A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

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ARTICLE INFO

Abstract  
This study outlines an inclusive review of past studies on “entrepreneurial leadership (EL)”. A systematic literature review (SLTR) is an accredited approach for producing the trustworthy understandings from an evidence based technique. The approach of SLTR used in this study is conducted stepwise for providing the support to conceptual development of EL. The review method of this research conduct begins with keywords’ identification collected from the panel of review. These search strings were then utilized in nine databases that were considered as highly suitable for the research in management field. These databases include: Emerald, JSTOR, Sage journals, Science direct, Springer link, Taylor and Francis, Web of Knowledge, and Wiley online library. To obtain the relevant articles, titles and abstracts were screened out based on exclusion and inclusion criteria. The references and citations of chosen papers were scrutinized to decide their exclusion and inclusion. Initially, 216 articles in total were recognized that were further refined in the process of review. Duplicate papers chosen from given databases were then filtered out. In the end, the study has selected 97 papers that were suitable for the review and analysis. The findings of this paper sustenance the conclusion that EL is an important determinant that enhances organizational performance across competitive and turbulent atmospheres. Though, what is indistinct is the magnitude to which the EL attributes recognized are pertinent in a specific context. The research results highlight the manifold attributes relevant to EL like vision, risk-taking, effective communication, creativity and innovativeness. It has been seen that while the SLTR procedures came up with a exhaustive review of the past studies on EL, the effectiveness of the literatures is restricted to the search specific sentence strings used in the databases. Based on the SLTR, recommendations and future suggestions with specific reference to emerging countries are proposed.

Keywords:  
Systematic Literature Review, Entrepreneurial Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Attributes.

JEL Classification:  
O15, K15

1. INTRODUCTION

There is an appropriate structure of research and knowledge including leadership and entrepreneurship. The vast area of leadership is generally thought to be a “mature field” (Hunt et al., 2000) even yet this development in the field of leadership has not been attained without reasonable concerns related to leadership (Cogliser and Brigham, 2004). The discipline of entrepreneurship has obtained noticeable importance and growth in current years (Shane et al., 2000; Shane, 2012). At the same time, the field of leadership and entrepreneurship are specifically taken as the fields which are considered to be independent, numerous authors have drawn concurrence among the areas both traditionally and theoretically (Cogliser and Brigham, 2004). Within this rising viewpoint, numerous scholars expand these concurrences towards explaining entrepreneurship as a type of leadership in a narrow perspective; especially small size possession or business kick-off. Such research has outcome in the appearance of a latest model identified as...
“entrepreneurial leadership”. This latest model of leadership further enhances the concept further than an overlapping of the areas (Fernald et al., 2005; Coglizer and Brigham, 2004) and links to the leadership qualities across different circumstances and perspectives (Kansikas et al., 2012; Harrison et al., 2016).

According to Fernald et al. (2005), the “entrepreneurial leadership (EL)” function has been regarded as a main factor in which small business startups can keep up their uniqueness when encountered with vibrant and varying settings. Past studies have recommended that “entrepreneurial leadership” is directly linked to performance of business by stressing the need of innovation and improvement in clients and rival organizations (Van et al., 2007). In value acknowledgement that this latest rising type of leadership provides in improving performance of organization, attention in EL has improved noticeably between researchers. This is observed with the descriptions that have originated from literature associated to EL. EL has lately been explained as a leadership type that generates imaginative situations that are used to collect and organize a “supporting cast” of respondents who become dedicated by the objective to the finding and utilization of strategic value edition (Gupta et al., 2004). At the same time as the leadership function proves itself different (Northouse, 2010), EL provides a method to discover the function and impact of leadership in industrial environment (Swiercz et al., 2002; Harison et al., 2016). Grenberg et al. (2013) discussed that it is a leadership approach that is employed “to solve complex business, social, and environmental problems”. But yet with the noticeable explanations and great attention, development in this latest area has been stopped by a deficiency of theoretical progress and the lack of satisfactory instruments to evaluate leader’s attributes and attitude regarding entrepreneurship (Renko et al., 2015).

On the other hand, the development of past studies from both practical and theoretical perspective on EL (Cogliser et al., 2004; Chen, 2007; Harrison et al., 2016), and there exists a restricted agreement on the explanation and EL characteristics. The effect is a different literature base with a different study gaps in our information and consideration regarding EL both theoretically and practically. This research makes a primary step to attaining consensus on the EL explanation and characteristics through conducting a SLTR. The major objective of this research is to provide a standard in the theoretical development of “entrepreneurial leadership”. The follow-on SLTR and analysis aims to deliver a roadmap of the existing condition of research in the field and discover directions for further researches. Rely on the facts offered, the rising characteristics of EL are recognized and an agenda of future research is set out.

2. METHODS

To offer a focused assessment of EL and linked models, a SLTR was used. This method is essential in any type of intellectual enquiry and provides an important instrument in research of management. The major objective of conducting SLTR is to allow a scholar to “map and assess the existing intellectual territory and to specify a research question to develop the existing body of knowledge further” (Tranfield et al., 2003). On the other hand, the majority of management studies have shadowed a narrative strategy, despite the fact that such strategy has been condemned for deficient criticality in several examples (Denyer et al., 2009). As an outcome, an additional systematic strategy to the assessment of past studies is proposed (Rousseau et al., 2008; Vázquez et al., 2013). A SLTR accepts a logical, imitable and fair procedure (Tranfield et al., 2003) and, this way, varies from an established description review. SLTR in management field is expected to be fair, comprehensive, descriptive and investigative naturally (Denyer et al., 2009). By this procedure, an SLTR provides the summary of the eminence of recent information and a vision into its growth (Rouseau et al., 2008). In this paper, the SLTR method established by Tranfield et al. (2003) was taken in to account and a stepwise review method was adopted.

2.1 Step 1: Planning for the Review

Before conducting the process of review, a board of highly technical members in the field of “entrepreneurship and leadership” was taken into confidence on the way to develop a vigorous review procedure. The board extended help in giving a plan of the irritable penalizing setting of “entrepreneurial leadership” and the changing perceptions that can rise in this evolving model. An additional study and description of previous academic work was also under taken to strategize and improved comprehension of the rising tendencies in academic previous work linked to “entrepreneurial leadership”. This early phase was involved in evolving the assessment procedures which comprised of the review inquiries to be settled, the special attention to the study as well as the procedures for academic previous back ground studies exclusion and inclusion.

The review is directed by the three questions given below:

$RQ1$: What are the attributes of entrepreneurial leader?

$RQ2$: What is the impact of entrepreneurial leadership?

$RQ3$: How do the leaders develop these attributes?
Lastly, the study had developed the evaluation criteria in order to eradicate low quality research articles and ensures the inclusion of high quality papers for review. The criteria of inclusion and exclusion for research articles to be reviewed is as under:

**Criteria of Inclusion**

i. The article must be published between the period of 1970-2021.

ii. The article must address at least one review question.

iii. The article must concentrate on the “entrepreneurial leadership (EL)” as leadership style.

iv. The article must be written in English language.

**Criteria of Inclusion**

i. The article focusing on other leadership style were excluded.

ii. The articles not in peer reviewed (such as book chapters and conference proceedings) publications were also excluded.

### 2.2 Step 2: Conducting Review

The review method of this research conduct begins with keywords’ identification collected from the panel of review. The Table 1 outlines the search strings and keywords:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Keywords and Search Strings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search String</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A1</td>
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<td>A2</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>C1</td>
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<tr>
<td>C2</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entrepr* denotes entrepreneurial, entrepreneurship, entrepreneur etc.; Leader* denotes lead, leader or leadership etc.

These search strings were then utilized in 9 databases that were considered as highly suitable for the research in management field. These databases include: Emerald, JSTOR, Sage journals, Science direct, Springer link, Taylor and Francis, Web of Knowledge, and Wiley online library. The study has chosen the literature on the basis of keywords and search strings. To obtain the relevant articles, titles and abstracts were screened out based on exclusion and inclusion criteria. The references and citations of chosen papers were scrutinized to decide their exclusion and inclusion. Initially, 216 articles in total were recognized that were further refined in the process of review. After this initial process, the study used google scholar to get more articles. Duplicate papers chosen from given databases were then filtered out. References and citations were examined for selected papers on the basis of exclusion and inclusion criteria. In the end, the study has selected 97 papers that were suitable for the review and analysis.

### 2.3 Quality Assessment of Current Study

The study has used following criteria for each paper found in the process of review to assess the quality of current study; is the article properly referenced? and does the article address explicit findings on the basis of arguments and evidences? All of the articles considered for review process have conceded the criteria of assessment of quality and final sample of 97 articles were reviewed by the independent experts that further ensured the consistency of the review process.

### 2.4 Data Extraction and Validation

The study used Mendeley software to generate the details of references of all the papers and then all the references were manually cross checked. The data were synthesized to recognize themes. The selected sample of 97 articles was carried out in the validation process. All the articles were reread and no article was excluded as all the papers met the assessment criteria given above. Hence, 97 papers were kept as the final sample.
3. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

3.1 Contribution on the Basis of Geographical Area

USA has higher numbers of articles (33) published in the field of EL. A total of 20 countries are included in the sample with UK stands second in terms of numbers of articles published. An interesting fact is that only few studies are published in developing economies in the field of EL; stating that current review on EL is strongly concerned with developed countries. Figure 1 depicts the No. of papers published in each country of study.

![Number of Articles Published](image)

**Fig. 1.** Number of Articles Published in each Country of Study

3.2 Study Type

Figure 2a shows that 70% of the total reviewed paper were empirical while 6% (24%) were review of literature (conceptual). Out of these 70%, 64% (33%) papers were based on qualitative (quantitative) studies while rest 3% were mix method studies (see Figure 2b).

![Number of Articles in each Type of Study](image)

**Fig. 2a.** Number of Articles in each Type of Study
3.3 Source of Literature

The selected 97 reviewed papers were appeared in different reputed journals and only ten journals had at least 5 published articles. Table 2 shows the numbers of articles published in the ten journals.

3.4 Citations

The top 5 papers with most number of citations are shown in Figure 3. The article with highest citations was Gupta et al. (2004) with 1010 citations followed by Vecchio (2003) with 737 citations, Kuratko (2007) with 548 citations, Cogliser and Brigham (2004) with 497 citations and Hamieleski and Ensley (2007) with 399 citations (Accessed on August 11, 2021).

Table 2. Journal with High Numbers of Publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Journal Name</th>
<th>Articles Published</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Human Resource Management Review</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior &amp; Research</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>International Review of Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Journal of Asia Entrepreneurship and Sustainability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Journal of Education for Business</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Journal of Leadership &amp; Organizational Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Journal of Leadership Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Journal of Small Business &amp; Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Journal of Small Business Management</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Organization Development Journal</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. FINDINGS

4.1 Answer to RQ1: Attributes of an Entrepreneurial Leader

Out of reviewed papers, 40 papers were found related to the answer of RQ1. The summary of attributes found in these 40 papers is presented in Table 3. The recognized attributes of leadership mirror the diversity of concepts and points out the difference between institutional and individual elements. The attributes like effective communication, risk taking, vision and creativity were most prominent in the identified articles.

Table 3. Attributes of an Entrepreneurial Leader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agbim et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Strategic factors: economic intuition, flexibility, vision, holistic view, opportunism, forecasting upcoming hitches, exploring environmental variations, risk taking, ability to deal with the unanticipated situations and the ability to demonstrate the future events. Communicative factors: empathy, persuasion, evading unhelpful conflict, controlling feelings, active listener, participation and inspiring confidence. Personal and motivational factors: transfer of positive feelings, making the constant progress, accepting the needs of followers, self-confidence, hyperactivity, motivation, candour, creativity, emotional stability, discipline, open minded, planning, modesty, courage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagheri &amp; Pihie (2009)</td>
<td>Innovativeness, risk taking and creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagheri &amp; Pihie (2010)</td>
<td>Ability to self-confidence, motivation, influence and communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagheri &amp; Pihie (2011)</td>
<td>Decisive, positive, intellectual stimulating, improvement-oriented, effective bargainer, integrator, team builder, enthusiastic, inspirational, encouraging, convincing, diplomatic, confidence builder, informed, foresight, visionary, extra insight, ambitious, performance oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagheri et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Love for versatility and challenges, innovativeness, and proactiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter (2012)</td>
<td>team builder, intellectually stimulated, questions assumptions, control of resources, ethical practice, carries out novel amalgamations, social influence, ability to allocate the resources efficiently and effectively, encourages the innovativeness, ability of path-clearing, ability to locate the resources, ability to motivate others, bargainer, positive mindset, creativity, seizes opportunities, ability to execute, takes calculated risk, approach of building confidence, foresight, recognition of pattern, patient, decisive, perseverance, intuition and understanding about how the technology can be utilized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballein (1998)</td>
<td>coalition building, financial skills, communication skills, leadership skills, decisiveness, confidence, innovativeness, integrity, persistence, risk taking, vision, team playing, strategic thinking and capability to handle the change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darling and Beebe (2007)</td>
<td>Effective communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cogliser and Brigham (2004)</td>
<td>Vision, planning, motivation and influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen (2007)</td>
<td>Innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choi (2009)</td>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darling et al. (2007)</td>
<td>meaning via communication, confidence via respect, attention via vision and trust via positioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D’intro et al. (2008)</td>
<td>Risk-taking, courageous and rational decision making, radical innovation and technological vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gupta et al. (2004)</td>
<td>Decisive, positive, intellectual stimulating, improvement-oriented, effective bargainer, integrator, team builder, enthusiastic, inspirational, encouraging, convincing, diplomatic, confidence builder, informed, foresight, visionary, extra insight, ambitious, performance oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernald et al. (2005)</td>
<td>Motivating ability, patience, creativity, vision, risk taking, flexibility, achievement orientation, and persistence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeman and Siegfried, (2015)</td>
<td>Self-evaluation, coaching and strategic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guo (2009)</td>
<td>Environment and system competencies involving system knowledge. Organizational competencies involving risk, quality and financial management and skills. Social competencies involving developing others via motivation and effective communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuratko and Hornsby (1999)</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial climate, innovation, vision and developing venture teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuratko (2007)</td>
<td>Innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter and Lean (2014)</td>
<td>Effective negotiator, reward, integrator, motivational, knowledgeable, encouraging, ambition, hard work, foresight, commitment, intuitive, team-builder, enthusiastic,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
support creativity, decisive, intellectually stimulating, visionary, extra insight, performance-oriented, confidence-builder and inspiring.

Nicholson (1998) assertive, tough mindedness, separated by social disruptions and not unfocussed by inquisitiveness
Ruvio et al. (2010) Vision
Swiercz and Lydon (2002) Function related competencies on the basis of finance, marketing, HR and operations. Self-competencies like “intellectual integrity, move from me to we, speak to the oracle and create a sustainable organization”
Van Assche (2005) Skillful agenda setting, issue popularization, making deals, innovative policies and enhanced support.
Surie and Ashley (2008) Ethics
Ahmed and Ramzan (2013) Decisive, positive, intellectual stimulating, improvement-oriented, effective bargainer, integrator, team builder, enthusiastic, inspirational, encouraging, convincing, diplomatic, confidence builder, informed, foresight, visionary, extra insight, ambitious, performance oriented.
Omeihe et al. (2020) Hard work, innovativeness, vision
Misra and Mishra (2017) Creative integration, discovery of opportunity
Pittino et al. (2018) Resource endowment, innovation
Clark et al. (2019) Proactiveness, risk-taking, innovativeness
Renko (2017) Risk taker, passionate, creative
Klingbeil et al. (2019) Distinction, creativity, hard work, vision
Al Mamun et al. (2018) Vision, intelligence

4.2 Answer to RQ2: The Impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership

The studies on the EL generally shown that EL played positive role in the organizations. 42 studies answered the RQ2 (in parts at least), most of these studies are shown in Table 4. 78% of these studies were empirical. The reviews’ findings highlight EL as dynamic process that shapes the directions of the organizations. EL is dominant in increasing effectiveness of organizations and enhancing the firm and business performance (Harrison et al., 2015; Mgeni, 2015; Chheda and Banga, 2013; Dintino et al., 2008; Van Zyl and Mathur-Helm, 2007; Flamholts, 2011). It also extends the economic performance and connects the entrepreneurship related values in the firm (Bagheri and Harrison, 2020; Suyitno et al., 2014; Agus and Hassan, 2010). Such extensions affect many organizational factors like organizational innovation, creativity and renewal (Al Mamun et al., 2018; Pihie et al., 2014; Pihie and Bagheri, 2013; Flamholzt, 2011; D’intino et al, 2008). With the help of this, the organizations promoting the attributes of EL become able to address the discontinuities and challenging conditions (Sarabi et al., 2020; Harrison et al., 2016; Freiman and Siegfried, 2015; Abbas, 2014). Table 4 provides the answers on the influence of EL attributes. However, only 9% papers have addressed the influence of EL in an emerging economy perspective.
Table 4. The Impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agus and Hassan (2010), Shokouhyar et al. (2020)</td>
<td>Satisfaction of customers and performance of sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coyle (2014)</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship related culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeman and Siegfried (2015), Sundararajan et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Reduce the rates of start-up failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison et al. (2016), Agbim et al. (2013), McCarthy et al. (2010)</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship related success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison et al. (2016), Greenberg et al. (2013), Darling et al. (2007), Currie et al. (2008)</td>
<td>Capturing and creation of novel opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansikas et al. (2012), Nwaomah and Tsukani (2020)</td>
<td>Attainment of goals of an organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koryak et al. (2015)</td>
<td>Growth and performance of firms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pashiaris and Savvides (2011)</td>
<td>Resource acquisition and development of network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Answer to RQ3: How do the leaders develop EL attributes?

15 articles found that answer this question. Most of these articles examined EL development from a perspective of students studying entrepreneurship or by improving the curricula of education (Roomi and Harrison, 2011). Only few papers studied EL development from the eyes of entrepreneurial leaders (Leitch et al., 2012; Lang, 2013). The studies linked with EL development are following; Miao et al. (2019), Baghire and Akbar (2018), Leitch and Volery (2017), Harrison et al. (2016), Freeman and Siegfried (2015), Abbas (2014), Baghire et al. (2013), Lang (2013), Bagheri and Pihie (2012), Leitch et al. (2012), Bagheri and Pihie (2011), Roomi and Harrison (2011), Bagheri and Pihie (2009), Kempster and Cope (2010), and Leitch et al. (2009).

5. CONCLUSION

The substantives proof of the SLTR, “entrepreneurial leadership” gives a method of hypothesizing the vibrant procedure of “leadership” across perplexing situation. The SLR has proven that the “entrepreneurial leadership” is a somewhat latest research paradigm. Nevertheless, the suggestion of the analysis recommends that “entrepreneurial leadership” is a significant element in the growth of a company. Conclusions of the analysis proved that “entrepreneurial leadership” associations are recognized athwart several studies. Characteristics like insight, creativeness, effective message transmission to receiver and hazard taking were recognized from the examination. Nevertheless, suggestion regarding the significance, priorities or addition of many of these characteristics is diverse. It is evident from the previous background that more investigation is needed to validate the various suppositions by scholars and the guidance recognized characteristics may have. Furthermore, regardless of the acknowledgement of the serious role that leadership qualities of small business proprietors show in improving single, group and upcoming performance of project (Bagheri and Pihie, 2011); little attention has been paid on the development of EL attributes.

As shown and it is evident by the SLTR findings, the idea of EL showed many chances for forthcoming research. While the idea has attained lot of development in coming years, the impact of EL in growing financial prudence has established partial consideration. A developing economy grants researchers with a perplexing context but gives the prospects to find the role and effect of leaders determining performance of the firm. Entrepreneurs in various countries with changing levels of per capita GDP encounters various difficulties, as an outcome of procedures and situations promising to small business set ups in a specific area may not be operational or favorable in another (Acs, 2006). The review has emphasized queries that would give benefits for further future researches. For an instance, how can EL qualities come in to personality? In adding, to this all the entrepreneurial characteristics suggested by scholars significant in every situation? As an outcome, future researches are needed to grow a specific plan of EL. In adding this, it is evident from the previous work that there is a requirement for better analysis of EL in the preview of growing
financial prudence. A smart method to kick off may be to write EL model in the preview of a speedily moving area of a growing economy. It might be convenient in recognizing the EL characteristics significant and to be useful in this context. It will also provide as a method of validating several suppositions about EL characteristics put forward by scholars.

5.1 Limitations

An SLTR is recognized as an effective method in corporate and organizational research towards giving an attentive and serious vision into a research (Tranfield et al., 2003). Such a method suggests proof that “clear findings can be made about the known and unknown (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009).” Though, like any procedure, there exist restrictions to its implementation. It has been seen that while the SLTR procedures came up with a detailed review of the prior studies on EL, the effectiveness of the literatures is restricted to the search specific sentence strings used in the databases, the finding time of the SLTR (i.e. August, 2021) and the RQs (review questions) have been entertained. The important keywords and the RQs designed by the board of high level dignitaries for the search were influential in exclusion and inclusion the literature that was received in this process.

REFERENCES


