



LITERATURE REVIEWS
AT A GLANCE:
a knowledge platform

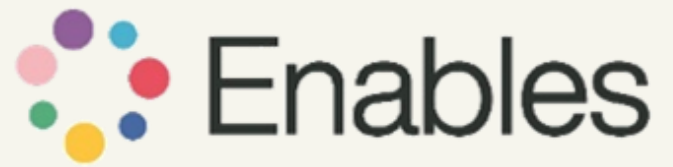


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01 Literature reviews at a glance: an overview

The following overview allows us to compare the literature reviews of all project partner countries at a glance.

Four systematic literature reviews, examining complementary aspects of arts-based and embodied (ABE) methods of leadership development, were prepared as part of the Erasmus+ ENABLES project (European Arts-Based Development of Distributed Leadership and Innovation in Schools). The ENABLES project aims to strengthen the collaborative and distributed leadership of innovation in schools by developing and disseminating innovative methods of arts-based and embodied leadership development.

The project partners undertaking literature reviews comprise:

- University of Hertfordshire (UK) (co-ordinating institution)
- University of Jyväskylä (Finland)
- Institute of Lifelong Learning and Culture «VITAE» (Latvia)
- University of Innsbruck (Austria)

This systematic literature review is a part of Output 2 (Knowledge Platform) for the ENABLES project. To be included in the review, a publication had to report research into the use of ABE methods for leadership development and offer knowledge on how such methods affect leadership development. Publications were sought that had been published in 2000 or later.

Each partner had a particular focus:

UK: a general approach to ABE and embodied methods, not limited to a specific type of ABE

Finland: visual methods

Latvia: performance arts and drama

Austria: vignettes and design thinking methodology

Systematic searches were undertaken using databases and search terms negotiated, tested and agreed by the project partners. The results form a Knowledge Platform - a state-of-the-art systematic review of existing research literature on ABE methods of leadership development. The Knowledge Platform:

- provides a knowledge foundation for the project, giving partners a shared understanding of ABE methods, which can be applied to strengthening collaborative and distributed leadership in schools
- makes an innovative contribution to the field of ABE leadership development which can be used by practitioners, policy actors and researchers across Europe and globally
- gives further depth and context to other project outputs, such as the action research trials of ABE methods for collaborative and distributed leadership development, which partners conducted

The results are published in the following format:

- This overview publication: *Literature reviews at a glance: a knowledge platform*
- Four reports comprising the detailed accounts and findings of each partner's literature review.

All of these documents are published and available to download on the ENABLES project website.

02 A synthesis

The reviews are the results of a systematic examination of a range of literature on arts-based and embodied methods and their application in leadership development. They offer positive findings about the outcomes of such methods. A strong theme concerns how these methods activate reflection, greater awareness and new thinking and perspectives amongst participants and how this helps to develop capabilities for distributed leadership. Developed capabilities include relational sensitivity, appreciation of leadership as an emergent, relational process, greater self-awareness and self-reflection skills, openness to new solutions and perspectives, and identity development. The potential for nurturing the development of distributed leadership by school students, as well as teachers and others in the school community, is evident from the research examined.

Limitations to the body of research reviewed are also highlighted by the reviews. For example, there is a need for much more evidence on outcomes and the influence on leadership practice. This includes the varying ways that participants in differing positions (students, teachers, administrative and other support staff, senior school leaders and so on) can be supported in their practice of distributed leadership. Research would benefit from more critical perspectives on issues of power and inequalities and the effects of social positioning according to factors such as gender, ethnicity, and social class. The practical use of the relatively new area of Design Thinking Methods is another promising area for future research and development.

More explicit attention to the kind of leadership being sought through these methods would be beneficial. Leadership is not a single, uncontested concept, but a phenomenon that can be defined and practised in different ways, reflecting differing perceptions concerning the purpose and ethics of leadership. Research studies into arts-based and embodied methods of leadership development need to engage with this and make clear the view of leadership underpinning the research design and the aims of the leadership development being sought.

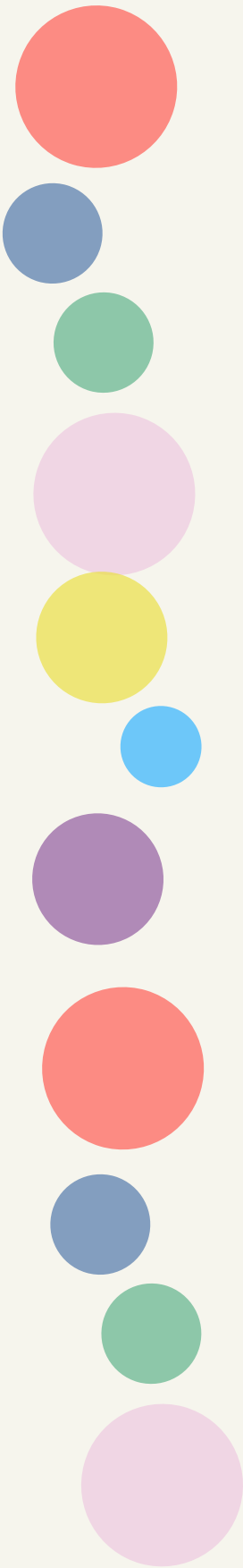
03 Review summaries

UK – Arts-based activities and embodied methods

The review conducted by the UK team took a more general approach than the other partners. It was not limited to any particular type of ABE, seeking out any studies that researched arts-based methods of leadership development (which might include one or more of any arts-based activity), and included embodied methods of leadership development.

The review examined a total of 50 selected publications, with dates ranging from 2004 to 2019. Thirty of the publications reported empirical studies. ABE methods studied in the publications comprised embodied activities, music, craft-based activities, art activities (such as drawing and painting), narrative-creative activities (such as storytelling and poem houses), dance and performance, combined arts-based and embodied methods, and general arts-based methods (which included instances of mixed methods or where no specific detail was given).

The review was carried out using a template in which information and assessments of each publication were entered, including what was reported about ABE methods, processes and outcomes and what could be concluded about the strength of connection between ABE methods and leadership development.



The main conclusions include the following.

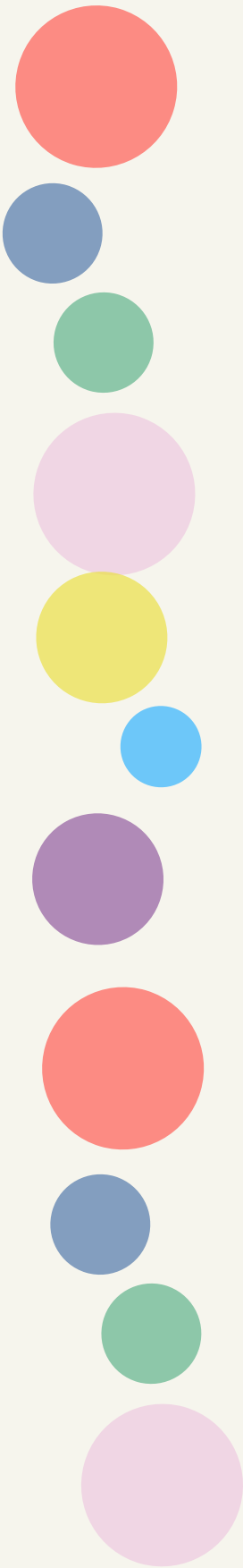
- The processes involved in using ABE methods can be understood in terms of three aspects: features of the activity, what is activated by the activity and the constructions of leadership underpinning and reflected in the sessions using ABE methods.
- A diverse range of leadership constructions were apparent, from the heroic leader through to a more holistic understanding of leadership as a complex, emotional, relational, embodied concept.
- Data on outcomes are limited, with only 10 publications offering evidence that ABE methods had some impact on leadership development. Six of these 10 publications offered evidence of consequent changes in practice.
- Most apparent is research evidence that ABE methods helped participants by enhancing their relational sensitivity and increasing their ability to cope with unfamiliar circumstances and complexity.
- A critical perspective is missing from most studies into ABE methods of leadership development – concerning issues of power and inequalities and the effects of social positioning according to factors such as gender, ethnicity, and social class.
- Implications include (a) the potential to make more use of ABE methods to increase capabilities (such as relational sensitivity), appreciation of leadership as an emergent, relational process and self-awareness in the context of leadership, and thereby enhance the ability to take an active part in distributed leadership; and (b) the need for more research on the impact of ABE methods, including subsequent changes in leadership practice.

FINLAND – visual methods

To explore the literature on the use of visual methods for leadership development, our broad initial searches from **Education collection (Education database and ERIC)** and **Business Source Elite** produced total of 453 hits that were narrowed down to final list of 21 publications included in this review which reported research or projects using visual arts-based and embodied (ABE) methods of leadership development and /or offered knowledge concerning whether and how such methods contribute to leadership development.

We also included some off-context – not directly addressing leadership development – publications that appeared to be (1) directly transferable to leadership development context or (2) described methods in such clarity that it would be easy to adapt for leadership development context. This decision was made due to the small number of empirical studies using *visual methods*. Included publications ranged from ones published in 2008 to 2020. Both Arts-Based Development (ABD) and Arts-Based Research publications were included, as well as publications describing Arts-Based Education projects and / or research that could directly contribute and / or be easily adapted for such use. Ten of the publications reported empirical studies, seven were conceptual or theoretical papers, two were reviews and one was considered as a professional essay.

ABE methods studied in the publications comprised a wide repertoire of visual tools connecting with knowledge propagation and facilitation within the goals of the development and research projects context. Both active participation in doing, namely expressing, and active construction of knowledge, namely critical and reflective thought exercises and facilitation based on perception, were used.



Findings include the following conclusions.

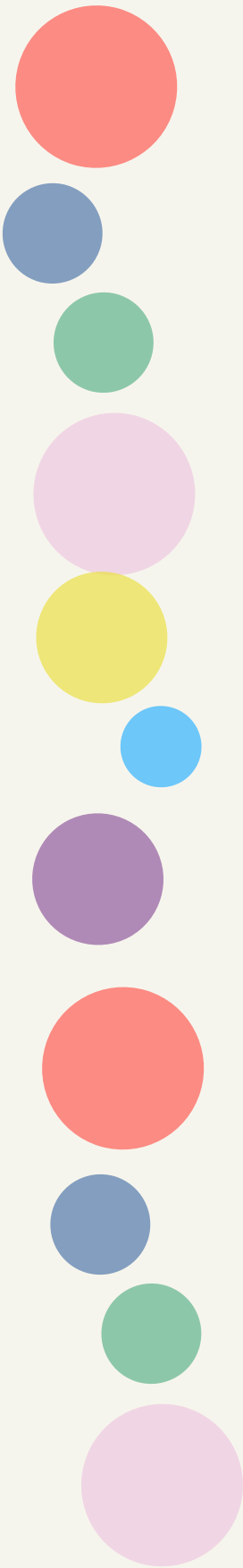
Typically, authors described the processes to consist of various phases, stages or steps. Some publications presented process models derived from corresponding previous efforts, while others outlined process models constructed as results of their own efforts.

- What appears to depict the processes from the perspective of their parts is that applying methods using visual imagery for leadership development is participatory in nature and can both include and be used for a multitude of purposes.
- Outcomes in terms of participants' leadership competences include better awareness, individual development, new solutions and perspectives, self-reflection skills and identity development.
- Methods using visual arts and visual images appear to constitute an alternative approach to conventional ones, meet several of the challenges in the complex and dynamic operational environment, and are able to provide positive learning outcomes.
- Our search on research of visual imagery for developing leadership provided, if not ample, some useful data. There is a need for further research on all aspects of using visual arts for leadership development.

LATVIA – performance arts and drama

The search strategy was based on three kinds of sources: a) literature appropriate for answering the research questions which was selected using one or more key words – leadership, distributed leadership, arts-based and embodied methods for leadership development, drama method and performance arts for leadership development – and is available in the Google Scholar, EBSCO Host or Science Direct databases; b) books published during the last 10 years that cover the problem fields related to the research questions and are currently widely used within education in Latvia admitting them as valuable sources of pedagogical knowledge; c) any other literature on the concepts, approaches and terminology necessary to complete the literature review.

As a result, 47 research articles were identified to be most relevant for being used in the literature review. The analysis of 18 of them was included in the Table of the Literature Review. 13 books published during the last 10 years and widely used in the Latvian educational discourse were chosen for the literature review. Out of them five most relevant books were selected by the team for in-depth review. Each of the books was thoroughly reviewed and the synopsis for each book is prepared separately. The additional literature search was undertaken when the review team completed the first part of the literature review and realized that there was a need to complement the definition of the concepts of leadership and distributed leadership also taking into account the experience and comprehension of these categories by leadership practitioners. There were 37 sources (29 from the search undertaken via Google Scholar, EBSCO Host and Science Direct search and eight books) that were not included in this final literature review but were available for the project team to be used in the stage of the empirical part of the research.



The main conclusions include the following.

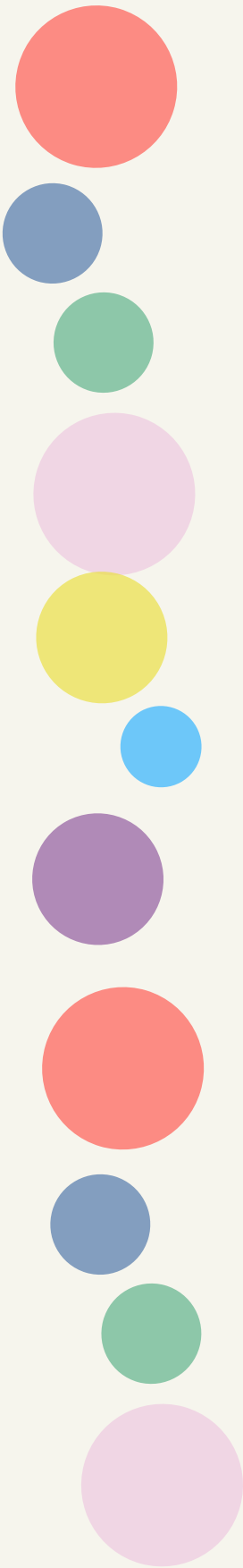
- Based on analysis of selected sources, the project team defined distributed leadership as a process of sharing legal ownership or moral authority among individuals in the society or in the institution, collaborating and creating new joint values for the sake of community development, and as an essential fundamental for living and acting in a democratic society.
- Performance arts and drama contribute to the development of students' personalities and skills substantially and they have huge potential for developing distributed leadership of students.
- The project team defines the process of using arts-based and embodied practices for leadership development through drama and performance arts as follows: Arts-based and embodied practices for distributed leadership development are an individual's or a group's development process that occurs by bringing in new dimensions for thinking, feeling and behaving in real life situations using different cultural forms and ways of expression in order to obtain a set of skills needed for distributed leadership

AUSTRIA – vignettes and DTM

The literature review focused on two methods: "Vignettes" and "Design Thinking Method" (DTM). To be included in the review, publications had to be relevant to the area of generic arts-based literature and research on vignettes and design thinking.

The Business Source Premier (BSP) platform and the ERIC database were used for the systematic search. The search for literature to review consisted of 3 steps: 1. Vignette focus, 2. Design Thinking focus, 3. German speaking literature (an additional search in various sources: the reason for this additional step was that the vignette research in the presented form finds its origins in Austria).

Titles and abstracts were searched for keywords; then the entire manuscript was reviewed. The systematic review process resulted in a total of 48 contributions, which were then analysed in more detail.



The main conclusions include the following.

- The two instruments, vignettes and DTM, are well known in the literature.
- What is understood by vignettes differs within the literature. The concepts and approaches of the Innsbruck vignette research, with its starting point in body phenomenology, are special and hardly any English-language literature on this approach exists, which makes it problematic to include this approach in the international discourse.
- In connection with vignettes, no uniform understanding of leadership could be identified in the literature.
- The vignette method helps to gain new and meaningful insights into leadership actions and to stimulate reflection on the personal understanding of leadership.
- DTM assumes that leaders understand leadership as part of a team. Distributed leadership and the giving of responsibility were more often discussed here.
- Using DTM for leadership development offers a change in perspective so the focus is no longer on the results but on the actors, resulting in leaders experiencing a broader range of actions in specific situations, and working as a team approach
- There are only a few practical findings on the use of DTM in the context of leadership development. This may be related to the fact that the approach is new and has only appeared from 2009 in leadership and research discourses.

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Further information on the project is available here:
<https://www.herts.ac.uk/ce/enable-arts-based-and-embodied-leadership-development>

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