

World School Leadership Study (WSLS): Research and Monitoring of School Leaders' Profession

1. Aim of IRN of the WSLS of the WERA

We want to bring together international researchers with a huge and wide variety of countries around the globe to exchange experiences of research on the profession of school leadership and conduct a joint study. The IRN of WERA will be the vehicle to the World School Leadership Study (WSLS). WSLS is to research and monitor the profession of school leaders.

2. Aim of the joint study

The purpose of the World School Leadership Study (WSLS) project is to research and monitor the profession of school leadership nationally and internationally. The data will be analyzed and reported nationally with an ideographical perspective and internationally with a comparative perspective. The results of the WSLS are expected to have implications on different levels. First, the findings will illuminate how different resources and demands at the system, organizational and personal level affect school leaders' health resilience and well-being as well as the school quality and its development. Second, based on the national data gathered, it is possible to conduct international comparisons so that the similarities and differences across countries can be highlighted. Third, WSLS aims to provide evidence-based recommendations to inform policy makers, to advise school leaders' recruitment, training, and professional development, and to improve the work conditions for school leaders in various countries.

3. Research Questions

The research focuses six thematic strands as shown in the model below. Research questions on level one represents the guiding research question within the different thematic strands. Research questions on level two focusing overarching questions across the different thematic strands by linking them.



Level 1 Research area-specific questions:

1. **Resources & demands:** What kinds of resources and demands are available on personal, organisational and system level that support or restrain school leaders' practice? How are these resources and demands experienced by the school leaders? How is the balance between resources and demands?
2. **Health, resilience, well-being:** What are the school leaders' perceptions on their own health? How resilient are school leaders? How is school leaders' work-related well-being?
3. **Values & professional understanding:** How are different professional values and professional understandings deemed important to school leaders, organisation and system? How do they align or misalign with each other?
4. **Practice:** What practices do school leaders prefer? What practices do school leaders experience as strain? How do school leaders spend their time at work?
5. **Person-job-organisation-system fit:** How do school leaders fit to their job, organisation and system? How is the balance between different fits?
6. **School quality and its development:** How do school leaders perceive school quality and its development?

Level 2 Cross research area questions (some examples):

1. What are school leaders' cognitive appraisal of the resources and demands on personal, organisational and system level?
2. How do the demands and resources impact on school leaders' practices, health, resilience, well-being and their efforts to develop school quality?

3. How is the person-job-organisation-system fit related to school leaders' practice, to health, resilience and well-being, as well as to the school quality and its development?
4. How do school leaders' professional values and understanding correspond to the demands and resources on the three levels?
5. How are school leaders' professional values and professional understanding related to school quality and its development?
6. How do school leaders' health, resilience and well-being transform into resource, affect their practice and affect school quality and development?
7. How can the findings be compared in a cluster of countries or internationally?
(Possible perspectives for comparison: high stakes versus low stakes systems, centralized versus decentralized systems, autonomy of schools, market orientation versus public system perspective, key values)

4. Most recent work

WSLS was presented at different international symposia such as WERA or ECER. Meetings 2020-2022: AERA 2020, WERA 2020, ECER 2020, AERA 2021, UCEA 2021, WELS 2021 and ECER 2021, WERA 2022.

Within the last year, we have elaborated the areas and methods of research to achieve a magnification of the perspectives. At the same time, the task groups were increased and their scope of activities was expended.

The information package has been modified and extended intensively the last couple of months and the finalization is now imminent. There have been some delays due to the Covid 19 pandemic and succession within the team due to early retirements, Covid-based outages, and discussions within countries about who could serve as national coordinator, etc.

5. Next work

Much of the planning for the project has been done bilaterally, but now we are starting to hold some joint events including to be part at the next meeting in Singapore.

One activity package is a very strong communication strategy in which we involve the regional coordinators. In a second step the coordinators of the countries. Finally, we include further international colleagues.

We will also have a series of events with all members and the national coordinators, i.e., there will be one event per region, then an event with the national coordinators, and finally a meeting of the national consortium with all members. Final design and research proposal decisions are forthcoming to generate research grants at the international level.

With this report, we provide an overview of the different agreements and next steps including an updated timetable for WSLS.

In the next couple of weeks, we will increase the role of the regional coordinators (list see below.) They will coordinate further network opportunities within the region to enhance

the discussion and the knowledge exchange to research as well as the regional work on the WSLs to understand the profession of school leadership.

There are three main foci for the next couple of weeks. First, to increase the role of the regional coordinators. Second, to intensify the work of the Advisory Board, for instance Jim Spillane, Ellen Goldring, Philipp Hallinger, Viviane Robinson, Olof Johansson, Allan Walker. Third, to establish a cross functional work group comprising Chris Chapman and Alma Harris to increase coherence and quality of the information package and therefore the conceptual quality of the joint study.

The identification of fast and slow track and final decisions of the countries and the colleagues as national research coordinators will be vital. For the next phase it is important, even if the network grew enormously over 60 countries, to identify those countries, who are able to identify the fast and/or the slow track and commit themselves to be final and committed partners for the study. Below you may find updates and further work.

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Updates and further work

1. Overview of different work packages

Country Report

Technical Report

Sampling

Instrument

Information Package

2. Task groups

Areas of research

- Demands and Resources (Task group 1)
- Health | Resilience | Well-being (Task group 1)
- Values & professional understanding (Task group 2)
- Practices (Task group 3)
- Person-job-organization-system fit (Task group 4)

- School quality and its development (Task group 5)
- Linkage of the six thematic strands (Task group 6)

Methods of research

- Operationalization of school leadership (and further demographics) (Task group 7)
- Sampling per country (this should be done country specific with some central guidelines (Task group 8)
- Country Report (Task group 9)
- Online Survey (Task group 10)
- Time use (Task group 11)
- Qualitative Studies (Task group 12)

3. Timeline of different work packages

Following the screenshot of the attached XLS with the time schedule.

University of Teacher Education Zug IBB Institute for the Management and Economics of Education					2023												2024							
Timeline of WLS World School Leadership Study					May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October		
Task / Aim / Scope	Further Information	Responsibility	Workload	Time scope																				
Information Package	Review and modification	Modification and finalization of the information package.	WLS consortium members	3 days	5 days																			
Country Report	Draft	Each 10-15 pages length in total following the proposed structure.	National research team.	10 days	3 weeks																			
	Review	During Jan/Feb 2022 the report will be reviewed in a peer-review process, including one reviewer from Stephan's team and you as a second reviewer for another one's report.	All research group members.	3 days																				
	Finalization	Finalization of country reports based on review feedbacks.	All research group members.	1 week																				
Instrument	Technical report	Technical report of nationally relevant socio-demographic variables that are important parameters in terms of representativeness.	National research team.	2 weeks	20 weeks																			
	Identifying common socio-demographics	Identifying commonly accepted socio-demographic variables for evaluating the representativeness of the sample as well as for serving as a selection of control variables.	IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug	2 weeks																				
	Selection of common and national specific socio-demographics	In addition to the common socio-demographic variables, a selection of country specific socio-demographic variables will be included in an Excel-Item Overview.	National research team / IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug	1 week																				
	Development of research models and choice of constructs according to	See information package	Task groups	4 weeks																				
	Operationalization	Research and selection of established psychometric scales and adaptations if necessary (by changing the word 'organization' to 'school', for example)	Task groups	2 weeks																				
	Final Decision of construct choice	During Online-Meeting	All research group members.	1 day																				
	Translations	The translations into the different languages, if not already existing, will be done individually in the specific countries.	National research team.	1 week																				
Programming and testing of online Questionnaire	The IBB team will program the online questionnaires with your logo for dissemination.	IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug (programming) / National research team (testing)	8 weeks																					
Sampling	Establish (country specific) sampling strategy	The sampling approach is currently being discussed internally at the IBB and in cooperation with the WLS consortium members who signed up for sampling method and experts from IEA (https://www.iea.nl)	IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug / WLS consortium members	2 weeks	2 weeks																			
Data collection	Data collection	Distribution of online surveys, monitoring of response rate, sending reminders if necessary.	IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug	16 weeks	16 weeks																			
Data preparation	Matching, cleaning and further preparations of the data	Matching all national data sets into one complete data set, doing basic data preparations and applying conventional procedures for data cleaning	IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug	8 weeks	8 weeks																			
Data analysis	Country specific basic statistical reports	Conducting descriptive analysis and prepare tables and figures for illustrating the results.	IBB from the University of Teacher Education Zug	8 weeks	8 weeks																			
Publications	Scientific or non-scientific publications, conference inputs, media releases, etc.	Further comparative analysis, multi-level analysis, tests for measurements invariance, etc.	Those who aim for scientific publications are responsible for their own further analysis. Collaborations will be highly appreciated.	2-4 weeks	16 weeks																			

Prof. Dr. Stephan Gerhard Huber, Prof. Dr. Guri Skedsmo, Marius Schwander & Colleagues from the Research Consortium

For further information information please refer to the information package.

4. Information about the different work packages

4.1 Country report

The country reports should be handed in by end of June.

Then, the report will be reviewed in a peer-review process, including one reviewer from Stephan's team and someone from the group as a second reviewer for another one's report.

Goal is to finalize the reports based on feedback in September 2023.

Approximately 6 selected reports will be submitted to a journal, and all reports will be published in the International Handbook of Governance, Leadership, Administration and Management in Education by Springer (Editor: Stephan Huber).

Structure and content of the country report:

- Abstract
- 1. Education system (document analysis)
- 2. Role of school leadership (document analysis)
- 3. State of research on school leadership (literature review for all areas)
- 4. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school leadership

Approximately 10-15 pages in total, which can vary depending on the current research available in the specific country.

4.2. Technical report

Goal of the technical report is to identify country specific key parameters for evaluating the representativeness of the sample and to manage the sampling strategy. The technical reports should be finished end of August 2023 and will be used for internal purpose/as an information basis for further publications.

Structure and content of technical reports:

- Description of the school system and school types
- The role and definition of school leadership
- School leadership population parameters of your country (average age, distribution of gender, average tenure, frequency of employment changes, school distribution rural/urban/agglomeration, contract type and labor law situation, educational background of school leaders, etc.) (The parameters mentioned are examples and are not limited to them)
- Your past experiences or best practice recommendations for sampling school leadership data

4.3. Sampling

The sampling approach is currently being discussed internally at the IBB and in cooperation with the WSLS consortium members who signed up for sampling method and experts from IEA (<https://www.iea.nl>).

4.4. Development / finalization of the instrument for data collection, including following steps in the process

- Finalizing the research for validated items and scales Jan/Feb 2024.
- Translations into the different languages, if not already existing, March 2024.
- Programming the online questionnaires April 2022.
- Data collection depending on country specific issues in May-June 2024.

4.5. Information package

The information package has been modified and extended intensively the last couple of month and now we will finalize it. Several parties have engaged in working on the information package. These parties are especially concerning the definition of the analysis model and on the questions, what are the constructs used and what scales can be used to capture these constructs. The model is based on the ideas described in the information package. Everyone of the group can check and add the information package.

5. Meeting rhythm

5.1. Monthly meeting

We plan to hold monthly meetings for the coming months.
We will circulate a doodle to find the times that fit all.

5.2. Events planned

We plan the following events

- One event per region.
- An event with the national coordinators.
- A meeting of the national consortium with all members.

5.3. WERA

WSLS is recognized as an International Research Network IRN by WERA. We have submitted two proposals for a Focal Meeting at the WERA 2022 which were accepted and presented. So far, we have presented on a regular base at different conferences such as ECER or WERA. With members from the following countries as leader, co-leaders and advisory board: Switzerland, Poland, Sweden, USA, Thailand and China.

A proposal for the WERA 2023 focal meeting in Singapore will be submitted.

6. Dissemination

6.1 Publications planned

IH-GLAME (all country reports)
Special issues with 6 selected country reports

6.2 Conference symposia and papers

WSLS was presented at different international symposia such as WERA or ECER. Meetings 2020-2022: AERA 2020, WERA 2020, ECER 2020, AERA 2021, UCEA 2021, WELS 2021 and ECER 2021, WERA 2022.

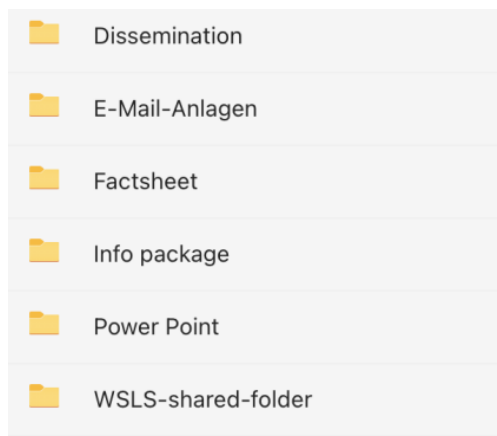
7. Openness to other countries and further collaborations

Some members of the group have inquired if they can invite further colleagues from other countries. WSLS follows an open strategy with inclusion of different countries; therefore, this is an option. However, there is have a fixed design and aim for a high research standard to guaranty good qualitative research, so this has to be kept in mind.

8. Joint SharePoint

The IRN collaborates mainly through “SharePoint” where it shares information and material regarding dissemination, factsheets, info packages or PowerPoints.

It includes the following folders:



It also includes the link to the presentation during our last WSLS consortiums meeting (21-09-21) that is as follows: Zoom-Recording; Pass code: M%04++zE

9. Project Site

Information on the WSLS can be found on the website: <http://wsls.edulead.net/>

You can also find a video with an introduction to the project:

<http://wsls.edulead.net/Info/>