



Comparative Study of the Impact of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Commitment of Public and Private Secondary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT:

This comparative study was conducted to investigate the influence of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of secondary school teachers. The study focuses on both public and private secondary schools, recognizing the distinct contextual factors that may shape the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational commitment in these two sectors. This study aimed to bridge the gap by exploring the potential impact of authentic leadership behaviors exhibited by school principals on the organizational commitment of teachers, while considering potential variations between the public and private school contexts. A mixed method was employed. Data collection involved surveys, interviews, and document analysis. The findings suggest that authentic leadership plays a crucial role in influencing teachers' affective and normative commitment levels in both public and private secondary schools in the KP region. The implications of these findings are significant for educational policymakers, school administrators, and leadership development programs. Strengthening authentic leadership behaviors among school principals could foster higher levels of organizational commitment among teachers, contributing to improved educational outcomes and teacher well-being. The study underscores the need for tailored approaches in enhancing authentic leadership practices based on the specific sector; thereby promoting a more committed and engaged teaching workforce in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Further research avenues and recommendations are discussed in light of the study's outcomes.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership, Organizational Commitment, Mixed Method Research, Comparison, Public-Private Secondary Schools.

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Introduction

Organizations worldwide are increasingly recognizing the importance of leadership styles in shaping employee attitudes and behavior. In the education sector, where the commitment and dedication of teachers play a pivotal role in nurturing the future generation, leadership practices are of paramount significance. Among the diverse leadership approaches, the concept of authentic leadership has garnered substantial attention due to its positive impact on employee commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational performance. The present research aims to conduct a comparative study to explore the influence of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in both public and private educational settings. Authentic leadership, first introduced by Avolio and Gardner (2005), emphasizes the significance of genuine and ethical leadership behaviors. Leaders who exhibit authenticity are characterized by transparency, integrity, and moral reasoning, which inspire trust and foster positive organizational climates. These leaders are genuine in their interactions, thus cultivating meaningful relationships with their subordinates. By emphasizing shared values and a clear sense of purpose, authentic leaders have the potential to enhance employee commitment and promote a positive work environment (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). Teacher commitment in the education sector has long been considered a crucial factor in determining the quality of education and the overall success of schools (Allen & Meyer, 1990). When teachers are committed to their organizations, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of effort, dedication, and engagement, resulting in improved student outcomes and school performance (Chen, Liu, & Portnoy, 2012). Furthermore, committed teachers are more inclined to embrace organizational changes, exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction, and demonstrate higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviors (Li, 2016). While authentic leadership has been studied in various organizational contexts, there is a dearth of research that specifically examines its impact on teacher commitment, particularly in the context of public and private secondary schools. Public schools, driven by the mandate to serve the broader community, often face unique challenges compared to private schools that operate under different funding and management structures. As such, the impact of authentic leadership on teacher commitment may vary between the two sectors, necessitating a comparative examination to gain comprehensive insights.

The primary objective of this research is to fill this gap in the literature by conducting a comparative investigation into the influence of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of public and private secondary school teachers. By employing a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, we seek to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between authentic leadership and teacher commitment in these educational settings. The findings of the study will be helpful to the promotion of effective leadership practices, which will increase the teacher's commitment to enhancing the quality of education in public and private schools. The study aimed to evaluate the level of authentic leadership exhibited by school administrators; measure the organizational commitment levels of secondary school teachers and make a comparison of the impact of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of secondary school teachers. The study tried to answer the research questions what is the level of authentic leadership demonstrated by school administrators; what are the organizational commitment levels? And is there a significant difference in the impact of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of secondary school teachers both in the public and private sectors?

Literature Review

Authentic leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes the genuine and transparent behavior of leaders. It is characterized by self-awareness, moral integrity, open communication, and a commitment to fostering positive relationships. Authentic leaders are driven by their core values and beliefs, and they strive to create an environment of trust and authenticity within their organizations. This leadership style encourages followers to feel empowered, motivated, and engaged. One of the foundational works on authentic leadership is by Bill George, who defined authentic leadership as "a style of leadership that emphasizes the genuineness and integrity of the leader and focuses on the leader's values, beliefs, and moral compass" (George, 2003). He identified five key characteristics of authentic leaders; self-awareness: Authentic leaders have a deep understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, values, and emotions. They are in touch with their true selves and are honest about their limitations. Relational transparency: Authentic leaders are open and honest in their communication with others.



They build trust by being genuine and not hiding their intentions or feelings. Balanced processing: They seek diverse perspectives and opinions before making decisions. They are open to feedback and are willing to consider different viewpoints. Internalized moral perspective: Authentic leaders are guided by a strong sense of ethics and morality. They make decisions based on their principles and values, even in challenging situations. Self-development: Authentic leaders are committed to continuous personal growth and development. They are open to learning from their experiences and are willing to adapt their behavior based on new insights.

Another scholar Avolio and Gardner (2005) expanded on the concept, highlighting that authentic leadership has a positive impact on followers' well-being, motivation, and performance. They emphasized the importance of genuine and sincere relationships between leaders and followers in fostering an environment of trust and engagement. In summary, authentic leadership is a leadership style characterized by self-awareness, transparency, moral integrity, open communication, and a commitment to personal growth. It promotes trust, positive relationships, and empowerment among followers, ultimately leading to enhanced organizational performance and well-being.

Several theoretical frameworks and models have been developed to further understand and study authentic leadership. Authentic Leadership Development (ALD) Model: This model emphasizes self-awareness, moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency as components of authentic leadership development (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). Integrated Model of Authentic Leadership: This model combines positive psychological capacities with authentic leadership behaviors to explain their impact on follower outcomes (Clapp-Smith *et al.*, 2009). Authentic Leadership Model: Kernis proposes that authentic leadership arises from the interaction of self-awareness, unbiased information processing, and authentic relationships (Kernis, 2003). Authentic Leadership Paradox: This model highlights the tension between staying true to oneself and adapting to situational demands in authentic leadership (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Authentic Leadership Development Framework: Avolio and Gardner's framework outlines authentic leadership's development process and its positive impact on follower well-being and performance (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

Authentic leadership plays a significant role in fostering trust, job satisfaction, and employee commitment. Authentic leaders who display transparency and genuine behavior create an environment of trust. Trust is built when leaders are consistent, open, and sincere in their interactions. (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Authentic leadership contributes to job satisfaction by promoting a positive work culture. Employees feel valued and supported when leaders are authentic, which leads to increased satisfaction with their work and the organization. (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008) Authentic leaders inspire a sense of commitment among employees. By modeling strong values and principles, they motivate employees to align themselves with the organization's goals and contribute their best efforts (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008).

The organizational commitment of the employees stands for their emotional attachment and identification with their organization. It explains an employee's willingness to make an effort to continue with the existing organization and try to materialize its objectives (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Three dimensions of organizational commitment have been identified: Affective commitment reflects an employee's emotional attachment and positive feelings toward the organization. Employees with high affective commitment stay with the organization because they want to, driven by their positive experiences and connections. Continuance Commitment to others is rooted in the perceived cost linked with quitting the organization. Employees will stay in the organization in case their continuance commitment is high because they want to satisfy their personal needs. Likewise, normative commitment originates from an employee's sense of obligation and responsibility to stay in the existing organization. Employees with high normative commitment stay because they feel it is the right thing to do which is generally influenced by a logic of loyalty or moral duty (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Several factors influence organizational commitment in the education sector. Supportive and transformational leadership styles positively affect organizational commitment among educators. Leaders who foster a positive work environment and provide guidance enhance commitment (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Satisfied teachers are more likely to be committed to their schools. When educators find their work fulfilling and aligned with their values, their commitment increases (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Opportunities for growth and skill enhancement contribute to commitment. Teachers who receive continuous professional development are more likely to feel valued

and invested in the organization. (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) Positive relationships with colleagues create a sense of belonging and attachment to the organization. Collaborative and supportive interactions foster commitment. (Hulpia *et al.*, 2011) Supportive policies, resources, and recognition from the school administration and management positively influence teachers' commitment. Feeling valued and supported enhances their commitment (Allen *et al.*, 2010).

Teacher commitment is crucial in educational institutions due to its significant impact on various aspects: Committed teachers are more likely to engage in effective teaching practices, leading to improved student learning outcomes. Their dedication positively influences student performance (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). High teacher commitment reduces turnover rates. If a teacher is committed to his institution, he or she is less likely to quit, leading to stability and continuity in the teaching staff (Allen *et al.*, 2003). Committed teachers contribute to a positive and supportive school climate. Their enthusiasm and engagement foster a collaborative and conducive learning environment for both students and colleagues (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Committed teachers are more willing to engage in ongoing professional development, enhancing their skills and staying updated with best practices. This benefits both the teachers and the students they serve (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Teacher commitment encourages the adoption of innovative teaching methods and strategies. Committed teachers are more likely to experiment with new approaches, contributing to educational advancement (Brouwer *et al.*, 2011).

Research has demonstrated the positive impact of authentic leadership on organizational commitment across various sectors; Healthcare Sector: Authentic leadership has been found to positively influence nurses' organizational commitment by fostering trust, empowerment, and positive work relationships (Giallonardo *et al.*, 2017). Business and Corporate Sector: Authentic leadership is associated with higher levels of organizational commitment among employees. Leaders who display authenticity create a supportive and engaging work environment (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). Education Sector: Authentic leadership in educational institutions enhances teachers' commitment. Authentic leaders' transparent and ethical behaviors contribute to a positive school culture and stronger teacher attachment (Wong & Cummings, 2009). Nonprofit and Public Sectors: Authentic leadership is linked to increased organizational commitment in nonprofit and public organizations. Leaders' sincerity and genuine interactions positively influence employee dedication (Hannah *et al.*, 2011).

Limited comparative studies exist on the organizational commitment of teachers in the public and private sectors, but some research indicates differences. The research by Bogler and Somech (2002) found that teachers in private schools tend to exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment compared to their counterparts in public schools. In a study by Ingersoll and Strong (2011), teachers in private schools reported higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment compared to public school teachers. Studies by Sweeney (2007); and Cordeiro and Eyring (2010) suggest that private schools may offer more supportive and collegial work environments, leading to higher levels of organizational commitment among teachers.

Method

This outlines the research methodology adopted to conduct a comparative study of the impact of authentic leadership on organizational commitment among public and private secondary school teachers in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) region. It discusses the research design, population and sample, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed in the study. This research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The study begins with a quantitative phase, followed by a qualitative phase, to capture both statistical trends and nuanced insights. The population of the study belongs to public and private secondary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This includes teachers across different subjects, grade levels, and administrative positions. The sample size was fixed according to the statistical significance to ascertain the reliability and validity of the findings. A larger sample size enhances the generalizability of the results to the larger population.

For the quantitative phase of the study, a survey questionnaire was distributed to 500 secondary school teachers. Out of these, 250 teachers were from public schools and 250 teachers were from private schools. This sample size was determined using appropriate statistical methods to achieve a representative and robust analysis. Qualitative Phase: For the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of participants from both public and private schools. A purposive sampling technique was used to select a smaller group of teachers (approximately 30) who represented a range of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds. These interviews provided in-depth

insights and rich qualitative data to complement the quantitative findings. A structured questionnaire was developed to assess the perceptions of teachers regarding authentic leadership and organizational commitment. The questionnaire consisted of validated scales, including the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The survey was administered electronically using online survey platforms. A subset of participants from both public and private schools were selected for semi-structured interviews. The interviews explored in-depth insights into the experiences, perceptions, and contextual factors related to authentic leadership and organizational commitment. Interviews were conducted using a pre-designed interview guide. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants, as well as their perceptions of authentic leadership and organizational commitment. Inferential statistical techniques such as t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to compare the mean scores of authentic leadership and organizational commitment between public and private school teachers. Correlation and regression analyses were also conducted to explore the relationships between authentic leadership and organizational commitment. This analysis provided a deeper understanding of how authentic leadership influences organizational commitment among public and private schoolteachers. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings through data triangulation enhanced the overall validity and reliability of the research outcomes, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon.

Results and Analysis

It presents the results of the comparative study on the impact of authentic leadership on organizational commitment among public and private secondary school teachers in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) region. The chapter begins with a presentation of the quantitative findings followed by the qualitative insights gathered through interviews. The results are then discussed in light of the research objectives and existing literature.

Quantitative Results

Table 1

Perceptions of Authentic Leadership among Public and Private School Teachers

	Public School Teachers	Private School Teachers	Total
Mean ALQ Score	3.45	3.50	3.47
Standard Deviation	0.62	0.58	0.60
t-value (Independent t-test)	0.88		
P-value(sig.)	0.380		

The quantitative analysis of the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) scores indicated that both public and private school teachers perceive a moderate level of authentic leadership behaviors in their school leadership. The mean ALQ score for public school teachers was 3.45, while for private school teachers, it was 3.50, resulting in a combined mean of 3.47. The standard deviation for both groups was 0.62 and 0.58, respectively, with an overall standard deviation of 0.60.

An independent t-test was conducted to examine whether there was a significant difference in the perceptions of authentic leadership between public and private school teachers. The t-value was calculated to be 0.88, and the associated p-value (Sig.) was 0.380. Since the p-value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, this implies no significant difference exists in the perceptions of authentic leadership among schoolteachers in the public and private sectors. These results suggest that, according to the ALQ scores, both public and private school teachers in the study perceive a similar moderate level of authentic leadership behaviors among their respective school leadership.

Table 2

Organizational Commitment Levels among Public and Private School Teachers

Commitment Dimension	Public School Teachers	Private School Teachers	Total
Affective Commitment	4.25	4.05	4.15
Normative Commitment	3.60	3.62	3.61
Continuance Commitment	3.80	3.78	3.79
ANOVA F-value	5.21*		
P-value(Sig.)	0.023		

Results from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) revealed interesting patterns in the levels of commitment among public and private school teachers. Affective commitment, which relates to emotional attachment to the organization, was found to be higher among public school teachers ($M = 4.25$) compared to private school teachers ($M = 4.05$), resulting in an overall mean affective commitment score of 4.15. On the other hand, no significant differences were observed in terms of normative commitment and continuance commitment between the two groups. The mean normative commitment scores for public and private school teachers were 3.60 and 3.62, respectively, with an overall mean of 3.61. Similarly, the mean continuance commitment scores for public and private school teachers were 3.80 and 3.78, respectively, with an overall mean of 3.79.

To further explore the differences, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The F-value for affective commitment was calculated to be 5.21 with a p-value (Sig.) of 0.023, indicating a statistically significant difference in affective commitment levels between public and private school teachers. Overall, the results suggest that public school teachers exhibit a higher level of affective commitment compared to their private school counterparts. However, no significant differences were found in terms of normative and continuance commitment between the two groups.

Table 3

Correlation Analysis for Authentic Leadership and Organizational Commitment

Variables	Affective Commitment	Normative Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Authentic Leadership (AL)	0.612**	0.529**	0.445**

Table 3 presents the results of the correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between authentic leadership (AL) and the three dimensions of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) among both public and private school teachers. The correlation coefficients indicate a positive and significant relationship between authentic leadership and all three dimensions of organizational commitment. The correlation coefficients for affective, normative, and continuance commitment are 0.612 ($p < 0.01$), 0.529 ($p < 0.01$), and 0.445 ($p < 0.01$), respectively.

Table 4*Regression Analysis for Authentic Leadership and Organizational Commitment*

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Affective Commitment	Authentic Leadership	0.487	7.32**	0.000
Normative Commitment	Authentic Leadership	0.352	5.98**	0.000

Table 4 displays the results of the regression analysis that was performed to assess the predictive power of authentic leadership on affective and normative commitment for both public and private school teachers. The beta coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between authentic leadership and each type of commitment. The regression model for affective commitment reveals that authentic leadership significantly predicts affective commitment for both public and private schoolteachers (Beta = 0.487, t-value = 7.32, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, the regression model for normative commitment demonstrates that authentic leadership significantly predicts normative commitment for both groups (Beta = 0.352, t-value = 5.98, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that authentic leadership plays a crucial role in influencing teachers' affective and normative commitment levels in both public and private secondary schools in the KP region. The positive relationship and predictive power of authentic leadership underscore its significance in fostering a strong emotional attachment to the organization and a sense of obligation and loyalty among teachers.

Qualitative Results

Interview findings highlighted that both public and private school teachers value authentic leadership behaviors such as transparency, open communication, and concern for individual growth. Teachers from both groups emphasized the importance of leaders who demonstrate integrity and ethical conduct. Qualitative data indicated that authentic leadership positively influences teachers' affective commitment by fostering a sense of trust, respect, and belonging. Teachers expressed that authentic leaders empower them and create a supportive work environment. However, public school teachers reported stronger ties to their institutions due to a sense of duty and loyalty, while private school teachers emphasized emotional attachment.

Discussion

The discussion delves into the interpretation and implications of the research findings from the comparative study on the impact of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of public and private secondary school teachers. The outcomes are discussed about existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and practical implications for educational leadership and policy. The results of this study demonstrate a positive relationship between authentic leadership and organizational commitment among both public and private secondary school teachers in KP. This finding aligns with previous research that underscores the significance of authentic leadership in fostering employee commitment (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). The study highlights that leaders who exhibit authenticity by demonstrating transparency, ethical behavior, and genuine concern for their team members create an environment that encourages emotional attachment and dedication to the organization. A noteworthy finding is the variation in affective commitment levels between public and private school teachers. Public school teachers reported a higher level of affective commitment compared to their private school counterparts. This discrepancy might be attributed to the distinct nature of the two sectors. Public school teachers may feel a stronger sense of duty and loyalty towards their institutions due to their role in the public education system, which is often seen as a service to society. Private school teachers, on the other hand, may experience a different emotional connection due to the unique working conditions and often smaller, more tightly knit environments. The study underscores the critical role of authentic leadership in shaping teachers' commitment levels. Educational leaders, both in public and private schools, should

recognize the impact of their leadership behaviors on teachers' well-being and commitment. By fostering open communication, transparency, and ethical conduct, leaders can enhance the overall organizational climate and promote a sense of trust and belonging among teachers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

The findings of this study have several implications for educational policy in the KP region. Policymakers and educational administrators should consider integrating authentic leadership development programs into leadership training for both public and private school leaders. Emphasizing authenticity, ethical behavior, and interpersonal skills can contribute to a more supportive and engaging work environment, ultimately benefiting teacher well-being and student outcomes. The study's qualitative insights shed light on the contextual factors that influence teachers' perceptions and commitment levels. It is critical to recognize that a complex interplay of societal, organizational, and cultural influences affects organizational commitment. Future research could delve deeper into the specific cultural nuances and contextual elements within the KP region that shape teachers' commitment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research conducted a comprehensive comparative study on the impact of authentic leadership on the organizational commitment of Public and Private secondary school teachers in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The study aimed to shed light on the relationship between authentic leadership and teachers' commitment within distinct educational sectors. The findings of the research demonstrated that authentic leadership plays a significant role in shaping the organizational commitment of both public and private secondary school teachers in KP. The study revealed that teachers who perceive their school leaders as authentic are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment to their respective organizations. Authentic leaders, characterized by traits such as transparency, ethical behavior, open communication, and genuine concern for their followers, create an environment that fosters trust, loyalty, and a sense of belonging among teachers. Interestingly, while the overall impact of authentic leadership on organizational commitment was evident in both public and private sectors, some nuances emerged. Private school teachers appeared to place a slightly greater emphasis on the leader-follower relationship, valuing authentic leadership attributes more prominently in their commitment levels. On the other hand, public school teachers also valued authentic leadership, but factors such as job security and external influences seemed to play a more substantial role in their commitment. These findings emphasize the importance of cultivating authentic leadership behaviors within educational institutions, as they positively influence teachers' commitment and, subsequently, the overall effectiveness of the schools. The research suggests that both public and private schools in KP can benefit from adopting and nurturing authentic leadership practices, albeit with some tailored strategies to address the varying needs and priorities of teachers in each sector. In light of these conclusions, it is recommended that educational policymakers, school administrators, and leadership development programs in KP consider integrating authentic leadership training as a means to enhance teachers' commitment and improve the educational landscape. Further research could delve into specific strategies and interventions that could amplify the impact of authentic leadership on organizational commitment, taking into account the unique challenges and dynamics present among secondary school teachers in the public and private sectors.

Deceleration of Interest

The authors declare that there was no clash of interest.

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