The main findings show an increasing trend in publications, with the United States and England serving as research hubs. Wermke Wieland, Verger Antoni, and Hartley David are the most influential scholars. Educational Management, Administration, and Leadership is the most relevant source. Five research themes in SG are School governance and its contexts, Leadership roles, Internal governance, New public management, and Autonomy. Moreover, topical topics in recent years related to the Principal and the School board.

Conclusion. The findings also insight into further research in terms of power and authority in schools, or the differences and similarities of school governance in different cultures and social-economic conditions, or should be seen in the scope of the regions or global that can find out effective models to meet the demand of how to be of smart learners these days.

1. Introduction

School governance (SG) encompasses various aspects, including policy implementation, stakeholder involvement, and the roles of different sectors in educational management. It involves the need for good school governance models that promote consensus development among stakeholders to enhance educational outcomes and address challenges like unemployment among vocational school graduates. The evolution of school governance reflects a shift towards centralization, influencing decision-making processes and community involvement. Additionally, the involvement of professionals from the business sector in school governance programs can bring valuable perspectives and contribute positively to educational practices. Effective school governance requires fostering strong relationships between school committees and management, emphasizing continuous training and communication to optimize the committee's role in school development.

1.1. Problem of the Study

The literature on school governance is expanding, but there are still a number of important bibliometric research gaps. Significantly, there aren't many thorough international comparative studies that chart research output, networks of collaboration, and regional thematic trends. With little representation from the Global South, the field is heavily influenced by viewpoints from the Global North, which skews our understanding of governance models. Furthermore, few studies use sophisticated methods like topic modeling or co-word analysis to reveal obscure conceptual patterns, and there is little longitudinal analysis documenting the development of governance themes over time. There are also a few network analyses that pinpoint important writers, organizations, and journals, which restrict our understanding of knowledge flows and interdisciplinary relationships. Additionally, the literature is still dispersed among sub-themes such as accountability, autonomy, and leadership without integration. It can be said that school governance is a multi-aspect issue that can be seen in some ways, but there is still no review of school governance in terms of analyzing the documents collected by a database, which is why some questions of school governance will be answered by the following research questions:

What are the changes in publication trends in the knowledge base of SG from 2005 to 2023?

Who are the most relevant scholars in the knowledge base of SG from 2005 to 2023?

What are the scopes of SG sources in the knowledge base of SG from 2005 to 2023?

What are the SG themes in the knowledge base of SG from 2005 to 2023?

What are the emerging keywords in the knowledge base of SG from 2005 to 2023?

1.2. Literature Review

The intricacies of school governance in England and other OECD contexts are examined in research by James et al. (2011) and Wilkins (2015, 2019), which shows how neoliberal reforms and socio-economic circumstances influence governance practices. James et al. present the ideas of governance agency, or the ability to act in spite of scarce resources, and governance capital, or the abilities, connections, and resources accessible to school governors. These elements play a part in the "amplifier effect" that perpetuates disparities between schools. Wilkins (2015) emphasizes how school governors are professionalized and disciplined by state-imposed accountability mechanisms, which are influenced by New Public Management (NPM), in order to preserve control under the pretense of autonomy. NPM-inspired governance reforms appear differently in countries like England, Australia, Spain, and Switzerland, according to a comparative study by Wilkins et al. (2019), creating hybrid governance models tailored to.

Furthermore, new research on educational leadership emphasizes distributed and context-responsive methods over top-down, "heroic" leadership models. Dominant distributed leadership frameworks, especially those of Firestone and Heller and Spillane et al., are criticized by Maxcy and Nguyen (2006) for ignoring the political aspects of leadership and placing an excessive amount of emphasis on administrative control. The importance of more inclusive performance definitions and mutual accountability with local stakeholders is demonstrated by their case studies from Texas schools. Currie et al. (2005) also highlight the conflict between the UK's government-imposed standards under New Labour, which limit leadership autonomy and make stakeholder participation more difficult, and the contingent, context-sensitive practices of school leaders. Extending this perspective internationally, Maroy et al. (2017) investigate how "vernacular globalisations" influence educational leadership and accountability systems, demonstrating how nations such as Quebec and France modify global education discourses in distinctive ways. While France discursively absorbs global narratives without undergoing substantial structural change, Quebec fortifies centralized accountability through institutional ties. Together, these studies highlight how crucial distributed, politically conscious, and culturally embedded leadership models are to modern school governance.

A change from strict hierarchical systems to more integrated, cooperative, and context-sensitive governance models is evident in the field of internal governance in education. The term "inter-regnum" was first used by Hartley (2007) to describe a new policy philosophy in UK education that encourages inter-agency cooperation and blurred professional boundaries. Consumer culture, theories of organizational learning, and the developing logic of networked, market-based governance under "new capitalism" all lend credence to this model. Luschei and Jeong (2021) broaden the international perspective by examining data from 68 nations and finding that, regardless of principal leadership philosophies, increased teacher participation in decision-making is consistently associated with higher student achievement across all subject areas. This implies that internal governance frameworks that empower educators may have a greater influence than conventional leadership approaches. In the meantime, Allen and Mintrom (2010) stress how accountability plays a part in changing governance in the US through reforms like charter schools and mayoral control. They contend that civic engagement and civic duty, which reflect public accountability for equitable education, must be the foundation of effective school governance. Collectively, these studies highlight the value of contextually grounded, participatory, and integrated approaches to school governance that strike a balance between civic duty and distributed authority.

Research on New Public Management (NPM) in education emphasizes its hybridization across contexts, global influence, and unforeseen implications for governance and equity. Chile's post-1980 educational reforms, which combine elements of market-based, evaluative, and professional bureaucratic state models, are examined by Bellei and Munoz (2023). They conclude that although reforms increased access and learning outcomes, they also created a highly privatized and segregated system with enduring inequality, indicating that NPM-driven policies have had both significant negative effects and few positive ones. Verger et al. (2019) investigate the ways in which large-scale assessments and test-based accountability have changed the governance of education around the world. They contend that although these NPM-promoted tools are widely used in a variety of contexts, they function in politically contingent and path-dependent ways that are impacted by regional administrative customs. In the meantime, Verger and Curran (2014) examine the paradoxical ways in which Spain has embraced NPM reforms, including school autonomy, principal professionalization, and teacher accountability. Despite their conservative beginnings, social democratic governments adopted these reforms as a means of re-establishing public confidence in education. However, due to intricate institutional and political dynamics, Spain's implementation has been inconsistent and incoherent. These studies collectively show that although NPM has emerged

as a leading global model for education policy, local adaptation shapes its results, which frequently lead to conflicts between democratic governance, accountability, and equity.

Autonomy is a historically and culturally contingent concept that is continuously negotiated between professional agency and state control, as studies on autonomy in school governance have shown, particularly in relation to the teaching profession. Wermke and Prøitz (2019) argue that the traditional division between European Didaktik and Anglo-American curriculum models oversimplifies teacher governance and hides more complex dynamics like peer, parental, and civil society influences. They suggest going beyond this division to examine teachers' functions as administrators and civil servants, positioned between the state and society, using data from six different nations. In a previous study, Wermke and Höstfält (2014) created a framework for comparing teacher autonomy across nations and time periods, emphasizing how governance structures and curriculum evaluation regimes both promote and restrict autonomy. They suggest looking at autonomy from both an institutional and a service-based standpoint, which enables more complex understandings of how autonomy differs depending on the situation. Using Sweden as an example, Wermke and Forsberg (2017) demonstrate how the 1990s reforms, which initially increased autonomy through decentralization and marketization, ultimately led to more standardization, thereby reducing teacher autonomy. They stress that autonomy is a dynamic balance between external policy constraints and internal professional control rather than a static state. All of these studies contend that in order to comprehend teacher autonomy, one must pay close attention to national histories, policy developments, and the changing relationship between bureaucratic oversight and professional freedom.

2. Methodology

2.1. Bibliometric Method

Bibliometric analysis can be applied to any study topic to uncover both objective and hidden patterns. The bibliometric method provides a quantitative methodology to efficiently manage the growing volume of books across all disciplines. This method was conducted in various fields, such as start-up success (Toan-Vu et al., 2021), metaverse (Feng et al., 2024), and STEM education (Phuong et al., 2023).

2.2. Reasons to Choose a Data Source

Reliable sources and comprehensive databases are essential elements for attaining success in quantitative approaches, such as scientometrics analysis. The Thomson Reuters ISI Web of Science (WOS) is presently regarded as one of the foremost databases (Luong et al., 2023). The current investigation utilized the Web of Science (WOS), specifically its Core Collection Databases, which comprise meticulously selected scholarly publications from around the world and subject to peer review. This collection was utilized to access scientific literature. Moreover, it is surrounded by a multitude of academic specialties and various forms of knowledge that are easily accessible.

2.3. Data Gathering Process

The search for the relevant article in the Web of Science (WOS) was conducted by examining the "Topics" section, which includes the item's title, abstract, author names, and keywords. There are two tags in WOS that are utilized in the process of searching: the Boolean functions (OR) and AND. To find documents that fit the field of study, we use the following keywords: school governance, new public management, school. The initial search result consisted of 449 documents, each of which contained either the keyword school governance or the two keywords new public management and school. Next, the data set is narrowed to the criteria of the article, proceeding paper, the language of publication, and the subject of study. (Education & Educational Research). The final data set for analysis contains 227 documents (see Fig. 1).

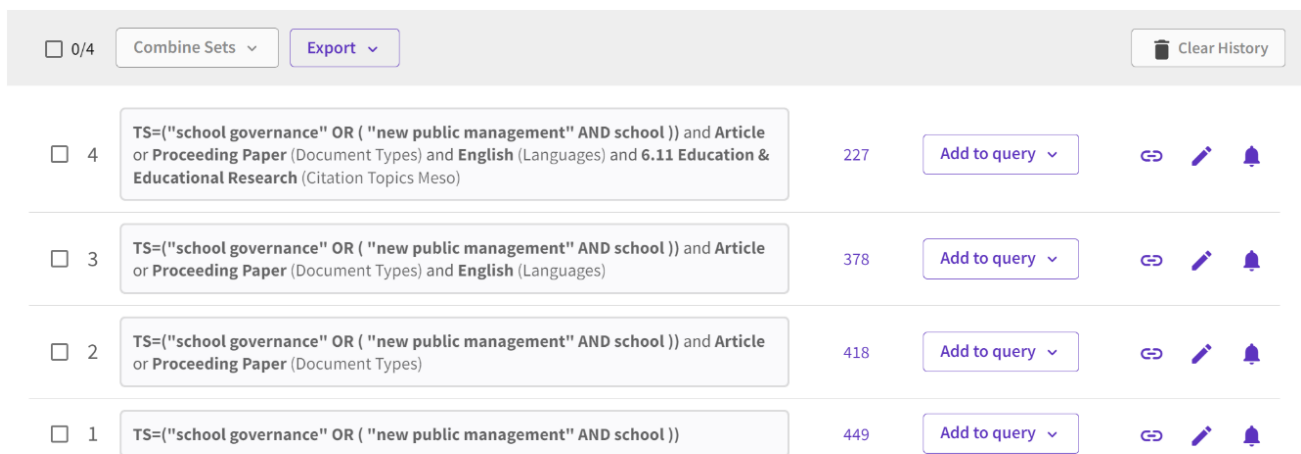


Figure 1. Data Collection Process

2.4. Data Analysis

In this study, we use statistical description analysis and science mapping analysis to respond to the research questions. Number of citations was summarized to point out the most cited documents (see Table 4). Number of documents was calculated to identify the annual publication of this knowledge base. The frequency of keywords was utilized to explore the most relevant topics. Both the number of documents and the number of citations were used to investigate the most important countries, authors, and sources (see Tables 1, 2, and 3). Additionally, co-author analysis visualized the collaborations of countries and authors (see Figure 3, Figure 4). Bibliography coupling analysis explored the research themes and the sources' scopes (see Figure 5, Figure 6).

To conduct a bibliometric analysis, we used VOSviewer, a bibliometric tool that has been developed alongside numerous others. The VOSviewer program utilizes two scales of measurement, namely the number of links and the overall strength, to depict bibliographic coupling, co-citation, and co-occurrence networks. According to Van Eck and Waltman (2014), VOSviewer is capable of efficiently managing substantial volumes of data, possesses advanced mapping capabilities, and supports all the functionalities investigated in this work. Moreover, we also used Microsoft Excel to visualize the findings.

3. Results

3.1. Publication Trends in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

A total of 227 documents were retrieved by focusing on the annual publication, which tends to increase from 2005 to 2023 (Figure 2). The document's statistics for 218 articles and nine proceeding papers indicate three periods during which the number of publications rose rapidly. 2005 - 2013 with a high rate of 4 to 10 publications per year. From 2014 to 2019, with fluctuating rates, especially in 2016 and 2018, the number of documents tended to decrease, with 5 and 7 documents being published. Between 2020 and 2023, the number of publications was the highest, with 23 to 29 documents. The highest point of annual publications in the knowledge base of school governance within 18 years was in 2020, with 29 additional documents published.

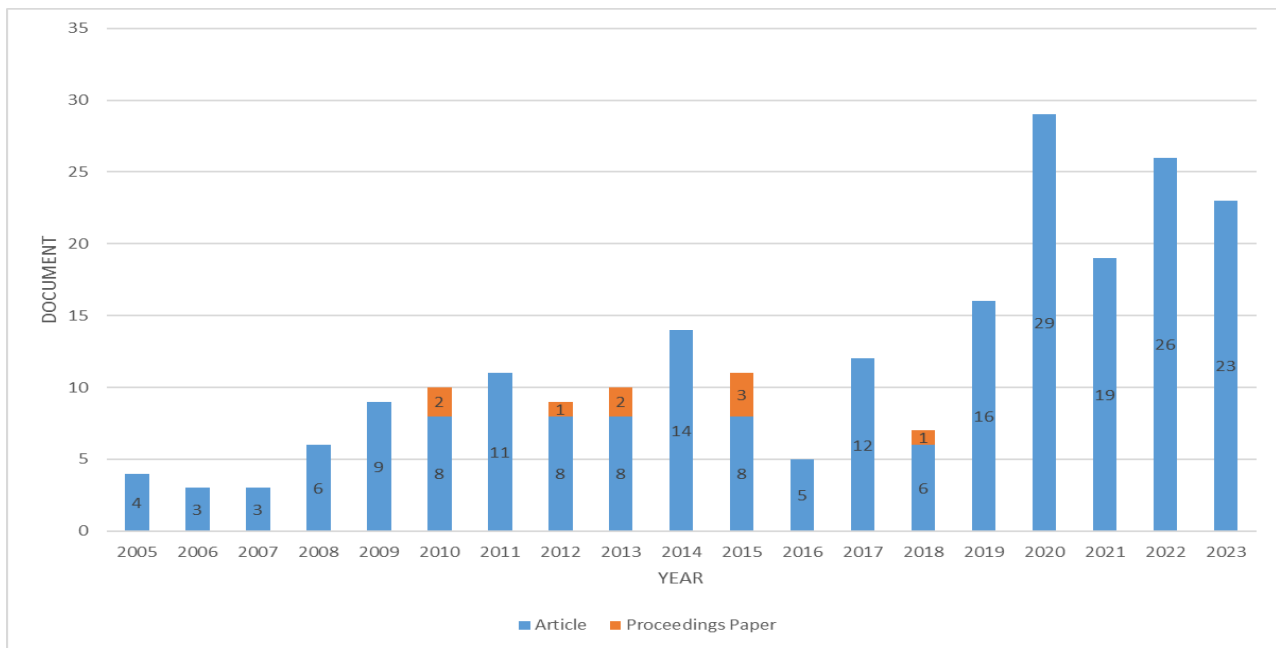


Figure 2. Annual Publication in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

The geographical distribution of the research was analyzed to investigate the collaboration between countries in the knowledge base of school governance. Based on Figure 3, the bibliometric map created in VOSviewer is based on countries as a unit analysis in network visualization mode. Network visualization has been shown to be a valuable tool for analyzing a wide range of countries in cooperation with others. The figure shows the network of 46 countries in 23 clusters. Each cluster is presented in a different color. The node size represents the number of articles originating from a certain country, and the thickness of the connection indicates the number of collaborations between the two countries.

It is noticed that the largest cluster is the blue one from 2014 - 2016, with around 15 nodes, and it had a thick network connection with the USA and South Africa. The second biggest cluster is the green one (4 nodes) from 2020, the major country in this group is Spain. Especially between England and South Africa, this shows that there are many similarities in school governance between these two countries; maybe South Africa is a member of the British Commonwealth, or maybe there is a reason. The country's history shows that it has long connections with European nations and European migrants. Regarding the relationship between England and the USA, it can be said that these two countries are both highly developed countries and have similar levels of social development, and at the same time, these two countries have historical connections in immigration as well as development cooperation in all fields.

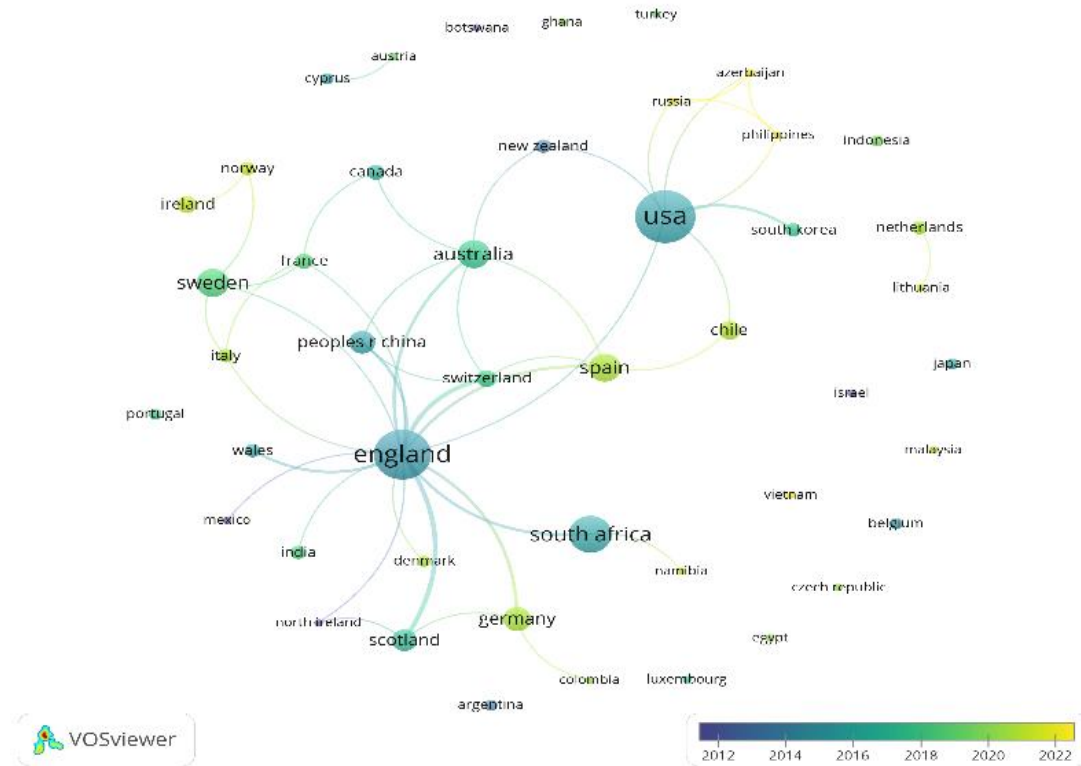


Figure 3. Countries' Collaborations in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

The ten most published articles in the knowledge base of School governance over the past two decades from the Scopus database can be seen in Table 1. The result summarizes the list of 10 countries that have the most remarkable publications in this field. It can be seen that the USA is at the top with 51 documents, accounting for more than 26 %. This ratio is higher than the second one, England, with 45 publications and a rate of 23%. Next is South Africa, which has 24 publications and accounts for 12%. In this list, Spain, Sweden, and Australia, which ranked respectively 4th, 5th, and 6th, have the same number of publications in the knowledge base of school governance (with 14 documents). Only one Asian country has publications in this field, China, with 9 documents accounting for 5%. This result shows how School Governance studies have been conducted in European and Asian countries, which still have many different levels of attention.

Table 1. Top 10 Countries in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

ID	Country	Document	ID	Country	Citation
1	USA	51	1	England	763
2	England	45	2	USA	512
3	South Africa	24	3	Spain	219
4	Spain	14	4	Sweden	197
5	Sweden	14	5	Australia	182
6	Australia	14	6	South Africa	152
7	Germany	10	7	Peoples R China	83
8	Peoples R. China	9	8	Germany	70
9	Scotland	8	9	New Zealand	57
10	Chile	6	10	Switzerland	56

The top 10 countries are ranked by the number of citations for the publications in the knowledge base of school governance, represented in Table 10. England was ranked first with 763 citations. Meanwhile, the USA was second with 512 citations. Spain was the following country (197 citations), representing a big gap compared to the USA. Interestingly, New Zealand and Switzerland were not the top countries with the most publications but ranked among the countries with the most citations. The results show 8 important countries have the most publications and citations in the school governance studies.

3.2. The Most Relevant Scholars in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

The Scopus database presented 227 documents with 420 authors on the theme of the knowledge base of school governance from 2005 to 2023. The ten authors with the most publications and citations, including those from the United States, England, Ireland, Spain, and Sweden, can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Top 10 Authors in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

ID	Author	Affiliation	Document	ID	Author	Affiliation	Citation
1	Wermke, Wieland	Uppsala University, Sweden	4	1	Verger, Antoni	Autonomous University of Barcelona, University of Girona	140
2	Ford, Michael R.	University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, United States	4	2	Duflo, Esther	Massachusetts Institute of Technology, United States	118
3	Verger, Antoni	Autonomous University of Barcelona, University of Girona	3	3	Dupas, Pascaline	Stanford University, United States	118
4	Hartley, David	University of Birmingham, United Kingdom	3	4	Kremer, Michael	Harvard University, United States	118
5	Wilkins, Andrew	University of East London, United Kingdom	3	5	Hartley, David	University of Birmingham, United Kingdom	108
6	James, Chris	University of Bath, United Kingdom	3	6	Wermke, Wieland	Uppsala University, Sweden	106
7	Mcnamara, Gerry	Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland	3	7	Wilkins, Andrew	University of East London, United Kingdom	71
8	Du Plessis, Pierre	University of Johannesburg, South Africa	3	8	Parcerisa, Lluís	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain	70

9	Parcerisa, Lluís	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain	2	9	Curran, Marta	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain	70
10	Collet-Sabe, Jordi	University College London, United Kingdom	2	10	Fontdevila, Clara	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain	70

Among the three top researchers of the last two decades, Wieland Wermke is the author of the theme of School Governance Studies with 4 documents. Another author with the same amount of publications is Michael R. Ford from the USA. Furthermore, the researchers had 3 publications belonging to the authors from Spain (Antoni Verger), England (David Hartley, Andrew Wilkins, Chris James), Ireland (Gerry McNamara), and South Africa (Pierre Du Plessis).

The database in Table 2 reveals no uniformity between the top researchers with the highest number of publications and those with the highest citation counts. For example, although Wieland Wermke has the most publications, it is ranked in the 6th place in terms of citation times (106 citations). Antoni Verger from Spain was third in the theme category of most publications. However, he topped the chart regarding the number of citations received (140). Meanwhile, David Hartley and Andrew Wilkins from England have different rankings regarding the number of citations they received (ranked 5th and 7th, respectively).

Interestingly, these two researchers have the same number of publications, but there is a significant difference in the number of citations they received (approximately 37). Meanwhile, some authors, such as Lluís Parcerisa from Spain, were ranked 9th (with two publications) among the top 10 most published authors but placed 8th in the group with the most citations (70 citations). Additionally, some authors did not appear in the top 10 most published authors but were among those with the most citations, such as Esther Duflo, Pascaline Dupas, Michael Kremer (with 118 citations), Marta Curran, and Clara Fontdevila (with 70 citations).

Therefore, it clearly shows that based on the results of Table 2, the repeated authors in two columns could predict the most influential researcher in this field. It summarizes the work of the most important authors, including Wieland Wermke, Antoni Verger, David Hartley, Andrew Wilkins, and Lluís Parcerisa.

A coauthorship network was extracted from the knowledge base of school governance in the last two decades. A total of 420 authors were identified with various sizes of nodes shown in different colors from 2005 to 2023. The blue and purple nodes are present for the oldest authors in this field. The green nodes identified by the authors were published from 2018 to 2020. The yellow nodes represent authors who have published between 2020 and 2023. Additionally, the size of the nodes indicates the number of publications by the authors. The nodes are more prominent, and there are more publications in the field of school governance studies.

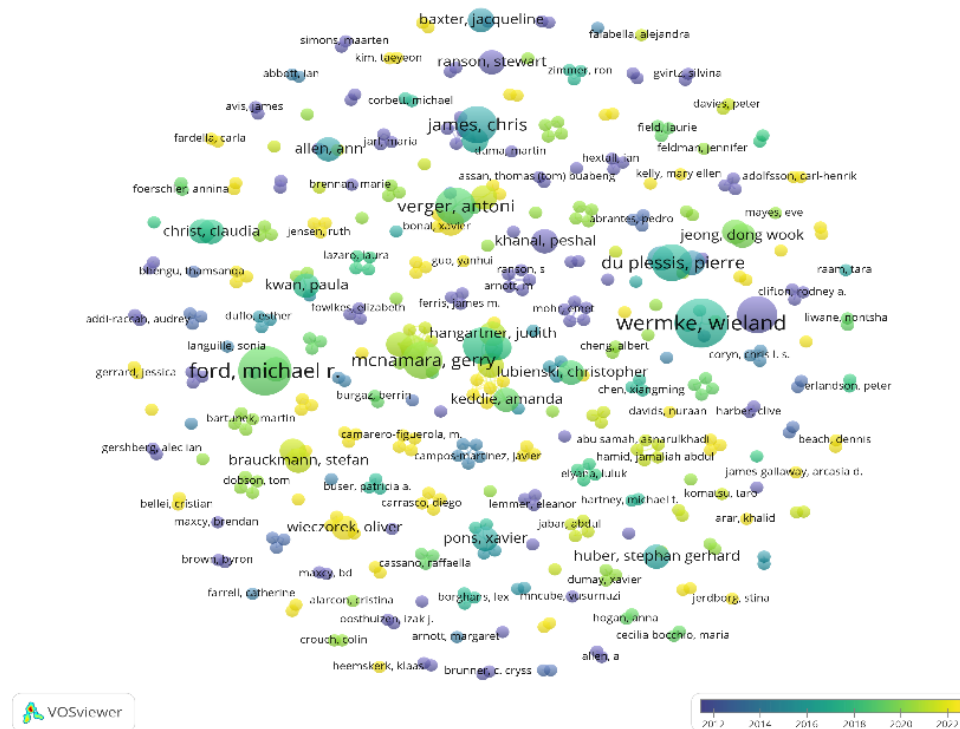


Figure 4. Research community in the knowledge base of SG from 2005 to 2023 (420 authors)

The bibliometrics analysis results in this section which identifies essential communities of scholars studying school governance and the relationships within and among the clusters through co-authorship or citations. Every community seems to be centered around a professor with a network of other former students, colleagues, and collaborators.

The bibliometric map displayed in Figure 4 shows that the blue and purple communities primarily represent the authors' publications from 2012 to 2018. These clusters indicated the authors' contributions, representing countries such as South Africa, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The most significant nodes that correlate with the highest number of publications on school governance are shown in the co-author map from 2012 to 2018, created under the direction of Wieland Wermke from Sweden. It is appropriate to note that Pierre Du Plessis, a leader from South Africa, is a member of a smaller node in this cluster. Another co-authorship, led by UK-based Chris James, also has a node cluster of the same size.

The leader of the co-authorship from 2018 to 2020 was Michael R. Ford, an American who was the core of the green cluster. Antoni Verger of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the University of Girona is another well-known author in the smaller node. The number of nodes in this cluster indicates that authors in European nations are still concerned about school governance. The partners associated with the center author in the green cluster have publications from 2020 to 2023, as shown visually. In Dublin, Ireland, for instance, the point where the green and yellow nodes converge is Gerry McNamara of Dublin City University.

The yellow nodes spread evenly among independent authors in Figure 4 represent the recently published documents. This community centered around Oliver Wieczorek from the International Center for Higher Education Research, University of Kassel, Germany, presents for the new authors in the school governance studies. A smaller community is concentrated around M. Camarero Figuerola from the University of Rovira i Virgili, Spain.

Conclusively, the figure presents an unambiguous visual science map of the leading writers who have contributed significantly to the publishing of school governance. With Wieland Wermke, Pierre Du Plessis, and Chris James as the presenters, most publications concentrate on 2012–2018.

Emerging between 2018 and 2020, the author seems significant, focusing on Michael R. Ford. As of 2023, the writers of this work, who are from Germany and Spain, are still deeply interested in this study area.

3.3. The scopes of SG Sources in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

Figure 5 shows a high-level visualization of connectedness based on the relationship among 112 sources of journals publishing on school governance studies. There are 5 clusters with various colors describing the articles published in these journals, such as yellow, red, purple, blue, and green. The size of nodes identifies the most significant journal in clusters, and the thickness of the links among the journals shows the level of relationships. This is an indication of thematic overlap between journals. Total 112 sources

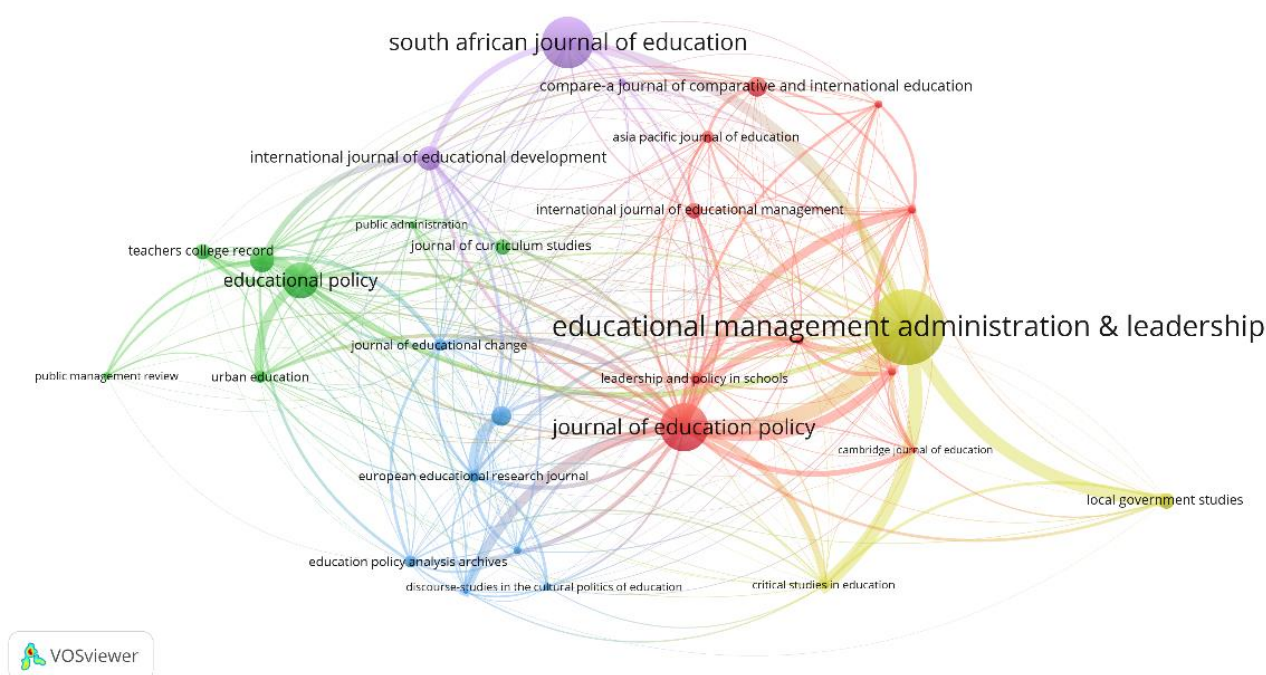


Figure 5. Scopes' Sources in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023 (30 sources)

Figure 5 displays a map highlighting the top journals with the most articles in the governance studies. The top journals are listed in the following order: Educational Management, Administration & Leadership, South African Journal of Education, Journal of Education Policy, and Educational Policy. These journals are considered the most crucial venues for publishing research.

The first cluster, with the most prominent nodes, is presented in yellow, centered on the Journal of Educational Management, Administration & Leadership. This journal has strong connections with other journals, including Local Government Studies, the Cambridge Journal of Education, Critical Studies in Education, and Leadership and Policy in Schools. These clusters focus on educational administration, management, and leadership studies in the school context. Furthermore, the articles contributed to sharing the understanding of the theorists, policy-makers, and educational administrators. Therefore, in summary, this cluster could be named *Educational Management Administration*.

The next cluster related to the South African Journal of Education Studies is purple. It has the most vital connection with the International Journal of Educational Development. The articles in this journal aim to articulate the study's relevance to the education system characterized by transformation, an emerging or developed economy, and/or scarce resources. The studies contribute

to promoting human capability and educational change in diverse settings. This cluster generally focuses on the *Transformation of Education resources related to Policy*.

The Journal of Education Policy centers the red cluster with 10 sources. The journals with related connections include Leadership and Policy in Schools, International Journal of Educational Management, Asia Pacific Journal of Education, and Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education. The scope of these journals focuses on discussing, analyzing, and debating policy implementation, policymaking, and the impact of policies on various educational aspects. In proposing sustainable development, these journals provide a forum for sharing ideas and information, as well as maximizing studies on school governance in multiple aspects, especially the roles of educators and school leaders. This cluster concerns *The international perspectives on School Leadership and Policy*.

The green cluster publishes articles that discuss *the relationship between educational policy and School settings*. The center of this cluster is Educational Policy with seven sources. This cluster is centered on educational policy, which has several key links. The most vital link in this cluster is Urban Education. The others include Teacher College Record, Journal of Curriculum Studies, Public Management Review, and Journal of Public Administration. The educational research focuses on effectively integrating policy and educational practice in the school setting. These clusters' multidisciplinary themes span a variety of school-related topics, including curriculum, educational policy, human development, special education, teacher education, and educational equity. This cluster offers insights into qualitative and quantitative empirical investigations and a theoretical overview of school management processes.

The last blue cluster, which is the center of the European Educational Research Journal, is interested in the junction of studies across Europe. Depending on the school setting, this cluster represents the voices of policymakers, administrators, and practitioners, including school leaders, system administrators, teacher leaders, consultants, facilitators, educational researchers, and staff development specialists. Journals with noteworthy ties include Journal of Educational Change, Education Policy Analysis Archives, and Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education. This green cluster suggests *The Implication for Educational Policy*, which could be approached in a wide range of scientific research.

Table 3. Top Three Sources of Each Scope in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

Cluster	Source	Document	Citation
1	journal of education policy	12	205
1	compare-a journal of comparative and international education	5	31
1	International journal of educational management	4	15
2	educational policy	9	103
2	educational administration quarterly	6	34
2	journal of curriculum studies	4	120
3	comparative education	5	21
3	journal of educational change	3	22
3	European educational research journal	3	9

4	educational management administration & leadership	19	215
4	local government studies	4	25
4	critical studies in education	2	88
5	south african journal of education	13	157
5	International journal of educational development	6	70
5	cogent social sciences	2	2

Table 3 summarizes the top three sources based on the journals in each scope above. Cluster 1 comprises three journals with the highest number of published documents and citations. The Journal of Education Policy is a valuable resource for most researchers to provide and share their points and insights into educational policy development. With 205 citations, this journal establishes a reliable position in the field of school governance. The Compare-A Journal of Comparative and International Education and the International Journal of Educational Management are valuable resources in this cluster. Visually, Figure 5 above also clearly shows that the red cluster has a lot of connections with other clusters in the bibliometric map. Therefore, the studies published in this journal can serve as an original, critical, and theoretical reference resource.

Cluster 2 comprises three journals: the Journal of Curriculum Studies, Educational Policy, and Educational Administration Quarterly. Although the number of published documents is 9, Educational Policy has 103 citations. As well as the Journal of Curriculum Studies has 4 documents, but it has 120 citations. The number of citations present for the level of involvement adhering to a specific discourse convention in a School Governance study. On the other hand, to discuss the relationship between educational policy and school settings, the high citations explicitly link the academic professionals' points to present their critically informed research.

Comparative Education, Journal of Education Change, and European Education Research Journal are in cluster 3. The number of citations and documents in this cluster is the lowest. In a while, cluster 4 has the highest number. The Educational Management Administration and Leadership journal has the highest number of published documents based on School Governance, with 215 citations. The two other resources in this cluster also have many citations though fewer documents than the others.

Cluster 5 contains the studies, as the analysis above, concerns the transformation of policy-related educational resources. The South African Journal of Education is second, with 13 publications and 157 citations. Besides that, the International Journal of Educational Development also has high rates of documents and citations. The studies on this issue could be worthy of academic professionals, authors, and educators identifying the impact of the policy change at various levels and in all facets of formal and informal education.

3.4. The SG Themes in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

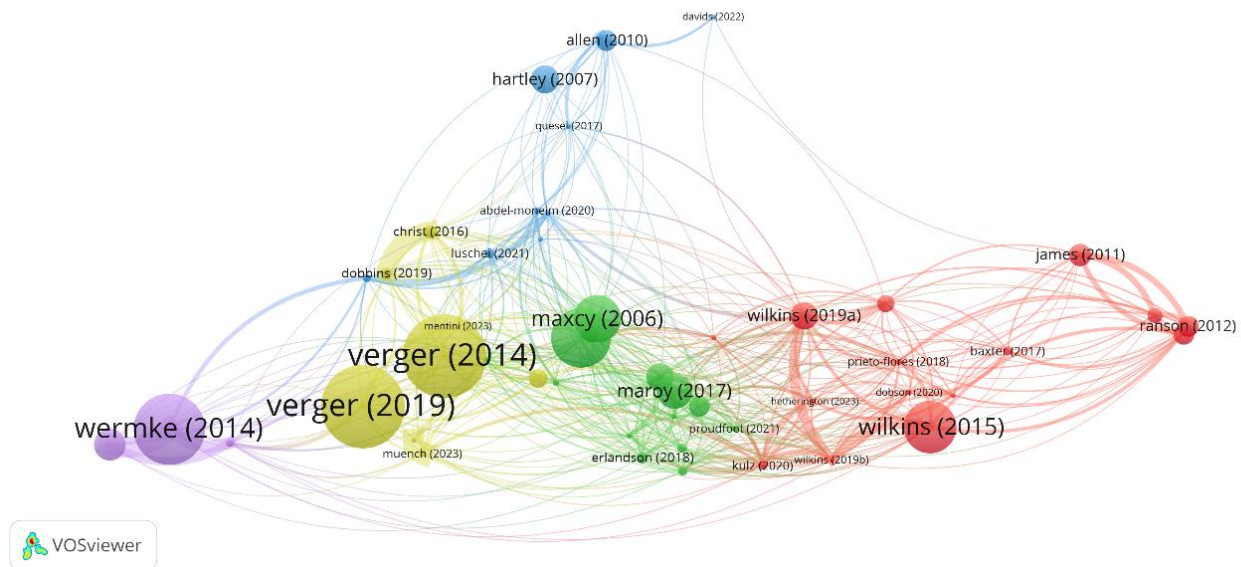


Figure 6. Research Themes in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023 (30 documents)

The research results show the co-citation network analysis of the most cited references. The number of references is restricted to 30 for effective visualization. Table 4 lists the documents in each cluster in Figure 3. The centrality-based clustering generated five clusters from the predefined nodes. The node size represents the core author with the most publications and citations in this area. They play a crucial role in contributing to the valuation studies in the knowledge base of school governance. The red cluster with the centralization is Wilkins in nearly 5 years. Verges is a virtual author in the yellow cluster. The green cluster has Maxcy, who has been a prominent author since 2006. The purple cluster has Wermke, who has made many contributions to scientific research on school governance. The last blue cluster with the smallest node size has Harley, who appears as a professional with various links to others.

In general, these clusters were examined to identify the research themes. We named each theme based on the main topic cover its documents. Table 4 shows the top three documents of each theme in the knowledge base of SG.

Table 4. Top Three Documents of Each Theme in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

Cluster	Author (Year)	Title	Source	Citations	Themes
1 (red)	Wilkins (2015)	Professionalizing school governance: the disciplinary effects of school autonomy and inspection on the changing role of school governors	Journal of Education Policy	44	School governance and its contexts
	Wilkins (2019a)	Translations of new public management: a decentred approach to school governance in four OECD countries	Globalisation societies and education	23	

	James (2011)	School Governing bodies in England under pressure: The effects of socio-economic context and school performance	Educational management administration & leadership	19	
2 (green)	Currie (2005)	Transformational leadership within secondary schools in England. A panacea for organizational ills?	Public administration	50	Leadership roles
	Maxcy (2006)	The politics of distributing leadership - reconsidering leadership distribution in two texas elementary schools	Educational policy	40	
	Maroy (2017)	Vernacular globalisations: neo-statist accountable""lity policies in France and Quebec education	Journal of Education Policy	30	
3 (blue)	Hartley (2007)	Education policy and the 'inter'-regnum	Journal of Education Policy	24	Internal governance
	Allen (2010)	Responsibility and school governance	Educational policy	18	
	Luschei (2021)	School governance and student achievement: cross-national evidence from the 2015 pisa	Educational administration quarterly	9	
4 (yellow)	Verger (2019)	Reforming governance through policy instruments: how and to what extent standards, tests and accountability in education spread worldwide	Discourse-studies in the cultural politics of education	70	new public management
	Verger (2014)	New public management as a global education policy: its adoption and re-contextualization in a southern European setting	Critical studies in education	70	
	Bellei (2023)	Models of regulation, education policies, and changes in the education system: A long-term analysis of the Chilean case	Journal of educational change	16	

5 (Purple)	Wermke (2014)	Contextualizing teacher autonomy in time and space: a model for comparing various forms of governing the teaching profession	Journal of Curriculum Studies	60	Autonomy
	Wermke (2017)	The changing nature of autonomy: transformations of the late Swedish teaching profession	Scandinavian journal of educational research	27	
	Wermke (2019)	Discussing the curriculum-didaktik dichotomy and comparative conceptualisations of the teaching profession	Education inquiry	7	

Cluster 1 underscores the evolution of governance models in education, influenced by both global trends and local contexts. It elucidates how various countries navigate the implementation of governance mechanisms to ensure accountability and performance in their education systems, showcasing the interplay between global patterns and localized adaptations.

The top three articles in cluster 2 highlights the divergence between New Labour's modernization policy and New Public Management in the UK, the critique of traditional hierarchical leadership through distributed leadership frameworks, and the recognition of multiple globalizations within education systems, exemplified by variations in accountability policies in France and Quebec. In overall, it mentions the Management decentralization through the distributed leadership framework

With the main idea of Leadership practices and Educational autonomy, cluster 3 determined there is a burgeoning acknowledgment of responsibility frameworks within public schooling, elucidating reform endeavors such as the implementation of mayoral control over urban educational institutions and the proliferation of charter schools. The pivotal significance of teacher decision-making autonomy in fostering enhanced student achievement across academic domains prompts a critical examination of the multifaceted roles played by diverse stakeholders—from governmental entities to school boards, principals, and teachers—in shaping the educational landscape.

Comparative analysis of education regulation models in several countries illustrates a hybridization of bureaucratic, quasi-market, and evaluative state models, resulting in positive and negative access, quality, and equity outcomes. Therefore, cluster 4 sheds light on the complex dynamics shaping education governance globally and the varied impacts of policy implementation across different national contexts. Concurrently, new public management (NPM) policies promoted by international bodies, such as the OECD, have been adopted and adapted by various nations, including Spain, where social democratic governments have embraced them to address concerns about welfare state legitimacy. This situation has led to the transformation of the new public management in recent years.

The publications in cluster 5 endeavors to develop a model for comparing teacher autonomy across diverse national and historical contexts, recognizing its pivotal role in the teaching profession. It examines cases from various settings, revealing how deregulation, decentralization, and marketization reforms have both extended and restricted teacher autonomy over time. The study challenges traditional dichotomies in comparative school governance research, advocating for a

nuanced understanding of the roles played by state governance, parents, and peers in educational governance. It emphasizes the need to explore the tensions between teachers' roles as civil servants and administrators within broader civil society contexts. Overall, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of teacher autonomy and its implications for educational governance.

3.5. The Emerging Keywords in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

Table 5 presents frequency data about 10 distinct keyword categories. The term "school governance" emerges as the most prevalently utilized keyword within the corpus under examination. Remarkably, it is attributed to 31.28% (71 occurrences) of the articles within the dataset. This prominence underscores the importance of "school governance" within the journal's thematic scope. Moreover, its recurrent appearance underscores its salience as a requisite consideration for researchers seeking publications, thereby emphasizing its instrumental value in shaping scholarly discourse.

Subsequently, the keyword with the highest frequency count is "New Public Management." This term is attributed to 14.54% of the articles within the dataset, indicating a notable presence in scholarly discourse. Examining educational policy frameworks underscores the transformative potential of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm within the school context, suggesting its viability as a strategic policy solution across diverse national contexts.

Ranked third in frequency within the dataset, "Education policy" emerges as a prominent keyword, aligning with the thematic focus on school governance elucidated within the studies. Notably, the term "accountability" garners discernibly heightened research attention, indicative of its nuanced portrayal of stakeholder dynamics and resource allocation within the policy formulation and implementation trajectory.

Ranked fifth in frequency within the dataset, "governance" accounts for 6.17% of the articles. This prominence likely signifies the imperative of aligning educational policy implementation with state statutes and regulations. This implies significant ramifications for various stakeholders involved in the academic ecosystem, including teachers, students, administrators, and managerial personnel. The research within this domain delves into the multifaceted dimensions of policy implementation efficacy, evidenced by investigations into the concept of "school autonomy" (5.29%) and the pedagogical processes underpinning "education" (5.29%). Moreover, scholarly keywords highlight the centrality of stakeholder engagement and delineate the attendant responsibilities of participants within the governance framework, as evident in studies employing the keyword "participant" (4.41%).

The preeminent positioning of certain keywords underscores the predominant themes characterizing scholarly inquiries into school governance. Primarily, investigations in this domain focus on elucidating the organizational framework, distributive accountability, levels of institutional autonomy, pedagogical dynamics, and stakeholder engagement. Moreover, scholarly scrutiny extends to encompassing discourses pertaining to broader ideological frameworks, as evidenced by attention directed towards themes encapsulated by keywords such as "neoliberalism" (3.96%) and "leadership" (3.96%).

Table 5. Top 10 Keywords in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023

ID	Keywords	Frequency	Percentage	ID	Emerging keywords	Frequency	Avg. Year
1	School governance	71	31.28	1	Autonomy	3	2021
2	New public management	33	14.54	2	Professional development	3	2021
3	Education policy	16	7.05	3	Principal	8	2020
4	Accountability	16	7.05	4	School board	5	2020
5	Governance	14	6.17	5	Academy	4	2019
6	School autonomy	12	5.29	6	Sweden	4	2019
7	Education	12	5.29	7	Progressive education	3	2019
8	Participation	10	4.41	8	School leadership	5	2019
9	Neoliberalism	9	3.96	9	School choice	7	2019
10	Leadership	9	3.96	10	Privatization	4	2019

The results in Table 5 also determined the trend of emerging keywords in school governance studies. The first place belongs to “Autonomy” which appeared in 2021. These studies elucidate a discernible shift towards heightened educator autonomy and more careful consideration of student well-being, diverging from the confines of entrenched new public management frameworks. Examining autonomy in leadership practice underscores the nuanced interplay between individual agency and institutional difficulties, underscoring the necessity of harmonizing these dimensions to foster efficacious educational enhancement strategies.

The “professional development” appeared at the same time. It examines educational governance and leadership, particularly in New Public Management (NPM). It addresses the complexities of translating New Public Management principles into effective school leadership, emphasizing the need for a context-sensitive approach.

The emerging keywords “principal” and “school board” have been mentioned from 2020. The study suggests a holistic approach, with principals taking a central leadership role to address challenges in school context. In contrast, hybrid governance offers benefits by combining the transparency of elected boards with the specialized skills of appointed members. The proposed governance model emphasizes the importance of recruitment and training practices to ensure governors complement the board's expertise, possess appropriate motivations, and understand their roles effectively.

Since 2019, the studies on the knowledge base of school governance focus on emerging keywords, including "academy," Sweden," Progressive education," "School leadership," School choice," and "privatization." The most prominent related article explores governance and decision-making in education systems. Together, they underscore the need to understand governance structures and decision-making processes to address challenges and improve outcomes in education.

4. Discussion

The issue of internal governance in school governance is also very noteworthy when the roles of stakeholders in school governance change, the nature of autonomy, self-responsibility, and accountability change, and the need for leaders to change. Leading transformation in school organizational activities, the relationship between school governance and student academic achievement, and transforming learning programs according to the new governance context.

4.1. *The Changes in Publication Trends in the Knowledge Base of SG*

From 2005 to 2023, the publication trends in the field of school governance (SG) show three significant growth periods and a consistent rise in scholarly interest. Publications increased moderately but steadily between 2005 and 2013, from 4 to 10 documents per year. After that, there was a period of instability from 2014 to 2019, during which time publication rates fluctuated, particularly declining in 2016 and 2018. Nonetheless, there was a notable uptick from 2020 to 2023, with yearly publications peaking at 29 documents in 2020. This increasing trend indicates that research into school governance frameworks and practices has increased as a result of recent global events, potentially such as the COVID-19 pandemic and growing interest in educational reform on a global scale. This leads school governing bodies must adapt to a variety of environmental impacts and, at the same time, must adjust the activities of those impacts to bring about favorable conditions beneficial for school operations (James et al., 2011).

The global nature of research collaborations is highlighted by the geographical analysis of the SG knowledge base, which also shows volume trends. Based on bibliometric mapping, 46 countries form 23 clusters. In terms of both the quantity of publications (51 and 45, respectively) and the impact of citations, the United States and England were the leading contributors. Strong research efforts in both the Global North and South are indicated by the prominent inclusion of South Africa and Spain. It's interesting that South Africa and England have collaborated, indicating that political and historical ties may have an impact on academic collaborations. A regional discrepancy in SG scholarship is highlighted by the under-representation of Asian nations, with China providing just nine documents.

According to these findings, research leadership is concentrated in Western countries, despite the fact that school governance is a globally relevant issue. This is indicative of larger trends in the distribution of academic resources and institutional capacity. Arnott (2000) writes that "there is perhaps a greater tendency for heads in Scottish schools to inform councils rather than actively consult or seek direct involvement.". And Zhang, D. (2009) considered the differences between urban and rural areas and the strength of family and school social capital can influence on educational equality by the process of school selection and allocation of school resources.

4.2. *The Most Relevant Scholars in the Knowledge Base of SG*

A dynamic and diverse community of researchers with differing levels of influence is revealed by the examination of academic contributions made in the field of school governance (SG) between 2005 and 2023. With four papers each, American scholar Michael R. Ford and Swedish scholar Wieland Wermke are among the most published. Notably, with three publications apiece, academics from South Africa, Spain, Ireland, and England also exhibit a significant presence. However, because citation counts differ greatly, publication frequency is not a direct indicator of academic impact. For

example, Spanish author Antoni Verger leads in citations with 140, despite not having the most volume, demonstrating the importance and influence of his work in SG discourse.

Visualizations of co-authorship networks enhance our comprehension of scholarly influence and cooperation in SG. These bibliometric maps show times of scholarly focus as clusters of coloured nodes. For instance, important individuals like Wermke, Du Plessis, and Chris James established core publication hubs between 2012 and 2018. Michael R. Ford oversaw the green cluster from 2018 to 2020, and Antoni Verger in particular showed continued interest in the group in European circles. A continuous resurgence of research interest is indicated by the rise of more recent authors between 2020 and 2023, including M. Camarero Figuerola (Spain) and Oliver Wieczorek (Germany). These illustrations highlight the global scope of SG research as well as its changing leadership, which is influenced by both established academics and up-and-coming researchers. That a prominent feature in school governance is the leadership role in the school governance process, which does not stop at participating in all areas of the school but gradually shifts to more meaningful guiding activities because school governance no longer depends much on the school but also involves the participation of stakeholders, especially encouraging interaction and accountability (Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006). To a large extent, the second is the need to decentralize leadership to stakeholders both inside and outside the school because the scope involved even goes beyond the responsibilities and authority of the principal (Currie et al., 2005)., and within the school, the typical force that can participate in leadership is the teacher, so empowering teachers is also a strength for successful school administration (Ulrich C. Reitzug, 1992).

4.3. The Scopes of SG Sources in the Knowledge Base of SG from 2005 to 2023?

Five main thematic clusters are revealed by the results, each of which represents a different area of scholarly interest. The most prevalent of these was the yellow cluster, which focused on leadership, local government, and critical educational studies and was centered around Educational Management Administration & Leadership. This cluster highlights administrative and leadership-oriented research in school contexts and links to other important sources, such as the Cambridge Journal of Education and Local Government Studies. Interestingly, the red cluster headed by the Journal of Education Policy is essential to policy-focused SG research since it discusses the creation, application, and impact of educational policies on educational systems around the world. This journal's high citation count (205) highlights its function as a focal point for theoretical and empirical discussions on the dynamics of education policy.

The SG literature is further diversified by clusters centered on transformation-oriented and regional themes. Research on educational reform in developing and emerging economies is reflected in the purple cluster, which is headed by the South African Journal of Education and has close ties to the International Journal of Educational Development. In the meantime, the green cluster, which focusses on urban education and educational policy, integrates SG themes with curriculum studies, teacher education, and public management from a variety of disciplinary viewpoints. Cross-national perspectives on governance and policy formation are covered by Cluster 5, which is distinguished by voices from European educational systems and is represented by journals such as Discourse and the European Educational Research Journal. Overall, the clustering of sources demonstrates a comprehensive and interconnected body of SG research, with strong nodes representing administrative leadership that leadership activities can be determined from the individual's role for a specific job, while leadership capacity appears due to need and continues to develop, and gradually becomes clearer in the future, international policy dialogue, and regional educational transformation.

4.4. The SG Themes in the Knowledge Base of SG

Five major clusters, each representing fundamental conceptual areas that researchers have concentrated on over the previous 20 years, summarise the thematic development of school

governance (SG) research from 2005 to 2023. The first cluster, headed by Wilkins, examines the sociopolitical contexts of school governance, with a focus on the pressures and changes faced by school governors as a result of inspection regimes and socio-economic factors. James et al. (2011) contend that the socio-economic context and the conditions under which work is conducted make school governance difficult and open the door for a number of problems. It shows how accountability procedures and performance standards interact in a complicated way to shape governance systems. The second cluster focusses on leadership roles, particularly the transition from distributed leadership paradigms to traditional hierarchical models. Academics like Maxcy and Currie have criticized centralized models and argued in favor of participatory, embedded leadership that frequently reflects the political and cultural realities of various countries.

The SG discourse is extended into more ideologically diverse and globally situated areas by clusters three through five. The third cluster focusses on accountability frameworks, internal governance systems, and how these affect student outcomes. The fourth cluster, on the other hand, is dominated by New Public Management (NPM) ideologies, which are always grounded in the market and service quality and are overseen by government agencies using particular measurement indicators (Verger & Curran, 2014). This emphasizes how NPM tools, such as standards, testing, and accountability systems, are being adopted locally and globally. For example, Verger's work highlights how NPM policies have infiltrated different national systems while posing as modernization. Lastly, the fifth cluster discusses the idea of teacher autonomy. Wermke's contributions explain how this concept is impacted by broader trends of decentralization and deregulation, which require schools to focus on outcomes rather than just internal operations and to fully implement accountability (Allen & Mintrom, 2010). This cluster argues for a nuanced understanding of autonomy across various educational systems by critically analyzing the changing balance between teacher agency and institutional control. When taken as a whole, these themes show that SG is a complex field where local adaptations, global trends, and ideological shifts come together to influence educational leadership and policy that and Tao, Y (2022) mentioned that network governance has become a widely recognized and increasingly utilized instrument for leading and managing public service delivery, especially in the education sphere.

4.5. The Emerging Keywords in the Knowledge Base of SG

The evolution of the field of school governance (SG) is highlighted by a keyword analysis conducted between 2005 and 2023. The term "school governance" itself is the main focus, appearing in 31.28% of the documents under study. This frequent occurrence highlights its fundamental function in scholarly discourse. Closely following are themes like "New Public Management" (14.54%), which refers to stakeholder demands for accountability and transparency (Wilkins, 2015) and an increasing trend of stakeholder participation in school governance as a result of new public management's influence (Wilkins et al., 2019). Regarding to educational reform, managerial and policy-driven approaches are deeply ingrained, as evidenced by the "education policy" (7.05%) and "accountability" (7.05%). Notably, the emphasis on "governance" (6.17%) and "school autonomy" (5.29%) demonstrates a persistent scholarly concern with the structure of institutional decision-making, the levels of autonomy granted to educational actors, and the conflict between the state and civil society that have a significant impact on school governance (Wermke & Prøitz, 2019). The goal is to enhance internal capacity and curriculum evaluation by the school itself (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). That is, Arnott (2000) makes it abundantly evident that there is a misalignment between the management of schools and their social and cultural values. These keywords reflect a clear scholarly emphasis on accountability frameworks, decentralized leadership, and the impact of political ideologies like neoliberalism (3.96%) on educational reform.

Emerging keywords in recent years suggest a change in emphasis; by 2021, "autonomy" and "professional development" will be more common. This indicates a shift away from purely structural

governance issues and towards more human-centered approaches, reflecting a growing interest in leadership agency and capacity-building. The use of terms like "principal," "school board," and "school leadership" (mostly from 2020) further highlights the crucial role that local actors play in navigating governance reforms, which include the creation of systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and research activities, the establishment of intermediary bodies for accreditation and evaluation, and internal units for assessment and quality assurance in schools through mechanisms to form educational service organizations (Bellei & Munoz, 2023). In the meantime, terms like "privatization," "school choice," and "academy," which first surfaced in 2019, indicate a growing interest in market-oriented educational models. When taken as a whole, these patterns show how the SG conversation has expanded from structural governance to dynamic interactions between institutional contexts, policies, and individual actors, underscoring the intricate and changing nature of school leadership and management around the world. According to Hartley (2007), the school functions as a new affinity- and solution-space work.

Obviously, scholars are paying more and more attention to school governance because it is an inevitable process that is driven by changes in social and other related conditions rather than academic demands. Each school's resources should be made available in a way that best satisfies the needs of the real-world environment in which it operates. Without taking global influence into account, the policy concerns that require attention pertain to school governance, which includes the role, degree, and type of participation as well as the internal policies of the school to institutionalize the power of stakeholders in operations. The goal of these national-level governance policies for the education system is to systematize it and prevent internal conflicts that could arise from a lack of a common legal corridor. It is a system of governance for the entire nation, where various socio-economic sectors must support the governance activities of the schools. All three policy levels must be consistent based on common governance principles, but each of these policy aspects must be developed independently at the national, industry, and school levels.

5. Conclusion

Many aspects of school governance need to be considered and evaluated to make informed comments on this field, both in the past, present, and future of school governance. According to the trend, the number of studies on school governance is increasing, although there are no major fluctuations. Research cooperation is global, as evidenced by the publication levels of a few typical countries. It is noteworthy that authors with high levels of influence from school governance publications are mainly from developed countries. Additionally, the topics researched in school governance are quite diverse, including school governors and governance bodies.

Employing a bibliometric approach, this study analyzes 227 documents extracted from the Web of Science database to examine the primary characteristics of school governance research conducted over the past four decades. The key findings reveal an increasing trend in the number of publications. Furthermore, the United States and England are identified as prominent research hubs in this field. Wermke Wieland, Verger Antoni, and Hartley David emerge as the most influential scholars based on the bibliometric analysis. The journal *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* stands out as the most relevant source for publications on school governance. Thematic analysis identifies five core research themes within school governance: School governance and its contexts, Leadership roles, Internal governance, New public management, and Autonomy. Moreover, recent scholarly attention has increasingly focused on topics related to Principal and School board.

In particular, issues governing or related to school governance have been researched and explained by many authors in many different ways, that is, school governance is under the influence of new public management, when new public management is being implemented as a trend to change the entire public management towards more efficiency by facilitating the provision of

services; that is, to change policies and legal regulations on education in general and school governance in particular; at the same time, there is a trend of globalization in education policies in countries or regions, even on a global scale.

6. Limitations

This research has certain limitations, which are that it only focuses on English documents and belongs to one data system, while school governance is in other data systems and other languages also has its own characteristics. In addition, although there are many issues pointed out in this study, they are general in nature, so there is a need for research on specific topics associated with each separate context.

Declarations

Author Contributions. Thang Nguyen: Literature review, conceptualization. Hai Luong: methodology, data analysis. Thuy Ngo: review-editing and writing, original manuscript preparation. All authors have read and approved the published on the final version of the article.

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