MERGA Reports of Primary Mathematics Middle Leadership Practices: A Scoping Review

Kate Copping
University of Melbourne
kcopping@unimelb.edu.au

Kerryn Driscoll
Deakin University
k.driscoll@deakin.edu.au

Matt Sexton
Australian Catholic University
matthew.sexton@acu.edu.au

Ann Downton
Monash University
ann.downton@monash.edu

Mathematics education research has increasingly recognised the importance of school mathematics leaders (SMLs) in influencing student outcomes, teacher development, and teaching and learning (Driscoll, 2022). Mathematics leadership is often conceptualised as a form of middle leadership, positioned between senior leadership and teachers, involving practices, knowledge, and dispositions that support planning, coaching, and leading professional learning (Copping, 2022). In primary schools, where generalist teachers are responsible for mathematics instruction, SMLs play an important role in supporting pedagogical and content knowledge development as they lead change and navigating challenges in highly contextualised school environments (Sexton & Downton, 2014). Despite growing interest in this area, there is limited understanding of how knowledge in this field is created, represented, and shared in research communities.

MERGA is central to advancing mathematics education research across Australasia and represents a significant source of knowledge creation where evolving understandings of mathematical leadership, particularly in primary school contexts, are reported. However, there is limited synthesis of how this research conceptualises and reports mathematics leadership in primary schools as a form of middle leadership. A scoping review was chosen to explore the nature of this focus, diversity of study designs, theoretical perspectives, and reporting practices from MERGA publications. This scoping review addresses the question: *How has the MERGA community reported knowledge creation concerning mathematics leadership in primary schools as a form of middle leadership?* Through the systematic identification and analysis of relevant MERGA publications, the review examines how mathematics leadership is conceptualised, the forms of knowledge produced, and the methodological and theoretical approaches which underpin this work. In doing so, it offers insight into how mathematics education leadership is understood and how research communities construct and share knowledge. This short communication presents preliminary findings from the scoping review.

References

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