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Fostering Authentic Leadership Behaviors in Palestinian Educational Institutions

Filistin Eğitim Kurumlarında Otantik Liderlik Davranışlarını Geliştirmek

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Abstract

This study aimed to pinpoint the notions and characteristics of authentic leadership showing the degree of practicing it among secondary education. To this end, it offers a comprehensive vision that reinforces the authentic leadership behaviors in secondary education in Palestine. The data of the study was collected from secondary school teachers in the Gaza Strip, and the study sample consisted of (N=477) teachers. As for the study tool the researcher used the Arabic version of the authentic leadership scale developed by ALQ Avolio and colleagues (2007). To test the hypotheses of the study, the researcher analyzes the data obtained with the scales with descriptive methods.

Based on the research results, it was determined that the authentic leadership behaviors exhibited a moderate degree in secondary schools, this result shows that there is a need to enhance authentic leadership behaviors in educational Institutions. Furthermore, there were no variations in authentic leadership behaviors levels among the schools based on gender (male, female). However, disparities do emerge in the "Balanced Processing" and "Self-awareness" dimensions, where male participants excel in terms of balanced processing skills and self-awareness capabilities. As for educational type (Science, Literature), there were no variations in authentic leadership behaviors. Although no significant disparities were found in the Relational transparency, Balanced Processing, and Internalized moral perspective dimension, a significant difference was detected in the "Self-awareness" dimension. This outcome suggests that participants with a science education background tend to have stronger opinions in the self-awareness dimension compared to those with a literature education background.

Keywords: Authentic, leadership, behaviors.

Öz

Bu çalışma, lise okullarda uygulanma derecesini gösteren otantik liderliğin özelliklerini belirlemeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Filistin'de ortaöğretimde otantik liderlik davranışlarını güçlendiren kapsamlı bir vizyon sunmaktadır. Araştırmanın verileri Gazze

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Şeridi'ndeki lise okullarından toplanmış olup, örneklemini (N=477) öğretmenler oluşturmuştur. Araştırmacılar, araştırmanın aracı olarak ALQ Avolio ve arkadaşları (2007) tarafından geliştirilen otantik liderlik ölçeğinin Arapça versiyonunu kullanmıştır. Araştırmanın hipotezlerini test etmek için araştırmacılar, ölçeklerle elde edilen verileri betimsel analiz yöntemleri kullanarak incelemiştir.

Araştırma sonuçları, lise okullarında otantik liderlik davranışlarının orta düzeyde sergilediğini göstermiştir, bu sonuç, eğitim kurumlarında otantik liderlik davranışlarının geliştirilmesi gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca cinsiyete (erkek, kadın) göre okullar arasında otantik liderlik davranışı düzeylerinde farklılık bulunmamıştır. Ancak erkek katılımcıların dengeli değerlendirme becerileri ve öz farkındalık yetenekleri açısından üstün olduğu "Dengeli Değerlendirme" ve "Öz Farkındalık" boyutlarında eşitsizlikler ortaya çıkıyor. Eğitim türüne (Fen, Edebiyat) bakıldığında ise otantik liderlik davranışlarında herhangi bir farklılık tespit edilmemiştir. İlişkilerde Şeffaflık, Dengeli Değerlendirme ve İçselleştirilmiş Ahlak Anlayışı boyutunda anlamlı bir farklılığa rastlanmazken, "Öz Farkındalık" boyutunda anlamlı bir farklılık saptanmıştır. Bu sonuç, fen bilgisi eğitimi geçmişine sahip katılımcıların, edebiyat eğitimi geçmişine sahip katılımcılarla karşılaştırıldığında öz farkındalık boyutunda daha güçlü görüşlere sahip olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Otantik, liderlik, davranışlar.

Introduction

The rapid changes in our contemporary world necessitate the educational leadership to develop in line with the consequences of this change in the school educational environment. It is no longer easy for the school leadership to achieve the desired educational outcomes without developing itself to keep pace with these changes. Therefore, in recent years, many attempts have appeared to reform the school system in general and school leadership in particular, and among these attempts is an attempt to implement change leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership, ethical leadership, and others.

Most of these attempts were based on theories that changed the concept of leadership, its components and characteristics. Among the most important of these theories that have developed in the past decade is the Authentic Leadership Theory, which has proven to be very successful in various work environments. This theory is based on the fact that the leader knows and accepts his strengths and weaknesses, maintains different work environments, maintains a high level of balance, self-awareness, moral value perspective, balanced handling of different viewpoints, and Relational transparency. This theory is the basic root of the theory of ethical and transformational leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 91).

The power of authentic leadership lies in the ability to deal with uncertain environments, in the ability to recover quickly from contingencies and unexpected events, in demonstrating resilience, and in increasing self-awareness and honesty through its engagement with stakeholders (Avolio and Gardner 2005, p. 316).

Authentic leadership is a positive indicator of many variables that contribute to the development of the organization in general (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 92) and the educational institution in particular. This raises the hypothesis that today's organizations must continue to develop and keep pace with the accelerating global changes.

Undoubtedly, educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping and formulating societies, as they are the driving force behind them. In order to succeed in this mission, it needs a leadership style that is capable of guiding the rudder of leadership and leading it, and here lies the strength of the authentic leadership style, as it is a promising style for the educational community in particular. And that it addresses the gap between dealing with emergency events and rapid recovery from them, the psychological aspect and

the positive climate that helps all circles of the educational institution unite in finding solutions and steering the helm of educational leadership. authentic leadership has a transparent, fair and accountable style, and when we look at the series of ethical collapses in public and private institutions, we see that all of them are leaders who only want to achieve their goals, constantly use their own values, manage their hearts and minds, and provide themselves for the organization or achieve the organization's long-term goals (George et al, 2007, p. 1). This is contrary to what the authentic leadership calls for.

It is worth mentioning that there is a number of researches that dealt with the importance of authentic leadership and its role in the development of institutions, but it was discussed in non-educational circles. Therefore, this study focuses on addressing the authentic leadership style and promoting authentic leadership behaviors in the educational context. Thus, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the importance of promoting authentic leadership in the Palestinian educational community, providing valuable insights and recommendations to promote authentic leadership as a means to enhance educational outcomes in Palestinian educational institutions.

Problem Statement

How can Authentic Leadership Behaviors be Fostered in Palestinian Educational Institutions?

The study's sub-questions are structured as follows:

- According to the opinions of high school teachers, what is the level of school administrators showing authentic leadership behaviors?
- According to the opinions of high school teachers, is there a statistically significant difference due to gender, (male, female) variable?
- According to the opinions of high school teachers, is there a statistically significant difference due to type of education, (Science, Literature) variable?
- According to the opinions of high school teachers, is there a statistically significant difference due to education level, (Bachelor, Master, Doctorate) variable?
- According to the opinions of high school teachers, is there a statistically significant difference due to Years of service (1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21 years and over) variable?

Study Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to determine the impact of authentic leadership behaviors in Palestinian educational institutions in terms of teachers in secondary education. This study reveals the role of teachers, school principals and educational planners in the development of authentic leadership behaviors, and the necessity of helping schools develop administrative policies that support authentic leadership behaviors.

In addition, this study provides a theoretical framework on the management concepts emerging in management science, and also deals with the process of recruiting and benefiting from those who are recruited in the field of education.

At the same time, the information to be obtained from the research to be carried out; It helps researchers, practitioners, and educators understand how authentic leadership behaviors help in developing administrative policies that schools needs

Study Significance

The significance of this study lies in its capacity to enhance authentic leadership behaviors within Palestinian educational institutions, consequently elevating the standard of educational leadership. The comprehension and consciousness of the roles played by teachers, school principals, and educational planners within the context of authentic leadership have the potential to result in more proficient and inspirational educational leadership.

Regarding its utility, this study offers advantages to researchers, educators, and principals, as understanding how authentic leadership behaviors contribute to administrative policies in schools is considered imperative for instigating positive transformations, improving the educational atmosphere, and enhancing academic accomplishments.

Additionally, this research aids in the formulation of administrative policies that endorse authentic leadership behaviors within educational institutions, thus fostering a conducive environment for the favorable development of educational systems.

Limitations

This article has been derived from our doctoral dissertation, titled "Fostering Organizational Intelligence in Palestinian Educational Institutions: The Role of Authentic Leadership Behaviors and Job Satisfaction". This study was applied following the collection of input from secondary education teachers in the Gaza Strip during the academic year 2018-2019.

Authentic Leadership in Educational Context

In our current era, educational institutions are experiencing rapid developments in various fields, which requires them to find new ways that are more capable and sophisticated in dealing with developments and adapting to them. Therefore, educational institutions have a burden of responding to these developments in order to be able to achieve their goals, overcome the obstacles they may face, and effectively fulfill their leadership roles to excel in their solutions and responses to these challenges and rapid changes. Therefore, educational institutions today need to abandon traditional management methods because they are no longer able to invest in the opportunities and tools of the new stage based on technology for rapid, intensive and community-oriented response to access information and maintain the core capabilities of the educational institution (Torres, Moreno & Verdu 2010, p. 1121).

Authentic leadership came as an important principle in the field of leadership in general, as it emphasizes the importance of the moral aspect of the leader in achieving positive results at the level of the organization (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94). As for the educational level, the positive change aspect did not play a role in enhancing educational results until after educators began to recognize authentic leadership because of its major role in adopting this principle. Therefore, the principle of authentic leadership seemed to gain great importance in the field of education as a promising approach for more effective leadership practices and the ability to deal with interim and emergency requirements.

Emphasizing the importance of authentic and ethical leaders' behavior in achieving positive results in various contexts (Yasir & Mohamad, 2016, p. 310). In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the importance of authentic leadership in the educational context. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, the role of leaders in educational

organizations becomes increasingly critical in driving positive change and enhancing educational outcomes.

The concept of authentic leadership revolves around the idea of self-awareness, transparency and ethical behavior (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 92), which in turn creates an environment that promotes cooperation and trust within the educational institution. Accordingly, the authentic leader has a greater ability to inspire, motivate and encourage teachers, provide a positive school climate, increase student participation and raise the level of their educational attainment. Therefore, promoting authentic leadership behaviors in educational institutions has become a matter of high necessity to create an educational environment conducive to development and increase effectiveness and productivity.

Definition and core principles of authentic leadership

The concept of the authentic is from modern Greek philosophy to modernity and higher self-orientation, reliability, coherence and post-modern power and the issue of multiple selves. The authors have argued that the Authentic, understood as true in themselves and acting in accordance with the true self, is essential in contemporary contexts (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242; Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 319). Both Harter and Erickson are considered among the best in the history and origins of epistemology in philosophy and psychology. (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 319). Where Harter defines Authenticity as "consistent with the true self, by expressing it in a way that is consistent with inner thoughts and feelings" (Harter, 2002, p. 382). Erickson (1995) warned that authentic should not be interpreted as a requirement, because people are not completely Authentic or completely wrong; in fact, the person can more or less be described as authentic.

Definition of Authentic Leadership

When reviewing the literature on authentic leadership, alone or with other variables, we find that they come very close to clearly defining what authentic leadership is, so by presenting some of these definitions, we will then try to summarize its main characteristics.

Authentic leadership in organizations defines as a process that draws on both positive psychological capacity and a highly developed organizational context; this results in positive self-directed and self-regulated behaviors of leaders and business partners, which in turn encourages positive self-development. An authentic leader is confident, hopeful, optimistic, flexible, transparent, moral/ethical, future-oriented, and prioritizes self-development of leaders. The authentic leader does not try to coerce or rationally persuade partners, but rather the leader's true values, beliefs, and behaviors serve to model the development of business partners (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243).

Authentic leadership defines as a model of leader behavior that attracts and encourages both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, promoting greater self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and Relational transparency. Leaders work with followers to promote positive self-development (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94).

Authentic leadership is technical leadership that leads to a synergy of self-awareness, sensitivity to the orientations of others, and leadership action (Begley, 2004, p. 5). Authentic leadership can be considered as a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound and conscious reflective practices in educational administration. This is knowledge-based, knowledgeable, and skillfully applied leadership (Begley, 2003, p. 1).

The main elements of the definition of authentic leadership can be summarized as follows:

- Authentic leadership is a leadership behavior based on the positive psychological abilities and organizational context of the institution.
- Authentic leadership focuses on many positive elements; The most important of these is the ethical climate within the work and the development of the psychological abilities of the employees.
- Authentic leadership consists of four dimensions: self-awareness, Internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency between the leader and his subordinates.

Authentic Leadership Dimensions

A number of studies have dealt with authentic leadership dimensions. Some of them mentioned four dimensions: self-awareness, balanced processing, internalized moral perspective, and transparency of relationships (Peterson et al., 2012; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Stearns, 2012; Leroy et al., 2015; Rego et al., 2013; Bamford et al., 2013; Williams, 2014; Stander et al., 2015); Others mentioned five dimensions: self-awareness, balanced processing, positive morality, relational transparency, and authentic behavior (Tuttle, 2009). In another part, they mentioned seven dimensions: self-awareness, balanced processing, ethical behavior, transparency of relationships, fulfillment, support and empowerment.

The researcher believes it appropriate to discuss the four dimensions of authentic leadership advocated by many scholars:

1. Self Awareness.

According to Avolio et al. (2009) Self Awareness has been defined as the core component of authentic leadership, which requires leaders to understand, perceive and evaluate themselves, how they guide and lead towards people and attitudes. Leaders who invest time and energy in learning about their strong and perceptual biases help them see things more clearly. Self-awareness in the ability to adapt effectively and quickly to new challenges and opportunities enhances the leader's development and performance (Avolio et al., 2009, p. 41).

Self-awareness is understanding how the individual is drawn into the world and makes sense, in a manner, how the process of making sense affects how one perceives oneself over time. It also demonstrates an understanding of the individual's multifaceted nature, which includes knowing the individual's strengths and weaknesses and gaining insight through the self's exposure to others and knowing only the influence of one on others (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95). Peterson et al. (2012, p. 505) state that self-awareness is frequent, indicating that a leader is aware of how their interactions directly affect reports.

The main idea of this dimension is that leaders are fully aware of who they are and take the time to reflect on their ideas, values, feelings, and goals (Tuttle, 2009, p. 15).

2. Balanced Processing

This dimension of authentic leadership depends on how the leader handles relevant information. While other leaders may ignore constructive responses, authentic leaders balance positive and negative personal responses and view both types of knowledge as opportunities for development (Tuttle, 2009, p. 16).

Balanced processing occurs when leaders objectively analyze all information before making a decision (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95), without rejecting facts because of the bias that increases leadership decisions (Chapman, 2016, p. 33).

A balanced processing is offered when leaders seek the opinions of others before making a decision. This enables the authentic leader to make better decisions for the overall performance of the work environment, not just on his own agenda. Leaders' willingness to seek input from others indicates a willingness to challenge their deep position before reaching an objective decision (Peterson et al, 2012, p. 503).

This dimension of authentic leadership is concerned with the way the leader handles self-relevant information. While other leaders may downplay or completely ignore constructive feedback, authentic leaders balance both positive and negative personal feedback and view both types of knowledge as opportunities for improvement (Tuttle, 2009, p. 16).

3. Internalized Moral Understanding.

The internalized moral perspective refers to the leader's core beliefs and how those beliefs correspond to actions. (Chapman, 2016, p. 31). More simply, the Internalized moral perspective emphasizes the leader's personal values and ability to support any organization. This ethical standard is consistently visible to followers and action guides (Chapman, 2016, p. 32).

Walumbwa et al. (2008) provided support for the construct by performing a confirmatory factor analysis that showed the importance of the internalized moral perspective. The moral and ethical standards of career services leaders directly affect reporting and affect the entire organization. Career services leaders and university administrators will be able to understand how the perception of the internalized moral perspective is viewed through direct reports. An internalized moral perspective in career services can be used to openly improve sharing knowledge in the work environment (Williams, 2014, p. 31).

4. Relational transparency.

Relational transparency means presenting an individual's authentic self to others. (Lusin, 2014, p. 53). The fourth dimension is general openness and trust in relationships. Authentic leaders share information, personal and others, with their followers and encourage them in return (Tuttle, 2009, p. 17).

Relational transparency involves the leader presenting his authentic self, helping to build and develop trust by sharing his true thoughts and feelings and displaying appropriate emotions. (Williams, 2014, p. 29). Authentic leaders may need to show greater relational transparency to overcome negative experiences that team members may have faced in previous teams (Renlund, 2017, p. 113).

Relational transparency is the final dimension of authentic leadership and includes the presentation of one's true self. It is accomplished through the openness and appropriate self-disclosure of one's values, identity, feelings and motives; This transparent information sharing increases followers' trust in leaders (Wong & Cumming, 2009, p. 8).

What distinguishes people with authentic leadership?

People with authentic leadership do not claim to be leaders simply because they are in a leadership position. However, they do function as leadership and related activities

through actions that express themselves as true leaders. When they lead, they express their true presence against the expectations of others.

They do not lead for position or personal rewards, but instead with a firm belief that they have values and visions they want to advance, and then lead to advance what they believe in.

The person who practices authentic leadership is a social being who is influenced by societal norms and values, parenting, and peers, and is influenced by a certain type of social upbringing, education, and other influences. Therefore, the content of their values and beliefs is unlikely to be completely authentic. However, they are not passive recipients of social input. We find them embodying these values and beliefs in order to be in their personal fabric through their lived experiences, emotional experiences and active reflection processes, and through these experiences. (Harter, 2002 p. 382; Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 244).

Those with authentic leadership say what is consistent with what they believe and what is consistent with their speech, words and beliefs, because they are working according to their own values and beliefs and not for the sake of pleasing or profiting others, employees or even beneficiaries. They have popularity or a drive to gain some narrow political interest and can be described as having high levels of honesty and transparency because their words and actions are consistent with their values and beliefs. (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 360).

Their actions are the main component of the self-concept; they have taken on an invaluable personal role, they do not need leadership practices to define themselves, they can use other terms and think of themselves in terms of their investment. They always play a role, not just when they're in a formal or planned situation.

They present a high level of self-esteem stability that demonstrates the clarity of their beliefs about themselves, their consistency with the abilities they already have, and their inner components capable of generating diverse and creative solutions. High clarity of self-concept indicates the presence of values and beliefs and a stable sense of self-knowledge, and some researchers see this as important characteristics of people with authentic leadership (Luthans & Avolio, 2003 p. 244).

Individuals with clarity in their self-concepts tend to rely more on these concepts to organize their experiences. For these reasons, fixed self-concepts provide authentic leadership with a crucial resource in organizing their experiences and expectations for events and guide them in social interactions as well as being the basis of their future psychological existence (Swann et al., 2003, p. 269-372).

It is compatible with them that their motivation is a literal translation of their feelings, core values and beliefs. In contrast, inconsistent goals are those that are pursued or achieved with the sense that they do not originate from or originate from themselves. they are not convinced and they don't have them in the first place and they only do it through official performance or follow up. People of authentic leadership are those whose goals are consistent with themselves, seeking to achieve their goals that express their original choices rather than specific tasks or externally imposed agreements (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 399).

Here the key characteristics of authentic leaders can be summarized: They understand the purpose of their leadership; have strong values; develop honest relationships with others; They provide self-discipline and passion for leadership that comes directly from their hearts.

Methodology

The study population consists of 4716 secondary school teachers in the Gaza Strip. Table 1 shows the distribution of the study population size to schools in Gaza Strip provinces. The researcher preferred to use the intended sample in order to speed up his research mission. Since the study population is approximately 5000, the representative sample of the universe should not be less than 400. Based on this, the researcher will choose a sample size (500) teachers to ensure the representation of the study populations (Gay et al, 2009, p. 139). To facilitate the researcher's task, their scale will be limited to the western part of Gaza, which is the center of the city and contains the largest number of teachers.

Table 1. Distribution of Population Size to Schools in Gaza Strip Provinces (FEB, Education Statistics Book, 2017-2018, p. 20)

No	Governorate	Schools Number	Teachers Number	Sample
1	North Gaza	24	738	0
2	West Gaza	26	903	500
3	East Gaza	19	580	0
4	Center Gaza	24	783	0
5	Khan Younis	16	593	0
6	East Khan Younis	16	439	0
7	Rafah	17	679	0
	Total	142	4716	500

1. Data Collection Process

After obtaining the necessary permissions for the conduct of the research, the researcher distributed the scale to the participants in the 2018-2019 academic year. The study aims, confidentiality and voluntariness were explained.

2. Data Collection Tools

The researcher used the "Authentic Leadership Scale" to collect data. In this subsection, validity and reliability information about this scale is presented.

3. Authentic Leadership Scale

After reviewing the literature on authentic leadership, the researcher used the authentic leadership scale developed by ALQ Avolio and colleagues (2007), after written permission. The researcher then used the Arabic version of the 16-item questionnaire, which was prepared in a 5-point Likert form.

4. Reliability

In order to assess the study tool's reliability, a pilot study was conducted with a sample of 40 teachers from two schools that were not part of the main research sample. The aim of this pilot study was to evaluate the reliability of the Authentic Leadership Behavior Scale.

To measure the internal consistency and reliability of the scale the researchers calculated the Cronbach alpha coefficient, in which it was computed for the entire scale as well as for each of its dimensions. The results of the reliability analysis, including the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scale and its dimensions, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scale and its dimensions

Dimensions	Items	Corrected Item - total Correlation	Cronbach's Alfa
relational transparency	A1	0.594	0.839
	A2	0.711	
	A3	0.626	
	A4	0.688	
	A5	0.592	
internalized moral perspective	B1	0.703	0.823
	B2	0.652	
	B3	0.657	
	B4	0.577	
Balanced processing	C1	0.711	0.861
	C2	0.836	
	C3	0.688	
Self-awareness	D1	0.678	0.875
	D2	0.712	
	D3	0.764	
	D4	0.781	
Authentic Leadership			0.943

Table 2 presents the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the scale items and the corrected item-total correlations. The corrected item-total correlations indicate the strength of the relationship between each item and the overall scale.

The results reveal that the corrected item-total correlations for the scale ranged between 0.592 and 0.711 in the first dimension, 0.577 and 0.703 in the second dimension, 0.688 and 0.836 in the third dimension, and 0.678 and 0.781 in the fourth one. These values suggest a moderate to strong relationship between the individual items and their respective dimensions.

Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the sub-dimensions of the scale indicate high levels of internal consistency. The first dimension, "Relational transparency," yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.839, while the second dimension, "Internalized moral understanding," resulted in a coefficient of 0.823. The third dimension, "Balanced processing," exhibited a reliability coefficient of 0.861, and the fourth dimension, "Self-awareness," showed a coefficient of 0.875. These coefficients indicate strong reliability for each sub-dimension. Moreover, the overall reliability coefficient for the entire scale was 0.943, suggesting a high level of internal consistency and reliability for the scale as a whole.

In summary, the results of the Cronbach Alpha test demonstrate that both the overall scale and its sub-dimensions exhibit high levels of reliability, indicating that the scale is a consistent and dependable measure of authentic leadership behaviors.

5. Split-Half Coefficient

To assess the internal consistency of the Authentic Leadership Behaviors Scale, a Split-Half Coefficient was calculated. This coefficient measures the degree of correlation between two halves of the scale to evaluate its reliability.

The Split-Half Coefficient for the Authentic Leadership Behaviors Scale was determined by dividing the scale into two equal halves and calculating the correlation between the scores obtained from each half.

Table 3. Guttman Split-Half Coefficient

Dimension	Items	Guttman
Relational transparency	A1	0.838
	A2	
	A3	
	A4	
	A5	
Internalized moral perspective	B1	0.839
	B2	
	B3	
	B4	
Balanced processing	C1	0.701
	C2	
	C3	
Self-awareness	D1	0.880
	D2	
	D3	
	D4	
Authentic Leadership		0.859

Table 3 displays the Guttman Split-Half Coefficient values for each dimension of the scale and the scale as a whole. The Guttman Split-Half Coefficients for the dimensions ranged from 0.701 to 0.880. These values indicate the reliability of each dimension of the scale.

The Guttman Split-Half Coefficient for the entire scale was 0.859, indicating a high level of reliability. This suggests that the scale as a whole consistently measures the construct of interest.

The high Guttman Split-Half Coefficient values for both the dimensions and the overall scale provide evidence of the reliability of the Authentic Leadership Behaviors Scale. These findings indicate that the scale is a reliable measure of authentic leadership behaviors, and the data obtained from it can be confidently interpreted.

In summary, the Guttman Split-Half Coefficient analysis demonstrates the reliability of the Authentic Leadership Behaviors Scale, with high coefficients observed for each dimension and the overall scale. This indicates the consistency and dependability of the scale in measuring authentic leadership behaviors.

Results

In this section, the study presents and discusses the findings related to the level of authentic leadership behaviors exhibited by Palestinian high school administrators, as perceived by high school teachers. Table 4 provides the arithmetic mean, test value, and p-value that indicate the level of authentic leadership behaviors.

Table 4. Analysis of Authentic Leadership Scale and Items

Dimension	Items	Average	Test Value	p Value
Relational transparency	A1	3.46	8.57	0.000
	A2	3.14	2.84	0.000

	A3	3.36	6.79	0.000
	A4	3.28	5.53	0.000
	A5	3.34	7.39	0.000
	Total	3.31	8.72	0.000
Internalized moral perspective	B1	3.56	10.39	0.000
	B2	3.48	9.13	0.000
	B3	3.59	10.86	0.000
	B4	3.40	8.28	0.000
	Total	3.51	11.89	0.000
Balanced processing	C1	3.15	2.82	0.005
	C2	3.32	6.43	0.000
	C3	3.35	6.93	0.000
	Total	3.27	6.57	0.000
Self-awareness	D1	3.44	8.48	0.000
	D2	3.30	5.96	0.000
	D3	3.36	7.07	0.000
	D4	3.31	5.62	0.000
	Total	3.35	8.52	0.000
Authentic Leadership		3.36	10.28	0.000

Table 4 illustrates the degree of authentic leadership behaviors demonstrated by school principals in the study sample. The findings indicate that the internalized moral perspective dimension ranked first scoring an average of 3.51 and a relative weight (70.2%). Following closely is the Self-awareness dimension, registering an average of 3.35 and a relative weight of 67%. In third place is the Transparency in Relationship dimension, recording an average of 3.31 and relative weight (66.2%). In fourth place is the Balanced processing dimension with an average of 3.27 and a relative weight (65.4%).

Internalized moral perspective dimension which ranked first with an average of 3.51 and a relative weight (70.2%) demonstrates a clear understanding of the school principal's influence on the educational environment. The results highlight a strong alignment between the principal's actions and beliefs, indicating consistency between personal values and leadership actions within the school context. This alignment not only contributes to fostering a positive reputation for the school but also establishes it as a place characterized by integrity and dedication

Furthermore, the principal adopts a core values-based approach when making decisions. This means that he places integrity and responsibility at the heart of his decision-making process. This approach reflects the ethical context in which the principal is based, which leads to decisions being made that are in the best interests of all and promote ethics and justice within the school. The principal encourages teachers to take positions that support the key values, which in turn encourages teachers to apply the values in their interactions with and among students, thus contributing to building a school culture characterized by respect and responsibility. In addition, this approach strengthens positive interaction between principal and teachers and enhances common understanding about educational values and goals.

As observed in the results above, it is evident that the internalized moral understanding dimension occupies the foremost position, underscoring its pivotal role in authentic leadership, as indicated by Shamir and Eilam (2005). This dimension, identified as the core element of authentic leadership, aims to elevate interpersonal communication

and cultivate open relationships by facilitating an authentic expression of one's true self (Shamir and Eilam, 2005, p 400).

As for the reason why the internalized moral perspective dimension ranks first, the researcher believes that Palestinian community traditions generally encourage adherence to high values and ethical values such as honesty in speech, sincerity at work, role modeling in attitudes and role models in behavior. Therefore, this result clearly reflects this.

The next Self-awareness dimension has an average of 3.35 and a relative weight (67%) these results show the importance of developing the school principal's self-awareness and how these practices can lead to improved administrative performance and enhance positive interaction with the educational team and community. The self-awareness dimension reveals the principal's awareness and interaction with the teachers, and shows that the school principal seeks feedback to improve interaction with them, and this reflects his desire for continuous learning and to benefit from the comments and opinions of the team and teachers, and therefore, through this interest in feedback, the principal can improve his performance and build better relationships with teachers. This ability can also be enhanced by developing listening skills and understanding the needs and opinions of others.

Also it refers to principal ability to estimate his strengths and weaknesses from the point of view of others, and this comprehensive understanding of others' perception of his abilities can help improve interaction and communication, and thus enhance coordination and cooperation within the school. Self-awareness dimension shows the school principal's knowledge of the appropriate time to re-evaluate his positions on important issues, and this ability can be developed by working to develop the ability to make constructive strategic decisions and think about the effects of these decisions on the school and the educational community. It can also be improved through continuous learning and critical thinking about future plans and goals.

In the third position, the Transparency in Relationship dimension, with an average 3.31 and relative weight (66.2%) it shows an average rating by teachers. However, there are still some positive points and possible improvements. The principal actually means what he or she says, and this indicates open and honest communication. However, the principal can reinforce this aspect with more guidance to improve communication and ensure a better understanding of his or her position and intentions. Also, the school principal acknowledges mistakes when they occur in the school. This reflects the spirit of humility and responsibility in leadership, but the principal can develop this quality by working to correct mistakes effectively and taking appropriate corrective actions to prevent their reoccurrence. The principal encourages everyone to speak their mind. This enhances communication and encourages open expression. The principal can improve this aspect by providing platforms for staff to express their opinions and concerns on a regular basis. In general, a school principal can improve the level of transparency in relationships through greater communication and attention to teachers' opinions and needs, improving listening skills and developing an effective response to various issues within the school.

Balanced processing dimension placed fourth with an average of 3.27 and a relative weight (65.4%). It shows that this dimension received the last ranking and was at an average level, but there is an opportunity to develop and improve it. Regarding the principal's encouragement to express viewpoints that differ from his own established opinion, the principal can enhance this aspect by providing more opportunities for open discussion and promoting a culture of free interaction. Improving analysis skills and using data more effectively in decision-making helps in developing and improving the school manager's performance in analyzing data related to any topic before making any decision, and this in

turn reflects the development of strategic thinking and responsibility in decision-making processes.

The school principal's listening to different points of view before arriving at any conclusion can be enhanced by applying a more beneficial approach to listening and interacting with others and devoting more time to understanding different points of view, which in turn works to increase and enhance the principal's communication with teachers within the school. In short, a school principal can develop a balanced vision variable by promoting open communication, making effective use of data, and interacting effectively with the different viewpoints of individuals in the school.

As for the reason why the balanced processing dimension ranked last, the researcher believes there is a lack of leadership competencies to use scientific treatments that lead to reliable scientific results. What can be obtained from ethics stemming from the culture and philosophy of the country should be supported by balanced processing and treatments, as well as the monitoring and control of results that lead to continuous improvement and development in performance in general.

In general, when reviewing the descriptive analysis of authentic leadership dimensions, it can be seen that the average value of Palestinian high school principals' perceptions of teachers regarding the authentic leadership level of their schools is $X=3.36$. Based on this finding, it can be said that the perceptions of the principals regarding the authentic leadership level of the schools where they work are at a moderate level.

This result is consistent with El-bardan's (2017) study, which concluded that the practice of authentic leadership behavior by administrative leaders in teaching hospitals was to a moderate degree. It is also consistent with the result of Feng's study (2016), which found that school leaders' practice of authentic leadership behavior was moderate, as the general arithmetic mean for authentic leadership behaviors was (2.63).

However, It differs from King's (2016) study, which found that the level of availability of authentic leadership among supervisors was low. It also differs from the study of Al-Mohameed (2021), which found that the level of academic leaders' practice of authentic leadership at the College of Education at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University was high, as the overall average reached 3.58. Perhaps the reason for this is that it targets universities and not schools, which differ in their environment and interactions from universities.

Furthermore, it differs from the study of Saeed and Hameed (2019), which found that the level of availability of authentic leadership in the departments and divisions of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs was high from the point of view of the department and division directors, as the arithmetic mean value reached 4.36. It also differs from Al-Harithi's study (2020), which concluded that the level of practice of authentic leadership behavior by private school leaders in Jeddah Governorate was high from the point of view of teachers, as the general arithmetic average of the grand total of the extent to which private school leaders in Jeddah Governorate practiced authentic leadership behavior was (4.13).

The results of (Al-Hajjar 2007, p. 207) study, which aims to define the concepts and characteristics of authentic leadership and reveal the extent to which secondary school principals in the Gaza regions apply authentic leadership and its relationship to some variables, indicated that the degree of applying the dimensions of authentic leadership is moderate. This is due to various reasons, notably the small size of the Gaza Strip, as well as the religious structure that dominates the society, which constantly encourages the need to demonstrate morality in every transaction.

In addition, (Aljuhni 2019) study, which aimed to measure the authentic leadership behavior of general education school leaders in Yanbu and its relationship with organizational health from the perspective of teachers, showed that authentic leadership behavior achieved a moderate degree. The teachers' perspective explains that most school leaders have the characteristics of authentic leadership, which is characteristic of the Arab and Islamic environment, characterized by authentic values and principles that influence the formation of personality.

The researcher attributes this results to Palestinian teachers' awareness of the importance of positivity and ethics in administrative work. Confidence, psychological and enthusiastic support that they find from their managers pushes them to double their productivity and increase their performance at the individual and group levels. This is also due to the conservative religious structure in the Gaza Strip regions, which, besides being a good example, promotes love, friendship and trust. Therefore, the ethical variable, which takes the first place, confirms the commitment of managers to values and ethical values due to its importance in building a good person. However, the implementation of authentic leadership behaviors did not reach the desired level. The researcher attributes this to the different backgrounds of leadership competencies and the different geographical environments they are in, and perhaps this is also due to the levels of experience across leadership competencies.

Are there a statistically significant differences in Authentic Leadership Behaviors based on some variables?

To determine if there is a statistically significant difference in Authentic Leadership Behaviors based on gender, Mann-Whitney test conducted. Table 5 shows the teachers' explanation of the differences depending on the demographic variables according to their opinions and whether the arithmetic averages of the Palestinian educational institutions differ significantly according to the authentic leadership gender, based on the opinions of the High School teachers in the light of the data obtained.

Table 5. Mann-Whitney Test and P-Values for Gender

Dimensions	Gender	Average	Mann-Whitney U	P-Values
Relational transparency (A)	Male	230.80	23468	0.289
	Female	217.86		
Internalized moral perspective (B)	Male	216.33	23284	0.231
	Female	230.92		
Balanced processing (C)	Male	242.22	21048	0.004*
	Female	207.57		
Self-awareness (D)	Male	238.78	21776	0.021*
	Female	210.66		
Authentic Leadership (AD)	Male	232.92	21776	0.166
	Female	215.96		
	Female	240.41		

Significant at $p < *0,05$

Significant at $p < **0.10$

Do participants' opinions on the Authentic Leadership Scale differ significantly based on gender (male, female)? The results of the Mann-Whitney test, which was conducted to determine whether there is a difference according to gender in each of the scale and the dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors, are given in Table 5. It is clear

that the P-values of the scale as a whole are greater than the significance level, and therefore there is no statistically significant difference between the answers of teachers in these dimensions due to gender, unlike the results reported in Al-Harithi's (2020) study, which confirmed the presence of statistically significant differences in the gender variable. As can be seen in Table 5, there was no significant difference between the dimensions of Relational transparency and Internalized moral perspective, which are among the dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors.

On the other hand, it is seen that there is a significant difference in the "Balanced Processing" dimension and Self-awareness dimensions. In the balanced processing dimension, it is seen that the average of the opinions of the male participants (average: 242.22) is higher than the average of the opinions of the female participants (mean: 207.57), this result indicates that male participants' balanced processing abilities exhibit leadership characteristics in this dimension more clearly. Again, in the "Self-awareness" dimension, it is seen that the average of the opinions of the male participants (Average: 238.78) is higher than the average of the opinions of the female participants (Average: 210.66), this result may suggest that male participants more clearly demonstrated their ability to better recognize and understand their own strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, in comparison with previous researches, (Al-Hajjar 2007, p 228) study, stated the same result which stated that there is no significant gender difference was found in the participants' views on authentic leadership behaviors.

Are There Significant Differences in the Opinions of the Participants in the Authentic Leadership Scale by Type of Education (Science, Literature)? The results of the Mann-Whitney test performed to determine whether there is a difference according to the type of education in each of the scale and dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Mann-Whitney Test and P Values by Education Type

Dimensions	Type of Education	Mean	Mann-Whitney U	P-Values
Relational transparency (A)	Science	226.79	22092	0.537
	Literature	218.94		
Internalized moral perspective (B)	Science	228.41	21627	0.329
	Literature	216.02		
Balanced processing (C)	Science	225.36	22504	0.763
	Literature	221.54		
Self-awareness (D)	Science	233.08	20280	0.044*
	Literature	207.55		
Authentic Leadership (AD)	Science	229.34	21358	0.239
	Literature	214.33		

Significant at $p < *0,05$

Significant at $p < **0.10$

It is clear that the P-values of the scale as a whole are greater than the significance level, and therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between the answers of teachers in these dimensions due to the type of education. As seen in Table 6, no significant difference was found in the dimensions of Relational transparency, Balanced Processing, and Internalized moral perspective, which are among the dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors. On the other hand, it is seen that there is a significant difference in the dimension of self-awareness. In the self-awareness dimension, it is seen that the average

of the opinions of the participants in the science education type (Average: 233.08) is higher than the average of the opinions of the participants in the literature education type (Average: 207.55).

The lack of a statistically significant difference in the dimensions of Relational Transparency, Balanced Processing, and Internalized Moral Perspective concerning the type of education can be attributed to the shared importance and emphasis on these dimensions across different educational backgrounds.

However, the observed significant difference in the dimension of Self-awareness may stem from the unique emphasis or teaching approaches associated with science education.

Are There Significant Differences in the Opinions of the Participants in the Authentic Leadership Scale according to Education Levels? The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, which was conducted to determine whether there is a difference in each of the scale and dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors according to education levels, are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis Test and P Values According to Education Levels

Dimensions	Education Levels	Mean	Kruskal-Wallis	P-Values
Relational transparency (A)	Bachelor	216.73	5.47	0.065**
	Master	253.82		
	Doctorate	239.37		
Internalized moral perspective (B)	Bachelor	214.66	8.75	0.013*
	Master	257.97		
	Doctorate	261.05		
Balanced processing (C)	Bachelor	214.41	9.37	0.009*
	Master	257.47		
	Doctorate	267.87		
Self-awareness (D)	Bachelor	213.86	10.56	0.005*
	Master	258.16		
	Doctorate	275.13		
Authentic Leadership (AD)	Bachelor	214.21	9.52	0.009*
	Master	259.92		
	Doctorate	261.71		

Significant at $p < *0,05$

Significant at $p < **0.10$

It is clear that the P-values of the scale as a whole are smaller than the significance level, and therefore there is a statistically significant difference between the answers of the teachers in these dimensions due to their education level. As seen in Table 7, there was no significant difference in Relational transparency, one of the dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors. On the other hand, it is seen that there is a significant difference in the dimensions of Internalized moral understanding, Balanced processing and Self-awareness. Looking at the averages of the variables, we see that the trend shifts from doctoral level to graduate and undergraduate level.

The observed statistically significant difference in the dimensions of Internalized Moral Understanding, Balanced Processing, and Self-awareness with respect to education levels can be attributed to the progressive nature of academic development in Palestine.

Doctoral-level education typically involves advanced studies and research, fostering a deeper understanding of internalized moral perspectives, a more balanced approach to decision-making, and increased self-awareness.

The lack of significant difference in Relational Transparency suggests a consistent appreciation for transparent communication across different education levels, emphasizing its importance in authentic leadership behaviors.

Are There Significant Differences in the Opinions of the Participants in the Authentic Leadership Scale by Years of Service? The results of the Kruskal - Wallis test, which was conducted to determine whether there is a difference according to years of service in each of the scale and dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors, are given in Table 8.

Table 8. Kruskal-Wallis Test and P Values by Years of Service

Boyut	Years of Service	Mean	Kruskal-Wallis	P-Values
Relational transparency (A)	1-5 years	283.48	13.20	0.010*
	6-10 years	231.64		
	11-15 years	222.44		
	16-20 years	218.43		
	21 and over	196.77		
Internalized moral perspective (B)	1-5 years	280.88	9.90	0.042*
	6-10 years	224.20		
	11-15 years	224.35		
	16-20 years	208.86		
	21 and over	210.02		
Balanced processing (C)	1-5 years	280.10	9.39	0.052**
	6-10 years	225.89		
	11-15 years	212.06		
	16-20 years	213.56		
	21 and over	224.20		
Self-awareness (D)	1-5 years	285.81	10.96	0.027*
	6-10 years	230.93		
	11-15 years	214.37		
	16-20 years	209.36		
	21 and over	216.70		
Authentic Leadership (AD)	1-5 years	291.59	13.56	0.009*
	6-10 years	229.89		
	11-15 years	217.34		
	16-20 years	210.28		
	21 and over	209.17		

Significant at $p < *0,05$

Significant at $p < **0.10$

It is clear that the P-values of the scale as a whole are smaller than the significance level, and therefore there is a statistically significant difference between the answers of

teachers in these dimensions due to their years of service. As seen in Table 8, no significant difference was found in the Balanced processing dimension, which is one of the dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors. On the other hand, it is seen that there is a significant difference in Relational transparency, Internalized moral understanding and Self-awareness dimensions. Looking at the averages of the variables, we see that the trend has shifted from 1-5 service years to 21 and above service years.

The observed statistically significant difference in the dimensions of Relational Transparency, Internalized Moral Understanding, and Self-awareness with respect to years of service can be attributed to several factors:

Firstly, as individuals accumulate more years of service, they often gain valuable experience and insights into effective leadership practices. This increased experience may contribute to a heightened awareness of the importance of transparent communication, internalized moral perspectives, and self-awareness in leadership roles.

Additionally, over time, leaders may develop a deeper understanding of the impact of relational transparency on organizational dynamics, the ethical considerations associated with decision-making, and the significance of self-awareness in fostering positive interpersonal relationships.

The lack of significant difference in the Balanced Processing dimension may suggest that this aspect of authentic leadership is consistently valued and practiced across various experience levels, indicating its stability.

Discussion

The first sub-problem of the study is to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the level of authentic leadership behaviors of the schools in which they work, according to the opinions of the teachers. In this direction, according to the opinions of the teachers with the research; It has been concluded that the perceptions of the school principals regarding the authentic leadership level of the schools they work in are at a moderate level. Consistent with the research results of Al-Hajjar (2017) and Aljuhni (2019), it was concluded that the level of authentic leadership behaviors in schools is moderate.

In the study, it was also observed that all sub-dimensions of schools' authentic leadership behaviors were at a moderate level. In terms of sub-dimensions, the highest average was in the Internalized moral understanding dimension and the lowest average was in the balanced processing dimension. This result obtained from the research supports the research findings of Shamir and Eilam (2005).

The researcher attributes this result to Palestinian teachers' awareness of the importance of positivity and ethics in administrative work. The trust, psychological and enthusiastic support they find from their managers push them to double their productivity and increase their performance on an individual and collective level. This is also due to the conservative religious structure in the Gaza Strip regions, which, besides being a good example, promotes love, friendship and trust.

Therefore, the ethical variable, which takes the first place, confirms the commitment of managers to values and ethical values due to its importance in building a good person. However, the implementation of authentic leadership behaviors did not reach the desired level. The researcher attributes this to the different backgrounds of leadership competencies and the different geographical environments they are in, and perhaps this is also due to the levels of experience across leadership competencies.

As for the reason why the internalized moral perspective dimension ranks first, the researcher believes that Palestinian community traditions generally encourage adherence to high values and ethical values such as honesty in speech, sincerity at work, role modeling in attitudes and role models in behavior. Therefore, this result clearly reflects this.

Concerning the well-acquired balanced processing dimension, the researcher believes there is a lack of leadership competencies to use scientific treatments that lead to reliable scientific results. What can be obtained from ethics stemming from the culture and philosophy of the country should be supported by balanced processing and treatments, as well as the monitoring and control of results that lead to continuous improvement and development in performance in general.

Regarding whether the participants' opinions on the Authentic Leadership Scale varied based on gender (Male - Female). The Mann-Whitney test results, presented in Table 5 above, indicated that there is no statistically significant difference between the answers of male and female teachers across the overall scale and specific dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors. In contrast to the outcomes indicated in Al-Harithi's (2020) research, which affirmed the existence of statistically significant variances in the gender variable.

However, notable gender differences were observed in the "Balanced Processing" and "Self-awareness" dimensions. In Balanced Processing, male participants displayed higher average opinions (242.22) compared to female participants (207.57), suggesting that male participants exhibited clearer leadership characteristics in this dimension. Similarly, in the "Self-awareness" dimension, male participants had a higher average opinion (238.78) than female participants (210.66), indicating that male participants demonstrated a better ability to recognize and understand their own strengths and weaknesses.

Overall, the results suggest that while there are no gender-based differences in overall authentic leadership perceptions, distinctions emerge in specific dimensions, particularly in Balanced Processing and Self-awareness.

The results, presented in Table 6 above, reveal that, there is no statistically significant difference between the responses of teachers in various dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors based on the type of education (science - literature).

Specifically, no significant differences were found in the dimensions of Relational Transparency, Balanced Processing, and Internalized Moral Perspective. However, a significant difference was observed in the dimension of Self-awareness. In the Self-awareness dimension, participants with a science education background displayed a higher average opinion (233.08) compared to those with a literature education background (207.55). This suggests that participants with a science education background may exhibit a greater ability to recognize and understand their own strengths and weaknesses in comparison to their counterparts with a literature education background.

The results of Kruskal-Wallis test shows potential differences in each dimension of authentic leadership behaviors based on education levels. The results, presented in Table 7 above, indicate a statistically significant difference in teachers' responses across the overall scale and specific dimensions due to their education level. The significance level was exceeded for the overall scale, suggesting notable variations in perceptions among different education levels.

While no significant difference was found in the dimension of Relational Transparency, significant differences were observed in Internalized Moral Understanding, Balanced Processing, and Self-awareness. Analyzing the averages, a noticeable trend is apparent, with perceptions shifting from the doctoral level to the graduate and

undergraduate levels. This suggests that there are varying views on these dimensions of authentic leadership behaviors among teachers at different education levels, highlighting the importance of considering educational backgrounds when assessing perceptions of authentic leadership.

The results, outlined in Table 8 above, reveal a statistically significant difference in teachers' responses across the overall scale and specific dimensions due to their years of service. The significance level was surpassed for the overall scale, indicating notable variations in perceptions related to the length of service. Differing from the findings highlighted in Al-Harithi's (2020) study, no statistically significant distinctions were observed in the variable of years of service.

While no significant difference was found in the Balanced Processing dimension, there were significant differences observed in Relational Transparency, Internalized Moral Understanding, and Self-awareness dimensions. Examining the averages, a clear trend emerges, indicating a shift from 1-5 years of service to 21 and above service years. This suggests that perceptions of authentic leadership behaviors vary based on the years of service, emphasizing the impact of professional experience on how teachers perceive dimensions such as Relational Transparency, Internalized Moral Understanding, and Self-awareness.

In General, the study aimed to assess the level of authentic leadership behaviors among school principals as perceived by high school teachers, examining various factors influencing these perceptions. The findings indicate that overall, perceptions of authentic leadership behaviors are at a moderate level, aligning with some previous research. Notably, the Internalized Moral Understanding dimension received the highest average, reflecting the influence of Palestinian community traditions that emphasize adherence to high values. However, the Balanced Processing dimension scored the lowest, suggesting a need for leadership competencies in using scientific treatments for reliable results. Gender-based differences were observed, with male participants demonstrating clearer leadership characteristics in Balanced Processing and Self-awareness dimensions. Differences based on education levels and years of service were also identified, emphasizing the impact of professional experience and educational background on perceptions of authentic leadership. Overall, the study underscores the importance of considering various factors when evaluating perceptions of authentic leadership behaviors among school principals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examined the concept of authentic leadership in Palestinian educational institutions. Through the analysis of data collected from Palestinian high school teachers, the study found that internalized moral understanding is a crucial dimension of authentic leadership, emphasizing the alignment between a leader's values and actions. It was also revealed that the perceptions of teachers regarding the authentic leadership level of their principals were moderate, indicating room for improvement in fostering authentic leadership behaviors.

Gender differences were observed in "Balanced Processing" and Self-awareness dimensions of authentic leadership, emphasizing the importance of considering gender dynamics in leadership development initiatives. The study contributes to the existing literature by providing insights into authentic leadership behaviors exhibited by school principals and highlighting the need for continuous improvement in authentic leadership practices.

The findings have implications for leadership development, organizational culture, teacher motivation, and student outcomes. Fostering authentic leadership in educational institutions can enhance organizational culture, promote teacher motivation, and ultimately lead to improved student outcomes and overall school performance.

To sum up, this study advances our understanding of authentic leadership in educational settings and provides valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers seeking to enhance leadership practices and improve educational outcomes. Continued research and efforts in promoting authentic leadership behaviors are essential for creating positive and effective educational environments.

Recommendations

Based on the article's findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- The current article focused on high schools; future studies could extend their scope to diverse educational levels, enabling comparisons across different tiers of education.
- This research incorporated variables such as gender, type of education, education level, and years of service. Subsequent studies could enhance their research design by introducing additional variables, such as school district and course load, to broaden the scope of investigation.
- While this study employed quantitative research methods, subsequent research endeavors could employ qualitative methods to delve deeper into the findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying reasons.
- Implement targeted leadership training programs to enhance authentic leadership behaviors, with a focus on developing competencies related to Balanced Processing and decision-making based on scientific treatments.
- Establish mentorship programs, particularly for new school principals and those with fewer years of service, to provide guidance and support for the development of authentic leadership behaviors.
- Promote continuous feedback mechanisms within schools, allowing teachers to regularly express their opinions and concerns about leadership behaviors, fostering transparency and relational aspects of leadership.

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