



## Exploring the Influence of a Principal's Internalized Moral Perspective towards Teacher Commitment in Malaysian Secondary Schools

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### Abstract

Authentic leadership principals are an alternative to leadership styles within an organisation intended to create more effective administration in maintaining the trust of subordinates, meeting job expectations, and being able to implement change despite facing challenges. However, authentic leadership capabilities of school-style leadership adaptations are still relatively new and unfamiliar. This study aimed to identify the authentic leadership practices applied by school principals and their relationship to the commitment of national secondary school teachers in the district of Pendang in a northern state of Peninsular Malaysia. The research method used was a quantitative survey using a standardised questionnaire. The study respondents consisted of 254 teachers randomly selected from ten national secondary schools under the leadership of principals. The instrument used was adapted from the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ -version 1) to measure the dimensions of authentic leadership. Furthermore, the questionnaire of organizational commitment was used to measure the level of teachers' commitment to the organisation. Data processing was performed using SEM-PLS 3.0. Results showed that the internalised moral perspective dimension of authentic leadership significantly influenced teacher commitment. The leaders with these attributes should combine their principles and behaviours in keeping with internal moral standards. This approach should affect the attitudes of teachers and create a changing environment.

**Keywords:** Authentic leadership, Educational administration, Teacher commitment, Secondary school teacher, Secondary school principals, Internalized moral perspective, Moral education.

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### Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study aimed to identify the authentic leadership practices applied by school principals and their relationship to the commitment of national secondary school teachers in the district of Pendang in a northern state of Peninsular Malaysia.

## 1. Introduction

Malaysia's Ministry of Education initiated the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013-2025 in an attempt to strengthen the education sector in Malaysia (Ministry of Education, 2013). These improvements are expected to boost student achievement while also improving educational performance in schools. School leadership acts as a high impact controller and can organize and mobilize the advancement of school community activities and improve the quality of learning and teaching. Society has started to examine and assess the potential of effective school leadership. In fact, many are still looking for the best ways to become more efficient leaders. A leader is the inspiration, strength, architect, catalyst, and hero of his employees (Nurlaili & Mohd, 2019). Meanwhile, the teaching profession has been considered as a highly stressful job (Prasojo et al., 2020). Society believes that excellent leadership is a way to improve the school education system because society will value what leaders present. However, given the fact that leadership is one of the information areas that is also a core component in organizational literature research, much remains to be known about the impact of leadership on organizational success (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Mohd et al. (2020) also demonstrate that leadership is a significant process, working together with their team, and setting goals as a unit. The role of school administrators is, therefore, essential to ensure that the process meets the objectives and achieves the necessary respect, while rebuilding the potential of teachers and, as a result, making students' learning in the classroom and in school more valuable.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Authentic Leadership

In this respect, the leadership of an educational organization must have significant, exceptional support from selected participants. Leaders will maintain the trust of subordinates as long as they are transparent, predictable, have clear morals, remain flexible, are willing to compromise, meet job requirements and expectations, and remain loyal to the group rather than having a personal agenda (Legutko, 2020). Educational, organisational leaders are individuals who can bring about change in the face of challenges, competition, and conflict. The leadership of any organization must be credible in order to be more competitive and efficient in the long run (Tessema, 2020). Likewise, authentic leaders often show a high degree of honesty and have reason and dedication in their core values. Such members will establish an educational organization in a way which fulfils the needs of students, teachers, and other stakeholders. Subsequently, it is also important for leaders to have analytical intensity and clarity of thought to create perspectives and be able to set specific goals, strategies, and priorities (Makhmoor, 2018). In due respect, authentic leadership is a leadership model based not only on positive psychological capacities and an ethical climate, but also on strengthening them (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson (2008). Moreover, Luthans and Avolio (2003) describe authentic leadership as a process which draws from both the positive psychological capacities of a leader and from a highly developed organizational background. These result in self-awareness as well as self-regulated, positive behaviours on the part of both leader and followers, while fostering positive self-development. In addition, Luthans and Avolio (2003) state that the attributes of a true leader are being calm, ambitious, positive, flexible, humane, progressive, and someone who emphasizes the growth of their followers' leadership. Thus, authentic leaders are motivated by strong spiritual principles and behave in line with their strongly held beliefs, even under pressure; they are strongly mindful of their opinions, capabilities, and shortcomings, and try to consider how their leadership influences others (Aria, Jafari, & Behifar, 2019). Moreover, Avolio et al. (2009) have found authentic leadership to be essential in addressing ethical challenges and building a healthy environmental climate. Authenticity is, therefore, the foundation of honest leadership. In their first effort to describe leadership credibility, Henderson and Hoy (1983) pointed to employees' understanding of the level of cohesion between expression and the actions of leaders. Leaders need to see leadership as a responsibility and a trust rather than a privilege to be in the highest position of the organization. The position of educational leaders will put greater focus on attempts to form human nature and offer proof that the consistency of the working atmosphere generated by leaders plays a significant role in the degree to which workers build stronger interpersonal relations at work (Semedo, Coelho, & Ribeiro, 2019). According to Walumbwa et al. (2008), there are four dimensions of authentic leadership, namely, 1) self-awareness, 2) balanced process, 3) internalized moral perspective, and 4) relational transparency. These are described in Table 1.

Furthermore, authentic leadership has been described as having a positive effect on employee efficiency, worker satisfaction, confidence and cooperation with managers, corporate citizenship, organizational engagement, psychological energy, community loyalty, work environment, and financial success (Agwu & Agunwa, 2019; Erlangga, 2019; Gardner, Coglisier, Davis, & Dickens, 2011; Hadebe & Khumalo, 2018). Additionally, Duignan (2014); Kulophas and Hallinger (2019) conclude that in educational organizations substantial evidence confirms the arguments that credible education leaders use the combined constructive energy of core education partners to create a diverse, stimulating, and successful learning environment to deliver high-quality outcomes for students.

### 2.2. Commitment

Commitment usually refers to the degree of commitment or participation of an individual in an organization. It is the result of which the objectives and values of the organization are internalized and great efforts are made to achieve this goal (Yukl, 2006). The concept of dedication has been articulated by various scholars. Among them is a study conducted by Guzley, Araki, and Chalmers (1998) which describes the commitments that involve four elements: a) dedication that reflects one's allegiance and perseverance in terms of objectives for communities and organizations, b) obligation is a responsibility shared by a community or individual c) dignity is the pride in good values such as fairness, fidelity, and trust, and d) willfulness, such as self-sacrifice. In parallel, the engagement of

teachers can be defined in a number of ways in which teachers see, perceive, and conceptualize it as a psychological framework (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004). The commitment of teachers can be divided into three specific groups as follows. The first is the commitment to an organizational environment that reflects trust and recognition of corporate goals and principles, as well as the readiness to pursue operational activities and a desire to stay within the company (Mowday, Porter, & Steer, 1982). The second, contribution to the teaching profession is the degree to which a person's good outlook functions (Lee, 2019). The third form of dedication is the devotion of students to concentrate on the degree to which teachers are committed to student learning and growth (Gatling, Annete, Jungsun, & Kim, 2016).

**Table-1. The four dimensions of authentic leadership.**

The four dimensions of authentic leadership	
1) <b>Self-awareness</b>	
2)	Self-awareness refers to the awareness of members about their shortcomings and abilities, and their impact on circumstances and individuals (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Self-aware members pursue self-development and ongoing improvement through self-assessment (Glowacki-Dudka & Griswold, 2016). It concerns the understanding of one's personal strengths and weaknesses, and the attention of the leader to his / her impact on others.
3) <b>Relational transparency</b>	
	Relational transparency ensures that members are truthful and frank about their contact and relations with others (Kernis, 2003; Northouse, 2013), and communicate themselves by the exchange of open knowledge about their opinions, emotions, and feelings (Walumbwa et al., 2008). It is also related to presenting one's true self to others, helping to build trust and cooperation, and encouraging teamwork between colleagues (Iqbal et al., 2020). In addition, it means maintaining the authenticity of interpersonal interactions, recognizing errors and maintaining open, transparent communication with others.
4) <b>Balanced processing</b>	
	Balanced processing refers to the collection of information and impartial review of all pertinent evidence before any decision is made. Leaders who take advantage of this behaviour tend to place more emphasis on internal knowledge and externally generated information (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). On the other hand, it also demonstrates how the leader acknowledges a wide variety of stakeholder opinions when making decisions by using both factual and subjective knowledge.
5) <b>Internalized moral perspective</b>	
	Internalized moral perspective refers to a leader who retains coherence between expressed core principles and judgments and demonstrates justice and a strong level of professional practice. It also notes that the leader is motivated by internal ethical values and uses them to self-regulate his or her actions. A leader with these characteristics will integrate his or her values and actions in accordance with internal moral values (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

According to Moses, Admiraal, Berry, and Saab (2019), commitment is seen to have a positive impact on organizations where teachers are willing to sacrifice to achieve organizational goals, such as in schools. Moreover, Abasilim, Gberevbie, and Osibanjo (2019) define organizational commitment as employee behaviour in order for the organization to be able to spend time on organizational matters, to build good relations with colleagues, and to have passion for hard work. Additionally, Batugal (2019) points out that commitment is demonstrated by referring to the hard work of lecturers at a higher education institution in St. Thomas, The University of Paul, Philippines. On the other hand, Jawaad, Amir, Bashir, and Hasan (2019) suggest that emotional satisfaction in working relationships, as well as employee engagement with the company, represent dedication. Moreover, Allen and Meyer (2000) distinguish three different forms of commitment, consistency, normative, and effective. Individuals with an ongoing commitment are mindful of the risks of quitting, and thus seek to retain employment, those with a normative commitment have the responsibility to continue as they should, and those with an effective organizational commitment become emotionally committed to their company and remain so as they wish to live. The level of commitment felt by workers determines the degree and nature of their contribution to the overall success of the organization. Committed workers wish to be more important than those who simply need or feel compelled to do so Meyer and Allen (1997). Empirical findings have demonstrated that the effective occupational engagement of workers is strongly related to favourable organizational effects, such as decreased attrition (Meyer., Allen, & Smith, 1993), citizenship (Shore & Wayne, 1993), level of service (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004), and efficiency (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989). In addition, reliability and ethical engagement are either irrelevant or negatively associated with success scores (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; Meyer. et al., 1993). Klein, Molloy, and Brinsfield (2012) thus remove the acquiescent or authoritative affiliation of workers of an institution and redefine the relationship as an innately effective bond that is defined by volition, loyalty, and obligation.

### 2.3. Research problem

According to a local newspaper article dated 2 October 2018, a principal of a high school in Pendang was brought to court for a misdemeanour charge of RM23,763 for school repair programs (Suzalina, 2018). This problem is not rare; just this year, a Sabah High School Principal was prosecuted for engaging in sexually suggestive texts to his students (Fardy Bungga, 2019). These concerns are examples of school leaders who have

abused their power and position as the head of the organization, and this scenario has tarnished the reputation and integrity of the school and, at the same time, delivered a significant blow to the field of education (Mohamad, 2013). This scenario shows that, given the strength and position he or she occupies, the duties and obligations of the principal cannot be overlooked today. Leaders must also show honesty, core principles, and the desire to build core organizations through subordinate inspiration (Siti & Al Amin, 2019). This shows that, in addition to having teaching skills that can act as an indicator of teacher follow-up and recommendation, they must also be able to understand changes in education; skills in adapting to relevant and acceptable leadership styles in various contexts. This result supports the opinion of Avolio et al. (2009), that trustworthy leaders have an appreciation for diversity and empathy for followers that have a positive effect on employee engagement, productivity, and organizational resolution. Being a true leader is not something you can articulate yourself; it is something that takes commitment and hard work to develop. Authentic leaders have a strong desire to serve and empower others to substitute their desire for power, money, or prestige (Lee, 2019).

While there is increasing interest in the field of leading which prominent leadership scholars such as Avolio and Gardner have continuously studied, academics are also aware of credible leadership approaches that are not only important to today's organization, but that can generate exciting results in the future (Liu & Zhang, 2019). The former Prime Minister's Townhall Session, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and the Administrative and Diplomatic Officers (PTD) entitled Way Forward: The Rise of Credible Leadership jointly arranged by the Association for Administrative and Diplomatic Services and the Centre for Public Administration Nation (INTAN) was held on 31 August 2018. According to Tun Dr Mahathir, authentic leadership is a leadership approach that stresses the authority of leaders through truthful and ethical partnerships with followers (Mohd, 2018). Anyone with genuine leadership also has habits that encourage people to believe in them all the time. According to studies by Siti and Al Amin (2019), honest leadership is deemed important in the current educational scenario to help resolve key social issues. However, the degree to which genuine school leadership in the Pendang district meets these needs has to be objectively investigated to ensure that the school achieves both its mission and vision.

Moreover, Kulophas and Hallinger (2019) show that education organizational engagement can be a primary determinant of school productivity, climate, and success. Riketta (2002) observed that devoted instructors are committed to helping students learn, irrespective of academic or social context. They also discovered that when an individual is actively involved, it can be impossible for them to give up their principles in the organization. Studies have found that dedicated workers contribute to healthy output and efficiency (Batugal, 2019). Nevertheless, owing to the poor skills of executive management, most workers neglect their emotions, passion, dedication, and participation in their jobs, and this has influenced their organizational success (Sakic, Hadziahmetovic, & Tandir, 2019). This topic of engagement is also important to research, as past studies indicate that credible leadership strategies are recognized as core determinants of the progress and growth of workers and their overall organization (Mohamad, 2013). Semedo et al. (2019) reinforce this outlook, stating that while workers seek fair care from real officials, they also become more emotionally involved. In fact, commitment is perceived to be a core factor of the teaching profession and may alleviate the harsh circumstances in our country's education system. This is closely related to a teacher's success and reduces absenteeism, burnout, and attrition in the school sector (Moshahid & Ashraf, 2019). This core factor is also responsible for the academic and student successes of the school. The benchmark for determining the standard of teaching is measured not only by the expertise and abilities or competencies of teachers, but also by the integrity and level of dedication to teaching (Jawaad et al., 2019). The professional commitment and academic involvement of teachers are key factors in the success of any education system. According to a report by Anis, Syamsul, and Muzakki (2019), the level of professional engagement of teachers is a very significant feature of the progress of the present educational scenario, as it increases the ability of teachers to participate well in teaching practice. It indicates that observing the professional engagement of teachers and the power of genuine leadership are prerequisites for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the education system. Authentic leadership has had the strong effect of desirable organizational effects, but questions exist as to whether the system would have similar beneficial implications (Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016).

#### **2.4. Objective of the study**

The aim of this study is to examine how a principal's authentic leadership (self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral perspective) influences the commitment of teachers, particularly secondary school teachers in Pendang, North Malaysia.

#### **2.5. Research hypotheses**

*Ho1: There is no significant influence between self-awareness and teacher commitment.*

*Ho2: There is no significant influence between relational transparency and teacher commitment.*

*Ho3: There is no significant influence between balanced processing and teacher commitment.*

*Ho4: There is no significant influence between internalized moral perspective and teacher commitment.*

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Population and Sampling**

The sample population consists of 254 teachers randomly selected from ten secondary schools in the Pendang district. There are also ten regional high schools in the Pendang district. As a result, this group of teachers also addressed questions that revealed the degree to which a principal's genuine leadership and devotion to teaching at the regional high schools were displayed.

#### **3.2. Instrument**

The questionnaire comprises of three parts. Part A has 15 questions that measure teaching commitment, part B consists of 16 items that measure the principal's authentic leadership, and lastly, part C (teacher demographics) has five items that measure personal knowledge of the teachers.

### 3.2.1. Teacher Commitment

The calculation of each of these elements was used from the original instrument developed by Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1979), namely The Calculation of Organizational Engagement translated into the Malay language. It has 15 items which cover questions about the commitment of teachers to the organization. There are six negative items that allow the researchers to conduct the re-code process in the IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 for Windows to fit the values of the other objects. The findings of the median analysis of the reliability index of Alpha Cronbach for the Abasilim et al. (2019) teacher commitment questionnaire was 0.90 where the alpha coefficient values were very high, between 0.82 and 0.93. As such, this tool is the researchers' preference and has been used by previous researchers such as Akinwale and Okotoni (2019) and Anis et al. (2019) to investigate the dedication of teachers to their institution.

### 3.2.2. The Authentic Leadership Model Instrument

The key leadership style questionnaire consists of an authentic leadership questionnaire from the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ-version 1), an original instrument developed by Avolio, Gardner, and Walumbwa (2007) and adapted by Bento and Ribeiro (2013). Authentic leadership, according to the researchers, is characterized by four dimensions, namely transparency of communication, appreciation of moral values, the balance of information processing, and self-awareness. The four parts of the study consist of five items for openness arrangement, four items for spiritual principles, three items for balance of information gathering, and four items for self-awareness. The questions in this section are calculated using the Likert Scale which is "strongly oppose" (1), "oppose" (2), "strongly accept" (3), "accept" (4), and "strongly agree" (5). The median study of the Alpha Cronbach reliability index for the Bento and Ribeiro (2013) studies was 0.966, where the alpha coefficient was very high, between 0.855 and 0.944. The internal accuracy and standard deviations of each leadership methodology show the degree of reliability and integrity of the evidence that can be used in this analysis.

### 3.3. Pilot Study

A pilot test was performed to resolve potential confusion over meanings of the question, as this questionnaire focused heavily on western questionnaires; also to assess the reliability of the instrument. In addition, the researchers used translation by way of equalization or logical matching (Arizah, 2013). A pilot study was performed on 30 teachers from Sultan Abdul Hamid College, Kedah, consisting of randomly chosen male and female secondary school students. This is because it is the closest national high school, and it has a comparable setting. The pilot study respondents consisted of teachers from national secondary schools who did not participate in the actual study. The completed questionnaires were evaluated using SPSS v.25 to extract accurate index values. The Alpha Cronbach technique was used in this study to test reliability. In evaluating its validity, the rule proposed by Nunnally (1967) applied that the alpha for each dimension should be between 0.70 and 0.90.

### 3.4. Procedure

Prior to data collection and project recording, the first step taken by the researchers was to seek permission from Awang Had Salleh Graduate School (AHSGS), University Utara Malaysia. The next move was to obtain permission from the Planning and Policy Department at the Ministry of Education of Malaysia for further research permission at URL: <https://eras.moe.gov.my/>.

After obtaining the Ministry of Education approval, which is considered as the ethical committee of research for Malaysian schools, a written request was made to the State Education Department of Kedah and Pendang District Education Office. Subsequently, the researchers approached and reminded the principals of the selected national high schools of the study to arrange the distribution of the questionnaires. The set of 306 questionnaires was printed and circulated to designated schools. In order to promote the process of administering the questionnaire, the researchers sought assistance from the senior assistants, or the school administration assistants involved in administering the questionnaires to the respondents (teachers). To facilitate this, a letter of approval from the Policy Planning and Analysis Department was requested. Upon approval, the questionnaires were distributed. The researchers had to notify all respondents of the answering process, timetable, and return date for the questionnaire. Subsequently, the data were recorded in SPSS v.25 in stages, and the results were obtained from the analysis. Finally, the findings of the study were written in the form of project reports.

Table-2. Cronbach Alpha of the instrument.

Bil	Instrument	Cronbach Alpha
1	Authentic leadership	0.86
	Relationship	0.73
	Moral	0.80
	Balance	0.68
	Self-awareness	0.83
2	Teacher commitment	0.82

Table-3. Reliability.

Reliability	Level
0.90 or Greater	Excellent
0.80 – 0.89	Good
0.60 – 0.79	Moderate
0.40 – 0.59	Half-moderate
0.00 – 0.39	Reject

Table 3 above demonstrates the efficiency of the principal's genuine instrument of leadership, together with the willingness of the researchers to perform the pilot test. Ultimately, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient from Table 2 for the 16-item authentic guidance instrument was good at Alpha Cronbach = 0.86. The measure of effectiveness for each aspect of honest leadership were contact consistency = 0.92, respect of human values = 0.82, knowledge management efficiency = 0.81, and self-awareness = 0.84. For the teacher dedication satisfaction instrument with 15 items, the reading standard was Alpha Cronbach = 0.82. According to Cronbach (1951), the alpha coefficient is very high, while the reliability factor is between 0.82 and 0.93. This is endorsed by Fauzi, Jamal, and Mohd (2014), who argues that a healthy alpha coefficient should surpass 0.8. The reliability index values for items in both independent variables and the pilot study were good. This questionnaire is also appropriate and should be used in this analysis.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Demographic

Table-4. Demographic.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	112	44.1
Female	142	55.9
Total	254	100.0

Table 4 shows that out of the 254 questionnaires collected, 112, or 44.1%, were from male respondents, while the remaining 142, or 55.9%, were from female respondents.

### 4.2. Measurement model

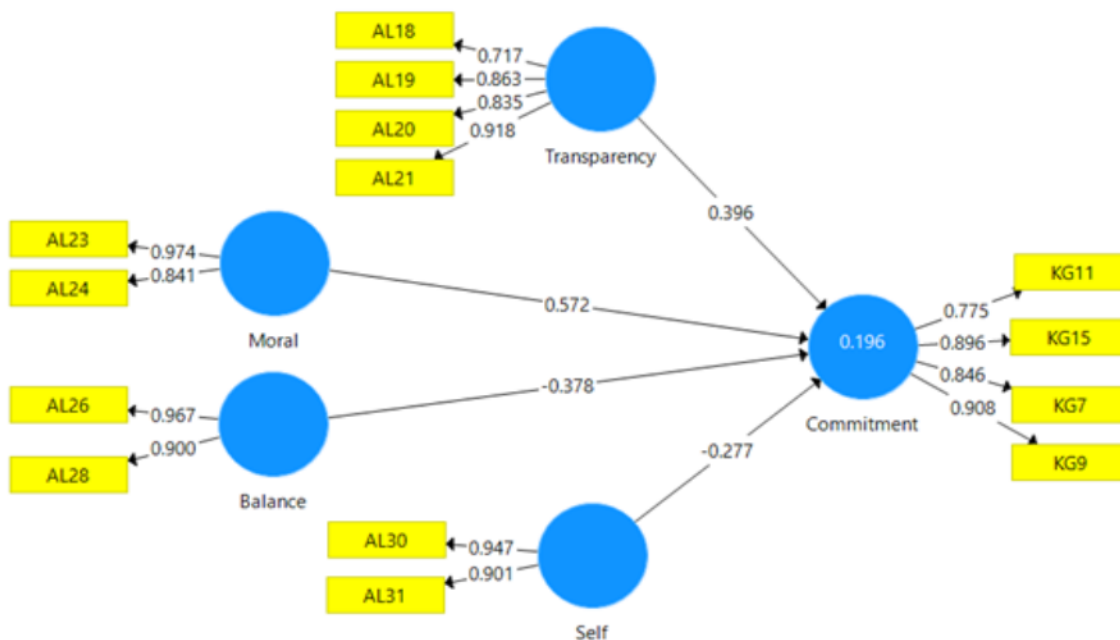


Figure-1. Measurement model.

The four dimensions of Authentic Leadership were assessed, as shown in Figure 1, on the basis of the measurement model, i.e. internal consistency, convergence validity, reliability of indicators based on external loading values, and discriminant validity.

### 4.3. Internal consistency

Table-5. Internal consistency.

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
Balance	0.863
Commitment	0.889
Moral	0.821
Self	0.833
Transparency	0.881

Table 6 shows the constructs, outer loading, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The value of the outer loading of all items was between 0.706 and 0.843. Next, the composite reliability for each construct in the HOTS teaching and learning and teacher competencies model were as follows: assessment (0.898), implementation (0.887), student (0.884), technique (0.843), and teaching competencies (0.97) which were found to be above 0.7; AVE was reported greater than 0.5. Therefore, this indicates the model of this study achieved the required internal consistency (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017).

**Table-6. Constructs, outer loading, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE).**

Constructs	Items	Loading	CR	AVE
Transparency	AL18	0.717	0.902	0.7
	AL19	0.863		
	AL20	0.835		
	AL21	0.918		
Moral	AL23	0.974	0.905	0.828
	AL24	0.841		
Balance	AL26	0.967	0.932	0.873
	AL28	0.9		
Self	AL30	0.947	0.921	
	AL31	0.901		
	KG11	0.775		
Commitment	KG15	0.896	0.917	0.736
	KG7	0.846		
	KG9	0.908		

**4.4. Discriminant validity**

Table 7 of the Fornell-Larcker criterion indicates that the value of the AVE square root in the first-order construct is higher than the value of all the constructs below it. The AVE square root value refers to the highlighted value, while the unhighlighted value refers to the correlation value in the construct. The cause of the AVE squares is higher than the value of the correlation between the constructs. This shows that the discriminatory validity of the first order construct was achieved in this study on the basis of the Fornell-Larcker criteria (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table-7. Discriminant validity.**

Constructs	Balance	Commitment	Moral	Self	Transparency
Balance	0.934				
Commitment	0.169	0.858			
Moral	0.679	0.375	0.91		
Self	0.573	0.219	0.734	0.924	
Transparency	0.803	0.267	0.662	0.738	0.837

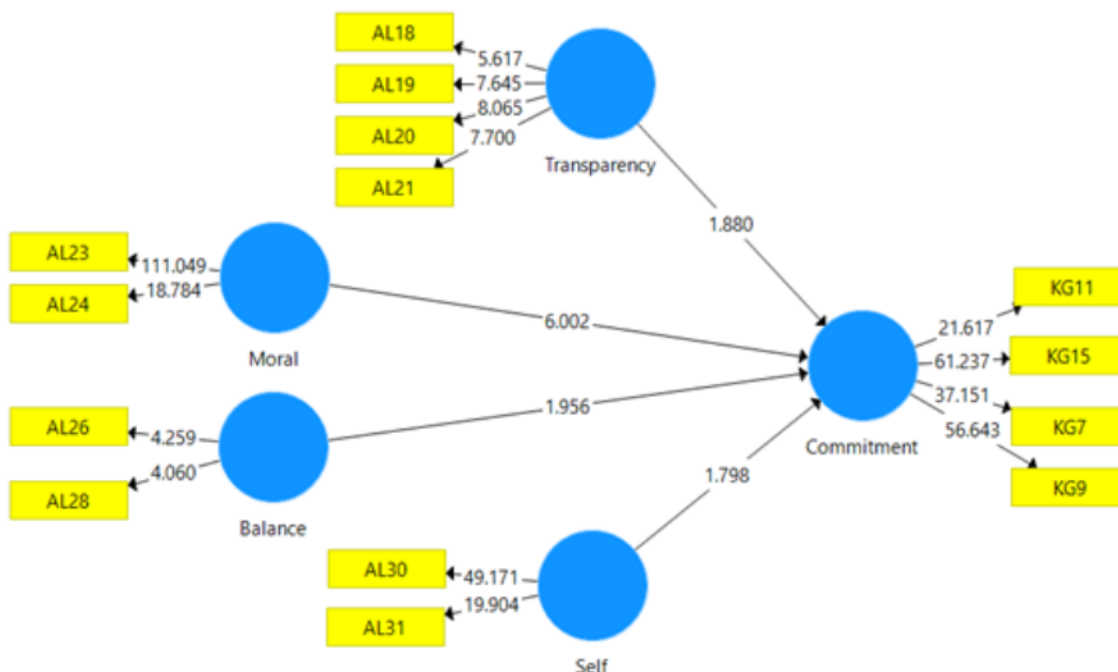
**Table-8. Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT).**

Constructs	Balance	Commitment_	Moral	Self_	Transparency
Balance					
Commitment_	0.234				
Moral	0.837	0.34			
Self_	0.684	0.224	0.899		
Transparency	0.916	0.268	0.913	0.913	

The results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Criteria (HTMT) are shown in Table 8. The total value of the correlation between each construct is less than 1.00, and this shows that all constructions differ from each other (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013).

**4.5. Structural model**

The structural model analysis shows that it meets the measurement model assessment criteria using the Smart-PLS 3.0 software analysis procedure, as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure-2. Structural model.**

Table-9. Relationship.

Relationship	t-value	P Values	Result
Balance -> Commitment_	1.956	0.051	Not significant
Moral -> Commitment_	6.002	0.000	Significant
Self -> Commitment_	1.798	0.073	Not significant
Transparency -> Commitment_	1.88	0.061	Not significant

There was significant influence between the moral construct to commitment construct,  $p < 0.05$ , and  $T (6.002)$  or  $> 1.96$  (Imam & Hengky, 2015) as displayed in Table 9. The results of the other constructs were not significant as follows: balance to commitment,  $p > 0.05$ , and  $T (0.051)$  or  $< 1.96$ ; self to commitment,  $p > 0.05$ , and  $T (1.789)$  or  $< 1.96$  and transparency to commitment  $p > 0.05$ , and  $T (1.88)$  or  $< 1.96$ .

## 5. Discussion

The results of the SEM-PLS 3.0 analysis show that only the internalized moral perspectives significantly affect the commitment of teachers, while the other three aspects of effective leadership (self-awareness, healthy communication, and partnership transparency) are not significant. The results of this research are consistent with the findings of the Sakic et al. (2019) report, which shows that there is a substantial effect of genuine leadership aspects, specifically personal openness and respect of moral standards, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, honest leaders are said to improve internal morale, staff engagement, and work satisfaction within the company (Miniotaite & Buciumiene, 2013). The results specifically indicate that school principals in the Pendang district have strong moral standards. An internalized moral perspective refers to a leader who maintains consistency between their core principles and the judgments they express and demonstrate justice and a strong level of professional practice. It also states that a leader is motivated by internal ethical principles and uses them to self-regulate his actions. The person with these characteristics shall combine his principles and behaviour in line with internal moral standards (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Regarding ethical choices and acts, and the enhancement of human partnerships, trustworthy leaders increase intrinsic engagement, encourage individuals to display greater flexibility in the face of obstacles and difficulties, become more optimistic about the future, focus on achieving their roles and corporate goals, and could be more likely to remain. Interestingly, authentic leadership has also been found to predict work happiness, which in turn explains the emotional bond of employees to the organization. Such findings offer evidence that the nature of a working atmosphere generated by leaders plays a significant role in the degree to which workers build stronger social connections at work (Semedo et al., 2019).

According to Aria et al. (2019), authentic leadership also contributes to the teaching of teachers. It is recommended that principals take appropriate steps to ensure continuous self-regulation. Self-development is portrayed as internalizing the values and features of authentic leadership through regular self-discovery and self-monitoring, identifying weaknesses and strengths, and applying non-stop and continuous feedback; also demonstrating an internal commitment to externalize and display these features in their leadership process. In particular, it serves as a role model by displaying optimistic characteristics in the relationship with subordinates, turning individual identities into a coordinated group one, and by providing a welcoming atmosphere increasing worker expectations of corporate support, and encouraging them to improve their psychological capacity and, eventually, enhancing their willingness to stay. Authentic leadership also applies to classroom teachers. This means that teachers act as strong professionals with more authentic leadership while performing their duties and responsibilities in the classroom. Conclusively, the trend of exhibited leadership actions encourages both positive psychological capability and a positive ethical environment, while also promoting healthy self-development. Teachers in the classroom are real, mission-driven, and results-oriented, lead with their cores, not just their brains, and focus on long-term goals (Arceño, Ag, & Adamu, 2019).

According to Mat and Abdullah (2016), teachers need to be kind to each other, cautious, tutors, mentors, planners, executors, and leaders who are committed, energetic, and effective in carrying out their assigned tasks. In addition, the philosophy of strong moral values should be maintained because it is seen to be effective in strengthening the continuing dedication of teachers to work. With the implementation of good ethical and moral standards, teachers will, in turn, be more accountable in their jobs. Moreover, they will be building a high-performance organizational environment to ensure that the efficiency of the schooling institution is at the optimum level along with the overall organizational success of not only the Malaysian Ministry of Education Department but also at the global level. The commitment of school principals can contribute not only to academic achievement but also to a holistic success in fulfilling the mission and vision of the Ministry of Education. The increase of commitment level among teachers is due to their open-mindedness and understanding of leadership organizations. However, this initiative would not be feasible if the principal, as a school leader, could not use honest leadership to build a positive working atmosphere and support teachers in schools, particularly in high schools. This means that the commitment of the teachers depends on the authentic leadership of the school principals in the Pendang District secondary schools. The Kedah Department of Education, therefore, needs to delve deeper into other factors in determining the success and excellence of secondary schools globally, as this study shows that genuine leadership and good teaching commitments of the principals are key contributors. The findings of this study may have consequences for the administration and officials of the State Department of Education to the degree of engagement of teachers and the essence of genuine leadership.

However, the findings of this study differ from the study by Banks et al. (2016), which found that all dimensions of authentic leadership (relative transparency, moral values, the balance of information processing, and self-awareness) have a strong influence on a robust commitment to work. In order to ensure a high degree of commitment, principals are people who play an essential role in accordance with the genuine characteristics of leadership that affect the positive attitudes and actions of workers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). This is because there is a lack of widespread exposure of principals and teachers to aspects of authentic leadership that can be practised aiding in the development of schools where most schools are still overshadowed by educational or transformational leadership patterns. The results of a study by Suhailee (2019) show that transformational leadership styles are most practised in private higher education centres. Meanwhile, the results of a study carried out Mee and Tan (2019)



with secondary school teachers in the Seberang Perai Utara and Seberang Perai Tengah districts of Penang indicate that distributive leadership has a positive impact on teachers' contribution to reform in schools. The style of leadership is important, but it is more significant that principals use a style of leadership that will influence the mindset of teachers and students to build a positive atmosphere. According to Kulophas and Hallinger (2019), a principal who models behaviours relevant to the actual leadership aspects will influence teacher attitudes and build an environment conducive to change. The research stresses the importance of ideals as a central foundation for the development of transitional leadership. The results from this contextualized overview of credible school leadership in Malaysia will help to create a broader base of expertise in educational leadership.

### 5.1. Limitation of the study

We also urge researchers to use experimental and quasi-experimental methods to deepen our knowledge of the authentic leadership system. These designs will allow the causal results of authentic leadership and its context and implications to be better isolated. In addition, alternatives to the accurate leadership metric proposed in this article should be created, as it gives only a narrow view of the system. In order to validate the findings obtained using survey tests, prospective work will use other approaches to determine credible leadership including observation techniques and the labelling of material for interviews, letters, situations, videotapes, and others. It will also be beneficial to implement fewer arbitrary human success metrics based on the effects of competently conducted research. These success metrics can provide a range of results to consider the low order impacts of genuine leadership together with higher-order consequences for transformational and ethical leadership.

Future work will also involve exploring how honest leadership influences the success of the boss, unit, or organization. The study suggests that scholars conduct additional mixed methodology studies that concentrate on the connection between true leadership and meaningful educational change from a Malaysian perspective as well as other social contexts. Qualitative data are required to gain insight into the essence of contextualized, relational approaches that are implicit in authentic leadership. We also recommend that researchers use a broader variety of sampling techniques in this area. For example, it would be useful to research mixed methods of honest leadership in schools which cannot accomplish social improvement goals. This form of work will include valuable, in-depth explanations of how relationship models, such as true leadership, are created.

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