



Asian Journal of Management and Commerce

E-ISSN: 2708-4523

P-ISSN: 2708-4515

AJMC 2024; 5(1): 181-193

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www.allcommercejournal.com

Received: 13-11-2023

Accepted: 21-12-2023

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The role of leadership virtuousness in reducing counterproductive work behaviors: An analytical study of the opinions of a sample of employees in Salah Al-Din general directorate of education

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Abstract

The primary objective of the present study was to ascertain the significance of leadership virtuousness in mitigating counterproductive behaviours inside the Salah Al-Din General Directorate of Education. To attain this purpose and get more precise and unbiased outcomes, the descriptive analytical methodology was employed, with the questionnaire serving as the primary instrument for data gathering. Consequently, a total of 217 questionnaire forms were disseminated among the study participants, and subsequently, all forms were collected and subjected to statistical analysis. The research revealed that the characteristics of leadership virtuousness, including optimism, trust, tolerance, empathy, and virtuousness, had a detrimental impact on counterproductive behaviours inside the examined organization. This finding suggests that the presence of leadership virtuousness, encompassing its five dimensions, inside the examined organization will have a significant impact on mitigating unproductive work behaviours within said organization.

Keywords: Leadership virtuousness, counterproductive work behaviors, Salah al-Din general directorate of education

Introduction

The contemporary business organizations of all types, sizes and shapes are full of many ethical dilemmas, requiring the business communities to emphasize ethics and highlight the importance of the virtues of leadership virtuousness in those organizations. This is attributed to the important role of leadership virtuousness in improving organizational health, enhancing the state of satisfaction among employees and encouraging positive behaviors. However, the lack of virtuousness makes employees feel unsatisfied, lack of confidence in their leadership, unfair treatment and lack of care and support. This provokes employees to adopt counterproductive behaviors with devastating effects. These effects threaten the well-being of organizations and employees, violate the organizational standards and reduce the level of efficiency and organizational performance. Therefore, this study completes the research efforts made by researchers in this field through studying the role of leadership virtuousness in reducing counterproductive work behaviors. It is applied to Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education as field for study. The present study is structured into five distinct components. The initial segment of the paper outlines the study methodology, whilst the subsequent sections delve into the theoretical frameworks pertaining to the factors of leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviours. The fourth component of the study elucidates the practical framework, while the fifth section provides conclusions and recommendations.

Section One: Research Method

Research Problem

Many administrative leaders describe counterproductive work behaviors as a terminal illness that affects the social consistency in business organizations and greatly damages the employees and the organization as a whole. Therefore, the emergence and spread of these behaviors in the workplace is one of the most serious problems faced by organizations at the present time. The studies of Chinwuba (2023: 2) ^[10] and Baharom *et al.* (2017: 2) ^[7] prove that (75%) of employees may engage in one or more counterproductive behaviors, such as verbal abuse, bullying, deliberately late for work, waste of resources, low productivity, and

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disclosure of important trade secrets to competing organizations. These behaviors often occur in the public sector and cost organizations an estimated annual loss of about 300 billion dollars. Therefore, controlling these behaviors and limiting their spread is critical to the survival and prosperity of the organization. Since the leadership may negatively or positively affect the feelings of employees, the leadership virtuousness is an effective treatment for this illness. This is achieved through its ability to absorb the negative reactions of employees, enhance positive psychological capabilities, increase consistency in social relations, raise the level of trust between employees and their administrative leadership, and improve their job satisfaction. Based on the above, the problem of this study is shown in the following question:

What is the level of effect of leadership virtuousness on reducing counterproductive work behaviors?

Research Objectives

This study aims at

- a) Investigating the relationship between research variables, namely, leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviors, as well as defining the nature of this relationship.
- b) Presenting a comprehensive theoretical framework including the most important cognitive contributions

- related to the research variables.
- c) Providing conclusions and suggestions in light of the results to be attained in this study.

Research Significance

The importance of this study stems from the following

- a) Dealing with relatively recent topics in the field of management and organizational behavior, which have a significant effect on the performance of organizations of all types and sizes.
- b) Being applied to an important field, which is Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education, representing an important directorate in Salah al-Din Governorate, as it provides services to a wide range of students and educational institutions.
- c) Proposing several present and prospective remedies for the issues faced by the organization being examined, particularly in relation to the widespread occurrence of unproductive work behaviours.

Theoretical framework

Given the research topic and aims, the theoretical framework has been developed to elucidate the correlation and impact among the primary and secondary variables of the study, as depicted in the accompanying diagram.

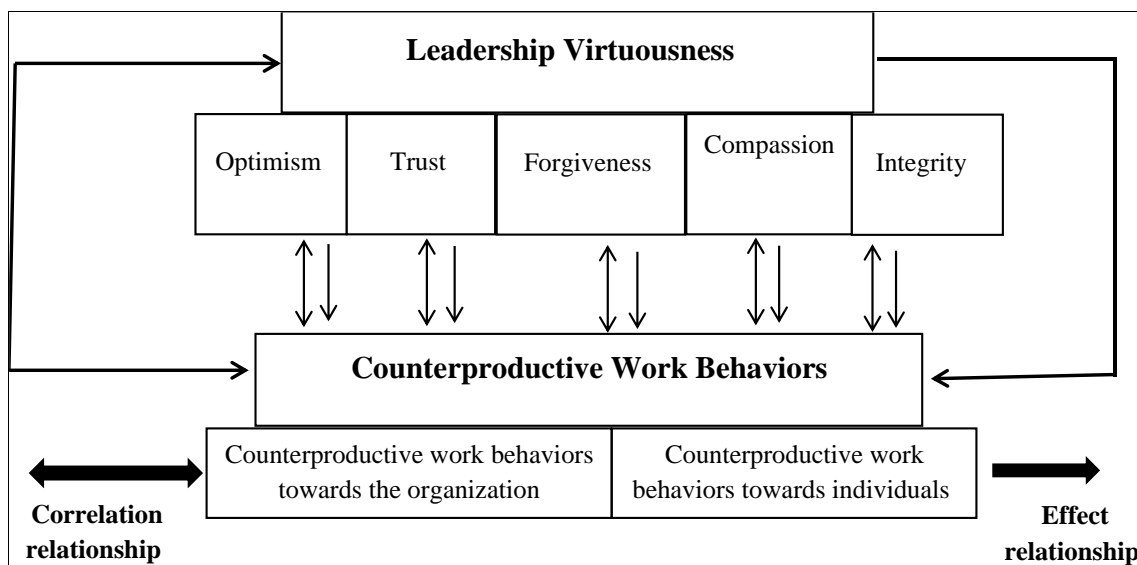


Fig 1: The theoretical framework of the study (designed by the researcher)

Research hypotheses

In light of the theoretical framework of study and in line with the research question, the following hypotheses are formed:

The first main hypothesis (H1): The administrative leadership in the organization studied has the dimensions of leadership virtuousness according to the perception of the research sample.

The second main hypothesis (H2): The dimensions of counterproductive behaviors are available in the organization studied according to the perception of the research sample.

The third main hypothesis (H3): There is an inverse correlation between leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviors.

The fourth main hypothesis (H4): There is a significant

inverse effect between leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviors. This main hypothesis is divided into five sub-hypotheses:

(H4.1): There is a significant inverse effect between optimism and counterproductive work behaviors.

(H4.2): There is a significant inverse effect between trust and counterproductive work behaviors.

(H4.3): There is a significant inverse effect between forgiveness and counterproductive work behaviors.

(H4.4): There is a significant inverse effect between compassion and counterproductive work behaviors.

(H4.5): There is a significant inverse effect between integrity and counterproductive work behaviors.

Research Community and Sample

The research community consists of Salah al-Din General

Directorate of Education in the city of Tikrit.

This organization is chosen specifically due to its important and vital role at the governorate level. This directorate is a wide sector that includes many branches and sections related to Salah al-Din Education. It has (500) employees, representing the research community. The Stephen Thompson equation is used for determining the size of the target sample, which includes (217) participants. The questionnaire forms are distributed to the participants, and then fully retrieved as a result of continuous and careful follow-up. The data obtained from the questionnaire are analyzed statistically.

Research Method

The descriptive analytical approach is adopted in the current study, due to its accuracy in defining the elements of the problem and the required data.

Section Two: Leadership Virtuosity

The Concept of Leadership Virtuosity

Oraibi and Saeed (2021: 11) ^[20] clarify that the term "virtuosity" stems from the Latin word "Virtus", which refers to strength or excellence. Karahan and Bulbul (2022: 178) ^[16] define it as the moral and intellectual rightness of an individual's character and behavior, which always motivates him to perform virtuous works for both personal and organizational benefits. It is also defined as acquired and socially valued dispositions or personality traits voluntarily reflected in the individual's habitual behavior (Hendriks *et al.*, 2020: 6) ^[13]. Kahveci and Yildirim (2022: 106) ^[15] find that although virtuosity is considered an individual trait, it may spread throughout the organization through leadership, as employees who seek virtuosity practices in their administrative leadership usually tend to imitate and reciprocate them; therefore, a cycle of positive behaviors occurs at all levels of the organization. In the same context, Cheng *et al.* (2023: 6) ^[9] emphasizes that virtuosity is more related to the work of leadership by providing a supportive organizational environment that enhances meeting the psychological needs of employees and stimulates their intrinsic motivations by encouraging positive habits and practices, such as courage, integrity, forgiveness and trust, at the individual and organization levels. Abbas (2022:2) ^[1] refers to leadership virtuosity as one of the motivational tools for positive behavior in business organizations, as it is associated with various outcomes, such as a high level of creativity and job performance, a decrease in organizational disputes, and a reduction in negative and deviant practices in the workplace. Mustafa and Amin (2023: 61) ^[19] view virtuosity as one of the basic values that a leader can have in the contemporary business world in order to achieve justice and forgiveness for all to achieve a sustainable success. A virtuous leader is a leader whose character and dispositions correspond to good virtues, having positive traits that affect the organization as a whole due to emotional contagion, where positive emotions are transmitted from the leader to employees who in turn exhibit compassion, enjoy work and contribute significantly to achieving organizational goals and developing virtuous behavior (Chand *et al.*, 2022: 5) ^[8]. Leadership virtuosity is based on a set of values and assumptions that generate useful attitudes and remarkable developments, motivating individuals and organizations towards achieving excellent performance (Redin *et al.*,

2023: 6) ^[23].

Leadership virtuosity is defined as distinguishing between what is right and what is wrong in a leadership role while taking the necessary measures to ensure justice and integrity in order to influence others and enable them to pursue the achievement of goals at the personal and organizational levels even in the most difficult circumstances (Alhalaseh & Alrawdhy, 2020: 16) ^[4]. Based on the above, the researcher believes that leadership virtuosity reflects virtuous behaviors of organizational leaders, represented by optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion and integrity, which contribute to leading employees to voluntarily achieve the desired goals away from conflicts and negative and deviant behaviors in the workplace.

The Benefits of Leadership Virtuosity

Leadership virtuosity is one of the important topics in administrative and organizational ethics, as it contributes to adding value to business by promoting positive activities, practices and behaviors that have a positive impact on the life of organizations. Hence, leadership virtuosity has the following benefits:

- a) Increasing levels of performance, creativity, positive culture and virtuous behaviors in organizations.
- b) Promoting professional ethical practices in the organization.
- c) Increasing consistency in relations and the level of trust and cooperation between employees.
- d) Helping organizations recover from unexpected shocks (Abbas, 2022: 2) ^[1].
- e) Contributing to reducing negative practices and behaviors in the workplace, such as deception, adulation and favoritism.
- f) Granting employees positive strength to cope with work pressures, absorb shocks and adapt to environmental changes (Chand *et al.*, 2022: 5) ^[8].
- g) Contributing to the flow of information, enrich interactions and distribute resources more efficiently among employees (Redin *et al.*, 2023: 5) ^[23].

Dimensions of Leadership Virtuosity

Saidi (2021: 324) ^[25], Karahan and Bulbul (2022: 178) ^[16] and Chand *et al.* (2022: 5) ^[8] state that leadership virtuosity consists of five basic dimensions, namely optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion and integrity, clarified as follows:

Optimism

It means developing the belief among leaders that they are capable of achieving successes in doing good even in the most difficult circumstances (Saidi, 2021: 324) ^[25]. The leader's capacity to effectively manage work demands is enhanced by optimism, which stems from a positive mindset and a strong conviction in their abilities to attain desired objectives and produce improved outcomes in the future, which generates unlimited potentials in dealing with problems successfully and increasing the ability to better performance (Oraibi & Saeed, 2021: 11) ^[20].

Trust

It refers to courtesy and respect for the rules and standards of the organization, as employees trust each other as well as their administrative leadership (Watanabe *et al.*, 2017: 631)

[28]. Leadership trust is a key factor in promoting success and building stable relationships with others, the absence of it results in the decline of interpersonal connections, difficult human dispositions, and a reduction in efficiency and organizational efficacy. Trust is a collection of emotions, convictions, and anticipations that employees possess regarding the trustworthiness and dependability of the practices and behaviours embraced by their superiors and peers within the professional setting (Oraibi & Saeed, 2021: 11) [20].

Forgiveness

It refers to leaders' forgiveness of potential mistakes and turning them into an opportunity to learn from experience to achieve excellence in performance (Alhalaseh & Alrawdyh, 2020: 17) [4]. Forgiveness of leaders gives employees a sense of psychological security and enhances their personal and professional development. Forgiveness in the workplace, whether by leaders or employees, is an altruistic gift, as it helps to build and restore the relationship by writing off the negative experience. On the contrary, unforgiveness means holding on to grudge, which increases hatred and negative emotions that can prevail in the workplace (Redin *et al.*, 2023: 6) [23].

Compassion

Compassion is viewed as one of the innate virtues of man. It is not just a psychological condition or trait, additionally, it is a technique that involves the leader's recognition and comprehension of the employees' distress, their response to it, and their interaction with it. This practice fosters a collective sense of good emotions, such as pride and gratitude, in addition to enhancing levels of commitment towards colleagues and the organization as a whole (Mahmood & Aljader, 2021: 774) [18]. However, the lack of compassion can cause reactions that negatively affect the organization and its employees.

Integrity

It refers to the manifestations of truthfulness, honor and honesty that the leader of the organization must enjoy (Saidi, 2021: 324) [25]. Accordingly, the leader's integrity is necessary for organizations in terms of managing their operations for two reasons: the first is that it is an ethical goal in itself, and the second is because of the negative effects of its absence, as its availability enhances the motivation of employees and improves the quality of work outputs. In contrast, its absence entails serious repercussions that affect the mental health of employees, high levels of stress and low commitment and performance (Raza *et al.*, 2023: 883) [22].

Section Three: Counterproductive Work Behaviors

The Concept of Counterproductive Work Behaviors

In contemporary times, there has been a notable surge in scholarly interest surrounding counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) within the realm of organizational behavior. This is an effort to comprehend these behaviors and implement preventive measures against them, particularly in light of their extensive and detrimental impact on businesses and their personnel. The permissiveness of such behaviors has the potential to disrupt organizational performance due to their infringement upon crucial organizational norms, diminishing efficiency and

work performance, and primarily jeopardizing the health and well-being of both organizations and their members (Chinwuba, 2023: 1) [10]. Counterproductive work behaviors may be characterized as a condition of failing to adhere to the established norms and expectations of an organization. This, in turn, results in diminished productivity, heightened rates of absenteeism and employee turnover, hence posing a danger to the overall stability of the company (Farahbakhsh *et al.*, 2020: 65) [11]. According to Iqbal and Hasan (2016: 807) [14], counterproductive work behaviors have negative consequences for organizations. These behaviors not only result in material losses, but also have a detrimental impact on the organization's human capital. This is due to the dissemination of feelings of dissatisfaction and distress among members, which in turn harms the overall quality of organizational life and reputation. Kareem *et al.* (2023: 71) [17] refer to these behaviors as a set of harmful work behaviors practiced by employees themselves and aimed at harming the organization or other colleagues in the workplace. Goncar (2023: 9) [12] considered that counterproductive work behavior is a form of destructive behavior that contradicts the permissible behaviors within business organizations, which damages organizations, employees and stakeholders, whether they are customers, leaders or co-workers, causing a low level of performance and organizational losses. These are deliberate behaviors that affect an individual's organizational performance and weaken organizational effectiveness (Pratheepa & Arulkumar, 2021: 3083) [21]. Such behaviors refer to the intentional deviation from the path of expected daily behavior, contradicting the organizational values and standards and deviating from labor controls and laws by carrying out irregular acts that contradict the contents of the ethical codes adopted in the organization, which harms employees and organizations alike (Baez *et al.*, 2019: 271) [6]. They are also defined as a voluntary behavior that violates important organizational standards and threatens the safety of the organization and its employees. The spread of these behaviors negatively affects the organizational performance and causes a state of stress and a decrease in the levels of commitment and job satisfaction and thus low productivity. According to Ucok's (2023: 40) [27] view, counterproductive work behavior can take the form of protest through which employees express dissatisfaction with their jobs in achieving their goals, which can have negative repercussions on a personal and organizational level. Based on the above, the researcher provides the operational definition of counterproductive work behaviors as a set of behaviors or traits shown by employees under certain conditions, described as an intentional violation of organizational standards and social norms adopted in an organization.

Causes of Counterproductive Work Behaviors

The origins of counterproductive work behaviors can be attributed to various individual, social, organizational, and economic factors. It is crucial for management leaders to recognize and address these causes in order to effectively manage and mitigate their potential consequences across all organizational levels (Rogojan, 2009: 6) [24]. This phenomenon arises when employees become aware that their leadership and organizations are failing to offer them the essential support and attention, leading to job dissatisfaction. Consequently, they respond by participating

in counterproductive work behaviors. According to the idea of social exchange and the law of reciprocity, employees tend to exhibit unproductive actions as a means of expressing their concerns over work settings when they experience frustration and dissatisfaction with their organizations, leaders, and colleagues. Hence, it is more probable for employees who have unfavorable sentiments and emotions towards their leaders and companies to manifest such behaviors (Raza *et al.*, 2023: 885) ^[22]. Thus, the causes behind the prevalence of counterproductive work behaviors can be identified as follows:

- a) Lack of leadership integrity and abuse received by employees within their workplace.
- b) Employees' feeling of frustration by non-recognition of their efforts and achievements and loss of dignity in the workplace (Akkerman *et al.*, 2020: 3) ^[3].
- c) Lack of integrity and organizational fairness and low level of trust between employees and their administrative leadership.
- d) Poor organizational support, organizational disputes, and low level of job satisfaction.
- e) Authoritarian leadership that does not involve employees in goals setting and decision-making.
- f) The psychological stress and emotional exhaustion experienced by some workers in the workplace as a result of the lack of an appropriate organizational environment (Alromeedy & Ozbek, 2022: 412) ^[5].

Dimensions of Counterproductive Work Behaviors

Many academics in the fields of administrative and organizational ethics, such as Chinwuba (2023: 2) ^[10], Ucok (2023: 40) ^[27] and Tam and Ha (2023: 585) ^[26], focus on the adoption of two main dimensions in measuring counterproductive work behaviors and the negative results associated with them, namely counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. These dimensions are clarified in the following subsections.

Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization

They refer to the negative behaviors deliberately practiced by employees in the workplace with the aim of harming the reputation and productivity of the organization and its business interests (Chinwuba, 2023: 1) ^[10], such as revealing trade secrets to unauthorized parties, deliberately slowing down work, not reporting violations that occur within the organization, violating work rules and procedures, taking long breaks more than allowed, being absent from work and pretending to be sick, wasting too much time in matters not related to work, seizing and destroying the organization's property or using it for personal purposes, leaving early before the end of work time, and hiding knowledge and intentionally not sharing it with others. Therefore, all of these behaviors can be counterproductive that will reduce productivity and affect the work of the organization as a whole (Akhtar *et al.*, 2023: 5) ^[2].

Counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals

They refer to those behaviors that are directed directly

towards harming other employees in the workplace. Although this type of behavior is considered secondary, it is still unhealthy for business organizations. These behaviors come in the form of verbal abuse and disrespect for colleagues, nepotism and gossip in the workplace (Ucok, 2023: 40) ^[27]. These behaviors also include obstructing others from achieving important successes and preventing them from obtaining future promotion opportunities, delving into topics that may provoke sectarian and racial conflicts among colleagues or withhold important information that affects the performance of others in accomplishing their job tasks (Zuberi *et al.*, 2023: 6) ^[29].

Section four: The Practical Framework of The Study

The practical part of the study included a set of subsections represented as follows:

The research tool for describing and measuring the research variables

A questionnaire form was designed by the researcher as a research tool for collecting primary and approved data mainly to measure the research variables. In this regard, the studies of Saidi (2021: 324) ^[25] and Chinwuba (2023: 2) ^[10] were utilized to prepare and form the statements of the questionnaire. Then, the descriptive analytical method was adopted in this study. The questionnaire included two main parts: the first part was concerned with the demographic information of participants including their age, gender, qualification, and years of service. It is observed that the age group of (31-40 years) reached (37.3%), followed by the age group of (30 years and less) with (34.6%). By combining these two percentages, it is clear that (71.9%) of participants are within the age group of (40 years and less), which is approximately (156) participants of the total sample of (n = 217). This indicates that most of the participants are young. As for the percentage of participants within the age group of (51-60 years), it was (19.4%). Finally, the age group of (61 years and more) reached (8.8%). These results support the level of maturity that combines young and mature participants. This contributes to enhancing the awareness of the questionnaire statements. It is also noted that males represented the largest group by (73.7%), while females' percentage was (26.3%) only. This indicates that the male participants' answers to the questionnaire statements were higher than those of female participants. Concerning the qualification, the largest percentage was for holders of Bachelor's degree by (51.6%), followed by holders of higher degrees (master and doctorate degrees) by (27.2%). These percentages support the participants' cognitive perception of the questionnaire statements, which is reflected in the objectivity and reliability of answers. With regard to years of experience, it is noted that most of the participants had experience of (10 years or less) by (55.3%), followed by the experience of (11-20 years) by (29.5%). These percentages somewhat support the level of professional awareness of the terms and concepts of the questionnaire statements. This in turn enhances the reliability in participants' responses. Figure (2) shows the distribution of participants according to the demographic information.

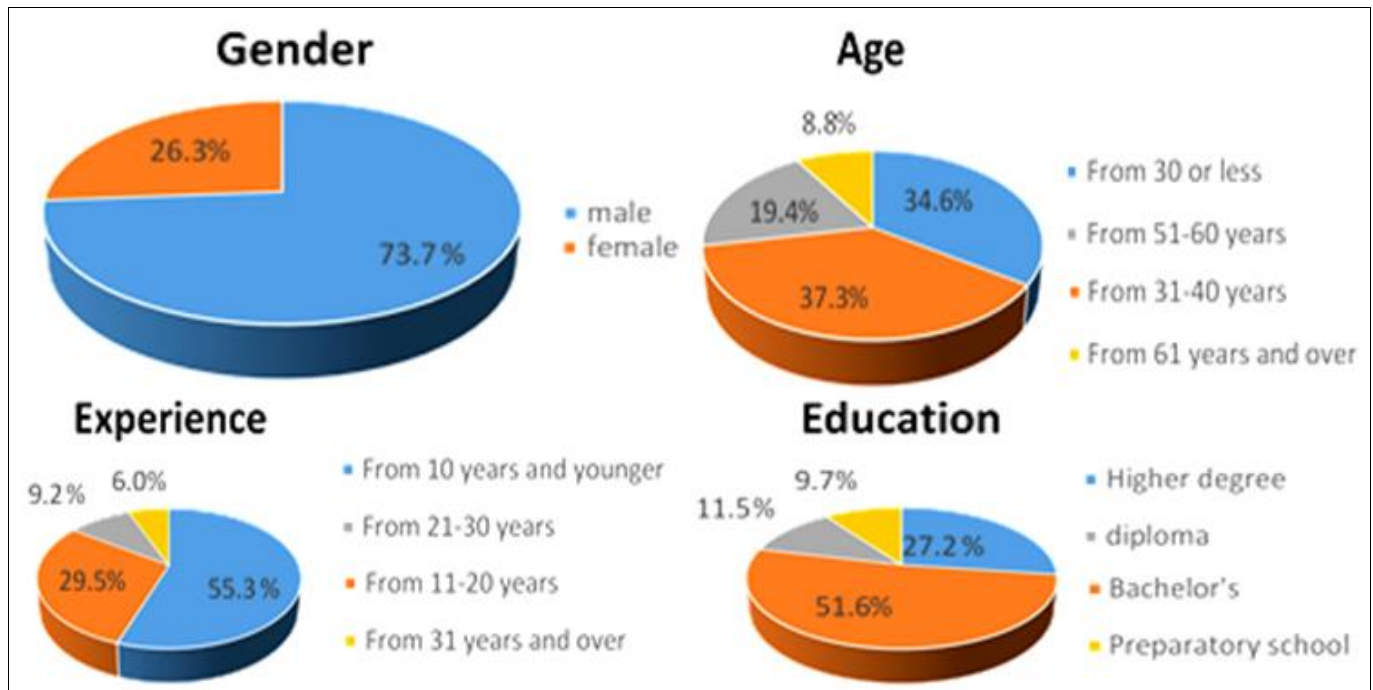


Fig 2: The distribution of participants according to the demographic information (Designed by the researcher)

The second part of the questionnaire was dedicated to measuring the independent variable (leadership virtuousness) and dependent variable (counterproductive behaviors). It included (15) statements for measuring the independent variable (leadership virtuousness) with its five dimensions: optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion, and integrity, with (3) statements for each dimension. While the dependent variable (counterproductive work behaviors) included two dimensions: counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. It was measured through (10) statements with (5) statements for each dimension. After that, the collected data was quantified by adopting the Likert five-point scale, where (5) was for (strongly agree), (4) for (agree), (3) for (somewhat agree), (2) for (disagree), and (1) for (strongly disagree). A descriptive weighting was given to represent the arithmetic mean values of the questionnaire statements and the research dimensions and variables after dividing them into five categories ^[1]. The intensity of agreement is very weak if the arithmetic mean is between (1 to less than 1.8), weak if it is between (1.8 to less than 2.6), acceptable if it is between (2.6 to less than 3.4), high if it is between (3.4 to less than 4.2), and very high if it is between (4.2 to 5).

The validity and reliability of the research tool

To assess the questionnaire's validity and reliability as a research instrument, the validity coefficient was determined by calculating the square root of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient.

According to Table 1, the validity coefficients for the

research variables and dimensions were within the range of 0.871 to 0.968, indicating a satisfactory degree of validity. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was employed to assess the questionnaire's reliability. According to Table 1, the reliability coefficient values varied from 0.758 to 0.937, indicating a satisfactory degree of dependability. This finding demonstrates the questionnaire form's dependability in accurately representing the intended variables for measurement, as well as the reliability of the results when the measurement procedure is replicated under identical conditions. In this study, the researcher is allowed to utilize the questionnaire form for further analysis.

Normal Distribution Test

In order to test the normal distribution of data in the current study, the value of skewness coefficient was relied upon, as shown in Table (2).

The skewness coefficient indicates that the data are distributed normally, as the value ranges between (+1 to -1), and then the parametric statistical methods can be used instead of non-parametric ones. Table (2) demonstrates that the calculated values of the skewness coefficient for the research dimensions and variables were in the range mentioned above. Thus, the parametric statistical methods can be adopted in testing the research hypotheses.

¹ The intensity of the agreement was divided into five categories to represent the arithmetic mean of the statements, the research dimensions and variables. The length of category was calculated through the following equation: the length of category = (the highest value - the lowest value) / number of categories, i.e., (5-1)/5 = 0.8 the length of category.

Table 1: Testing the validity and reliability of questionnaire

Variables and dimensions	Symbol	Validity coefficient	Cronbach Alpha coefficient
Optimism	XX1	0.871	0.758
Trust	XX2	0.892	0.796
Forgiveness	XX3	0.886	0.785
Compassion	XX4	0.905	0.819
Integrity	XX5	0.908	0.825
Leadership virtuousness	X	0.957	0.915
Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization	YY1	0.962	0.925
Counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals	YY2	0.944	0.892
Counterproductive work behaviors	Y	0.968	0.937

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table 2: Testing the normal distribution of data

Variables and dimensions	Symbol	Skewness coefficient
Optimism	XX1	-0.108
Trust	XX2	-0.007
Forgiveness	XX3	-0.132
Compassion	XX4	-0.964
Integrity	XX5	-0.182
Leadership virtuousness	X	-0.265
Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization	YY1	0.974
Counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals	YY2	0.211
Counterproductive work behaviors	Y	-0.108

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Discussion of Results

For describing the research variables and testing its hypotheses, the statistical program (SPSS Ver. 23) was adopted to determine the arithmetic mean and standard deviation, along with some methods that contribute to the description of variables. While the research hypotheses were tested by adopting the regression analysis of ordinary least squares, along with a set of statistical methods, such as Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the relationship

between the research variables.

Description of Research Variables

By relying on the arithmetic mean, standard deviation and relative importance, the research tested the directions of the participants' answers to the questionnaire statements adopted in measuring the research variables and dimensions. Table (3) shows the results of describing the statements of the independent variable (leadership virtuousness).

Table 3: Description of independent variable statements (Leadership virtuousness)

No.	Statements	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	Intensity of agreement
X1	Being optimistic about the success of employees even when facing great challenges at work.	4.221	0.854	84.42%	Very high
X2	Always motivating us to see the positive aspects around us.	4.032	0.950	80.65%	High
X3	Having a deep sense about what is done.	4.134	0.853	82.67%	High
X4	Treating employees with confidence and respect.	4.332	0.908	86.64%	High
X5	Spreading an atmosphere of trust among employees.	4.009	0.928	80.18%	High
X6	Feeling high confidence towards colleagues.	4.032	0.964	80.65%	High
X7	Forgiving the mistakes of employees to turn them into an opportunity to learn from them.	4.018	0.897	80.37%	High
X8	Instilling forgiveness among employees and considering the humanitarian issues.	4.147	0.911	82.95%	High
X9	Forgiving provides a sense of psychological security and enhances our ability to develop ourselves	4.111	0.864	82.21%	High
X10	Empathizing with employees when they are experiencing suffering.	4.240	0.875	84.79%	Very high
X11	Empathizing with employees to give them a sense of pride and gratitude.	4.014	0.905	80.28%	High
X12	Empathizing with employees to enhance their level of commitment and job loyalty.	3.949	0.973	78.99%	High
X13	Being characterized by integrity and honesty in the performance of work.	4.378	0.785	87.56%	Very high
X14	Enjoying an ethical and professional reputation.	4.470	0.733	89.40%	Very high
X15	Having a virtuous and honest behavior at work.	4.350	0.737	87.00%	Very high

Source: prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (3) Demonstrate a strong consensus about the claims pertaining to the independent variable of leadership virtuousness, as seen by the arithmetic mean surpassing the standard value of (3) and the substantial percentage of relative significance. Furthermore, the majority of statements exhibited a high degree of agreement, while a few claims (X1, X10, X13, X14, X15) shown a significantly high level of agreement. The highest degree of agreement was seen for statement (X14) on the enjoyment of an ethical

and professional reputation, with arithmetic mean and relative significance values of 4.470 and 89.40%, respectively. The statement X12, which pertains to empathizing with employees to enhance their level of commitment and job loyalty, exhibited the lowest level of agreement among the independent variable statements. This was indicated by the arithmetic mean and relative importance values of 3.949 and 78.99%, respectively. Furthermore, the very small magnitude of the standard

deviation suggests a notable degree of uniformity and minimal variability in the participants' interpretation of the statements presented in the questionnaire. The arithmetic mean's dependability is improved by this, indicating a strong level of agreement across all claims pertaining to the

independent variable. This suggests that Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education has a significant presence of exemplary leadership qualities. The findings pertaining to the description of the dependent variable (counterproductive work habits) are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Description of dependent variable statements (Counterproductive work behaviors)

No.	Statements	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	Intensity of agreement
Y1	Disclosing confidential information to unauthorized parties.	2.304	1.294	46.08%	Low
Y2	Seizing the property of the department and using it for personal purposes.	2.212	1.225	44.24%	Low
Y3	Taking longer breaks than is allowed.	2.373	1.219	47.47%	Low
Y4	Slowing down in performing work on purpose.	2.069	1.163	41.38%	Low
Y5	Violating the rules and procedures of work.	1.986	1.099	39.72%	Low
Y6	Disrespecting colleagues in the workplace.	1.866	1.161	37.33%	Low
Y7	Preventing colleagues from developing their career paths.	2.147	1.238	42.95%	Low
Y8	Talking about topics that provoke sectarian and racial conflict among colleagues.	1.756	1.054	35.12%	Very low
Y9	Withholding important information that affects the performance of colleagues.	2.124	1.224	42.49%	Low
Y10	Practicing adulation and nepotism at work.	2.336	1.395	46.73%	Low

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (4) shows that the level of agreement about the statements of counterproductive work behaviors is low in terms of the low value of the calculated arithmetic mean compared to its standard value of (3), as well as the low percentage of relative importance. The statements recorded a weak level of agreement, which indicates the low levels of counterproductive behaviors in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education. It is noted that the statement (Y3) (Taking longer breaks than is allowed) recorded the highest level of agreement in terms of the arithmetic mean value of (2.373) and relative importance of (47.47%). While the statement (Y8) (Talking about topics that provoke sectarian and racial conflict among colleagues) recorded the lowest

level of agreement in terms of the arithmetic mean value of (1.756) and relative importance of (35.12%). As for the standard deviation, its low value indicates a high level of consistency and low dispersion in participants' perception of the questionnaire statements. This enhances the level of reliability of the arithmetic mean, which shows a low level of agreement for all dependent variable statements.

Table (5) shows the descriptive analysis of the research dimensions and variables, depending on the measures of central tendency represented by the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, the lowest and highest value, in addition to the relative importance.

Table 5: Descriptive analysis of research variables and dimensions

Variables and dimensions	Symbol	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	The lowest value	The highest value	Relative importance	Intensity of agreement
Optimism	xx1	4.129	0.728	1.00	5.00	82.58%	High
Trust	xx2	4.124	0.787	1.00	5.00	82.49%	High
Forgiveness	xx3	4.092	0.745	1.00	5.00	81.84%	High
Compassion	xx4	4.068	0.787	1.00	5.00	81.35%	High
Integrity	xx5	4.399	0.647	2.33	5.00	87.99%	Very high
Leadership virtuousness	X	4.163	0.594	1.27	5.00	83.25%	High
Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization	yy1	2.189	1.055	1.00	5.00	43.78%	Low
Counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals	yy2	2.046	1.020	1.00	5.00	40.92%	Low
Counterproductive work behaviors	Y	2.118	0.969	1.00	5.00	42.35%	Low

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (5) shows the high level of agreement for leadership virtuousness and all of its five dimensions (Optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion, integrity) in terms of the high value of the arithmetic mean, exceeding its standard value of (3), as well as the high percentage of relative importance and agreement. It is noted that the dimension (Integrity) recorded the highest level of agreement in terms of arithmetic mean (4.399) and relative importance (87.99%), followed by (Optimism) with an arithmetic mean of (4.129) and relative importance (82.58%). Then, the dimension (Trust) had an arithmetic mean of (4.124) and relative importance (82.49%), followed by (forgiveness) with an arithmetic mean of (4.092) and relative importance (81.84%). Finally, the dimension (Compassion) had an arithmetic mean of (4.068) and relative importance (81.35%). Moreover, a high level of consistency is noted in

terms of the decrease in the value of the standard deviation, which indicates a decrease in the dispersion in participants' answers. This supports the reliability of the arithmetic mean, which confirms the high level of availability of leadership virtuousness with its five dimensions in Salah Al-Din General Directorate of Education.

It also shows the low level of agreement about the availability of counterproductive work behaviors and its two dimensions (Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals) in terms of the low value of the calculated arithmetic mean compared to its the standard value of (3) as well as the low percentage of relative importance and agreement. It is noted that the dimension (counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization) recorded the highest level of agreement in terms of the arithmetic mean

of (2.189) and relative importance of (43.78%), followed by (counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals) in terms of the arithmetic mean of (2.046) and relative importance of (40.92%). In addition, the low values of the standard deviation indicate a decrease in the levels of dispersion in participants' responses about the variable of counterproductive behaviors with its dimensions. This enhances the reliability of the arithmetic mean in representing the sample as a whole in terms of low levels of availability of counterproductive behaviors with all of its dimensions in Salah Al-Din General Directorate of

Education.

Testing Research Hypotheses

The current study included four main hypotheses as follows: The first main hypothesis (H1): The administrative leadership in the organization studied has the dimensions of leadership virtuousness according to the perception of the research sample.

To test this hypothesis, one-sample t-test was used, which a test is used to determine the significant differences based on the questionnaire form. Table (6) shows the test results.

Table 6: Testing the availability of dimensions of leadership virtuousness in the organization studied

Variables and dimensions	Symbol	T-value	Freedom degree	Sig.
Optimism	xx1	22.855	216	0.000
Trust	xx2	21.058	216	0.000
Forgiveness	xx3	21.591	216	0.000
Compassion	xx4	19.974	216	0.000
Integrity	xx5	31.848	216	0.000
Leadership virtuousness	X	28.844	216	0.000

Source: prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (6) shows that (T) recorded a positive value and a significant level of probability at (5%). This indicates the availability of the five dimensions (optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion, integrity) of leadership virtuousness in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education according to participants' perception. Thus, the first main hypothesis is accepted.

The second main hypothesis (H2): The dimensions of counterproductive behaviors are available in the organization studied according to the perception of the research sample.

To test this hypothesis, one-sample t-test was used, which a test is used to determine the significant differences based on the questionnaire form. Table (7) shows the test results.

Table 7: Testing the availability of dimensions of counterproductive behaviors in the organization studied

Variables and dimensions	Symbol	T-value	Freedom degree	Sig.
Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization	yy1	-11.330	216	0.000
Counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals	yy2	-13.779	216	0.000
Counterproductive work behaviors	Y	-13.422	216	0.000

Source: prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (7) indicates that (T) exhibited a negative value and a statistically significant likelihood at a significance level of 5%. According to the viewpoint of participants, it is evident that the Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education lacks the two characteristics of counterproductive work behaviors, namely counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards people. Consequently, the second primary hypothesis is disproven.

The third main hypothesis (H3): There is an inverse correlation between leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviors.

To test this hypothesis, Pearson coefficient was used to determine the power of relationship and its significance and direction among all research variables and dimensions. Table (8) shows the matrix of correlation between research variables and dimensions.

Table 8: The matrix of correlation between research variables and dimensions

Variables and dimensions		YY1	YY2	Y
XX1	Pearson coefficient	-0.401**	-0.389**	-0.423**
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
XX2	Pearson coefficient	-0.492**	-0.469**	-0.515**
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
XX3	Pearson coefficient	-0.348**	-0.446**	-0.424**
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
XX4	Pearson coefficient	-0.407**	-0.420**	-0.443**
	Sig.	.000	0.000	0.000
XX5	Pearson coefficient	-0.301**	-0.427**	-0.389**
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
X	Pearson coefficient	-0.490**	-0.536**	-0.549**
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (8) clarifies that there is

- a) There exists a statistically significant negative correlation between optimism and the two dimensions of counterproductive work behaviors, namely counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. This suggests that when individuals exhibit high levels of optimism in relation to leadership virtuousness within the organization under investigation, there is a corresponding decrease in the levels of counterproductive work behaviors across these two dimensions within the organization.
- b) The study found a statistically significant negative correlation between trust and two dimensions of counterproductive work behaviors: counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. This suggests that higher levels of trust in leadership virtuousness within the organization will be associated with a decrease in counterproductive work behaviors across these dimensions.
- c) There exists a statistically significant negative correlation between forgiveness and the two dimensions of counterproductive work behaviors, namely counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. This suggests that when leadership virtuousness is high within the organization under investigation, there will be a corresponding decrease in the levels of counterproductive work behaviors across these two dimensions within the organization.
- d) There exists a statistically significant negative correlation between compassion and the two dimensions of counterproductive work behaviors, namely counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. This suggests that when leadership virtuousness is high within the organization under investigation, there will be a corresponding decrease in the levels of counterproductive work behaviors across these dimensions within the organization.
- e) There is a statistically significant negative correlation observed between integrity and the two dimensions of counterproductive work behaviors, namely counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. This suggests that when leadership virtuousness is high within the organization under study, there will be a corresponding decrease in the levels of counterproductive work behaviors across these dimensions within the organization.
- f) The study found a statistically significant negative correlation between leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviors, specifically in relation to counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals. This suggests that higher levels of leadership virtuousness within the organization are associated with a decrease in counterproductive work behaviors across both dimensions. According to the information provided, the third primary hypothesis is confirmed.

The fourth main hypothesis (H4): There is a significant inverse effect between leadership virtuousness and

counterproductive work behaviors. This main hypothesis is divided into five sub-hypotheses:

(H4.1): There is a significant inverse effect between optimism and counterproductive work behaviors.

To test this hypothesis, a simple linear regression equation was prepared to estimate the level of counterproductive work behaviors with the dimension of optimism, which is the first dimension of the leadership virtuousness variable to determine the extent to which the optimism dimension affects counterproductive work behaviors. Table (9) shows the results of the effect.

Table 9: Results of the effect of optimism on counterproductive work behaviors

Dimension	R ²	F-value	Sig.
Optimism	0.179	46.836	0.000
	B	T-value	Sig.
	-0.423	-6.844	0.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

The validity of the regression equation model is demonstrated in Table 9, with an F-value of 46836 at a significance level below 5%. This suggests that optimism can be used to evaluate the extent of unproductive job habits. The significant level of the impact is shown by the T-value (-6.844) at a level of significance less than 5%. Additionally, the negative value of the regression coefficient (-0.423) suggests a negative effect. The presence of optimism among leaders within the examined company is expected to have a mitigating effect on the occurrence of counterproductive work practices. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.179 suggests that the optimism component accounts for 17.9% of the variance in unproductive work habits. Therefore, the initial sub-hypothesis is deemed valid.

(H4.2): There is a significant inverse effect between trust and counterproductive work behaviors.

In order to examine the proposed hypothesis, a basic linear regression model was constructed to assess the relationship between counterproductive work behaviors and the dimension of trust. Trust is considered as the second dimension of the leadership virtuousness variable, and the aim was to ascertain the degree to which the trust dimension influences counterproductive work behaviors. The findings of the effect are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Results of the effect of trust on counterproductive work behaviors

Dimension	R ²	F-value	Sig.
Trust	0.265	77.584	0.000
	B	T-value	Sig.
	-0.515	-8.808	0.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (10) shows the validity of the regression equation model in terms of F-value (77.584) at a significance level less than (5%). This indicates that the level of counterproductive work behaviors can be estimated through trust. The T-value (-8.808) at a significance level less than (5%) indicates the significance of the effect, while the negative value of (β) regression coefficient (-0.515)

indicates a negative effect. This means that the availability of trust among leaders in the organization studied will reduce the levels of counterproductive work behaviors. The value of R² (0.265) indicates that the trust dimension explains (26.5%) of the changes that occur in the level of counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, the second sub-hypothesis is accepted.

(H4.3): There is a significant inverse effect between forgiveness and counterproductive work behaviors.

To test this hypothesis, a simple linear regression equation was prepared to estimate the level of counterproductive work behaviors with the dimension of forgiveness, which is the third dimension of the leadership virtuousness variable to determine the extent to which the forgiveness dimension affects counterproductive work behaviors. Table (11) shows the results of the effect.

Table 11: Results of the effect of forgiveness on counterproductive work behaviors

Dimension	R ²	F-value	Sig.
Forgiveness	0.180	47.213	0.000
	B	T-value	Sig.
	-0.424	-6.871	0.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

The validity of the regression equation model is demonstrated in Table 11, with an F-value of 47.213, at a significance level below 5%. This suggests that forgiveness can be used to measure the extent of detrimental job habits. The significant level of the impact is shown by the T-value (-6.871) at a level of significance less than 5%. Additionally, the negative value of the regression coefficient (-0.424) suggests a negative effect. The presence of forgiveness among leaders within the examined company is expected to have a mitigating effect on the occurrence of unproductive work practices. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.180 suggests that the forgiveness component accounts for 18% of the variance in unproductive work habits. Therefore, the acceptance of the third sub-hypothesis is given.

(H4.4): There is a significant inverse effect between compassion and counterproductive work behaviors.

To test this hypothesis, a simple linear regression equation was prepared to estimate the level of counterproductive work behaviors with the dimension of compassion, which is the fourth dimension of the leadership virtuousness variable to determine the extent to which the compassion dimension affects counterproductive work behaviors. Table (12) shows the results of the effect.

Table 12: Results of the effect of compassion on counterproductive work behaviors

Dimension	R ²	F-value	Sig.
Compassion	0.196	52.472	0.000
	B	T-value	Sig.
	-0.443	-7.244	0.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (12) shows the validity of the regression equation model in terms of F-value (52.472) at a significance level less than (5%). This indicates that the level of counterproductive work behaviors can be estimated through

compassion. The T-value (-7.244) at a significance level less than (5%) indicates the significance of the effect, while the negative value of (β) regression coefficient (-0.443) indicates a negative effect. This means that the availability of compassion among leaders in the organization studied will reduce the levels of counterproductive work behaviors. The value of R² (0.196) indicates that the compassion dimension explains (19.6%) of the changes that occur in the level of counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, the fourth sub-hypothesis is accepted.

(H4.5): There is a significant inverse effect between integrity and counterproductive work behaviors.

To test this hypothesis, a simple linear regression equation was prepared to estimate the level of counterproductive work behaviors with the dimension of integrity, which is the fifth dimension of the leadership virtuousness variable to determine the extent to which the integrity dimension affects counterproductive work behaviors. Table (13) shows the results of the effect.

Table 13: Results of the effect of integrity on counterproductive work behaviors

Dimension	R ²	F-value	Sig.
Integrity	0.151	38.233	0.000
	B	T-value	Sig.
	-0.389	-6.183	0.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.

Table (13) shows the validity of the regression equation model in terms of F-value (38.233) at a significance level less than (5%). This indicates that the level of counterproductive work behaviors can be estimated through integrity. The T-value (-6.183) at a significance level less than (5%) indicates the significance of the effect, while the negative value of (β) regression coefficient (-0.389) indicates a negative effect. This means that the availability of integrity among leaders in the organization studied will reduce the levels of counterproductive work behaviors. The value of R² (0.151) indicates that the integrity dimension explains (15.1%) of the changes that occur in the level of counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, the fifth sub-hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it can be said that the fourth main hypothesis is accepted. This means that leadership virtuousness through its five dimensions inversely affects the levels of counterproductive work behaviors in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education.

Section five: Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusions

The statistical analysis carried out in this study reveals the following conclusions

- a) There is a high awareness about the availability of leadership virtuousness with its five dimensions among the administrative leaders in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education, noting that the integrity dimension has recorded the highest level of agreement. This is a good indicator for the organization studied towards the availability of leadership virtuousness in its work environment.
- b) There is a high awareness about the lack of counterproductive work behaviors with its two dimensions in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education, noting that the dimension of

- counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals has recorded the lowest level of agreement. This is a good indicator for the organization studied towards avoiding counterproductive work behaviors in the work environment.
- c) There is a negative significant correlation between the variables of leadership virtuousness and counterproductive work behaviors with its two dimensions (Counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization and counterproductive work behaviors towards individuals) in the organization studied. This indicates that the availability of leadership virtuousness with its five dimensions in the organization will be accompanied by a decrease in the level of counterproductive work behaviors.
- d) Leadership virtuousness through its dimensions (Optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion, integrity) has a negative effect on counterproductive work behaviors in the organization studied. This indicates that the availability of leadership virtuousness with its five dimensions in the organization studied will contribute effectively to reducing the level of counterproductive work behaviors in this organization.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions reached, this study presents the following suggestions

- a) Administrative leaders in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education should support the availability of dimensions of leadership virtuousness (Optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion, integrity) in order to promote positive behaviors and eliminate negative and deviant behaviors in the workplace.
- b) Administration of the organization should support actions that limit counterproductive work behaviors to avoid employees engaging in reciprocal behaviors that would lead to a decrease in efficiency and organizational performance.
- c) The administration of the organization studied should spread the culture of establishing the basics of trust, respect, optimism, justice and ethical behavior among employees in the organization, in order to reduce the level of counterproductive work behaviors and prevent their spread.
- d) There is a need to further deepen the behavior of leadership virtuousness among administrative leaders in Salah al-Din General Directorate of Education because of its effect on reducing counterproductive work behaviors, through its ability to absorb the negative reactions of employees and enhance their psychological and positive abilities.

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