



YOUTH LEADERSHIP: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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SUMMARY

Following discussions with Plan staff, this annotated bibliography seeks to update the knowledge base by highlighting relevant recent additions to the literature on this important topic. To that end, the focus here is on literature from the last decade, 2008-2017. This is not to suggest that literature produced before that point would be irrelevant but simply to highlight the current context as most relevant to people in the world experiencing youth today. Clearly this topic is one of growing interest, so this is necessarily a small slice of the existing literature on youth leadership. The aim is to cover the key areas of discussion and contention, including attention to what the research suggests matters to the field for future theory and practice. While some entries of course exhibit some degree of crossover, the research included here tended to cohere around 6 key thematic categories. These included: (1) Theories and Frameworks of Youth Leadership Development Programs; (2) Formal (School- or University-based) Youth Leadership Development Programs; (3) Youth Leadership & Political Inclusion; (4) Youth-Led Approaches to Programs and/or Evaluation; (5) Gendered Analyses of Youth Leadership: Focus on Young Women and Girls; and Other Publishing Relevant to Youth Leadership Research.

Across the literature spanning these categories, many report on studies based in North America (US and Canada) though studies from a number of other countries (e.g. the Philippines and Hong Kong) are included. The studies tend to concentrate on youth deemed to fit one of two categories – existing youth leaders or young people seen as marginalized or at-risk based on one or more factors, such as race, gender, or indigeneity for example. However, youth who may face other types of marginalization, such as young people with disabilities,¹ youth in settings facing conflict² or complex emergencies³, are rarely considered in this body of literature. Using a range of methods and qualitative and quantitative approaches, the researchers consider diverse frameworks and theories deployed in policy, practice, and curricula seeking to support, build, or enhance youth leadership. These initiatives predominantly occur in community-based organisations, schools, universities, and through other non-government organisations.

Reflecting on work already completed and theorizing about future implications, the authors highlighted here consider how, why, and how successfully youth leadership initiatives have been deployed in these diverse contexts. While there is diversity among the views and findings presented, the scholars featured herein tend to agree that young people are important as current and future political actors who can play critical roles in leading for sustainable, positive social change. While young people, especially those under 18 years old, may often be excluded from a number of formal political leadership roles, such as running for office for example, the studies presented here make a case for understanding youth leadership as an ever-evolving concept that can include a variety of activities and roles played by a diverse range of young people around the world. While some of the reports presented will be more relevant to certain initiatives than others, taken together they help advance the evidence base for designing, implementing, and evaluating youth leadership efforts to enhance their effectiveness.

1 An additional targeted search did uncover a few scholarly studies addressing youth leadership that include attention to youth living with disabilities. These include Cohen et al.'s (2012) research with Israeli high school programs aimed at changing attitudes toward people with disabilities; research in the US by Grenwelge, Zhang, & Landmark (2010) and Grenwelge & Zhang (2013), who considered a youth leadership forum for high school students with disabilities in Texas; and research in Canada by Kelly and Carson (2012), who studied the Youth Activist Forum, which brought together 38 young people, with and without disabilities to facilitate youth empowerment.

2 There are however, some studies that look at youth leaders working for peacebuilding (e.g. Pruitt 2011; Pruitt 2013; Pruitt 2014; Pruitt 2015)

3 An additional targeted search uncovered one scholarly study from New Zealand addressing youth leadership and incorporating attention both to young people with disabilities and young people's roles in disaster risk reduction (Ronoh 2017).

RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE LITERATURE CONSIDERING YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Adult facilitators, allies, and peer educators working with youth leadership efforts should:

- Receive adequate training, support and practice in order to ensure their ability to:
 - Apply a non-judgmental approach
 - Use active listening and positive tones in communicating with youth
- Critically reflect on how to best support youth-led approaches and/or youth-centred approaches that incorporate intergenerational (or multigenerational) collaborations to redress existing hierarchies – especially intergenerational hierarchies – and pursue sustainable social change.
- Recognise the need for including attention to broader social inequalities and supporting youth to advocate for broader political change. This could include:
 - Learning and applying young people's understandings of leadership to research, policy, and practice – noting that their views on leadership often relate most strongly to contemporary approaches that focus on collaboration, collective action, and transforming leadership while allowing for individual difference
 - Prioritising youth voices, and focusing on meaningful participation
 - Rejecting stereotypes that suggest youth are lazy, apathetic, or incapable
 - Involving youth in all stages of the project cycle
 - Working together with youth to analyse and solve social problems
 - Building positive cross-generational relationships
 - Actively engaging with youth
 - Creating/advocating for opportunities for youth to practice leadership with substantial responsibilities (e.g. activities such as experiential or service learning and creating and implementing their own projects)
 - Supporting youth to develop confidence and skills such as public speaking and capacity for critical thinking
 - Using accessible language and other communication strategies, recognizing youth vernacular may differ significantly
 - Being flexible to allow youth to learn actively and take on increasing responsibility
- Work to create safe spaces where youth can discuss issues that matter to them (including sensitive topics such as discussions around sexual and reproductive health)
- Consider using creative, participatory approaches such as Photovoice, playback theatre, or participatory action research (PAR) to include youth in programs, research, and facilitation at all stages.
- Consider offering peer education opportunities in which young people can learn from a diverse range of peers.
- Recognise and account for contextual and individual factors (e.g. gender, nationality, class, race, ethnicity, religion, etc.) that may affect young people's beliefs about and knowledge around leadership.
 - Doing so may mean altering program design or creating programs aimed at including particular groups of youth.
 - At the same time, working to create connections across difference for young people from diverse backgrounds can be important.
 - Providing a range of diverse role models who exhibit trust and respect is also critical.
 - There should be recognition and addressing of particular gendered barriers to leadership young women and girls around the world face.

Role models were also noted as critical. Youth workers and other adults seeking to act as role models for youth leaders should exhibit:

- a strong work ethic
- positive character traits,
- good interpersonal skills.

Having outlined the recommendations based on the literature considered here, the remainder of this document briefly presents the literature from each of the six thematic categories identified above.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS: THEORIES & FRAMEWORKS

Bean, Corliss; Meghan Harlow and Tanya Forneris. 2016. “Examining the importance of supporting youth’s basic needs in one youth leadership programme: a case study exploring programme quality.” *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*. 22(2): 195-209.⁴

In this study the researchers examined differences between two adult leaders who delivered an out-of-school youth leadership program in order to consider needs support and program quality. The program, which aimed to develop leadership skills and build character with youth from 13-18 years old from low-income families, included twenty 2-hour sessions delivered over eight months. Participants in the study included 28 young people (19 female, 9 male) from 14-18 years old. Mixed methods were used. Researchers’ observations were used to quantitatively assess program quality. Semi-structured interviews with youth at the end of the program were used to evaluate needs support based on the self-reports from youth.

Researchers found significant differences in the two adult facilitators, with the first using a positive and ‘uplifting’ tone and using active listening and a non-judgmental approach, and cooperation with the youth to solve problems. According to the students, this helped them gain a sense of competency and autonomy, while on the other hand they saw the second facilitator as lacking respect for them and dismissing conflicts instead of addressing them. Youth also reported that the first facilitator used debriefs at the end of sessions and modelled appropriate behaviour to effectively help them develop a sense of competence. Overall, the researchers concluded that a project can include high levels of engagement and interaction, yet if it does not offer a supportive, safe environment, expected outcomes can be compromised. In short, they suggest, “that certain characteristics of [adult] leaders, such as being trustworthy, respectful and interested in youth beyond regular programme interaction are thought to facilitate a high quality programme and accompanied needs support from youth” (Corliss et al. 2016: 205).

Bowers, Jill R; Rosch, David M; and Collier, Daniel A. 2016. “Examining the Relationship Between Role Models and Leadership Growth During the Transition to Adulthood.” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 31(1): 96-118.⁵

Using a grounded theory approach, Bowers, Rosch and Collier sought to understand how role models constrain or facilitate youth leadership development. To that end, they interviewed 23 emerging adults enrolled in a US university and already active in leadership positions about their views of leadership development. Based on these interviews, the authors situate role models as critical to development of youth leadership. The authors also provided 4-paragraph result summaries to participants, who confirmed their findings. They found that role models affected the ways the young people understood leadership, what they knew about opportunities for growth, how they understood their own leadership potential, whether and how they would pursue leadership opportunities, and the degree to which they would be involved. Several qualities were seen as key for good role models. These included professional work ethic, positive character traits, and good interpersonal skills. Participants also highlighted the importance of recognising and accounting for contextual and individual factors affecting beliefs about and knowledge around leadership. Hence, the researchers suggested that practitioners consider developing or refining leadership trainings to serve specific populations where relevant.

4 Corliss, B., M. Harlow and T. Forneris (2016). “Examining the importance of supporting youth’s basic needs in one youth leadership programme: a case study exploring programme quality.” *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 22(2): 195-209.

5 Bowers, J. R., D. M. Rosch and D. A. Collier (2016). “Examining the Relationship Between Role Models and Leadership Growth During the Transition to Adulthood.” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 31(1): 96-118.

Fox, Madeline and Fine, Michelle. 2015. "Leadership in Solidarity: Notions of Leadership Through Critical Participatory Action Research With Young People and Adults." *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2015(148): 45-58.⁶

Fox and Fine propose critical participatory action research (PAR) with youth as praxis for working toward opportunities and spaces for developing critical leadership framed by justice. According to the authors, PAR "positions those considered the subject of research as the researchers themselves" (Fox and Fine 2015: 47). Using a multigenerational framework, the authors focus on shared leadership as a collective approach and report on the Polling for Justice study in New York City (2008-2011) as an example of their work. In that study the research team used focus group and survey design teams that included youth alongside students, academic research staff, community activists, and lawyers. Arguing for the importance of including youth as researchers, the authors note the high value of gathering young people's everyday knowledge and recognising expertise as shared. To prepare the youth researchers, a research camp was held in which participants "learned and practiced critical theory" (Fox and Fine 2015: 52), including attention to power and privilege. Adults and youth co-facilitated the research process and check-ins provided opportunities in which each participant got the chance to say how s/he was feeling. Artistic methods like Playback Theatre were also deployed as it was seen as shifting the paradigm from privileging certain types of experiences, like skills in statistics for example. The research was also disseminated through a diverse range of methods, including participatory performances. Overall, collective, youth-centred, multigenerational knowledge production was seen as leading in practice, which contributed to policy reform, producing knowledge, rethinking youth-adult relations, and emancipation.

Govan, Rashida H.; Fernandez, Jesica Siham; Lewis, Deana G.; and Kirshner, Ben. 2015. "International Perspectives on Youth Leadership Development Through Community Organizing." *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2015(148): 87-99.⁷

The authors consider youth leadership development through seven community organisations on three different continents. The programs all target youth seen as 'marginalised.' The authors look at four organisations in the US, one in South Africa, and one in Northern Ireland. All the organisations are situated in urban areas. The study's aim was to identify youth development and civic engagement outcomes associated with such organisations and the kinds of environments that could foster such outcomes. The main data collection mode was ethnography conducted over 18-24 months by local researchers. This included meetings, observations, artifact analysis, and interviews. Surveys were also administered at two points, though this chapter mostly draws on field notes.

Four key themes were identified that help the organisations develop youth leadership. These included prioritizing youth voice, critical social analysis, positive relationships, and active engagement. The approaches around positive relationships took on a variety of forms, including youth-centered, youth-adult partnerships, and intergenerational approaches. The authors highlight the value of both peer-to-peer relations and positive youth-adult relations, which can enhance youth agency, efficacy, and commitment to the organization. Breaking down of hierarchies was noted as particularly valuable; as was the chance to do leadership in order to learn leadership. Youth involvement in decision-making and planning were also seen as strong characteristics, along with the use of reflections and debriefs to foster active engagement. Based on their research, the researchers, "recommend that youth leadership programs emphasize opportunities for direct interaction between students and institutional decision-makers or education policy makers" and highlight that, "Young people benefit from chances to prepare for such encounters, including role plays, where they practice responding to hostile or patronizing responses from adults and other power holders" (Govan et al. 2015: 98).

6 Fox, M. and M. Fine (2015). "Leadership in Solidarity: Notions of Leadership Through Critical Participatory Action Research With Young People and Adults." *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2015(148): 45-58.

7 Govan, R. H., J. S. Fernandez, D. G. Lewis and B. Kirshner *ibid.* "International Perspectives on Youth Leadership Development Through Community Organizing." 87-99.

Mitra, Dana; Serriere, Stephanie; and Kirshner, Ben. 2014. “Youth Participation in U.S. Contexts: Student Voice Without a National Mandate.” *Children & Society*, 28(4), 292-304.⁸

Mitra, Serriere and Kirshner focus on the US, which they see as contrasting to most European nations, where national education structures and formal policies spur participation by youth. On the other hand, in the US they note that education is state-based and such a policy framework does not exist, which leads them to suggest that American policies on average do not encourage participation by children but rather inhibit such participation. Giving examples from youth participatory action research, the authors argue that young people's participation in research on matters affecting young people results in higher quality findings. At the same time, they note that in the US student activities are rarely led by youth and that youth leadership is often conceptualised in terms of youth-adult partnerships. Finally, the authors note the need to consider factors influencing privilege and access for youth, including for example nationality, race, gender, and class, among others.

Monchalin, Renee; Flicker, Sarah; Wilson, Ciann; Prentice, Tracey; Oliver, Vanessa. 2016. ““When you follow your heart, you provide that path for others”: Indigenous Models of Youth Leadership in HIV Prevention.” *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 11(1):135-158.⁹

In this study Monchalin et al engaged self-identified Indigenous youth leaders in Canada through a participatory, decolonizing framework, with data collection methods including interviews and digital storytelling. The authors note the importance of this work, given there has been little attention to Indigenous youth as leaders. The first phase of the project included three years working with over 100 youth across six communities to develop art considering links between HIV and structural inequalities. The second phase then included 18 (7 male; 11 female) of the Indigenous youth leaders aged 16-26 coming together for a week-long program in which they created digital stories. The authors noted that the cohort was not representative of Indigenous youth across Canada, as it was a small group of self-identified leaders. The participants worked together with facilitators and peers in the lead-up and also following the program, when they conducted showings in their home communities. They were interviewed after developing their digital stories and after having held the community screenings. While the young people were a diverse group, they did share experience of ongoing harmful impacts of colonialism. The researchers noted the importance of the program being peer-led, which they saw as useful in reversing HIV trends and improving health.

Findings included understanding participants' thoughts and experiences around the qualities of a leader, challenges to leadership, and examples of leadership practice. Key leadership qualities identified included being trustworthy, humble, confident, willing to listen, dedicated, patient, healthy, and resilient. These views were in contrast with traditional hierarchical notions of leadership in colonial contexts and better reflect certain qualities associated with Indigenous leadership. Challenges the young people faced included intergenerational trauma associated with the history of residential schools for Indigenous people, experiences of tokenism as youth leaders, discrimination and stigma associated with HIV, the theme of their leadership stories. In terms of how to demonstrate leadership, the youth noted the importance of localised approaches, stating that “a leader is someone who works to establish strong ties in their family unit and communities before venturing outside their personal networks” (Monchalin et al. 2016: 147). Finally, the authors suggest that further studies pay attention to gender, as Indigenous women remain underrepresented in decision-making affecting their lives.

8 Mitra, D., S. Serriere and B. Kirshner (2014). “Youth Participation in U.S. Contexts: Student Voice Without a National Mandate.” *Children & Society* 28(4): 292-304.

9 Monchalin, R., S. Flicker, C. Wilson, T. Prentice and V. Oliver (2016). ““When you follow your heart, you provide that path for others”: Indigenous Models of Youth Leadership in HIV Prevention.” *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 11(1): 135-158.

Mortensen, Jennifer. 2016. An empirical investigation of an emerging youth-driven model of leadership: The Collective Change Youth Leadership Framework. Michigan State University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. 10249820.¹⁰

In this thesis Mortenson examines the Collective Change Youth Leadership Framework, a youth-defined, emerging approach, with a national sample of young people. The framework was created based on two earlier youth studies that used Photovoice and Concept Mapping to understand youth definitions of leadership. Based on youth leadership perceptions, it includes six dimensions: collective action, leadership can come from anyone, modelling and mentoring, creating change, strong character, and motivation and ambition. Through using a national sample to test the framework, the author seeks to contribute to understandings a framework of leadership that is defined by youth. Additionally, the author sought to understand variables relating to how youth perceive leadership. The variables explored included critical consciousness, empowerment, background characteristics (e.g. age), and adult support.

The findings are aimed at informing youth leadership development programming so that more youth will take part in such opportunities and become leaders in their communities in the present and in their futures as adults. The findings suggest that it is important to offer young people leadership roles in order to develop their skills as well as their perceptions of leadership and that the dimensions included in the Collective Change Youth Leadership Framework are important to how youth understand leadership and thus that these should be incorporated in future programs aimed at youth leadership development. Finally, the author notes the limitation that the youth involved in the studies on which this one was based were all already involved as leaders, and thus noted the findings may not hold more a more general sample. Hence, research is needed with a variety of groups of youth who may or may not already hold leadership roles.

Mortensen, Jennifer; Lichty, Lauren; Foster-Fishman, Pennie; Harfst, Sarah; Hockin, Sara; Warsinske, Kelly; and Abdullah, Kareemah. 2014. "LEADERSHIP THROUGH A YOUTH LENS: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF LEADERSHIP." *Journal of Community Psychology* 42(4): 447-462.¹¹

Noting that youth leadership programs commonly use adult theories in framing their activities, the authors aimed to understand youth perspectives on leadership. After all, they say, "If communities hope to attract and engage youth in significant leadership roles, we need to understand what leadership means to them. Using youth-informed definitions of leadership to guide engagement and training efforts may increase buy-in by youth and get them excited to take on meaningful leadership roles now and in the future" (Mortensen et al 2014: 448). The sample in this study included 130 young people (49 males; 78 females) participating in the National Youth Leadership Initiative, developed by the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America and delivered in the eastern US. The vast majority (90%) of participants lived in rural communities and were White. Activities included 3 in-person sessions with distance learning conducted online to advance training in between those sessions. Photovoice was used online through blogs. Participants took photos they posted along with answers to questions like 'What makes someone a leader?' and 'What does leadership look like?' 190 individual posts were made, and a facilitated group discussion then took place focusing on 29 selected photos. Posts and discussion were then thematically analysed.

Based on their data analysis, the researchers concluded that, "Youth have unique perspectives on leadership that emphasize multiplicity." Overall, they said, "According to youth, leadership is (a) available to anyone in any context, and involves (b) creating change, (c) collective action, (d) modelling and mentoring, and (e) strong character" (Mortensen et al 2014: 453). Noting that traditional adult leadership approaches have tended to be hierarchical, the authors point out that contemporary theories such as servant leadership or relational leadership line up more closely, though not exactly, with the views of the youth they studied. In contrast to traditional adult leadership theories, youth differ in their handling of defining leader

¹⁰ Mortensen, J. (2016). An empirical investigation of an emerging youth-driven model of leadership: The Collective Change Youth Leadership Framework., Michigan State University.

¹¹ Mortensen, J., L. Lichty, P. Foster-Fishman, S. Harfst, S. Hockin, K. Warsinske and K. Abdullah (2014). "LEADERSHIP THROUGH A YOUTH LENS: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF LEADERSHIP." *Journal of Community Psychology* 42(4): 447-462.

characteristics, leadership goals, and questions of control and power. The authors note such differences are to be expected given youth's different position in society, which tends to feature less authority and power than adults. Given this, the authors say, youth have to construct leadership different to account for their own current roles. In particular collective action, a focus of the youth participants, was seen as a "relatively new characterisation of leadership," situating it as a group struggle where people get together to benefit everyone (Mortensen et al 2014: 455).

Nelson, Alan E. 2010. "In focus/ youth leadership – Stepping in early to grow great leaders." *Leadership in Action* 29(6): 20-24.¹²

Noting that most leadership training efforts focus on adults and the few that deal with young people tend to target those over 15, Nelson argues for developing and initiating leadership trainings for younger children from the age of 10. The programs he proposes are described as executive-caliber and include competency skills and character elements. This brief article refers to program prototyping over a four-year period with over a hundred preteens. The author uses the Social Influence Survey, a 25-question assessment, which an adult who has observed the child completes to estimate his or her leadership aptitude. The aim was to locate 10-13-year-olds possessing an aptitude for leadership. To be selected for the program at least two of these surveys had to be submitted with no more than one coming from a parent. Eight sessions were used initially. A learn-by-doing approach was utilised following the LEAD (Learn, Experience, and Discover) approach. Each LEAD activity went for 15-20 minutes, in which the participants would take turns leading the team of 4-6 participants. Coaches were trained to speak less than 25% of the session, with most of that being to ask strategic questions. At least two teams would make up a club, as many activities involved competitions between teams. Each of the initial eight sessions lasted for 90 minutes broken up into these micro-projects and including cognitive skills, micro-motor skills, and macro-motor skills. After the initial session, participants were encouraged to work as a group to create their own leadership project. An intergenerational aspect was also included, with training development for teachers and parents.

Outcomes included changes to self-image, with participants starting to think of themselves as leaders; cultural impact of positive influence on peers and decreased disruptions in the classroom; and enhanced verbal articulation abilities. Overall, the author concludes, "if the world is to have enough effective and ethical leaders, serious leadership training and development must begin at a much younger age than is currently the case" (Nelson 2010: 24).

Ngai, Ngan-Pun; Chau-kiu Cheung; Steven Sek-yum Ngai, and Siu-ming To. 2012. "Youth leadership training in Hong Kong: current developments and the way ahead." *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*. 17(2-3): 165-179.¹³

This article offers a unique lens, particularly given that much of the scholarly literature on youth leadership is produced in and focuses on US-based programs. The authors use the Internet to collect data on the domains, goals, and strategies employed in Hong Kong-based youth leadership training programs. They find that in Hong Kong such programs are designed and organised with the aim of achieving five goals: helping youth develop positively while cultivating leadership potential; building youth capacity around team building and interpersonal relationships; encouraging youth to get involved in social services and community affairs; promoting a national identity, including greater understanding of their own country; and, providing youth with an international stance. The programs use a variety of strategies in pursuit of these aims, including adventure-based training, experiential learning, non-local exposure, service learning, and competitions based on projects. The authors also discuss the implications of their findings on Hong Kong's policy and practice.

12 Nelson, A. E. (2010.). "In focus/ youth leadership – Stepping in early to grow great leaders." *Leadership in Action* 29(6): 20-24.

13 Ngai, N.-P., C.-k. Cheung, S. S.-y. Ngai and S.-m. To (2012). "Youth leadership training in Hong Kong: current developments and the way ahead." *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 17(2-3): 165-179.

Patel, Ashraf, Meenu Venkateswaran, Kamini Prakash, and Arjun Shekhar (eds.). 2013. *The Ocean in a Drop: Inside-out Youth Leadership*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.¹⁴

This edited book looks at historical youth participation in India and suggests that youth political participation and participation in governance specifically have declined since the 1970s. The authors attribute this to lack of support from elders for youth involvement. At the same time, the authors suggest that India young people's attitudes have changed alongside collective action by youth around the world in recent years. The authors consulted 50 oral transcripts from the 1940s around youth activists, interviewed 30 people in their eighties to understand their earlier engagement as youth, and interviewed 19 stakeholders including party leaders, academics, and NGO activists. Noting challenges that may be presented by difference among youth, the authors suggest any policy or programs aiming to incorporate youth must account for this diversity. Furthermore, the authors propose a strategy that centers youth in social transformation efforts and supports efforts on active citizenship and deep exploration of the self. In this way individual and collective efforts may cohere. To that end, the authors argue that such efforts must be based on partnerships and co-created with youth, who have a sense of ownership. At the same time, non-judgmental, well-trained facilitators are also seen as critical to supporting youth in their aims.

Ungerleider, John. 2012. "Structured youth dialogue to empower peacebuilding and leadership." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 29(4): 381-402.¹⁵

Ungerleider reports on research around dialogues held at the Youth Peacebuilding and Leadership Programs (YPLP). Held in rural Vermont, USA over the past twenty years, the programs, in which participants live together in dorms over two weeks, have included more than 6000 youth leaders from over 40 countries, most from conflict-affected communities. Participants are typically 15-18 years old though a few programs cater to university-age students. Each morning after breakfast students participate in dialogue for around an hour and a half. Normally 7-8 students make up each dialogue group, though they can sometimes be bigger. The aim of these sessions is for youth to speak about what they are thinking and have their voices heard. In terms of leadership development, dialogue is aimed at analysing issues that directly affect youth, such as education or HIV, for example, while also considering what it means to lead collaboratively with peers on such issues.

This article draws on post-evaluations, anonymous except student nationality, from 100 participants of the around 500 involved in the summer 2009 cohort, along with 28 further evaluations from most of the Iraqi youth participants a year after they returned home. The author highlights new and enhanced abilities the youth reported from the dialogues including express, intercultural, relational, personal, and analytical aspects. In particular, they learned about authentic expression and active listening, which helped effectively communicate with peers. Facilitators' work to create safe spaces for communication was identified as critical, and having diverse participants sit in a close circle in order to facilitate intimacy and ability to hear was seen as crucial. Through these processes participants gained understanding of cultural sensitivity and diversity in communication. They also practiced analysing issues collaboratively, including reflecting on any pre-existing misconceptions. The space of dialogue also enabled facilitators to recognise personal needs of participants while also shaping participant identities in allowing them to see themselves as leaders for social change. Anecdotal evidence also suggested that after the program many participants gained achievements as they worked on social change as leaders in their home communities.

14 Patel, A., Meenu Venkateswaran, Kamini Prakash and A. Shekhar, Eds. (2013). *The Ocean in a Drop: Inside-out Youth Leadership*. New Delhi:, SAGE Publications.

15 Ungerleider, J. (2012.). "Structured youth dialogue to empower peacebuilding and leadership." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 29(4): 381-402.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS: SCHOOL & UNIVERSITY BASED

Blanton, Jedediah E.; Sturges, Alexander J.; and Gould, Daniel. 2014. "Lessons Learned from a Leadership Development Club for High School Athletes." *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action* 5(1): 1-13.¹⁶

In this article the authors describe a high school youth leadership club for student athletes to share their ideas on and practice leadership. The authors worked in the school for two years, beginning with a one-day clinic for 60 student athletes. Following that they recruited participants to continue with the program throughout the school year. Thirty signed up to continue, but only four continued past the first four meetings. After spring break the facilitators starting moving to a youth-centered approach, and the participants decided to develop the group as an official school club. In doing so, they aimed to be able to complete a large service project in the following year. They suggested incentivising participation by offering t-shirts for members who attended at least 5 meetings, and the suggestion was implemented. In the following year the four initial participants recruited another twenty students. Meetings were led by facilitators and then included small group activities with the students. At the mid-year point in the second year students took on further leadership as they used small group session to brainstorm ideas for a leadership project. They ultimately decided to develop a program for training younger students in leadership. Thus, they designed the Middle School Leadership program, including lunch before two 15-minute lessons or activities around leadership each day for two days, delivered to 24 middle school students by the 12 youth leaders involved. Following these sessions facilitators held debrief sessions with the peer educators. The three key findings included the need for facilitators to create empowering contexts, be consistent and use accessible language and approaches, and maintain flexibility to allow for active learning.

Eva, Nathan and Sen Sendjaya. 2012. "Creating Future Leaders: An Examination of Youth Leadership Development in Australia." *Education + Training* 55(6): 584-598.¹⁷

Focusing on the effectiveness of youth leadership development in Australia, the authors conducted three studies with stakeholders including students, high school principals and teachers, and youth leadership facilitators. They conducted 33 student leader interviews, 10 interviews with principals, teachers, and facilitators, and collected 97 completed surveys from recent high school graduates. They found significant differences between teachers and students in terms of what is being taught and what should be included in youth leadership development programs. Based on their research, they recommend a servant leadership approach – "which incorporates altruism, authenticity, ethics, accountability, empowerment, integrity, and spirituality" – to such programs (Eva and Sendjaya 2012: 585) to foster nurturing productive leaders who will continue to serve, incorporating an ethical or moral element that is often left out of such programs.

¹⁶ Blanton, J. E., A. J. Sturges and D. Gould (2014). "Lessons Learned from a Leadership Development Club for High School Athletes." *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action* 5(1): 1-13.

¹⁷ Eva, N. S., Sen (2013). "Creating future leaders: an examination of youth leadership development in Australia." *Education + Training* 55(6): 584-598.

Longo, Nicholas V. and Mcmillan, Janice. 2015. “Educating for Global Leadership: A North–South Collaboration.” *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2015(148): 73-86.¹⁸

Longo and McMillan situate their work in what they see as a crisis of leadership at the global level, highlighting the need for new approaches to leadership and noting that young people around the world can be seen as redefining leadership, including accounting for roles by everyday actors. With this in mind, they analyse two university-based global education programs – in the global South and one in the global North. Pointing to the need for North-South collaborations, they consider Providence College’s (USA) Global Studies major – which includes courses, an immersive experience abroad, and a collaborative action capstone project, along with other leadership opportunities, and University of Cape Town’s (South Africa) Global Citizenship Program, which includes exposure to social justice issues, leadership capacity development, and awareness raising as part of a leadership education program that focuses on action, learning, and reflection. Noting challenges to creating North-South connections when many student leaders may not be able to travel internationally, the authors highlight possibilities of using technology to connect globally.

Monkman, Karen and Proweller, Amira. 2016. “Emerging Youth Leaders in an After-School Civic Leadership Program.” *Schools* 13(2): 179-197.¹⁹

Monkman and Proweller consider the concept of leadership based on the experiences of youth involved in an after-school leadership development program. Situating youth voices as central, the researchers nonetheless noted the challenges and benefits of both youth-centred environments in which young people link with adults in cross-generational activities at all levels and youth-only activities. For example, they noted how youth-only environments lack opportunities for genuine partnerships with adults, while programs with adult leadership often lack true collaboration with the youth participants or restrict youth participation opportunities to certain levels of the program. Participants included 11 students (seven boys and four girls) in grades 10-12 from Latino and African American low-income backgrounds. They were selected because of their level of experience and involvement in a civic engagement program that also included a longer-term college-readiness program. The program aimed to develop listening and speaking skills, build cohesion, and stimulate civil leadership projects.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all these participants and two program staff members. The authors found that the youth participating gained skills and purpose and came “to recognise the collective nature of leadership, acknowledging the integral participation and contributions of others” (Monkman and Proweller 2016: 189-190). Given these outcomes, the authors further suggest the leadership development approaches employed could lead to life success for the youth themselves as well as fostering their contributions to their community. The authors also noted that the youth rejected authoritarian traditional models of leadership and instead embraced relational, collaborative approaches.

Shek, Daniel; Yuen-Tsang, Angie; and Ng, Eddie. 2017. “Global Youth Leadership Institute: A platform to nurture leadership in university students.” *International Journal of Child and Adolescent Health* 10(1): 17-23.²⁰

In this article the authors described existing and planned leadership development projects for university students in Hong Kong. They noted that rapid social change and ongoing global challenges require young people to take up leadership roles while demonstrating multicultural understandings, competence, and ethical approaches. To that end, at Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), the latest curriculum (since 2010) requires students to take a ‘Leadership and Intrapersonal Development’ course, which aims to prepare them for leadership. A course called “Tomorrow’s Leaders” has been created and delivered to over 2000 students per year over eight years. Since 2013 this approach has been expanded through

18 Longo, N. V. and J. Mcmillan (2015). “Educating for Global Leadership: A North–South Collaboration.” *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2015(148): 73-86.

19 Monkman, K. and A. Proweller (2016). “Emerging Youth Leaders in an After-School Civic Leadership Program.” *Schools* 13(2): 179-197.

20 Shek, D., A. Yuen-Tsang and E. Ng (2017). “Global Youth Leadership Institute: A platform to nurture leadership in university students.” *International Journal of Child and Adolescent Health* 10(1): 17-23.

Global Youth Leadership Programme (GYLP), a two-year leadership development program that works with students from both Mainland China and Hong Kong on service learning and study programs at home and abroad. Future plans including scaling up these initiatives to develop “The PolyU Global Youth Leadership Institute” (GYLI) as Asia’s central hub for youth leadership training and development. GYLI will also be grounded in research and evaluation aimed at informing youth leadership training. The GYLI program will be piloted through a series of dialogues with global leaders, the GYLP, and adventure-based and experiential leadership education camps. It will also involve peer support and mentoring.

Steinberg, Shirley. 2011. “Redefining the notion of Youth: Contextualizing the possible for transformative youth leadership.” [Chapter 18] *Transformative Leadership: A Reader*. Ed. Carolyn M. Shields. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.²¹

Drawing on her years of experience as a high school drama teacher in the US starting in 1987, Steinberg notes that adults have often feared youth, understanding them as a concern to address, including when it comes to leadership initiatives. In contrast, Steinberg argues that traditional hierarchical leadership approaches with one leader at the top need critical revisiting and that youth leadership can be transformative when it is grounded in the premise that youth have distinct needs, views, and cultures. Working with mostly 11-21 year olds, Steinberg note that each individual youth is unique and thus may require unique approaches in their leadership development, and that long-term approaches are required. For her, youth leadership comprises knowledge, respect, character, and responsibility as key aspects. Moreover, she says, youth themselves can be engaged in defining what leadership means to them.

Wexler, Lisa; Poudel-Tandukar, Kalpana; Rataj, Suzanne; Trout, Lucas; Poudel, Krishna; Woods, Michelle; Chachamovich, Eduardo. 2017. “Preliminary Evaluation of a School-Based Youth Leadership and Prevention Program in Rural Alaska Native Communities.” *School Mental Health* 9(2): 172-183.²²

The authors conducted an evaluation of the Youth Leaders Program (YLP), a health intervention in a school district in rural Alaska. The YLP used peer leaders to enhanced school engagement and cultural and personal identities while reducing risks of bullying, violence, and drug and alcohol abuse. The ultimate aim was to reduce high suicide rates among Indigenous youth in the region. YLP Youth Leaders were chosen by a vote by all students in a school; students were asked to name two students who were approachable if they had an issue at school or home and who were good communicators. Those listed most often were invited to become Youth Leaders and could decide whether or not to take up the role.

During school year 2013-2014, the researchers used surveys at the beginning and end of the year – with 61 complete pairs, school data from before and after the intervention, and surveys (n=764) completed across the whole school to ask students about their experiences with and views of YLP and its participants, school principal interviews (n=2), program advisor interviews (n=11), and end of year focus groups with student participants at all 11 schools that participated. In terms of improvements, the researchers noted that students would like more cultural activities connecting to their Indigenous heritage. This was noted as important given that ongoing colonisation and cultural loss have been linked to the high rates of Indigenous youth suicide. They also noted the importance of advisors being supportive and being sensitive to differences that may exist between their students of a different culture and themselves. Overall, the researchers found that school attendance increased and academic performance improved for program participants. They also received positive reviews from students who participants in student interventions conducted by YLP participants and found that YLP participants felt an enhanced sense of confidence, agency, and responsibility.

21 Steinberg, S. (2011). Redefining the notion of Youth: Contextualizing the possible for transformative youth leadership. *Transformative Leadership: A Reader*. C. M. Shields. New York, Peter Lang Publishing: 267-275.

22 Wexler, L., K. Poudel-Tandukar, S. Rataj, L. Trout, K. Poudel, M. Woods and E. Chachamovich (2017). “Preliminary Evaluation of a School-Based Youth Leadership and Prevention Program in Rural Alaska Native Communities.” *School Mental Health* 9(2): 172-183.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP & POLITICAL INCLUSION

Christens, Brian D. and Dolan, Tom. 2011. "Interweaving Youth Development, Community Development, and Social Change through Youth Organizing." *Youth & Society* 43(2): 528-548.²³

Christens and Dolan focus on youth organising initiatives, which they see as unique in (1) concentrating on conditions youth face and how these are systematic and imbued with power relations; (2) offering youth education around collaborative organising for social change at the community-level; (3) youth having ownership of defining the issues through collective decision-making; and (4) youth frequently leading decision-making though adults that support them. Noting that "Youth organising draws on a diversity of traditions of collective action" (Christens and Dolan 2011: 530); the authors focus on Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC), an organization running for over two decades in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in California. While historically adult-focused, in recent years ICUC has shifted to include efforts in youth organizing. The authors focus on these in this research, which was envisioned as a collaboration between practitioners and researchers. Data collected included archival documents from ICUC, press coverage from ICUC activities, 20 semi-structured interviews with young ICUC leaders (90% Latino/a; 70% women; ages 16-20), 2 interviews with adult supporters and 1 former staff member. In the program youth acted as researchers and directly contacted decision-makers to propose new policies in their community.

In this way, they achieved outcomes in influencing policy, programs, and institutions. They created and took part in a youth council in which along with adult partners they sought to influence local governance. They also reported gains in confidence and skills in public speaking and noted that research was critical to the effective development of leadership. The youth also reported developing friendships and a sense of community through the work. Based on observations of the case study analysed, the authors recommend similar programs focus on experiential learning and genuine youth participation. Moreover, they find that effective impact across individuals and communities can be fruitfully pursued through linking leadership development with social change and community development.

Collin, Philippa. 2015, *Young citizens and political participation in a digital society: addressing the democratic disconnect*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Collin's book considers policy, practice, and experience around youth participation in the UK and Australia, including looking at the ways online and other forms of participation intersect. While she notes that over the past few decades there have been important steps taken in youth participation policy, she highlights a tendency to focus on young people's development, promoting "'leadership' and normative contributions to local community and institutionalized political process" (Collin 2015: 16).²⁴ She notes that the most common approach across various government levels is to engage youth through, for example, creating advisory boards, ad hoc events informing about service, or developing resources, along with Youth Parliaments that take youth views to decision-making bodies populated by adults. This means young people's ability to contribute to policy is dependent on being invited by adults or having their ideas interpreted by adults to decide how they should be actioned if at all. In this way, she says, "Leadership is espoused as both necessary and desirable, as it acts as a measure of successful socialization of young people as 'active citizens' without actually conferring agenda-setting or decision-making power on young people" (Collin 2015: 54).²⁵ Noting that such efforts often seek to manage youth and their practices of citizenship, Collin argues that this can actually increase "the democratic disconnect," as within this paradigm young people's everyday political activities can easily be discounted or ignored (Collin 2015: 16).²⁶

²³ Christens, B. D. and T. Dolan (2011). "Interweaving Youth Development, Community Development, and Social Change through Youth Organizing." *Youth & Society* 43(2): 528-548.

²⁴ Collin, P. (2015). *Young citizens and political participation in a digital society: addressing the democratic disconnect*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Lawless, Jennifer L. and Richard L. Fox. 2015. *Running from Office: Why Young Americans Are Turned Off to Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lawless and Fox conducted over 4000 surveys and over 100 interviews with college and high school students in the US. They found that many young people want to improve their communities, care about issues, have a sense of what leadership means, and often have leadership experience. However, the vast majority of young people in the study saw this as completely disconnected from what public servants or politicians do – the vast majority were averse to ever running for elected office. While not sufficient to fill existing offices in the future, they did identify a small percentage of students with a favourable view of politicians, and those students were also significantly more likely to show interest in running for office themselves. Still, overall, the young people they studied tended not to believe that positive leadership qualities could or should be applied politically. For Lawless and Fox, much of the blame lies with a broken, ineffective political system, bad behaviour by political leaders, and constant media reporting on what they call “Washington’s dreadful performance” (Lawless and Fox 2015: 4).²⁷ The young people participating tended to see their leadership skills as revolving around compromise and teamwork, and did not see these as prominent, if even evident, in public depictions of politicians (Lawless and Fox 2015: 120).²⁸

United Nations Youth. 2013. United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Youth. Survey Results. 4 May 2013. Available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/YouthSWAP/SWAPsurveyrespondants.pdf>. Accessed 7 June 2013.²⁹

In 2012 the Inter-agency Network on Youth Development conducted a survey reaching 186 countries with over 13,500 respondents in order to gain input for developing the UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth (Youth-SWAP), called for by Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General at the time. This was part of Ki-Moon’s objective when he set working for and with youth as a priority in his Five-Year Action Agenda. The purpose of Youth-SWAP is to guide the UN system as a whole on promoting youth development needs and human rights. The survey identified a number of key concerns and challenges across a variety of thematic areas and also proposed solutions. Thematic areas included employment and entrepreneurship, education, education on sexual and reproductive health, protection of rights, political inclusion, and civic engagement. Particularly relevant here is the political inclusion platform, which noted “Public institutions [are] not leading by example” and highlighted the need to “Promote youth leadership, capacities and skills” and “Work with political parties and other relevant institutions to improve young people’s participation in political parties and relevant institutions.” Further points included highlighting how opportunities for youth to participate meaningfully in decision-making are limited, noting the lack of trust between governments and political parties and youth, and the need for improved civic education. In short, a strong case is made for “creating an enabling environment for young people’s participation, promoting their leadership skills and capacities (in particular that of young women), ensuring young people’s participation in UN governance and decision-making as well as their participation in humanitarian and peacebuilding initiatives” (p. 6).³⁰

27 Lawless, J. L. and R. L. Fox (2015). *Running from Office: Why Young Americans Are Turned Off to Politics*. New York, Oxford University Press.

28 Ibid.

29 United Nations Youth (2013). *United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Youth. Survey Results*.

30 Ibid.

YOUTH-LED PROGRAMS & EVALUATION

Blanchet-Cohen, Natasha and Brunson, Liesette. 2014. "Creating Settings for Youth Empowerment and Leadership: An Ecological Perspective." *Child & Youth Services* 35(3): 216-236.³¹

Blanchet-Cohen and Brunson consider program managers' and youth workers' reflections on their work with YouthScape, a Canadian four-year program implemented across five communities to engage marginalised young people by providing youth-led grants aimed at social change. In particular, the authors sought to understand how these staff members' practices sought to nurture foster youth-led efforts in their own practice. To collect data, the authors used participant observation in the program, evaluation, and research interviews with 20 youth workers and 8 program managers across the 5 sites where the program operated.

They found that in order to build successful relationships adult youth workers had to be accessible through the means of communication youth preferred – including emails, Facebook, texting, and phone calls, though this was sometimes a challenge when youth expected responses outside working hours. They also noted supporting youth motivation and confidence as another critical practice at the individual level. At the group level, youth workers found it important that adults took on a mentality of facilitation rather than leadership in their interactions with youth in order to foster youth responsibility and ownership. Moreover, they used practices like roundtable check-ins and voting to gain views from less vocal participants and to support consensus seeking. Noting the power differences between youth and adult youth workers, the workers expressed that sometimes when they offered an idea it could be seen as an instruction. Likewise, setting-level practices, such as the creation of a "safe space in which youth felt welcome and comfortable" (Blanchet-Cohen and Brunson 2014: 226), were essential. Peer recruitment was also seen as an effective practice. At the same time, adult workers noted opportunities for them to act in a 'watchdog' fashion to keep other adults from holding too much power in the youth-led initiatives. When adults could not let young people participate in decision-making due to organisational constraints, the adult workers worked hard to explain the reasons for this to help show support for youth leadership while acknowledging real world constraints. In terms of organizational-level approaches, youth workers noted the need to create practices and policies that foster youth participation, citing having youth serve on boards as especially helpful in seeking a youth-led approach. Finally, the youth workers suggested adult training on power sharing, a flexible approach, and working to put youth in contact with policy makers could also be useful.

Bulanda, Jeffrey J., Katie Szarzynski, Daria Siler & Katherine Tyson McCrea. 2013. "Keeping It Real": An Evaluation Audit of Five Years of Youth-Led Program Evaluation." *Smith College Studies in Social Work*. 83(2-3): 279-302.³²

Bulanda et al. report findings from their evaluation audit of an after-school leadership program targeting disadvantaged African American youth in an urban setting. Using participatory action research, they noted challenges could come up in this model if administrators were unwilling to give students control or accept their ideas; however, they noted they had not faced these issues in their experience. Drawing on more than 5 years of evaluation data collected by peer researchers, the authors discuss the young people's experiences as researchers and participants, consider best practices for supporting youth to explain their experiences with the program, and reflect on implications for other similar programs. Youth were paid a stipend to participate in this program and weekly 'sharing circles' allowed them to discuss their ideas and concerns, along with program feedback and planning suggestions. Young people were selected and recruited as peer researchers and they used qualitative approaches, including mostly interviews, but also a smaller number of focus groups, as it was clear from youth feedback that they did not see the use of standardized scales or adult-led questionnaires as relevant or accurately reflecting their views.

31 Blanchet-Cohen, N. and L. Brunson (2014). "Creating Settings for Youth Empowerment and Leadership: An Ecological Perspective." *Child & Youth Services* 35(3): 216-236

32 Bulanda, J. J., K. Szarzynski, D. Siler and K. Tyson McCrea (2013). "Keeping It Real: An Evaluation Audit of Five Years of Youth-Led Program Evaluation." *Smith College Studies in Social Work* 83(2-3): 279-302.

In terms of activities youth suggested they found the sharing circles, small group activities, and ice breakers useful and wanted more of them. At the same time, they noted that some activities like lectures or writing projects could be “boring” but still valuable. They also noted that using peer researchers could reduce “potential adult bias,” although there could also be different challenges introduced through the peer researchers, such as some participants not wanting to say certain things in front of their friends. For many participants, they said having young people do the interviewing also helped them feel less nervous than they would have been with adults, though a small number said they would have felt as comfortable with adults and others were still nervous with the peer interviewers. The participants made it clear that keeping evaluation brief and confidential was important, as was training youth adequately as interviewers and involving them in question design to ensure the youth vernacular of the context is reflected. Young people noted a variety of reasons they liked being interviewed, including the chance to express themselves, feeling valued, and feeling connected. The authors conclude that using youth-led evaluation is a promising way to ensure such programs are meaningful for participants – they “created democracy within the program, optimized youth engagement, met youths’ needs for autonomy, allowed youths’ voices to be heard, and provided a way to add fun to the typically dull process of evaluation” (Bulanda et al. 2013: 296).

Connolly, Jennifer; Josephson, Wendy; Schnoll, Jessica; Simkins-Strong, Emily; Pepler, Debra; Macpherson, Alison; Weiser, Jessica; Moran, Michelle; and Jiang, Depeng. 2015. “Evaluation of a Youth-Led Program for Preventing Bullying, Sexual Harassment, and Dating Aggression in Middle Schools.” *Journal of Early Adolescence* 35(3): 403-434.³³

Connolly et al. consider the utility of youth-led programs (YLPs) in reducing dating aggressing, bullying, and sexual harassment through using an experimental model comparing board-mandated ‘usual practice’ (adult-led) programs with YLPs in four Canadian urban middle schools. To do so, they used pre- and post-test data from 509 students in Grades 7 and 8. They found that both types of programs resulted in improved attitudes and knowledge. However, students undergoing the YLP programs also had significantly reduced anxiety and maintained their level of connectedness in their school.

While pointing out that short-term programs are more difficult to evaluate accurately, based on their findings, the authors suggest YLPs as effective methods for dealing with peer aggression in schools. In particular, the authors highlight that YLPs led to unique gains in emotional adjustment in school. At the same time, they point out that to be effective, peer leaders need to be credible and well trained with adequate adult program support. They also note that adults working with YLPs should maintain a degree of flexibility around format to ensure that youth leaders can have some ownership even when following a manual-based program. Finally, while noting that given the small sample size findings in this area should be interpreted using caution, the authors note that their statistical analysis suggested that ethnic differences may have an influence on whether and how youth might benefit from adult- versus youth-led approaches.

Delgado, Melvin and Lee Staples. 2008. *Youth-Led Community Organizing: Theory and Action*. New York: Oxford University Press.³⁴

Delgado and Staples connect theory and practice around youth-led organizing, an approach aimed at enabling youth to make real contributions to society. Following a social-justice framework, they highlight examples of groups they see as successful and provide guidance on strengthening organizations. In this way the book speaks not only to academic concerns but also to facilitators and organizers of such programs (Delgado and Staples: 2008).³⁵

33 Connolly, J., W. Josephson, J. Schnoll, E. Simkins-Strong, D. Pepler, A. Macpherson, J. Weiser, M. Moran and D. Jiang (2015). “Evaluation of a Youth-Led Program for Preventing Bullying, Sexual Harassment, and Dating Aggression in Middle Schools.” *Journal of Early Adolescence* 35(3): 403-434.

34 Delgado, M. and L. Staples (2008). *Youth-Led Community Organizing: Theory and Action*. New York, Oxford University Press, USA.

35 Ibid.

Torres, Maria de Los Angeles; Irene Rizzini, and Norma Del Rio. 2013. *Citizens in the present: Youth civic engagement in the Americas*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.³⁶

Torres, Rizzini and Del Rio consider youth civic engagement across three cities: Chicago, Rio de Janeiro, and Mexico City. In doing so, they counter narratives that situate youth as outside political participation and instead highlight youth leaders' agency. Using in-depth interviews, they give examples of how youth leaders across these contexts practice active citizenship – rejecting the notion of “youth as future active citizens.” Their work suggests the need to reconsider models that are led by adults and instead point to the need for civic and political participation that is driven by youth themselves.

Weisz, Arlene N. and Black, Beverly M. 2010. “Peer Education and Leadership in Dating Violence Prevention: Strengths and Challenges.” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 19(6): 641-660.³⁷

Weisz and Black consider the challenges and strengths of using peer education youth leadership models in programs aimed at preventing dating violence. Using a qualitative framework, the authors used a convenience sample that included 52 semi-structured interviews with 61 adult prevention educators, who were mostly white and mostly female. The researchers noted that interviewees' statements on advantages of peer education aligned with themes in the existing literature on the subject, such as provision of role models and enhanced credibility along with benefits for both participants and the peer educators themselves. The programs they studied varied in the roles adults took on in them.

Most of the programs used some type of theatre-based methodology, which was seen as particularly useful for being engaging and relevant for the youth participants, and was followed by discussion with audience members. Adults noted at times they needed to monitor to ensure the content was factual, not including victim-blaming for example. The adults also reported on other ways their organisations involved youth in leadership, such as through youth advisory boards. Moreover, interviewees highlighted peer leader recruitment of a diverse range of young leaders as important. Training program length and scope was also seen as an important factor to ensuring peer leaders felt competent at the program delivery. Interviewees also noted challenges around peer leadership models, including significantly increased demands on time and resources compared to other models. Overall, the authors suggest that peer education or youth leadership aspects should be used in programs targeting teen dating violence or sexual assault, as doing so shows respect for youth, who may be empowered through the opportunity. At the same time, adequate resources for training and supporting peer educators, along with ongoing evaluations are also seen as requirements.

36 Torres, M. d. L. A., I. Rizzini and N. Del Rio (2013). *Citizens in the present: Youth civic engagement in the Americas*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

37 Weisz, A. N. and B. M. Black (2010). “Peer Education and Leadership in Dating Violence Prevention: Strengths and Challenges.” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 19(6): 641-660.

GENDER & YOUTH LEADERSHIP: FOCUS ON GIRLS & YOUNG WOMEN

Ackerly, Brooke A. 2016. 'Girls Rising for Human Rights: Not Magic, Politics.' *Journal of International Political Theory*. 12(1): 26-41.³⁸

Through an approach incorporating grounded theory and a normative framework, Ackerly highlights the need for paying specific attention to girls as political actors and bearers of human rights. She sets out a case for politically engaged human rights discussions as a necessary grounding for bringing about those rights. At the same time, Ackerly identifies a trend common in depictions of girls' leadership and political action – as it has also been in such narratives about women – to focus on the girls as individualized political actors who take simple actions to achieve massive outcomes. Taking a critical lens to such depictions, Ackerly highlights how they deny the need for collective, transformative approaches to human rights and render invisible political, structural barriers to their participation as well as the presence of social and collective efforts, which are essential to democratic politics. Instead of following the trend to simplification, Ackerly asserts that, “We can learn more from what girls confront in struggle for their rights than we can from what donors take from their stories in order to mobilize support for their struggles” (Ackerly 2016:28).³⁹

Furthermore, she argues that advancing human rights necessitates engaging deeply with the world's relations and power dynamics, including public problems – failing to do so, she says, could “reify oppressive hierarchies and norms” (Ackerly 2016:27).⁴⁰ While Ackerly does not make this point explicitly, age, after all, may be among the most normalized of hierarchical relations. That is not to say that it is the only factor of importance. As Ackerly notes, accounting for a range of factors through the application of, “Intersectionality is essential for a rights-based approach to responsibility” (Ackerly 2016: 33).⁴¹ In fact, Ackerly charges that, “Building relations across hierarchies transform those hierarchies” (Ackerly 2016:35),⁴² a point that may be applied to intergenerational efforts around engaging youth in leadership roles. Furthermore, in terms of youth leadership, her work suggests premising frameworks not on simplifying, but on destabilising familiar ideas and making structural dimensions visible, including through collective struggle. After all, as Ackerly says, rights are about “what we need to be for each other, of what we need to do to support and build our processes and relations so that they tie us together as we work for our rights and the rights of others” (Ackerly 2016:30).⁴³

Banet-Weiser, Sarah. 2015. “‘Confidence you can carry!’ Girls in crisis and the market for girls’ empowerment organizations.” *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 29(2): 182-192.

Banet-Weiser investigates girls' empowerment organisations, or GEOs. She notes that GEOs offer 'tools' for girls to empower themselves and become confident leaders. Acknowledging that this goal is important, she also offers a critique of how GEOs, rather than challenging broader economic and social structures that disempower girls to begin with, instead help “create a market for empowerment with girls as consumers and commodities, rather than challenging the social and economic structures that disempower girls in the first place”(Banet-Weiser 2015: 191).⁴⁴ Rather than commodifying empowerment through visibility and seeing empowerment as an end in itself, she advocates for instead seeing it “as a starting point for material change and feminist social justice” (Banet-Weiser 2015: 185).⁴⁵

38 Ackerly, B. A. (2016). “Girls Rising for Human Rights: Not Magic, Politics.” *Journal of International Political Theory* 12(1): 26-41.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Banet-Weiser, S. (2015). “‘Confidence you can carry!’: girls in crisis and the market for girls’ empowerment organizations.” *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 29(2): 182-193.

45 Ibid.

Bent, Emily. 2016. 'Making It Up: Intergenerational Activism and the Ethics of Empowering Girls.' *Girlhood Studies* 9(3): 105-121.⁴⁶

In this article Bent considers the ethics of intergenerational activism for feminist researchers doing research with pre-existing activist networks. To do so, she draws on a decade of working with 'girl activists' at the UN. Suggesting that such intergenerational activism can disrupt generational power, she notes that this is often a process of adult "practitioner-scholars learning to make it up as they go along" (Bent 2016: 106).⁴⁷ Based on her experience in North America, particularly with the Working Group on Girls (WGG), she considers the contested, complex ways adults and girls create partnerships "in adult-centered and sometimes politically hostile settings" (Bent 2016: 106).⁴⁸ Based on her interactions with girl activists, she highlights the need for intergenerational partnerships and collective action as crucial for girls' empowerment. To that end, she notes the need to avoid focusing narrowly on 'exceptional' or 'spectacular' girls as "the singular voice for/of girls," (Bent 2016: 107) since doing so can lead to exclusionary practices and ignore the work that gets done through partnerships and groups outside the narrative of 'individual girl power.' On the contrary, she notes that social and political supports are needed to make girls' exceptionality a reality, as girl activists "require mentorship and support for adults, fellow activists, and other young people, as well as communities and organizations driven by similar visions of transformation" (Bent 2016: 108).⁴⁹

Noting that power and privilege are linked with generation, and that age can mediate what gets taken seriously, Bent suggests this can affect the range of girls' political involvement. Hence, while girls' may come to 'the table' through participating in meetings and sessions, Bent notes that, "it does not guarantee access to power or their political empowerment" (Bent 2016: 113).⁵⁰ Likewise, she suggests that, "Intergenerational partnership means bringing girls into our political lives, intentionally disrupting generational power dynamics between adults and girls, and sharing our stories and experiences as feminist-activists," and that doing so relies on "sustained trust, respect, partnership, transparency, and dialogue among members" (Bent 2016: 108).⁵¹

Fraser, Tatiana, Nisha Sajnani, Alyssa Louw, and Stephanie Austin. 2016. "Girls Action Network: Reflecting on Systems Change through the Politics of Place." *Girlhood and the Politics of Place*. Eds. C. Mitchell and C. Rentschler. Berghahn Books: 154-172.

Fraser et al. draw on their experiences as adult women being involved in organizations for girls. In particular, they consider two Canadian initiatives: the Girls Action Foundation (GAF) and the Girls Action Network (GAN). Started in 1995, GAF noticed a lack of resources to support young women to lead and thus launched a leadership training program nationally in 2008. GAN was likewise developed as a community of practice including organizations that share GAF's values of all-girl spaces fostering media literacy, leadership skills, violence prevention, and sexual health while encouraging girls and offering resources that help them act as change agents in their community and social networks. A network model was used following minimum specifications, or the "the fewest requirements necessary to define something," as this was understood as an effective way to challenge inequitable power relations and integrate feminist analyses that account for the ways in which young women's and girls' "lives are informed by multiple systems of power and control" (Tatiana Fraser et al. 2016: 157)⁵² while valuing their strengths and those of their communities instead of focusing on challenges and deficiencies.

In seeking to scale both up and 'deep', GAN sought to value "local knowledge, leadership, and diverse forms of expertise while keeping intact our min specs. We felt that this approach to movement-building would allow communities to engage and collaborate without falling prone to the traps of national-level

46 Bent, E. (2016). "Making It Up: Intergenerational Activism and the Ethics of Empowering Girls." *Girlhood Studies* 9(3): 105-121.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Fraser, T., N. Sajnani, A. Louw and S. Austin (2016). *Girls Action Network: Reflecting on Systems Change through the Politics of Place*. *Girlhood and the Politics of Place*. C. Mitchell and C. Rentschler, Berghahn Books: 154-172.

identity politics or the limitations of traditional organizing structures” (Tatiana Fraser et al. 2016: 157).⁵³ In this way, the network actors were understood as interdependent, bottom-up and created through shared goals, which could include dealing with bigger institutional problem causes. GAN supported opportunities to conduct research so that members could understand the challenges their participants faced—such as lack of confidence, alongside structural inequalities based on social differences such as gender, race, or class. Girls were engaged in critical thinking and discussion, which offered opportunities for politicizing and reframing issues, breaking down isolation, building community, and gaining tools and knowledge that were relevant and useful for the issues on which they wanted to take action. Noting that youth-led approaches can face challenges of sustainability, the authors point out that unlike coalition leadership models, where agreed priorities and consensus building drive collective action, the network model instead saw emergent issues leading. Network members reported a belief that this has effects at both the individual and community level. When asked about what impact the network had, one explained the view that, “it is creating leaders. These girls and what they learned at the girls group impact their families, their peers and the community at large;” they “are now well-versed in their rights, healthy relationships, conflict resolutions skills, and communication skills” (Tatiana Fraser et al. 2016: 160-161).⁵⁴

Gordon, Hava Rachel. ‘Gendered Paths to Teenage Political Participation: Parental Power, Civic Mobility, and Youth Activism.’ *Gender & Society*. 22(1): 31-55.⁵⁵

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork research with two youth programs for high school activists in the US, Gordon argues that gender shapes how teenagers develop as political actors, as well as the shape and visibility of their involvement. In particular, she notes how young women can often be tracked away from leadership roles, and that parental power and concern was more likely to negatively affect whether or not and how they could participate. As an example of how to address this concern, Gordon discusses how adult allies at one program would often supply “the necessary transportation to coalition meetings, retreats, and rallies, which eased parental concern over their children’s whereabouts” (Gordon 2008: p. 48).⁵⁶ At times they also took further steps to challenge sexism within the program by encouraging girls who did participate in their leadership and involvement.

Hoyt, Michael A. and Kennedy, Cara L. 2008. “Leadership and Adolescent Girls: A Qualitative Study of Leadership Development.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 42(3-4): 203-219.⁵⁷

Hoyt and Kennedy, in their New York City-based study, use grounded theory to examine adolescent girls’ youth leadership experiences. The 10 high school girls aged 15-17 involved as research participants all took part in a six-week leadership program based on feminist ideals. Most of the young women were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and all were from low-income families. The aim of the program was to support participants to see themselves as change agents and to understand their own experiences and how they could apply to taking action for change. Moreover, the intervention sought to promote notions of leadership that were accountable, cooperative, effective, and ethical. The program model included intense coursework, experiential and service-based learning – including projects the girls designed and implemented themselves, and multi-generational mentoring.

Using interviews and focus groups as their primary data collection methods, the researchers found that upon starting the program participants held traditional views of leadership and were thus reluctant to see themselves as leaders. However, throughout the course of the program they expanded and refined their views of leadership and were able to see themselves as leaders while also developing confidence and

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 Gordon, H. R. “Gendered Paths to Teenage Political Participation: Parental Power, Civic Mobility, and Youth Activism.” *Gender & Society* 22(1): 31-55.

56 Ibid.

57 Hoyt, M. A. and C. L. Kennedy (2008). “Leadership and Adolescent Girls: A Qualitative Study of Leadership Development.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 42(3-4): 203-219.

feeling inspired. Key factors participants identified as contributing to these outcomes included: having women leaders as role models, understanding different concepts of leadership, and being in a safe space that was mostly or only women and was built on trust and respect. To this end, for future programs they recommend, “presenting diverse models of leadership, demonstrating the power of multiple ways of relating, and thus encouraging adolescents to broaden their own leadership concepts to include themselves” (Hoyt and Kennedy 2008: 218).

International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW). 2013. Girl Insights Report. Available at: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/8011/pdf/pages-girl_insights_report_final_1_0.pdf.⁵⁸

In this publication ICRW reports on direct research conducted with 508 girls aged 10-19 in fourteen countries across four continents. All the girls participated in consultation groups through interactive workshops, in which they shared their hopes and challenges in order to inform global decision-makers. In doing so, they “discussed challenges related to their biological, legal and social identity as girls, and how these challenges affected them physically, mentally and emotionally” (ICRW 2013: 14).⁵⁹ Three overarching categories – identity, environment, and assets and opportunities encompass the ten themes that were used to summarise the girls’ diverse voices in the report. These themes included: social support, safety and security, local environment, social identity, legal identity, marriage, jobs and money, education, emotions, and health. “Of all topics raised, the girls discussed the importance of education most frequently and passionately. Girls spoke about education as a channel for accessing opportunities, although they still faced many obstacles to accessing and completing a quality education” (ICRW 2013: 14).⁶⁰ Through their discussions and activities the girls participating explained their thoughts on these issues, noting challenges yet passionately stating their desires to contribute to their countries and communities while being recognized and valuable, worthy contributors. Moreover, it was established that girls ““want to be involved in the choices that affect them, especially about their education, role in the home, and when and whom to marry” (ICRW 2013: 14).⁶¹

Five goals were identified through the resultant Girl Declaration. These addressed the areas of education, health, safety, economic security, and citizenship. The goals include:

1. “Adolescent girls reach adulthood with relevant skills and knowledge to fully participate in economic, social and cultural life.”
2. “Adolescent girls have access to safe, age-appropriate health and nutrition information and services, and possess the confidence they need to make healthy transitions to adulthood.”
3. “Adolescent girls are free from violence and exploitation and are supported by enforced laws, strong and adequately resourced child protection systems and their communities.”
4. “Adolescent girls know how to build and protect their economic assets and transition to adulthood with the skills, including technical and vocational, needed to earn a safe and productive income. Governments, communities and the private sector respect and uphold girls’ economic rights.” And,
5. “Adolescent girls have equal access to services, opportunities, legal rights and personal freedom, and thus are able to fully participate as citizens of their communities and countries” (ICRW 2013: 15).⁶²

58 ICRW (2013). Girl Insights Report, International Center for Research on Women: 13-15.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA) 2015. ‘Bougainville Young Women’s Leadership Research.’ Research Brief. Melbourne: IWDA.⁶³

This IWDA project involved training 12 young women from Bougainville, Papua New Guinea (PNG) in research methods. In teams of 2, the young women then conducted research including 49 group discussions and 52 individual interviews. They also participated in a workshop on initial analysis of the data. The aim was to build young women’s capacity as researchers and to uncover factors that inhibit their ability to participate in civil society organisations (CSOs) in order to create a baseline and inform future programming, noting that PNG’s levels of formal women’s leadership is among the lowest in the world and “The representation of young women in leadership is particularly low.”⁶⁴ Several barriers were identified to young women’s participation, including limits to education and confidence, family and community attitudes, interaction patterns between younger and older women, and responsibilities to the family and in the home. In light of these findings, the research led to a number of suggestions, including: the establishment of a working group that could review the organization with an aim to strengthening inclusion, including representation of young women on the working group; establishing a “safe space for young women” through creating a youth caucus, developing a strategy for engaging young women, creating a training program to help foster leadership skills for young women, and initiating a mentoring program to strengthen bonds and build skills between older and younger women.

Pacific Young women’s leadership alliance (PYWLA). 2016. Online dialogue issues series.⁶⁵

In this report PYWLA summarises a series of Online Dialogues that took place from June-October 2013, involving almost 100 young women from the Pacific region. These participants shared their experiences and thoughts using Facebook as a platform to explore key themes on topics including sexual and reproductive health and rights, participation, peer-to-peer learning, peace and security, transformational leadership, and bodily security (PYWLA 2016: 1).⁶⁶ In the first dialogue, focused on Transformational Leadership in the Pacific, “participants defined a transformational leader as someone who is inclusive, visionary, and adaptable, and who acts as a role model to those around them” (PYWLA 2016: 3).⁶⁷ Identified barriers to young women taking on leadership roles and enacting transformational leadership included: restrictive ideas and practices relating to women’s roles, insufficient support from family, community, peers, and other women; and discrimination based on a variety of intersecting status or identity areas such as sexual orientation or ethnicity. In light of these barriers, the young women reported that limiting attitudes need challenging and that they require role models and mentors, along with access to training and education. The third dialogue, which focused on Young Women’s Participation in the Pacific considered the degree to which young women participate in decision-making in their countries and communities. A number of challenges identified including weak systems for participation, especially in isolated or rural areas, and young women not being empowered, often in relation to traditional attitudes that can feature intersecting discrimination for young women based on both their gender and age, since leadership roles are commonly domain of older men.

They also underscored how all young people tend to lack representation, as older generations often undervalue and underestimate how valuable their contributions can be, and pointed out that this is exacerbated for young women. Suggested pathways forward including asking young women for their opinions in an open, safe environment using appropriate methodologies, such as focus groups and educating older and younger generations to support attitudinal change. Noting that older women could sometimes act as barriers to young women’s involvement, participants suggested that older women who hold leadership roles could instead be encouraged to mentor young women and support them to participate in decision-making (PYWLA 2016: 18).⁶⁸ At the same time, in the fifth dialogue, which examined Peer to Peer Learning, participants noted this as a relevant way to engage and educate youth, because they “are more responsive when the message is delivered by someone more or less around their age group,” noting this made young people more at ease

63 International Women’s Development Agency (2015). Bougainville Young Women’s Leadership Research. Research Brief. Melbourne.

64 Ibid.

65 PYWLA Pacific Young women’s leadership alliance; Online dialogue issues series: 1-40.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

so they would feel more free to interact, learn and discuss outside the typical barriers to their communication. Peer to peer learning was noted as particularly important on topics considered sensitive, such as sexuality, as many young women felt it was “taboo” to discuss these with older people and were afraid to consider these subjects in discussions with their parents. Finally, the participants noted the importance of using plain language understandable and accessible to young people, and suggested peer-to-peer learning is a good method for facilitating this, since “peers often share a common vernacular” (PYWLA 2016: 29).⁶⁹

Pruitt, Lesley J. 2014. “The Women, Peace and Security Agenda: Australia and the Agency of Girls.” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 486-498.

In this article the author argues that gender- and age-based hierarchies tend to leave the interests and needs of young women and girls ignored when it comes to efforts at advancing peace and security. Further arguing that, girls and young women are critical stakeholders when it comes to the pursuit of peace and security, the article analyses Australia’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and uses three cases to demonstrate the various ways in which young women are affected by security issues and work to build peace and ensure security. Drawing on these cases, the author makes suggestions for better including girls in peacebuilding efforts.

The three cases considered represent different ways girls and young women get involved in issues relation to peace and security, including “individual leadership and action, participation in activism for revolutionary social change, and involvement in government or NGO-sponsored programs aimed at incorporating young women” (Pruitt 2014: 489). Examples analysed for these types of involvement include the work of Malala Yousafzai, young women leaders of the Arab Spring, and the now-defunct Young United Nations Women Association Australia (YUNWA). Based on these examples, the article suggests the need to apply an age-sensitive lens to gender equity approaches along with applying a gender-sensitive lens to youth-focused programming. The article concludes that supporting the role of young women and girls as leaders for peace could be advanced domestically through a variety of approaches, including but not limited to, leadership training, adapting structures to give young people, including girls more of a say in decision-making, public forums, and education initiatives. Moreover, at the global level countries wanting to support young women as leaders can lobby organisations such as the UN to further commit to funding and supporting young women, expanding opportunities for their leadership, and networking with existing organisations run by and for young women.

Reyes, Melanie and Asinas, Anamaine. 2011. “Locating young women in a plethora of issues: reflections from the tenth Young Women Leader’s Conference 2010.” *Gender & Development* 19(3): 423-439.⁷⁰

In this article Reyes and Asinas reflect on a one-day Young Women Leaders Conference held in 2010 in the Philippines. Using dialogue-based workshops, the event targeted school students who were already existing student-leaders. The authors noted the importance of such an event, since young women are often left out of decision-making for both youth and women, as traditional hierarchies marginalise both their age and gender. They note that older adults may often hold stereotypes of young women, who may likewise feel alienated by women’s movements, while youth organisations tend to be male-dominated. Pointing out that young women are far from homogenous and deserve attention to other aspects influencing their identities, such as religion, local, sexual orientation among others, the authors also note that young women in the Philippines and beyond may share commonalities, such as lacking power due to their age and facing challenges around finding work and balancing activism with education.

Based on the dialogues that took place at the conference, the authors offer a number of recommendations for how and why to incorporate young women as active citizens. These include: using creative, participatory approaches to dialogue on issues relevant to young women, rather than expecting them to sit through top-down one-way lectures driven by older people’s concerns; offering space for reflection; trusting that young

69 Ibid.

70 Reyes, M. and A. Asinas (2011). “Locating young women in a plethora of issues: reflections from the tenth Young Women Leader’s Conference 2010.” *Gender & Development* 19(3): 423-439.

people can lead and letting them do it; supporting a range of young women in all their diversity; supporting young women's capacity to act as multipliers who can spread knowledge learned from workshops and trainings; critically reflecting on information and communications technologies like Facebook – realising they can create a space where young women can discuss topics that may be seen as 'taboo' in other forums, such as teen pregnancy and gender identities, but also that young women make up 80% of victims of cyberstalking and also face issues with bullying; and finally, recording and sharing young women's stories to expand their audience.

Taylor, John Anderson. 2012. "The impact of the 'Girls on the Move' Leadership Programme on young female leaders' self-esteem." *Leisure Studies* 33(1): 1-13.⁷¹

Taylor evaluates 'Girls on the Move', a Scottish leadership program. The program offered 16-25-year-old young women the chance to train in nationally recognised certificate courses. The aim was to provide opportunities for young women to participate in physical activities by offering training for new leaders who could deliver physical activity programs in their communities in some of the more 'social deprived' areas of the country. The main aspect of the program was the ADL, or award in dance leadership, in which volunteers are trained to lead dance activities. It includes a 33-hour course in leadership and a 1-hour leadership skills demonstration from each participant. Participants completed the course as a residential program held over 5 days, and most got follow-up support from local groups in their communities.

The author evaluated the course using pre- (n=289) and post-surveys (n=119; paired data n=45) that employed the Rosenberg self-esteem scale. Self-esteem has not been examined extensively in youth leadership research, and the author proposes it is worthy of further consideration, particularly given previous research showing that girls' self-esteem levels go down throughout school and that if this carries over to adulthood it can affect their life chances. Self-esteem is also noted to correlate positively with good mental health. He found that participant self-esteem levels were higher after the course than before it, and that this measurement was statistically significant. However, for the matched data (n=45) while the scores still increased the scores were not statistically significant. The author offers the caveat that in some cases those taking on leadership training may already have high self-esteem, making measurable changes less likely to be observed. In the discussion he concludes that global self-esteem increased more for the participants who had greater leadership experience in activities. While hard to quantify the direct impact of the training itself, Nelson suggests it played an important part in developing skills that could create a basis for self-esteem growth. Overall, the findings suggest that leadership activity involvement should be sustained following leadership trainings in order to make the most gains in self-esteem.

UNDP (2016). The new dynamics in the inclusion and empowerment of young women. *Arab Human Development Report 2016; Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Reality*. New York, United Nations: 90-105.⁷²

This report by the United Nations Development Programme considers emerging dynamics around how young feminists through determination creatively challenge considerable barriers they face. Examples of these challenges noted in the report include acts of violence and issues for scrutiny that disproportionately affect young women. For example, it notes that, "The so-called honour killings or femicide affect young women at higher rates than older women. In Jordan, for example, 81 percent of victims are under 30, and the largest subcategory of victims is aged 19–24," with most of these young women coming from poor families (UNDP 2016:96)⁷³ while "Young women's demographic position in a large youth population that is postponing marriage puts their sexuality under particular scrutiny" (UNDP 2016: 96).⁷⁴

Within this context, feminist organisations that have emerged since 2011 have developed through

71 Taylor, J. A. (2012). "The impact of the 'Girls on the Move' Leadership Programme on young female leaders' self-esteem." *Leisure Studies* 33(1): 1-13.

72 UNDP (2016). The new dynamics in the inclusion and empowerment of young women. *Arab Human Development Report 2016; Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Reality*. New York, United Nations: 90-105.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

incorporating participatory democracy, resulting in bottom up initiatives featuring less bureaucracy and hierarchy. By doing so, such organizations have re-politicised approaches to social justice and women's rights in contrast to the NGO-dominated terrain. UNDP suggests that in some contexts authoritarianism may lead women activists to move to a deeper online focus, yet women in other parts of the world "may have greater opportunities for offline action" (UNDP 2016: 103).⁷⁵ This point supports other existing research, which notes that despite a great deal of focus and optimism around youth online activism, it does not exist in a power vacuum. As such, the report highlights the need to recognize that young women's experiences across countries are diverse, that addressing these issues will require attention to both political economy and culture – and likewise both individual and structural factors, including cases in which global funders have aided in the creation of a harmful view that feminist organisations are "agents of the West" or cannot authentically reflect local culture (UNDP 2016: 101).⁷⁶ Overall, the report reminds the reader, that the young women discussed "are negotiating and contesting systems of power in diverse, creative, and transformative ways" (UNDP 2016).⁷⁷

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

OTHER PUBLISHING RELEVANT TO YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Holmes, Mary. 2016. *Sociology for Optimists*. Sage: London.⁷⁸

Holmes' book reflects on what she sees as the tendency toward pessimism in sociology and advocates for reorienting the framework to a critical optimism that would enable thinking about how changing approaches could recreate the social world in better ways. Advocating for a relational approach that recognizes that caring for and relying on others is still crucial for humanity, (p. 74).⁷⁹ Holmes suggests that more collective, less individualized, efforts for change are needed to create sustained, long-term change. While noting that youth are often portrayed as individualised actors, Holmes points out that this claim may be overstated and argues for the need to focus not only on their individual choices, but noting the ways they connect with others in protest and seek change through collective means. Moreover, she says, "Young people engage in, and not just react to, social change and they do this together in often positive ways" (Holmes 2016: 11).⁸⁰ One example she refers to of this is the YWCA of Scotland, "an organization run for young women, largely by young women, which seeks to empower them" (Holmes 2016: 12).⁸¹ This example prefaces the later section in this document, which focuses on intersections of gender with literature considering youth leadership.

Mansouri, Fethi and Amelia Johns. 2017. "Social networks and perceptions of intergenerational difference among migrant youth in Australia." *Journal of Sociology* 53(1): 127–144.⁸²

While their study, based in Australia, is mainly concerned with understandings of intergenerational difference and migrant youth, through their discussions with young people they also uncover some thoughts about youth leadership, including noting and criticizing the challenges of age-based hierarchies in the Pacific region. In one focus group where Pacific Island young people pointed out these issues, one explained that, "If we could start things ourselves, we would have had heaps done already. But you have to get permission and stuff by elders so nothing gets done. We don't get a chance. We want to lead in something and not just to be told" (Mansouri and Johns 2017: 138).⁸³

Sommers, Marc. 2011. "Governance, Security and Culture: Assessing Africa's Youth Bulge." *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 5(2): 292-303.

While his article overall focuses on critically evaluating the youth bulge theory, which holds that large numbers of youth are more likely to lead to or sustain conflict, Sommers' extensive fieldwork with youth in Africa more broadly also points to a commonly cited occurrence of civil society's elite youth leaders being deemed the 'voices' of youth. He notes that this "is almost always a mistake if tensions and suspicions divide elite youth minorities from vast nonelite youth majorities," suggesting that scenarios like this are common (Sommers 2011: 301).⁸⁴ Furthermore, he says the outcomes of such an approach may inadvertently worsen already difficult situations, especially for youth not participating in these programs, where such programs unconsciously exclude by offering "programs to the fortunate few in areas where most youth are desperate for any support" (Sommers 2011: 301).⁸⁵

78 Holmes, M. (2016). *Sociology for Optimists*. London, Sage.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.

82 Mansouri, F. and A. Johns (2017). "Social networks and perceptions of intergenerational difference among migrant youth in Australia" *Journal of Sociology*, 53(1): 127–144

83 Ibid.

84 Sommers, M. (2011). "Governance, Security and Culture: Assessing Africa's Youth Bulge." *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 5(2): 292-303.

85 Ibid.

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We strive to advance children's rights and equality for girls all over the world. We recognise the power and potential of every single child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it's girls who are most affected. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 75 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 70 countries.

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