A Comparative Analysis of Values-Based Leadership Theories: A Review and Future Research Agenda

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Abstract
This paper systematically reviews the literature on values-based leadership (VBL) theories by analyzing 161 studies published in different peer-review journals from 2000 to 2022. The study first identified the literature on VBL and found that the terms "values-oriented, values-centered, or value-based" leadership are used interchangeably as a roof term for various theories focusing on the moral, authentic, principled, and ethical dimensions of leadership. The literature on leadership offers different types of leadership theories that constitute VBL, but we focused on six leadership theories that are widely cited as forms of VBL and have a strong theoretical background. The key theoretical components of each theory were then compared to pinpoint how they relate to the other forms of VBL theories. Our results from the comparative analysis revealed that transformational leadership is a broader theory and many of the core dimensions of the other five VBL theories overlap with the essential theoretical components of transformational leadership which raises a question on their distinctiveness as separate theories. Based on our literature review, we offered our conceptualization of VBL to bring more clarity and harmonization to the concept. Finally, we presented a conclusion and forwarded an agenda for future research.

Introduction
Leadership is one of the most researched areas in organizational studies and leadership researchers are persistently looking at the key constructs of leadership. Hence, today's leadership theories have evolved over time, and the theory of leadership has been changing from time to time; Grint (2011:13) mentioned that "leadership has been always related to the cultural mores that prevail at the time, and what appears 'normal' at one time can often appear extraordinarily naive when considered retrospectively." Over the last few decades,

ample studies have been conducted by scholars aiming to construct leadership using traits, as an interaction between the leader and the situation, as a behavior, and in terms of personal values as well. However, this ongoing debate among scholars and practitioners in the area, most importantly in search of the most effective leadership theory has not come to an end.

The emergence of the 21st century has called for leadership and management theorists to place a renewed emphasis on the importance of ethical and moral values such as servant, spiritual, and transformational leadership theories (Copeland, 2014; Dames, 2014). This need for values-based leadership (VBL) theories emerged due to numerous corporate scandals and leadership failures at the beginning of the present millennium (Chang et al., 2021; Bano et al., 2020; Sumanasiri, 2020) although others believe that it is because of the dissatisfaction within the dominant rational-bureaucratic assumptions about leadership and management (Bush, 2010). Thus, the concept of VBL is relatively a new way to look at leadership today (Fulford and Coleman, 2022) and there has been a growing interest over the years in the academic literature on VBL (Sumanasiri, 2020).

The literature on leadership demonstrates a lack of agreement on the conceptualization of VBL and what it entails as there are a wide array of operational definitions in use (Fulford and Coleman, 2022). Moreover, prior studies have identified different leadership theories that constitute VBL (James et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2021; Bano et al., 2020; Sumanasiri, 2020; Lašáková et al., 2019; Hendrikz & Engelbrecht, 2019; Berger, 2013; Copeland, 2014; Dames, 2014), and most of these theories are regarded as emerging leadership theories, for instance, responsible leadership and spiritual leadership. Yet, despite a significant increase in the number of these values-based emerging leadership theories over the past years, empirical evidence has shown that there are many theoretical overlaps among them (Lemoine et al., 2019; Hoch et al., 2018; Anderson & Sun, 2015; Van Dierendonck et al., 2014; Piccolo et al., 2012; Pless & Maak, 2012; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and the fact that whether some of these VBL theories should be considered as standalone theories has remained unclear and their added value has become questionable.

Thus, to address the conceptualization gap on VBL and which leadership theories constitute it, we believe a systematic review and synthesis of the previous research is paramount. We also believe that a critical comparative analysis of the components of the VBL is important to identify the shared theoretical dimensions as well as the missing elements within these VBL theories. It is our belief that this can contribute not only to further building the theory on VBL, but it can also provide direction to future researchers to develop an overarching specific full range and/or integrated leadership theory.

Theoretical Background

VBL is relatively a new concept and the terms "values-oriented, values-centered, or value-based" leadership are used interchangeably as a roof term for various theories focusing on the moral, authentic, principled, and ethical dimensions of leadership (e.g., Shaaban, 2021; Copeland, 2014; Berger, 2013). According to Dames (2014), the term VBL refers to leadership traits within ethical, spiritual, servant, and transformational leadership theories. Meanwhile, in a recent study, Bano et al. (2020) stated that VBL has ethical, authentic, and moral dimensions. We have presented *Table 1* below to show some of the conceptual definitions given to the term VBL by different scholars:

Table 1: *Conceptual Definitions of VBL*

Author/s	Conceptual Definition of VBL
Prilleltensky (2000)	Practice aimed at fostering cogent values in consideration of personal interests and degrees of power held by people within an organization and in the group of people it serves.
Shatalebi and Yarmohammadian (2011)	A modern approach that is proposed in response to some of the main changes in this period of time especially in falling values era.
Ahn et al. (2012)	Moral foundation underlying stewardship decisions and actions of leaders.
Viinamäki (2012)	Leadership based on foundational moral principles or values such as integrity, empowerment, and social responsibility.
Copeland (2014)	Behaviors that are rooted in ethical and moral foundations.
Lašáková et al. (2019)	Based on the idea that the effectiveness of laws and other regulations begins and ends with the ethicality of individual managers and company owners.
Eneanya (2020)	It is about doing the right thing and not compromising core values and a leader whose values align with that of his teams, would build their trust and partnership which would build commitment to strategic visions and goals.
Sumanasiri (2020)	Deals with strong leadership values which are moral and ethical for ensuring organizational survival.
Chang et al. (2021)	Morality to address questions like sustainability, responsibilities, and justices.
Lin et al. (2021)	Leadership styles based on strong ideological values (e.g., morality, benevolence) espoused by a leader.
Fulford and Coleman (2022)	Open in sharing personal values with stakeholders and their actions and decision-making processes are consistent with those values, while being transparent and observed by followers and stakeholders.

Source: *Authors' literature compilation*

In terms of components, perhaps the most comprehensive number of theories under VBL were mentioned by Sumanasiri (2020) who avowed that VBL constitutes shared leadership, spiritual leadership, stewardship, servant leadership, authentic leadership, connective leadership, self-sacrificial leadership, ethical leadership, and transformational leadership. However, the study did not address all of them due to lack of strong theoretical background to validate some of them as theories. According to Hendrikz and Engelbrecht (2019), the most significant leadership theories that have moral behaviors and should be regarded as VBL are transformational, servant, authentic and ethical leadership. While Copeland (2014) and Berger (2013) argued that VBL can only be observed on authentic, ethical, and transformational leadership theories. *Table 2* presents different types of leadership theories which are believed to be forms of VBL by different scholars, which leads us to conduct the comparative analysis in the upcoming sections.

Table 2: *VBL Theories*

Scholar/s	Leadership Theory
Berger (2013)	Ethical, Transformational, and Authentic
Copeland (2014)	Authentic, Ethical, and Transformational
Lašáková et al. (2019)	Ethical, Spiritual, Responsible, Servant, and Authentic
Hendrikz & Engelbrecht (2019)	Authentic, Transformational, Servant, and Ethical
Bano et al. (2020)	Authentic, Ethical and Transformational
Sumanasiri (2020)	Transformational, Ethical, Spiritual, Responsible, Servant, and Authentic

Chang et al. (2021)	Authentic, Ethical, and Servant
James et al. (2021)	Authentic, Servant and Congruent

Source: *Authors' literature compilation*

As it can be seen from *Table 2*, scholars are yet to agree on the specific leadership theories that constitute VBL theories. Authentic, ethical, and servant leadership theories are presented as the most cited components of VBL theories followed by responsible, spiritual, and transformational leadership theories which are mentioned by some. Thus, the current state of knowledge on which leadership theories form VBL lacks consensus. This study aims to systematically review the literature on VBL to understand its conceptualization and the theories that constitute it and their theoretical components. The following section presents the procedures followed during our review process including searching strategy and eligibility criteria.
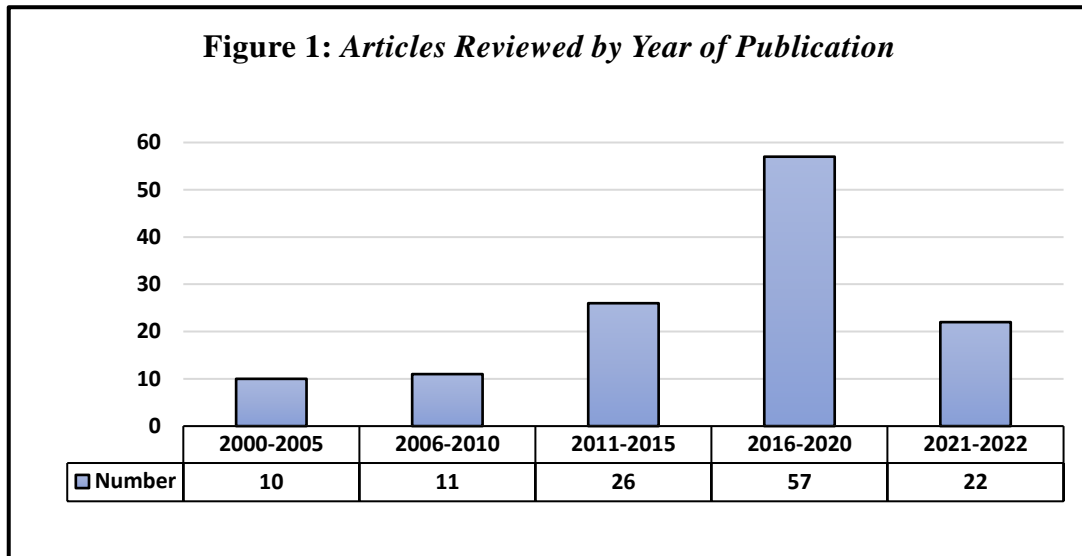
Methods

Our paper addressed two major issues. Firstly, we conducted a systematic literature review on VBL to understand the conceptualization of VBL which was followed by proposing a more comprehensive conceptual framework. Secondly, we identified specific leadership theories that form VBL and performed a comparative analysis of six leadership theories to pinpoint the commonalities and differences within these theories.

To do so, we conducted a two-stage systematic review. Our first systematic review was on VBL as we sought to extract the information from the existing literature. The purpose of this was to determine the state of knowledge in relation to VBL and guide us to identify specific leadership theories that constitute VBL. Thus, an electronic search was performed to find relevant studies on VBL. Searches were made from different databases that include *Web of Science, Wiley Online Library, Taylor and Francis, Academia, Google Scholar, Emerald, ScienceDirect databases,* and *ResearchGate*. A snowball search (citation tracking) was also conducted from the reference lists of the initially identified studies to locate additional relevant studies. The initial search key terms used are *Values-Based* and *Leadership*, *Values-Oriented* and *Leadership*, *Values-Centered* and *Leadership*, and *Values-Driven* and *Leadership*. Accordingly, 71 potentially related journal articles, 12 book chapters, and nine conference proceedings were collected.

After identifying the VBL theories covered in the literature, we identified eight leadership theories that form VBL (*see* Table 2). However, we decided to focus on six of them as we could not find a well-established theoretical background for the other two leadership theories. Thus, we focused on transformational leadership (TRL), ethical leadership (ETL), spiritual leadership (SPL), responsible leadership (RPL), servant leadership (SVL), and authentic leadership (ATL).

In order to help us achieve our second objective, it was followed by a new search using additional key terms *Transformational* and *Leadership*, *Ethical* and *Leadership*, *Spiritual* and *Leadership*, *Responsible* and *Leadership, Servant* and *Leadership, Authentic* and *Leadership*. The searches were made up to August 10, 2022. The first inclusion criteria for both searches were that the published document is in English and published between 2000 to 2022. and the main reason for the time range is because VBL is a contemporary introduction to leadership and deals with many of the emerging leadership theories such as ethical, authentic, responsible, and others. In fact, many of the studies on VBL theories have been

conducted over the last decade (see *Figure 1*). This does not include transformational leadership where many studies can be found prior to the millennia.

Figure 1: *Articles Reviewed by Year of Publication*

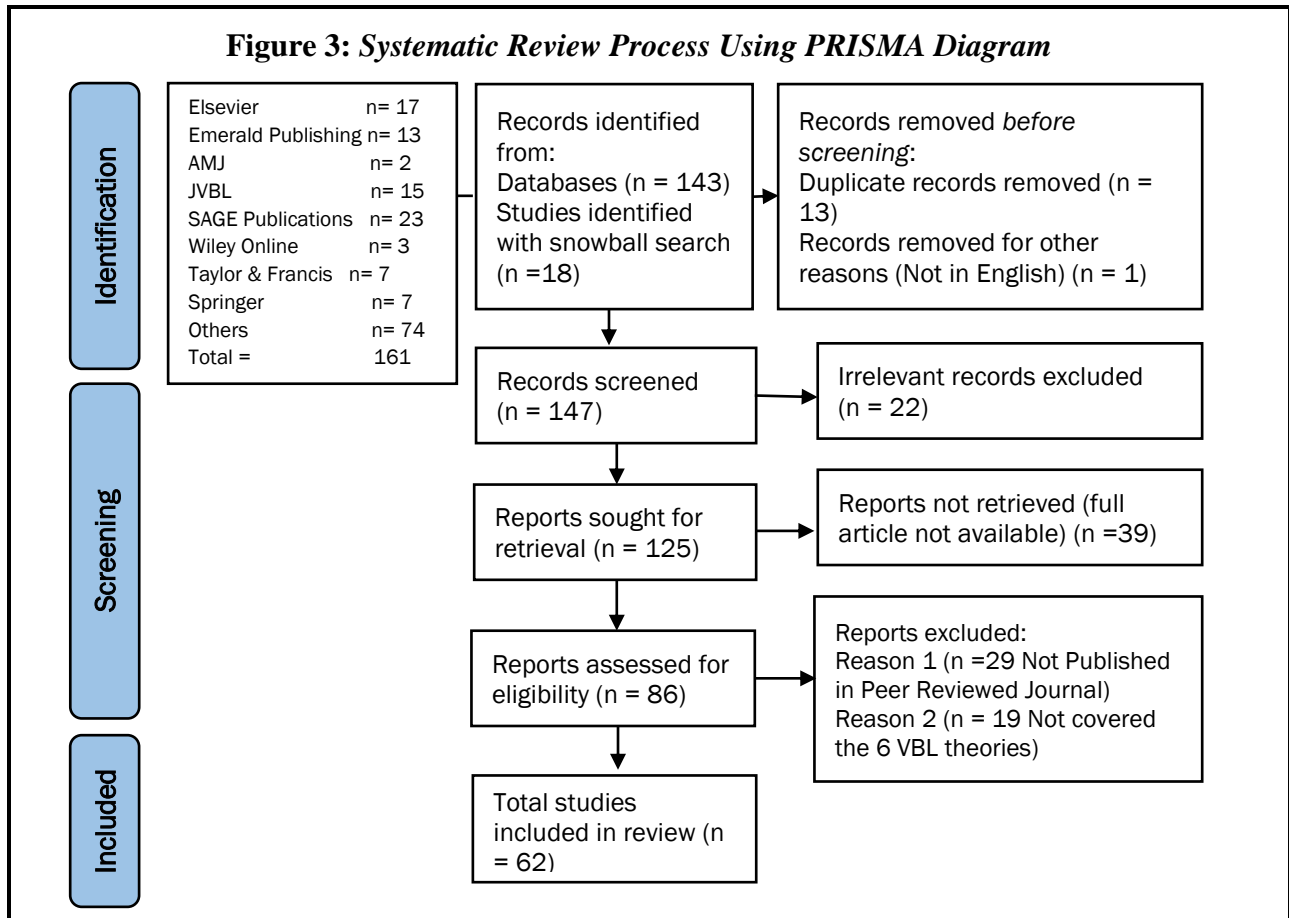| Number	2000-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2022
Number	10	11	26	57	22

The other inclusion criterion was it should be a journal article published in a peer-reviewed journal. Many of the journals used for this study are listed on SCOPUS and Web of Science, few relevant journals are used in the reviewing process with due care to avoid predatory journals. Most importantly, we tried to look at the previous issues of the journals as well as the editorial team. Thus, articles from non-peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and conference papers were excluded from the review.

Figure 2: *Articles Screened by Publisher/Journal*
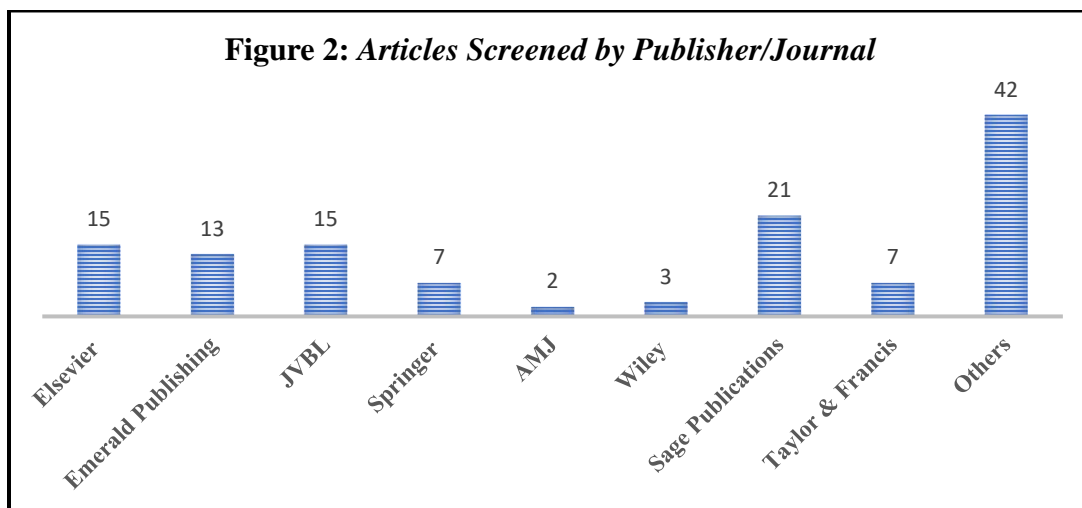
Our systematic review was done using PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses), which was initially released in 2009 and updated in 2020 (Page et al., 2021). The main purpose of using the PRISMA is to help us transparently report the steps we followed in our review process. Accordingly, a summary of the systematic review process is presented below (*Figure 3*). Thus, as illustrated in this figure, the initial search result from different databases resulted in a total of 161 studies and ended up with 62 studies that met the inclusion criteria and had full access.

Figure 3: *Systematic Review Process Using PRISMA Diagram*

Identification		
Elsevier n= 17 Emerald Publishing n= 13 AMJ n= 2 JVBL n= 15 SAGE Publications n= 23 Wiley Online n= 3 Taylor & Francis n= 7 Springer n= 7 Others n= 74 Total = 161	Records identified from: Databases (n = 143) Studies identified with snowball search (n =18)	Records removed *before screening*: Duplicate records removed (n = 13) Records removed for other reasons (Not in English) (n = 1)

Screening

Records screened (n = 147) → Irrelevant records excluded (n = 22)

Reports sought for retrieval (n = 125) → Reports not retrieved (full article not available) (n =39)

Reports assessed for eligibility (n = 86) → Reports excluded:
Reason 1 (n =29 Not Published in Peer Reviewed Journal)
Reason 2 (n = 19 Not covered the 6 VBL theories)

Included

Total studies included in review (n = 62)

Discussion

One of the major debates among scholars in leadership today is the commonalities and differentiation among different leadership theories (Pless & Maak, 2011; Hoch et al., 2018; Lemoine et al., 2019). Although the above six leadership theories collectively are regarded as VBL theories, the literature shows that each has its own distinct feature either in the form of encompassing a new theoretical dimension or the level of conceptual emphasis. Yet, there are many theoretical overlaps among the VBL theories and scholars have questioned whether these leadership theories are accumulating redundant or contributing a unique knowledge (Lemoine et al., 2019). Thus, the added value of some leadership theories has become questionable.

Transformational Leadership and Other VBL Theories

The similarities and differences between TRL and other leadership theories have been an area of interest for many researchers. As stated in Avolio et al. (2004), ATL theory stresses the idea of leading by example (i.e., role modeling) through setting high moral standards, honesty, and integrity. This idea is also certainly true for TRL theory but the focus on transparency, positivity, and high ethical standards in terms of degree is far more central to authentic leadership theory. On the other hand, Walumbwa et al. (2008) showed that the key theoretical dimensions under ATL are also elements of TRL theory. Indeed, TRL has a broader scope than ATL theory. Thus, "leader self-awareness and internalized moral perspective" are focal concepts of both ATL and TRL theories. While "relational transparency and balanced

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processing" are also elements of TRL, but more emphasis is given to them under authentic leadership theory. Likewise, a meta-analysis by Hoch et al. (2018) also found that the corrected correlation between TRL and ATL to be high (ρ=0.75). Hence, their empirical evidence did not suggest that authentic leadership in its current form provides much that TRL does not already provide.

According to Stones (2003), "transformational leaders and servant leaders are visionaries, generate high levels of trust, serve as role models, show consideration for others, delegate responsibilities, empower followers, teach, communicate, listen, and influence followers." Bass (2000) also discussed the relationship between TRL and SVL. In this work, SVL was described as having a number of parallels with TRL (vision, influence, credibility, trust, and service), but it moved beyond TRL with its alignment of leaders' and followers' motives.

Stones (2003) claims that the primary difference between TRL and SVL is the focus of the leader. A transformational leader focuses on the organization; hence, the leader inspires the followers' commitment toward organizational objectives. Whereas a servant leader focuses on people who are the followers. This means servant leaders do not have an affinity for the abstract corporation or organization, rather they value the people who constitute the organization. Similarly, Van Dierendonck (2011) posited that the largest difference between these two leadership theories is that SVL focuses on humility, authenticity, and interpersonal acceptance, none of which are explicit elements of TRL.

Likewise, Schaubroeck, Lam, and Peng (2011) have noted that TRL and SVL differ in their primary aims and the psychological states they seek to activate among followers. Accordingly, those leaders who exhibit high TRL are seen to develop employees in ways needed to accomplish collective goals. Conversely, SVL behavior emphasizes promoting the welfare of others by conveying support to individual group members, minimizing negative relationship conflicts, and nurturing the broader potential of individual members and a sense of community within the work group.

TRL and ETL also overlap in their focus on personal characteristics (Brown et al., 2005). Ethical and transformational leaders care about others, act consistently with their moral principles (i.e., integrity), consider the ethical consequences of their decisions, and are ethical role models for others (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Yet, TRL has additional properties which are not captured in the ethical leadership style: inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. That is, in contrast to TRL, ETL does not have as strong an emphasis on affecting follower in-role performance.

According to Brown and Treviño (2006), transformational leaders emphasize vision, values, and intellectual stimulation whereas, ethical leaders emphasize ethical standards, and moral management (more transactional) and it does not include references to visionary or intellectually stimulating leadership, terms that are consistent with the TRL theory. Other empirical shreds of evidence have also suggested ETL is strongly correlated with transformational leadership theory (Hoch et al., 2018; Anderson & Sun, 2015; Mayer et al., 2012; Brown & Treviño, 2006). These studies have revealed that there exists a high level of associations and overlaps between TRL and ETL.

Authentic Leadership and Other VBL Theories
Avolio and Gardner, (2005) avowed that ATL is considered as a root construct forming the basis for other positive leadership theories and suggested that it is a requirement for

transformational, servant, ethical, and spiritual leadership theories. This means ATL dimensions are closely linked with transformational, charismatic, servant, spiritual or other forms of positive leadership. Prior studies on ATL have asserted that there is a positive moral perspective characterized by high ethical standards within the ATL approach (Gardner et al., 2011; Brown & Treviño, 2006; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Moreover, Walumbwa et al. (2008) explained that an internalized moral perspective as a basic component of their ATL construct and developing the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire. Thus, authentic leaders demonstrate high moral values, express high levels of honesty and integrity (Avolio et al., 2004); openness and a desire to do the right thing (Walumbwa et al., 2008) in their dealings with followers. Brown and Treviño (2006) also mentioned that both authentic and ethical leaders share a social motivation and a consideration leadership style. Both are ethically principled leaders who consider the ethical consequences of their decisions.

As it has been already stated in the case of TRL, ATL theory is posited to the idea of leading by example/role modeling through setting high moral standards, honesty, and integrity. Thus, both theories require a moral person who demonstrates high moral value, honesty, integrity, and role modeling. Nevertheless, ATL has additional elements which are not addressed in ETL (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Brown & Treviño, 2006) including self-awareness, relational transparency, and balanced processing all represent features of ATL not captured in operational definitions of ETL.

Comparing this operationalization of ATL with the six SVL characteristics, one can see the overlap of authentic and servant leadership in terms of two characteristics, namely, authenticity and humility (*see* Table 3). With its explicit theoretical roots in authenticity theory, authenticity itself obviously is more an issue of ATL. With respect to humility, only the willingness to learn can be found in ATL too; the willingness to stand back and give room to others is missing. Moreover, none of the other 4 SVL characteristics are explicitly positioned or measured as belonging to the core of ATL.

Ethical Leadership and Other VBL Theories
Several scholars have argued that the theoretical dimensions of ETL exist within the RPL theory. For instance, Pless and Maak (2011) explained that RPL deals with the importance of a full-range view of leader–stakeholder relationships, whereas ETL restricts its view to a classical leadership dyad of leader–subordinate, thus RPL goes beyond ethical perspectives, primarily from a relational point of view. On the other hand, Agarwal and Bhal (2020) also suggested that RPL is a broader construct than ETL which tends to be an inherent part of RPL through the dimensions of the moral person and moral manager. But as it can be seen from *Figure 4,* RPL encompasses two additional dimensions, multistakeholder consideration and sustainable growth focus which are not addressed under ETL. In a recent study, James and Priyadarshini (2021) also argued that RPL theory moves beyond moral views, mainly from an interpersonal perspective.

ETL is similar to servant leadership in terms of caring for people, integrity, trustworthiness, and serving the good of the whole (Van Dierendonck, 2011). As it can be also seen from *Table 3*, the components explicitly overlapping with each other are empowering and developing people, humility, and stewardship. Whereas, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, and providing direction components of SVL are relatively unimportant in ETL.

Responsible Leadership and Other VBL Theories

Having a moral component as an integral part, RPL theory is bound to have similarities with the other VBL theories: transformational, authentic, ethical, servant, and spiritual. RPL is consistent with ATL as both theories include moral traits such as trustworthiness, integrity, and the desire to do what is ethically correct (Agarwal & Bhal, 2020). RPL is closely related to the TRL in terms of inspirational views, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation but differs with regards to the leader-follower relationship, leadership emphasis, focus on individual characteristics, the leader's ethical or unethical behavior, and how change and transformation are achieved (James & Priyadarshini, 2021; Pless & Maak, 2011).

The main distinctive theoretical dimension of RPL theory from other VBL theories is its focus on stakeholders on two levels, within and outside organizations (Shaaban, 2021). In this regard, Shi and Ye (2016) indicated the main difference between the RPL theory and the other VBL theories in terms of stakeholder relationships. This argument shows the other VBL theories mainly focus on the dyadic supervisor-subordinate relationships but considerably ignore the influence of leaders' behaviors and decisions on other stakeholders, RPL, on the contrary, makes up the deficiencies of the existing VBL theories, and can effectively balance the conflicting interests among stakeholders inside and outside organization, thereby contributing to promoting corporate reputation, earning the trust of the public and achieving sustainable development of organization and society.

Servant Leadership and Other VBL Theories

The similarities and differences between SVL and SVL have been an area of interest among researchers (Hoch et al., 2018; Anderson & Sun, 2015; Van Dierendonck et al., 2014; Stones, 2003). The main area of difference between the two is for SVL, the goal is the psychological needs of followers as but when it comes to TRL this priority is secondary to the organization's goals (Eva et al., 2019). According to Stones (2003), SVL focuses on followers who can bring achievement of an organization's long-term goals by assuring their growth, well-being, and development. While a study by Hoch et al. (2018) has affirmed that empirical evidence has shown a low correlation between SVL and TRL.

As presented in *Table 3* one of the theoretical components of SVL is authenticity. However, Eva et al. (2019, p.113) mentioned that for servant leaders, the propensity to operate with a deep clarity of self-awareness and self-regulation might spring from a spiritual and/or altruistic motive to serve others, both of which are absent in the ATL framework. Moreover, four theoretical components of servant leadership: empowering and developing people, stewardship, providing direction, and interpersonal acceptance are not addressed in authentic leadership theory.

Spiritual Leadership and Other VBL Theories

SPL is a relatively new theory, and unlike the above VBL theories, the literature on SPL theory is scarce in relation to its commonalities and differences with other leadership theories, with most studies focusing on validating Fry's (2003) theoretical framework (Anderson & Sun, 2015). Recently, Oh and Wang (2020) who systematically reviewed the literature on SPL corroborated that no comprehensive study has been done on how spiritual leadership as an emerging approach is distinctly different from other commonly known leadership approaches.

As noted by Avolio and Gardner (2005), areas of overlap between the authentic and spiritual leadership theories include their focus on integrity, trust, courage, hope, and perseverance (resilience) (p. 331). On the other hand, the common characteristics shared by spiritual and transformational leadership are building human relationships (Singh, 2021), "altruistic love" and "visioning" which are captured within individual consideration and inspirational motivation dimensions respectively (Anderson & Sun, 2015) and three qualities of spiritual leadership are also embedded in servant leadership. According to Karadağ et al. (2020), SPL theory emphasizes on the spirituality of an individual which is ignored by other leadership approaches. In general, SPL overlaps with authentic, ethical, servant, and transformational leadership, as authenticity, being ethical, and serving others form the basis of SPL.

We used *Table 3* and *Table 4* below to determine what set of knowledge is available about the six VBL theories considered in this study, how these leadership theories have been measured, and what are the shared theoretical components. The results have proved that the popularity of TRL is not a twist of fate, rather it is because it captures most of the theoretical components of the other leadership theories. Many of the key characteristics of these leadership styles overlap with the essential dimensions of TRL theory. For example, ethical value was found to be an explicit element in all the leadership theories, while ATL is considered as a root construct to any positive leadership, and issues related to self-awareness, and concern for others were found to be shared values of many the VBL theories.

Table 3: *Comparative Review of Transformational, Ethical, Authentic, Responsible, Servant, and Spiritual Leadership Theories*

Author(s) (Year)	Leadership Theories Compared	Overlaps and Differences
James and Priyadarshini (2021)	Responsible vs Ethical, Authentic, Transformational, Spiritual, Shared, Charismatic, Servant, Steward, Relational, Situational, and Virtuous	- Ethics is taken as an integral part of authentic leadership and responsible leadership, but RPL moves beyond moral views, mainly from an interpersonal perspective. - RPL is very close to transformational in different aspects like inspirational views, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation, but TRL is not considered in the environment of the stakeholder concept. - The main motivation for responsible leaders is to work for the organizational objectives and needs of all stakeholders and the social environment, rather than helping and serving others.
Hoch et al. (2018)	Transformational vs Ethical, Authentic, and Servant Leadership	- Authentic and ethical leadership display significant construct redundancy with TRL. - SVL appears to exhibit a higher degree of conceptual and empirical distinctness from TRL.
Anderson and Sun (2015)	Ideological Leadership, Pragmatic Leadership, Authentic Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Integrative Public Leadership, Servant Leadership, Ohio State Studies on Leadership,	- Transformational leaders' visions can be driven by what leaders believe is beneficial to the organization while, servant leaders' visions that benefit organizational members. - In contrast to transformational leadership, servant leaders are guided by high internalized moral principles. - TRL and SVL are highly correlated in terms of empowerment and creating value for the community. - Even if TRL requires ethical foundation, unlike ETL it is not an explicit component.

	and Transformational Leadership	- The element ethics figures heavily in both servant and authentic leadership
Dierendonck (2011)	Servant leadership vs Transformational, Authentic, Ethical, Empowering, Spiritual, Level 5, and Self-sacrificing leaderships	- Unlike to TRL, SVL focuses more on the needs of the individual than with the organization. - SVL overlaps with ATL with two characteristics (authenticity and humility) not with empowering and developing people, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction and stewardship. - SVL and ETL are similar in terms of empowering and developing people, humility, and stewardship. Unlike SVL, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction are relatively unimportant in ETL.
Pless and Maak (2011)	Responsible vs Ethical, Authentic, Transformational, Servant, and Virtuous	- RPL goes beyond ethical perspectives, primarily from a relational point of view. - RPL is close to the transformational notions of vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration but differs in terms of the definition of followers, RPL considers them more broadly as stakeholders inside and outside the organization. Moreover, RPL is less focused on individual characteristics than TRL.
Walumbwa et al. (2008)	Authentic Leadership vs Ethical Leadership, & Transformational Leadership	- Authentic and ethical leadership theories describe leaders as moral persons who exhibit honesty, integrity, openness, and a desire to do the right thing, and role modeling. - However, ATL covers distinctive components that are not captured by ETL namely, the focus on self-awareness, relational transparency, and balanced processing. - Leader self-awareness and internalized moral perspective are also focal components of TRL whereas, relational transparency and balanced processing are only implicit components of TRL. Nonetheless, TRL is a broader construct encompassing elements not addressed in ATL.
Brown and Treviño (2006)	Ethical Leadership vs Authentic Leadership, Spiritual Leadership and Transformational Leadership	- ETL is similar with ATL and TRL in terms of concern for others (altruism), ethical decision making, integrity & role modeling. - An ethical leader emphasizes moral management and "other" awareness, but an authentic leader emphasizes authenticity and self-awareness; - Transformational leaders emphasize vision, values, and intellectual stimulation but ethical leaders emphasize ethical standards, and moral management.
Stones (2003)	Transformational Leadership vs Servant Leadership	- Both transformational leaders and servant leaders are visionaries, generate high levels of trust, serve as role models, show consideration for others, delegate responsibilities, empower followers, teach, communicate, listen, and influence followers. - Significant point of variation lies in that transformational leaders tend to focus more on organizational objectives while servant leaders focus more on the people who are their followers.

Source: *Compiled by the researchers from the above review*

Table 4: *Theoretical Components, Commonalities, and Differences of VBL Theories*

Study/Theory	Theoretical Component	TRL	RPL	ATL	ETL	SVL	SPL
Transformational Leadership (TRL)	Idealized influence	■		▨	■	▨	
	Inspirational motivation	■				■	■
	Intellectual stimulation	■					
	Individualized consideration	■	▨		▨	■	■
Authentic Leadership (ATL)	Leader self-awareness	■		■	■	■	■
	Relational transparency	▨		■			
	Internalized moral perspective	■	■	■	■	▨	■
	Balanced processing	▨					
Ethical Leadership (ETL)	Moral Person	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Moral Manager	▨	■	▨			
Servant Leadership (SVL)	Empowering and Developing people	■	■		■	■	
	Humility	▨		■	■	■	
	Authenticity	▨	▨	■		■	■
	Interpersonal acceptance	▨				■	
	Providing direction	■	■			■	■
	Stewardship	■			■		■
Responsible Leadership (RPL)	Moral Person	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Multistakeholder consideration	▨	■				
	Moral Manager	▨	■		■		
	Sustainable growth focus		■				
Spiritual Leadership (SPL)	Hope/Faith					■	■
	Altruistic love	■		▨	▨	■	■
	Calling	■				■	■
	Vision	▨	■			■	■
	Membership	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	■

■ = Focal Component   ▨ = Addressed (Minor Component)

Source: *Compiled by the researchers from the above review*

Our Conceptualization of VBL

Our literature review revealed that VBL has attracted huge attention over the last decade. Yet despite this increased emphasis, there appears to be a lack of agreement and clarity about the conceptualization of VBL and the specific values that constitutes it. During our review, we realized that one of the main factors for such disparity among researchers is differences in cultural context whereas all the articles we reviewed have ignored it. It is noteworthy to mention that certain values are highly regarded in some cultures, which can be less important in other cultural contexts. The works of Bass (1997) and Walumbwa, Onva, Wang, and Lawler (2005) have also provided evidence that leadership is a culture-specific phenomenon. Moreover, Hofstede, Hofstede Jan, and Minkov (2010) have stated that "asking people to describe the qualities of a good leader is a way of asking them to describe their culture" (p.

331). Therefore, it is the cultural context that shapes how leaders and followers behave and interpret things.

We also agree with Antonakis and Day (2018) and Bass (2008) that not all aspects of leadership are universal, there are aspects that vary across cultures and countries; some key features of leadership may differ from society to society, resulting in different leader behaviors and practices. We understand that the different VBL theories and their components can be conceptualized differently if cultural contexts are considered. In light of this, we argue that the six VBL theories reviewed in our study should be supplemented by cultural contexts in order to bring more clarity and harmonization to their conceptualization.

Conclusions & Implications for Future Research

In response to the increasing interest in the research on VBL and the lack of clarity and agreement on the conceptualization of VBL, we conducted this review aiming to extend the view on VBL. After reviewing the literature, we conducted a critical comparative review to enlighten the key differences and similarities among six VBL theories that can help in building the VBL theory. We then offered a comprehensive conceptual framework of the VBL theory. But it should be underlined that there could be other leadership theories that might have associations with the leadership theories considered in our review. Thus, other researchers can expand on the concerns mentioned here to determine what value has been added by these theories and offer evidence of whether other emerging leadership styles (such as shared leadership and steward leadership theories) can be thought of as standalone theories or not.

Finally, we claim that many of the explicit and implicit theoretical dimensions of the six VBL theories in our review have been developed using Western perspectives that ignore non-Western contexts. We suggested a conceptual framework for VBL theories that considers cultural differences, thus, it would be interesting to look into the VBL theories from an indigenous perspective. We understand that indigenous leadership research is a better way of studying VBL leadership theories in different contexts as leadership is culturally contingent and its conceptualization may differ across cultures. Moreover, we suggest upcoming researchers to compare the VBL theories with different non-Western indigenous leadership approaches.

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