

## ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL: A Systematic Literature Review and Future Research

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### ABSTRACT

The dynamically evolving environment and organizational dynamics must be optimized to make systematic problem-solving steps, which lead to efforts to identify opportunities and threats, make timely decisions, and implement strategic and efficient changes. This can be done by developing leadership traits. The exemplary leadership for dynamic situational challenges is adaptive leadership. This study aims to map research related to the adaptive leadership model. The research method used is quantitative with a descriptive approach. The research data was analyzed using bibliometric techniques. In addition, documentation techniques and literature studies obtained from the Scopus database were also used. From the research analysis, it is known that the keyword network between one study and another, so that it can be known which keywords are most frequently used and which keywords are least commonly used by researchers. In this study, “adaptive leadership” is one of the most frequently used keywords in research related to organizations or leadership. However, “adaptive leadership” is still not widely done in education”, which is only about 1.5% of the research. Regarding the research conducted from 2007 to 2022, it is known that ten keywords are least common in research related to “adaptive leadership”. Concerning the three keywords with the lowest total links, namely “model”, “school” and “adaptive work” as well as the rising field that most rarely studies “adaptive leadership”, namely “education”, research can be designed with the theme “development of adaptive leadership models in higher education”.

**Keywords:** Adaptive Leadership, Model, Systematic Literature Review, Future Research.

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## INTRODUCTION

The complexity and dynamics of the development of the strategic environment, at the national level, are characterized by multi-dimensional problems and challenges, in the social, economic, political, institutional, and defense and security fields. At the beginning of the 21st century, this was marked, among others, by the weak structure and competitiveness of the economy, law enforcement, the implementation of autonomy and decentralization, the amount of foreign debt, the level of poverty and unemployment, the demands for democratization, and the threat of disintegration (Loignon & Kodydek, 2022). At the international level, there are estimates that the development of the global environment is characterized by situations, conditions, challenges and demands, which are increasingly complex, ever-changing, full of uncertainty, and often even unfriendly. The development of the strategic environment requires solid leaders and leadership, able to anticipate future developments, build a vision, mission and strategy and develop policy measures, institutional systems and government management that are relevant to the complexity of developments, problems and challenges faced, both at the national and international levels (McKimm et al., 2023; Robinson et al., 2008). Organizations must have a dynamic capacity to integrate, create and move internal and external resources into the best configuration to develop new capabilities and “market” opportunities (Lennon et al., 2022; Pearce & Conger, 2003).

Helfat & Peteraf, (2009) mentioned that an organization will develop in line with the behavior and actions of executive leadership. A senior executive must have the character and actions that are able to guess the conditions of the strategic environment. That way, the organization he leads will become an organization that is easy to compete and develop and ultimately evolve in accordance with the demands of the strategic environment. The character of senior leaders also determines the performance and strategies implemented by the organization to develop and win the competition. Northouse, (2019) the potential for dynamic capabilities in organizations must be optimized to make systematic problem-solving steps, which lead to efforts to identify opportunities and threats, make timely decisions, and implement strategic and efficient changes. This can be done through the development of leadership traits. One of the factors that support leadership ability is being able to manage organizational resource management well, so it is reason enough that efforts to improve leadership ability become a priority activity program carried out on an ongoing basis, so that organizational management becomes better and more effective.

Some research results show that organizational effectiveness depends on the extent to which leadership orientation has a match with the conditions of organizational culture and situational aspects of the organization itself. However, to achieve leadership success is largely determined by the situational aspects in which leadership is carried out (Scarpellini et al., 2020; Southworth & Quesnay, 2005). The leadership model that is the focus of the discussion of the results of this study is predicted to have a positive and sustainable impact on efforts to achieve the goals expected by the organization. Likewise, other situational factors, especially those covering individual and organizational characteristics, have the potential to influence leadership behavior and organizational performance (Evans et al., 2021; Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Marzano et al., 2005; Sergiovanni, 2001). However, some research findings prove that managers, on many occasions, fail due to the inability to understand organizational culture. As a result, the management system implemented is unable to have a positive impact on performance (Chemers, 2014).

The dynamization of the environment, which has consequences of loss of moral orientation, widening governance gaps, and increasing public awareness of organizational behavior, places an educational institution in a growing need to build and secure their (moral) legitimacy, to maintain trusting relationships with stakeholders and to leverage the social capital inherent in a leader (Wong & Chan, 2018; Yeo, 2021). The form of leadership that suits dynamic global developments is adaptive



leadership. Moreover, adaptive leadership can be assumed as an inclusive leadership approach that says a leader does not have to stand at the front to be a leader (Jefferies, 2017; Palm & Lilja, 2021) Using the model, the key role of the positional leader shifts from the traditional sense of providing direction and protection to subordinates, to one that orchestrates the change process with the team through adversity and uncertainty, and to build a culture and structure that facilitates adaptive change (Wong & Chan, 2018). Organizational resilience is not only about minimizing and managing risk exposure, but also about creating organizations with the agility to adapt to unexpected challenges and the ability to seize opportunities from adversity (Hoerudin, 2020) as well as making quick and appropriate decisions (Yaghi, 2017). In other studies, it is mentioned that many schools are led by someone who is less adaptive, so that sudden changes in the global environment often reduce school performance, especially in administrative matters (Bhengu & Myende, 2016; Khan, 2017; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009; Wong & Chan, 2018). Adaptive leaders provide opportunities for their members to innovate and participate in any professional development in order to become more responsible and competent individuals (Boylan, 2018; Muluneh & Gedifew, 2018).

In addition, adaptive leadership can be an inclusive leadership approach that says a leader does not have to stand at the front to be a leader (Jefferies, 2017; Yaghi, 2017). Using the model, the key role of the positional leader shifts from the traditional sense of providing direction and protection to followers, to a role that organizes the change process with the team through adversity and uncertainty, and to build a culture and structure that facilitates adaptive change (Wong & Chan, 2018). Adaptive leaders must match the conditions of the strategic environment. This means that any changes that occur outside the organization must be followed by 'internal changes' that remain in line with the vision, mission and goals of the organization (Muluneh & Gedifew, 2018; Peesker et al., 2019). Institutions should also revisit why and how they introduce change (Jayan et al., 2016; Muluneh & Gedifew, 2018). This means that it is necessary to develop leadership models from time to time in accordance with developments in the strategic environment.

Through the prior work that has been described, it can be seen that this research aims to map the topic of adaptive leadership models in various scientific studies (Hannah et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Mapping science is a method used to visualize a particular scientific field into a landscape map whose purpose is to see the development of a particular field of science using bibliographic data, keywords, citations, and countries that play a role in scientific research. That way, the position and novelty of research related to the 'adaptive leadership model' among previous studies can be known with certainty.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Leadership*

Several leadership theories have been proposed by experts. According to Robbin, there are three approaches to leadership theory, namely: 1) trait theory approach, 2) behavioral theory approach, and 3) contingency theory approach. According to trait theory, leaders are born, not made. Leaders have innate traits that enable them to lead others. Behavioral theory states that the main issue in leadership is making leaders effective or the best leadership style. The effectiveness of leaders using specific styles to lead individuals and groups in achieving specific goals will result in high morale and productivity. While contingency theory states that the effectiveness of a leader's personality, style, or behavior depends on the extent to which the leader is able to adjust to the situation at hand. Some of the more recent approaches include charismatic leadership theory (Antonakis & Day, 2007; Burns, 2012;

Robinson et al., 2008), transactional-transformational leadership (Avolio & Kahai, 2001; Bass & Riggio, 2005; Burns, 2012), and visionary leadership (Silva, 2016).

From the above description, it can be agreed that a person can actually become a leader if they have the skills to be able to attract the attention and support of the masses for their ideas and goals. Leadership involves influence, just like management. Leadership entails working with people and requires management as well. Leadership is concerned with effective goal achievement (Kotter, 2008).

### *Adaptive Leadership*

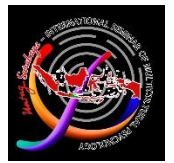
Leadership literature, Heifetz and his colleagues suggest that “adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to overcome tough challenges and thrive” (Heifetz & Laurie, 2009). In contrast to emphasizing the position or characteristics of the leader, this definition suggests that leadership is concerned with the leader's behavior. Adaptive leaders engage in activities that mobilize, motivate, organize, orient, and focus the attention of others (Heifetz et al., 2009). In addition, adaptive leadership is about helping others to explore and change their values. The goal of adaptive leadership is to encourage people to change and learn new ways of living so that they can effectively face their challenges and grow in the process (Cederquist, 2022; Darling et al., 2007).

Conceptually, the adaptive leadership process incorporates ideas from four different viewpoints: a systems perspective, a biological perspective, a service-oriented perspective, and a psychotherapeutic perspective. First, adaptive leadership takes a systems perspective, in that this approach assumes that many of the problems people face are actually embedded in complex interactive systems. Problems are seen as complex with many facets, dynamic in that they can evolve and change, and connected to others in a network of relationships. Second, the biological perspective for adaptive leadership recognizes that people develop and thrive as a result of having to adapt to internal cues/circumstances and their external environment. The ability to adapt allows people to thrive in new circumstances. Third, adaptive leadership assumes a service orientation. Similar to a doctor, an adaptive leader uses his or her expertise or authority to serve people by diagnosing their problems and helping them find solutions. Fourth, this approach incorporates a psychotherapeutic perspective to explain how people accomplish adaptive work (Biggadike et al., 2022; Jayan et al., 2016; Jumah et al., 2020; Northouse, 2018; Roush, 1997; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007).

Adaptive leadership allows the leader to be among the people. Leaders are not seen as leading members who have to look behind them to see their team. Instead, they can be in the team and provide guidance. This approach gives the team and leader a unique bond. Leadership is not defined by the position one holds but about the work and how people can best fulfill their duties (Northouse, 2019). More than that, adaptive leadership is about helping others change and grow. This approach, unlike most other leadership approaches, is more of a process. It does not rely on the individual characteristics of a "born leader" to work. People can be trained to become adaptive leaders (Jayan et al., 2016).

## **METHOD**

This research is a quantitative research with a descriptive approach, namely research whose data is a mixture of numeric data with narrative data but does not use statistical analysis or mathematical formulations (Begonja et al., 2016; Mubarrok et al., 2022; Pujianto & Muzdalifah, 2022; Supriharyanti & Sukoco, 2023). The research data was analyzed using bibliometric techniques. Bibliometric indicators are applied to evaluate bibliographic data that includes total authors and published articles, citations, institutions and countries that participate in a research development (Argumedo-García et al., 2021; Carneiro et al., 2021; Fernandes et al., 2022; Mubarrok et al., 2022; Palácios et al., 2021). In addition, documentation techniques and literature studies obtained from the Scopus database were also



used. Scopus is used as the basic data because it is a very popular platform among other databases in terms of the very high quality of articles on business and management topics (Carneiro et al., 2021). However, the Scopus platform tends to be less attractive because it is paid and publishes more quantitative research. In this study, the keyword used was 'adaptive leadership'. The journal articles found at the initial stage of the search were 34 documents from Scopus. The articles are research/studies conducted in the period 2018 to 2022. The article findings are still raw because no exploitation has been done to find out the relevance of the research that the author will do. After that, an analysis was carried out using the vos viewer software. Schematically, this research can be designed as Figure 1

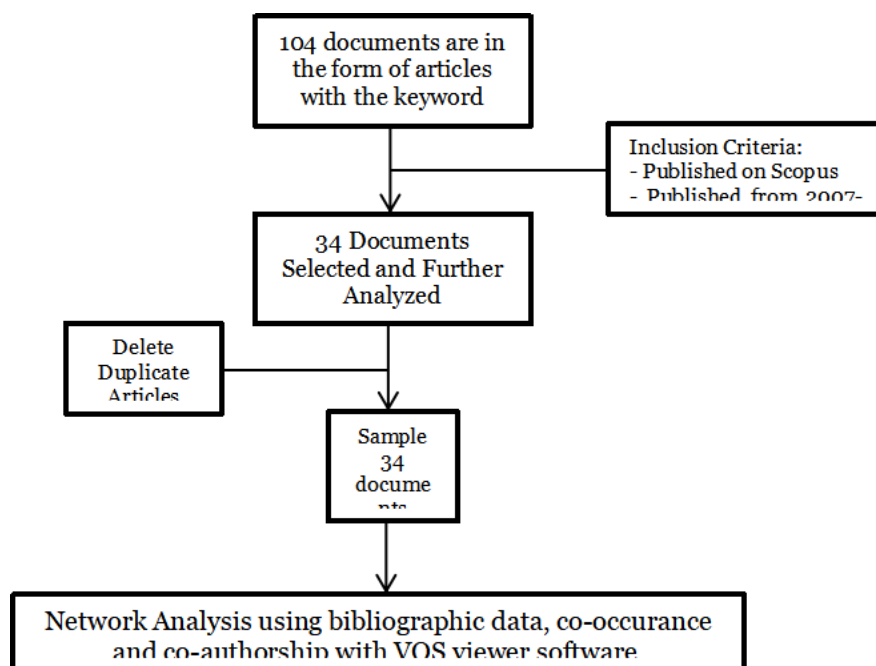


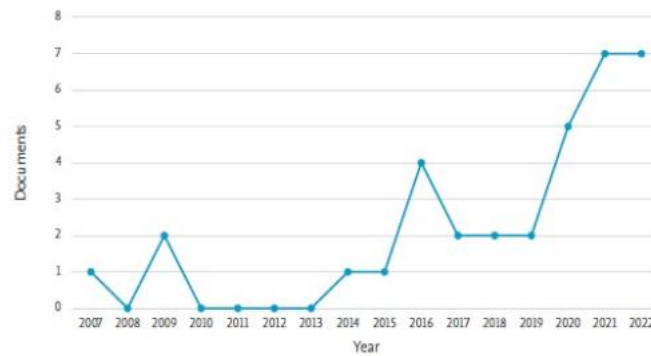
Figure 1: Research Design

## RESULT

The search results show that scientific publications containing the keywords “adaptive leadership” in the title, abstract and or keywords from 2007-2022 in the Scopus database were found as many as 34 documents with the distribution of all scientific publications in the article category. Scientific publications with the keywords “adaptive leadership mode and higher education” in the title, abstract and or keywords began to appear in 2014 with the findings of 31 documents. The absence of findings of scientific publications with the term “adaptive leadership” in the title, abstract and or keywords before 2014 could be due to the topic not yet attracting attention from academics.

### 1. Number of Publications and Citations

Figure 2 shows that in the last 15 years there are only 34 studies on “adaptive leadership” that have been published in the Scopus database from 2007 to 2022. The publication of articles analyzed through the Scopus base shows that the number of publications from 2007 to 2022 is fluctuating.



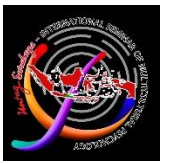
**Figure 2:** Adaptive Leadership Topic Publications on Scopus Database

In 2007 there was only 1 scientific publication related to “adaptive leadership”. In 2009, 2 articles related to adaptive leadership were published. While in 2008, 2010 to 2013 there were no scientific publications related to 'adaptive leadership' in the Scopus database. Furthermore, in 2014 and 2015 1 scientific publication was found; which further increased to 4 scientific publications in 2016. Research on “adaptive leadership” declined again in 2017 to 2019, each year there were 2 scientific publications. In 2020, publications related to “adaptive leadership” increased to 5 studies on the Scopus database. Furthermore, in 2021 and 2022 the topic of adaptive leadership published on Scopus increased again, namely 7 studies each. This increase in publications is indicated due to pandemic conditions around the world which require organizations to have strategies to survive, one of which is through adaptive behavior that must be implemented by every leader.

Adaptive leadership is closely related to efforts to create organizations with the agility to adapt to unexpected challenges and the ability to seize opportunities from difficulties (Hoerudin, 2020). It is necessary to study how the ability of leadership to deal with conditions of uncertainty and provide consideration in making decisions in situations of uncertainty that will have an impact on organizational goals. It is further emphasized that the role of leadership in conditions of uncertainty and unpredictability requires the formulation of strategies that focus on new mindsets, organizational capabilities that are more in tune with uncertainty and high uncertainty. Adaptive leadership can also be a solution to sensitize leaders and members to be innovative in times of crisis (Wong & Chan, 2018). Furthermore, if analyzed through the research fields that use the concept of “adaptive leadership” as listed in table 1, it can be seen that the field of “education” especially higher education has not used the topic of “adaptive leadership” as a research analysis. Only 1.5% or about 0.51 frequency of research in the field of education that uses the topic of adaptive leadership.

**Table 1:** Bibliometric Search Results by Research Sector

Sector	F	(%)
Sosial Sciences	14.6	43.1
Business	9.4	27.7
Economic	3.1	9.3
Psychology	2.6	7.7



Art & Humaniora	9.4	9.3
Environment	0.51	1.5
Education	0.51	1.5
Total	34	100,0

## 2. Top Author, Countries and Institutions

From the results of the data analysis, we know the most productive authors in research on the topic of “adaptive leadership”. The productivity of these authors is not only measured by the number of writings per year, but also the number of derivative studies that cite their names as research citations.



**Figure 3:** Most Productive Authors Based on Scopus Data

Uhl-Bien, M is the author with the most publications in Scopus, namely 3 articles. Uhl-Bient began conducting research on adaptive leadership since 2006, 2007 and 2009. The research conducted revolves around determining the theory of adaptive leadership and the development of adaptive leadership in social science. The second rank with the highest number of publications is Marion, R is basically a colleague of Uhl-Bien who also conducts research related to the implementation of adaptive leadership in the complexity of an organization. The two researchers can be said to be one of the drivers of other researchers to conduct research on an organization through an adaptive leadership approach.

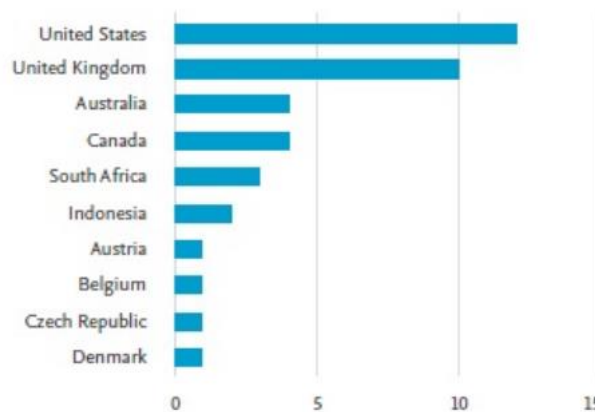
**Table 2:** Top Ten Most Productive Authors

Rating	Author	Publication	Cites
1	Uhl-Bien, M	3	34
2	Marion, R	2	31

3	Adams, J.A	1	20
4	Akhtar, P	1	10
5	Al-hayani, A	1	9
6	Alford, J	1	8
7	Anderson, R.Ai	1	4
8	Avolio, B.J	1	3
9	Bgwell, J	1	2
10	Bailey, D.E	1	2

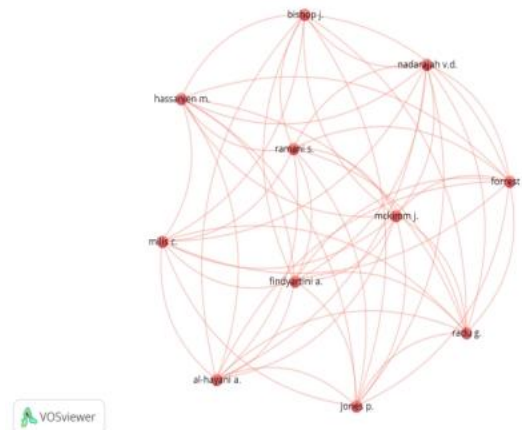
The articles that have been found come from researchers from various universities and practitioners in the world. Starting from the University of Nebraska, University of Kwazul, Clemson University, Australia & New Zealand Academy and University Alfred Health. In addition, there are research results conducted by practitioners from Adaptive Health, Virtual Health, and PT of The Leader Factor. These results show that there is a balance of research conducted between researchers from universities and practitioners who are directly engaged in organizational development.

From the results of the analysis conducted, it is known that the nodules representing the United States and the United Kingdom have a much larger size when compared to the nodules representing the names of other countries. This shows that the collaboration between authors in publishing research results related to the theme of “adaptive leadership” affiliated with the United Kingdom and the United States is stronger than the collaboration between authors affiliated with other countries. More than 10 publications are affiliated with the United States and 10 research publications from the United Kingdom whose authors are affiliated. Australia and Canada occupy the third and fourth positions as countries that conduct affiliated research on the topic of “adaptive leadership”.



**Figure 4:** Author Affiliation by Country Territory





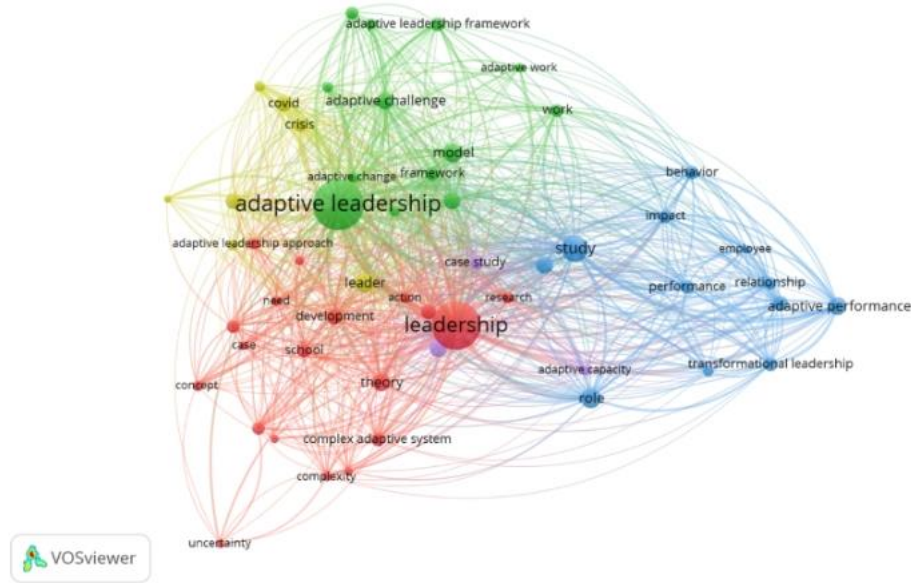
The strength of collaboration links between authors based on country of origin in scientific publications that have the term "adaptive leadership" in the title, abstract and/or keywords as a result of analysis using VOSviewer with a minimum number of documents 20 and 30 from the bibliometric analysis results are displayed with the network visualization display option. Figure 5 shows that the results of the analysis of collaboration between authors based on country of origin are presented in 1 color group, which represents one cluster.

**Figure 5:** Author Affiliation Links Related to Adaptive Leaderships

University of Nebraska, University of Kwazul and Clamson University are the most frequently affiliated institutions to conduct research related to the keyword "adaptive leadership". These results are in line with Figure 4 that the United Kingdom and the United States are the most frequently affiliated countries to conduct research related to "adaptive leadership".

### 3. Co-occurrence key-word

In a published study, co-occurrence of keywords is an indication of the frequency of the most frequently occurring words used in a research article. In this study, word extraction from titles and abstracts was full counting with the minimum number of occurrences set at 5. From the analysis through Vos Viewer, 169 co-occurrence connections with 5 clusters were found between 2007 and 2022.



**Figure 5:** Co-occurrence of keywords

The visualization above shows that there has been a lot of research on leadership, including “adaptive leadership”. However, in the visualization above, there is no nodule that connects the adaptive leadership model with educational organizations. As stated earlier, the field of education does not yet account for only 1.5% of the total research related to adaptive leadership. From Figure 6, it can be seen that there are several keywords with bright nodules and are related to other keywords, namely adaptive leadership, leadership, theory, performance, study, role, complex adaptive system, behavior, crisis, and covid. These keywords are the terms that are most widely used and analyzed in a study.

**Table 3:** The least common keywords used in research related to adaptive leadership

Rating	Keywords	Total Link Strength	Occurrences
1	Adaptive Leadership	154	81
2	Leadership	129	79
3	Theory	100	45
4	Performance	100	44
5	Study	90	50
6	Role	79	22
7	Complex Adaptive System	74	45
8	Behavior	70	33
9	Crisis	61	27
10	Covid	50	19

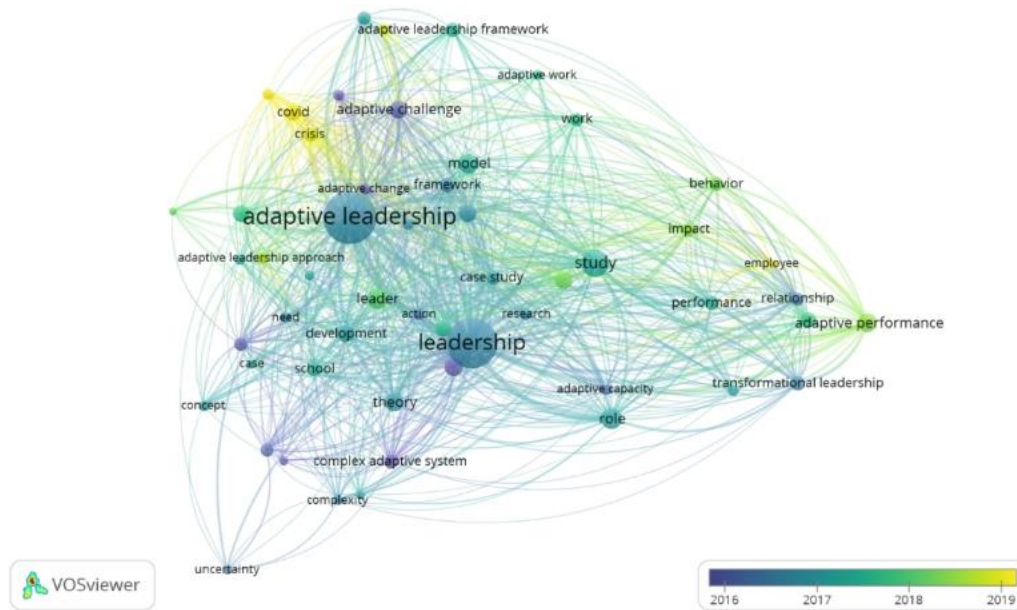


The results also show that 10 keywords are the least common but have an influence on keyword links. The ten (10) least common keywords indicate that the related topic is still rarely discussed in a broad and specific research. Of the ten least frequently used keywords in research on adaptive leadership, especially in education, there are three keywords that show low density with a fainter visualization color than other keywords, namely “adaptive work”, “school” and “model”. The least frequent keywords are recommendations for researchers and practitioners to conduct specific research related to these keywords.

**Tabel 4:** Most used keywords in research related to Adaptive Leadership

Rating	Keywords	Total Link Strength	Occurrences
1	Model	6	5
2	School	8	5
3	Adaptive Work	9	5
4	Uncestainty	9	5
5	Case	10	5
6	Framework	10	5
7	Adaptive Capability	10	5
8	Employee	14	5
9	Work	15	5
10	Need	15	5

The most and least influential keywords can also be displayed by VOS Viewer on the overlay visualization. Discussion trends are shown by the yellow nets associated with research related to adaptive leadership. As stated earlier, the fainter the color of the network shown, the greater the opportunity and need for further research on the topic with low links. This relates to the three keywords with the lowest total links, namely “model”, “school” and “adaptive work”, which can be designed into the theme “development of adaptive leadership models in higher education”, as explained in Figure 8.



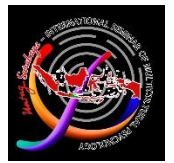
**Figure 8:** Keyword Overlay Visualization

## DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis carried out above provide a conclusion that the Scopus database has provided research articles that are hybrid and specific to the keywords mentioned, so that a comprehensive range of bibliometric indicators can be shown starting from the author's name, author affiliation, country, and author's institution based on country territory. In addition, it can also be seen the number of scientific publications related to the research topic, namely “adaptive leadership” along with the type of publication such as articles, proceedings, or reviews. The results of the analysis show that the keyword network between one study and another, so that the most frequently used keywords and the least common keywords used by researchers can be identified. In this study, “adaptive leadership” is one of the most frequently used keywords in research related to organizations or leadership. However, 'adaptive leadership' is still not widely done in the field of education (education), which is only about 1.5% of the total research.

From the analysis, it can be seen that the documents from 2007 to 2022 recorded in the Scopus database are 34 documents, all of which are articles with the words “adaptive leadership” and “leadership” as the most frequently analyzed keywords, so caution is needed for researchers who want to make these keywords a research topic. In addition, the large number of keywords identified, namely 169 keywords with 5 clusters, also requires researchers to conduct research with more actual topics, so that it has a strong originality value. For example, by looking at which fields have not used many of these keywords as research topics.

Since 2015, research related to the “adaptive leadership model” has developed significantly, especially during times of crisis such as the pandemic in 2020-2021. This provides information to the author that “adaptive leadership” is needed in critical and uncertain situations. Given the condition of the world which is still in the post-Covid-19 recovery stage and the goose neck era (unpredictable conditions), it



is hoped that researchers and practitioners will be active in conducting research as well as publishing it related to the concept of “adaptive leaderships model” so that the topic can reach a wider field.

The results of this study also show limitations, namely only using the Scopus database to analyze research topics, so it is indicated that there are still many studies with related topics that have not been comprehensively mapped. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct Bibliometric analysis using a wider database such as Google Scholar, Scient Direct, JSTOR, PubMed, Emerald Insight or Directory of Open Access Journals. Regarding research that has been conducted in the period 2007 to 2022, it is known that there are 10 keywords that are least common in research related to “adaptive leadership”. In relation to the three keywords with the lowest total links, namely “model”, “school” and “adaptive work” as well as the rise field that most rarely examines “adaptive leadership”, namely “education”, a study can be designed with the theme “development of adaptive leadership models in higher education”.

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