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Innovative Leadership among Arab School Principals within the Green Line and Its Relationship to Job Gratitude among Special Education Teachers

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Abstract: This study aimed to identify the degree of practising innovative leadership among Arab School Principals within the Green Line and its relationship to job gratitude among Special Education Teachers from the principals' and teachers' point of view. The study sample consisted of 348 principals and teachers selected using the available method. The descriptive correlational approach was used, and a questionnaire was used to collect data. The results showed that the degree of practising innovative leadership among school principals was high, and the results revealed that special education teachers' job gratitude level was high. The results also indicated a strong, statistically significant correlation between the degree of practising innovative leadership among school principals and the level of job gratitude among special education teachers. In light of the results, the researcher recommends that school principals continue practising innovative leadership and directing them towards adopting a common vision in school work that enhances job gratitude among teachers and its continuity.

Keywords: Innovative leadership, Job gratitude, Special education teachers, Green line.

Introduction and Theoretical Framework

Educational institutions in the twenty-first century experience challenges and changes. These are imposed on educational leaders, who must adopt modern methods based on renewal, innovation, and effective change. This is considered a fundamental approach to enable educational staff to adapt to these changes, motivate them to work positively, develop their motivation, and help them face educational problems efficiently in ways that raise their performance level. Hence, a supportive educational environment that stimulates creativity becomes an urgent requirement. It also becomes a fundamental requirement for educational leaders to direct energies toward achieving the desired educational goals, enhancing satisfaction, professional stability, and feelings of happiness and achievement among employees.

The responsibility of school leaders emerges in adopting positive change and leading it with educational awareness. They can do that by opening the way for teachers and staff to actively participate in developing the educational process and creating modern teaching methods that keep pace with developments. Additionally, supporting creative ideas and following up on their implementation in reality is considered a fundamental step towards achieving the desired goals for change and reducing resistance to it in its various forms. This leadership approach also contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of educational performance and ensuring optimal investment of available resources (Abu Ajwa, 2018).

In light of this, the pivotal role of school principals in achieving innovative leadership emerges. They are educational leaders responsible for directing educational work towards excellence and renewal. Therefore, the school principal should possess a spirit of innovation and perseverance and consciously recognize the importance of employing creative thinking in their daily practices, benefiting from modern thinking methods

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that motivate employees, develop their competencies, and enhance their productivity. Previous work indicated an indirect positive relationship between the level of innovation of the school principal and the nature of the relationship that connects them with teachers (Ghubain, 2009). Therefore, school principals should work on investing the creative energies of their team and overcoming administrative challenges with flexible and effective methods that enable them to keep pace with educational developments.

Innovative leadership has received increasing attention in recent years from researchers due to its direct impact on raising productivity levels and improving performance quality. This interest has extended to the educational field, where creativity and innovation have become fundamental in developing educational institutions. In this regard, studies have expanded to include various aspects of innovative leadership due to its effective role in improving educational work outcomes, enhancing institutional efficiency, and achieving the desired educational goals (Abdel Wahab, 2012).

Furthermore, innovative leadership is considered one of the fundamental pillars upon which the effectiveness of educational institutions is based. Its main goal is to explore available possibilities and employ them creatively to solve problems and provide diverse educational services. This leadership relies on anticipating the future, outlining its features, and establishing practical mechanisms to reach it efficiently and flexibly (Al-Hajjaj, 2019). Innovative leadership can raise the efficiency of both teachers and students. It also develops their motivation towards productive work and makes it a central element in teaching and learning. Equally important, it influences the variation in achievement levels among teachers, students, and administrators. On the other hand, weak innovative leadership is an obstacle to achieve effective learning (Asaad, 2005).

The innovative leadership style helps educational institutions succeed in a dynamic educational environment characterized by continuous change. This style also ensures achieving the goals and future visions of the educational institution due to its unique characteristics that distinguish it from other leadership styles. Al-Salem (2012) pointed out that there are characteristics that distinguish innovative leadership. According to Al-Sale, these are developmental characteristics that include supporting new initiatives and engaging in unconventional experiences; organizational characteristics represented in self-discipline, the ability to withstand pressure and ambiguity, identifying precise details, and clarifying complex issues. Al-Salem added that intuitive characteristics manifest in openness, enthusiasm, liberating and protecting ideas, and emotional characteristics that emerge in self-expression, resolving internal conflicts, accepting others, and integrating disparate ideas creatively. These characteristics are considered among the basic components for the success of educational leadership in achieving development and transformation within the school environment.

It should be noted that educational innovation does not occur suddenly or randomly, but is the product of an organized process that goes through several integrated stages that contribute to enhancing effective leadership performance within educational institutions. Nzinga et al. (2021) explained that the innovation process includes four main stages. The first one begins with the initiation stage, which is a work. This is followed by the analysis stage, where problems or team performance results are analyzed, their causes identified, and creative solutions sought. Then comes the reflection stage, in which the leader reflects on the results reached to develop a clear vision that leads the team towards innovation. Finally, the action stage is when innovative solutions are applied and the team is effectively involved. The final stage promotes building a positive and creative work environment that contributes to achieving the desired educational goals.

The importance of the leadership role of the school principal emerges in embodying this innovation and transforming it into daily practice within the school environment. For the principal to perform this role effectively, they must possess the desire, ability, and job satisfaction, as they serve as a role model for both students and teachers. The innovative principal always seeks to renew practices and works to develop their school through possessing innovative skills that enable them to achieve educational goals and enhance the effectiveness of their school. Human skills are an integral part of this leadership. They build morale, motivate teachers, and meet their psychological and social needs, which enhances the collaborative work environment (Ghubain, 2009).

In light of the rapid societal changes, the school principal should be attentive to everything new and keen on self and institutional development by continuously training those around them and motivating them to persevere in presenting creative ideas. These practices establish a culture of innovation within the school and make it a pioneering educational environment led by excellence and creativity (Al-Suwaiti, 2015). Enhancing innovative leadership in the school environment is not limited to developing skills and methods but extends to include building a positive work culture that establishes values of belonging and professional responsibility. Work culture is considered one of the basic foundations that affects the performance of employees and contributes to

raising their productivity and enhancing their positive interaction with their job roles. Successful teachers understand the nature of their work, succeed in dealing with colleagues and leaders, and continuously seek to develop themselves and fulfill their duties. These teachers should also receive support from their educational institutions and training programs provided by educational authorities, as well as their self-efforts towards professional success (Al-Ghufeili, 2015).

In this context, job gratitude becomes one of the dimensions of positive work culture. The employees' feelings of appreciation and attention constitute a motivating factor that enhances their commitment and institutional belonging. A teacher who feels that their efforts are appreciated by their administration is more willing to give and participate effectively. This is reflected in their professional performance and establishes a respectful and cooperative school environment.

Job gratitude is a positive feeling that improves the professional relationship between teachers and their principals. Teachers' feelings of appreciation and attention from school leadership enhance their job commitment and sense of belonging to the school. When a teacher feels that their efforts are appreciated and that someone supports them and provides them with an appropriate work environment, they become more willing to exert effort and achieve the required performance. This positively reflects on the educational process and supports cooperation within the school community (Sekaja et al., 2022).

Based on the short review above, job gratitude has received attention from many scholars and researchers due to its significant impact on directing teachers' behavior and enhancing their motivation towards achieving school goals. However, researchers have not reached a unified definition. The reason for this delay is due to the differences in intellectual ideologies and philosophical schools to which they belong. In this context, Bartlett et al. (2012, p. 2) defined job gratitude as: "The positive emotion that an individual feels when they recognize that another person has given them something of value." This definition highlights the importance of appreciating the efforts of others in promoting a spirit of cooperation and positivity within the educational environment. Morgan et al. (2017, p. 179) defined it as "the feeling and attitude of appreciation or thanks for the benefits we have received or expect to receive, and the feeling of genuine gratitude opens doors for more goodness to enter into the life experience."

Other work completed by Anas et al. (2017) indicated that gratitude is one of the most important social elements because it supports and stimulates psychological well-being, facilitates human interaction, reduces negative feelings, and strengthens ethical behaviors. It also reduces materialistic tendencies, increases humanitarian actions, improves self-respect, and builds positive social relationships. Lin and Yeh (2014) confirmed that gratitude enhances social relationships, supports the formation of sustainable friendships, and enhances the well-being of individuals through developing positive coping methods and mutual support. This has made it a central element in the educational work environment. Job gratitude is important because it impacts employee happiness and satisfaction with their work environment. This feeling is considered a fundamental foundation for successful professional performance. Gratitude is not limited to being a positive emotion, but goes beyond that to be a real motivator reflected in the individual's productivity and the quality of their interaction within the institution. Nassef (2019) emphasized that employee happiness stems from the work environment to which they belong and affect various aspects of their professional and social life. Nassef added that the presence of positive employees would raise the level of enthusiasm and motivation and lead to outstanding results that improve the institution's competitive ability to provide its services and products.

Scoggin-Chang and Kamin-Lindsay (2007) pointed out that job gratitude is not only reflected in employee happiness and professional performance, but its impact is seen in several areas that contribute to the individual's environmental and educational development. Emotionally, gratitude provides a feeling of comfort and flexibility, reduces negative feelings such as envy, and enhances positive memories. On the personal level, it increases optimism and joy, develops self-respect, and reduces selfishness and materialism. Moreover, it builds deeper social relationships and facilitates forming strong friendships. In terms of health, it helps improve sleep and general health, which raises energy and the ability to achieve. Professionally, gratitude enhances an individual's ability to manage tasks effectively, helps them build positive professional networks, and enables them to make better decisions. Based on the multiple positive educational effects of job gratitude, Morgan et al. (2017, p. 180) explained that this gratitude has four main dimensions that contribute to understanding its nature and applications in the school environment. First, gratitude relates to teachers' understanding of the meaning of gratitude and its educational values.

Second, there are feelings of gratitude, which are the feelings of appreciation that the teacher holds towards those who provide them with support and assistance. The third dimension is an appreciation of situations when

they recognize the importance of situations in which others help, and express gratitude for them. Finally, behaviours related to gratitude appear in teachers' actions that reflect their appreciation and gratitude.

In light of the aforementioned, there is a need to give more attention to special education teachers. These teachers are worth studying due to the nature of their educational and humanitarian tasks in serving students with special needs. This category of teachers bears more responsibilities that require high skills and competencies. Therefore, they should be supported psychologically and professionally and appreciated for their efforts in the work environment in a way that enhances their motivation and enables them to perform their educational role efficiently and effectively. Al-Khalayla (2021) indicated that the increasing interest in children with special needs has been accompanied by significant research interest in their teachers to enable them to face the challenges associated with teaching this critical category of students.

Special education teachers in Arab schools in Haifa District within the Green Line are worth being supported due to their significant role in the educational process. The Ministry of Education appoints them to supervise students with special needs. This integrated educational role begins with an accurate diagnostic process of the learner's condition. Then, special teachers design and implement individual educational programs to develop their abilities. Special education teachers also help them achieve self-realization and adapt to individual differences and special needs to enhance their independence and academic and social success (Tayeh, 2015).

There is also a need to create a work environment that supports their professional well-being and appreciates their efforts. In this context, job gratitude is considered one of the essential indicators of the quality of that environment due to its impact on enhancing the feeling of satisfaction and motivation towards performance. School leadership, especially innovative leadership, can achieve this by adopting administrative methods that support creativity and appreciate competencies. Hence, this study explores the degree of innovative leadership practice among Arab school principals in Haifa District within the Green Line, and its correlation with job satisfaction among special education teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Schools currently experience increasing challenges due to educational and technical developments at local, global, and institutional levels. These challenges require school leaders to adopt unconventional administrative patterns to keep pace with change and manage educational situations innovatively. Creating a stimulating school environment and addressing obstacles creatively is considered a basic condition for progress and achieving the desired goals. The researcher observed through their practical experience as a special education teacher in one of the schools affiliated with the Haifa District within the Green Line. The researcher noticed that some principals lack the skills and competencies associated with innovative leadership. The researcher believes this may negatively affect the quality of their performance and reflect on the satisfaction of teachers and staff and their job happiness, which is an important indicator of job satisfaction.

A limited number of studies addressed the relationship between innovative leadership and job gratitude for special education teachers. Most of the studies were limited to each variable separately. Al-Hajjaj (2019) and Sagir (2017) recommended conducting more research in innovative leadership and linking it to influential variables in the educational work environment. Based on the above, this study responds to those calls to provide a deeper understanding by linking innovative leadership and job gratitude for special education teachers.

Thus, this study aims to answer the following main questions:

1. What is the degree of innovative leadership practice among Arab school principals in Haifa District within the Green Line from the perspective of principals and teachers?
2. What is the level of job gratitude among special education teachers in Arab schools in Haifa District within the Green Line from the perspective of principals and teachers?
3. Is there a statistically significant correlation at the statistical significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the degree of innovative leadership practice among Arab school principals in Haifa District within the Green Line, and the level of job gratitude among special education teachers?

Objectives of the Study

The current study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identifying the degree of innovative leadership practice among Arab school principals in Haifa District within the Green Line from the perspective of principals and teachers to enhance these practices due to their positive impact on developing principals' performance, improving teacher efficiency, and raising student achievement.
2. Identifying the level of job gratitude among special education teachers in Arab schools in Haifa District within the Green Line, as perceived by principals and teachers, enhances this psychological and moral aspect due to its effective role in raising teacher motivation and increasing their productivity.
3. Revealing the nature of the correlation between innovative leadership practice by Arab school principals and the level of job gratitude among special education teachers, seeking to develop this relationship by proposing training programs and professional complementary courses that improve the educational environment and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Significance of the study

Theoretical Importance: This study is expected to enrich the theoretical framework of innovative leadership and job gratitude by understanding these concepts. It also provides the Arab library with reference materials that benefit school principals, teachers, researchers, and graduate students.

Practical Importance: The results of this study can draw the attention of decision-makers in the Ministry of Education to improve the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership and increase job satisfaction among special education teachers. In addition, this study is considered a reference for developing training programs directed to principals and teachers. It also enables other researchers to conduct future studies on different samples and areas.

Terminological and Procedural Definitions

The study included the following procedural and terminological definitions:

Innovative Leadership Terminologically: Najm (2015, 212) defined it as "the inspirational ability through which the leader can move those working with him to achieve goals in the fastest time, best performance, and least effort."

Procedurally defined as one of the modern leadership methods in which the school leader in Haifa District within the Green Line relies on renewal and innovation, through employing digital tools and contemporary technologies during the performance of administrative and educational tasks to achieve school goals, and face challenges that may hinder the teaching and learning process. It was measured in the current study through the respondents' total score on the questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was distributed into three domains: innovative behaviour, dealing with teachers, and work environment.

Job Gratitude: It is defined as: "An act by the nature of the person, and can be considered by some as an emotion or attitude, but for others a habit or response to adaptation" (Stegen & Wankier, 2018, 376).

Job Gratitude Procedurally is defined as a positive feeling or emotional state. This is experienced by special education teachers in Arab schools in Haifa District within the Green Line. It stems from their appreciation for the rewards or support they receive from school principals. These rewards are material or moral. Furthermore, this feeling reflects their satisfaction and connection to the work environment. It was measured in this study by the total score obtained by respondents on the questionnaire items prepared by the researcher, which were distributed in three domains: gratitude to the school principal, gratitude to colleagues at work, and gratitude to the local community.

Limitations of the Study

Objective Limitation: It is represented by the correlation between the degree of innovative leadership practice by Arab school principals in Haifa District within the Green Line, and the level of job gratitude among special education teachers.

Human Limitation: The study was limited to a sample of male and female principals and special education teachers working in Arab schools in Haifa District within the Green Line.

Spatial Limitation: The current study was applied in Arab schools in the Haifa District within the Green Line.

Time Limitation: This study was applied during the first semester of the academic year 2022/2023.

Study Determinants: The generalization of the results of this study depends on the objectivity and seriousness of the study sample's response, the tool used to collect data, and the extent of its validity and reliability.

Literature Review

In this section, the studies that the researcher was able to access are presented in chronological order from oldest to newest in two themes, as follows:

Innovative Leadership among School Principals

Sagir (2017) conducted a study to identify the level of practising innovative leadership behaviours among school principals in Turkey from the perspective of principals and teachers. The descriptive survey approach was adopted, and a questionnaire was prepared to collect the data. The study sample consisted of 111 school principals and 346 teachers, who were selected by a random method. The study results showed that there are high levels of practicing innovative leadership behaviors among school principals.

Al-Hajjaj (2019) conducted a study to identify the degree of innovative leadership practice among governmental secondary school principals in the University District Education Directorate in the Jordanian capital, Amman. The study used the descriptive survey approach and the questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The study sample consisted of 310 principals and teachers. They were selected by a stratified random method. The study results showed that the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership was low.

The purpose of the Eja et al. (2020) study was to reveal the relationship between innovative leadership practices of school principals and effective school supervision in Ikom Educational Zone in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive correlational approach and used the questionnaire for data collection. It was applied to a stratified random sample consisting of 376 respondents. The sample consisted of 94 male and female principals and 282 male and female teachers from 94 government secondary schools. The study results showed that innovative leadership practices of school principals, such as authentic, cultural, and balanced leadership, are associated with effective school supervision in providing education, keeping records, and maintaining school facilities.

Abd Al-Samad and Hajar's (2020) study aimed to identify the degree of elementary school principals' practice of innovative leadership from the teachers' perspective. The study used the descriptive survey approach and the questionnaire for data collection. It was applied to a random sample of male and female elementary education teachers in Ben Srou city in Algeria. The sample consisted of 73 male and female teachers. The study results showed that the degree of innovative leadership practice among school principals was moderate in the administrative and technical domains. It was also high in the conceptual domain.

Al-Quraan and Al-Shaqran (2021) conducted a study to identify the degree of secondary school principals' practice of innovative leadership in Jerash Governorate in Jordan from the teachers' perspective. The study used the descriptive survey approach. A questionnaire was also used to collect the data. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 281 male and female teachers randomly selected from secondary school teachers in the governorate. The study results showed that the degree of innovative leadership practice among secondary school principals was moderate from the perspective of the sample members.

Salama's (2023) study aimed to identify the degree of UNRWA school principals' practice of innovative leadership in the Nablus educational area from the perspective of their teachers. The descriptive approach (quantitative and qualitative methods) was used through the questionnaire and interview to achieve the study's objectives. The study sample consisted of 275 (35% of the study population). They were selected using a systematic random method. The results showed high degree of school principals' innovative leadership practice from their teachers' perspective.

Job Gratitude

Howells (2014) conducted a case study to explore gratitude's role in enhancing student-teacher relationships. The study used the exploratory qualitative approach and two tools for data collection. The study used two training workshops and a questionnaire distributed at the end of each workshop. The study sample consisted of 59 teachers from secondary schools in Western Australia. They were selected using the purposive sampling method. The results revealed that gratitude contributed positively to improving the classroom and school environment, and helped build healthy relationships and a positive school culture. The results showed that practising gratitude effectively increases social awareness among senior teachers and contributes to generating mutual positive effects between teachers and their students.

Augustine et al. (2017) conducted a study to reveal the correlation between positive feelings of gratitude among secondary school teachers and their level of professional effectiveness. The descriptive correlational approach was used. They also used McCullough et al.'s (2002) scale and Kulsum's (2000) teacher effectiveness questionnaire for data collection. The study sample consisted of 65 male and female teachers working in Bangalore (India) secondary schools. They were selected using a simple random method. The study revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between gratitude and teacher effectiveness. This result indicates the importance of enhancing gratitude among teachers due to its positive impact on improving their professional effectiveness.

A study completed by Bernhard (2020) aimed to investigate levels of happiness and gratitude among music teachers in the northeastern part of the United States. The study was conducted in light of several variables, such as grade level (elementary, middle, high school, or mixed), certificate status (initial or professional), and teaching field (instrumental, choral/general, or mixed) by comparing perceived happiness (meaning, engagement, and pleasure). The study used the descriptive survey approach and McCullough et al.'s (2002) scale to measure gratitude in all dimensions. It also used Peterson et al.'s (2005) scale to measure dimensions of happiness. The study tools were distributed electronically to a sample of 215 male and female music teachers. The results showed that the highest levels of meaning were recorded among elementary school teachers, while the highest levels of engagement were among high school teachers, and the lowest levels of gratitude were among middle school teachers. The results did not show statistically significant differences in pleasure or engagement according to certificate status. It was also found that new teachers showed lower levels of meaning and gratitude than those with experience. Regarding the teaching field, there were no statistically significant differences in pleasure, but instrumental teachers showed higher levels of gratitude than others. In contrast, instrumental and multi-disciplinary teachers achieved the highest levels in meaning and engagement compared to choral and general music teachers.

Previous work done by Al-Fatlawi and Khuraibet (2020) aimed to measure the level of feeling of gratitude among secondary school teachers in Diwaniyah city in Iraq, and their level of quality of work life, and to reveal the nature of the relationship between the two variables. To achieve its objectives, the descriptive correlational approach was used, and two tools were developed: the gratitude scale, which consisted of 29 items, and the quality of work life scale for teachers, which consisted of 44 items. These two scales were applied to a stratified random sample of 413 male and female secondary school teachers. The study results showed that teachers enjoy a good level of gratitude and a good quality of work-life. The results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between gratitude and quality of work life among teachers. This is to say that gratitude enhances their positive work environment. Itryah's (2023) study aimed to reveal the role of work-life balance in developing feelings of gratitude among female teachers in secondary schools. The descriptive correlational approach was adopted. The study used two scales, one of them to measure work-life balance, and the other to measure gratitude. The study sample consisted of 509 female teachers from all government secondary schools in Palembang city in South Sumatra province in Indonesia. They were selected using the purposive sampling method. The study results showed that work-life balance promotes gratitude. The study concluded that the more work-life balance increases, the higher the level of gratitude among female teachers.

Comments on Previous Studies

Previous studies had different objectives since some of these studies focused on the degree of innovative leadership practice by school principals, while other studies addressed the topic of job gratitude among teachers. Most of these studies were characterized by their reliance on the descriptive survey approach. The current study differs from previous studies in that it follows the descriptive correlational survey approach, which aligns with the nature of its objectives. The researcher believes this approach is comprehensive in presentation and analysis.

It also differs in its sample because it includes school principals and special education teachers. These two categories give this study a comprehensive vision of this topic.

These previous studies represented a fundamental reference for the researcher in enriching the study's theoretical framework, identifying and formulating its problem, determining the approach, population, sample, and variables. The research considers these studies in discussing the results by presenting similarities and differences, and what this work actually adds to the literature.

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, the descriptive correlational approach was adopted, as it suits the purposes of this study.

Population

The study population consisted of all principals and special education teachers working in the Directorate of Education in Haifa District within the Green Line. A total number of 157 male and female principals and 995 male and female teachers. These numbers are according to the statistical guide for faculty members of the Directorate of Education in Haifa District in the Green Line for the academic year 2022/2023.

Sample

The study sample was selected from the study population using a convenience method. It included 348 male and female principals and teachers. Table 1 below shows the distribution of the study sample members according to the variables.

Table 1. Distribution of the study sample members according to the variables

Variable	Levels/Categories of Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	61	17.5
	Female	287	82.5
Total	348	100.0	
Academic Qualification	Bachelor's degree	103	29.6
	Postgraduate studies	245	70.4
Total	348	100.0	
Job Title	School principal	70	20.1
	Teacher	278	79.9
Total	348	100.0	
Years of Experience	Less than 10 years	80	23.0
	10 years or more	268	77.0
Total	348	100.0	

Instruments

The researcher developed a questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part included the respondent's demographic data, while the second part consisted of two themes: the first was to measure the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership, and the second was to measure the level of job satisfaction among teachers. To formulate the items of the first theme (innovative leadership), reference was made to the theoretical literature and previous studies related to the topic (Sagir, 2017; Al-Hajjaj, 2019). Forty items were formulated and distributed over three domains: innovative behaviour (16 items), dealing with teachers (14 items), and work environment (ten items). To formulate the items of the second theme (job gratitude among teachers), the researcher relied on previous work completed by Sekaja et al. (2022) and Al-Karaawi and Al-Kilabi (2019). This theme in its initial form included 27 items distributed equally over three domains: school principal, colleagues at work, and the local community.

Content Validity of the Tool

To verify the content validity of the tool, it was presented in its initial form to 12 experts in educational administration, foundations of education, teaching methods, and measurement and evaluation, at Yarmouk University, Middle East University, Jerash University, and Irbid National University. They were asked to express their opinions on its items, in terms of clarity of meaning, linguistic formulation, suitability for the domain they belong to, and any modifications and notes they believe appropriate. Based on the observations and opinions of the arbitrators, the researcher modified the phrasing of items (1, 4, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 21), and deleting items (2, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 26, 29, 30, 32, 33, 37) from the items of the first theme (degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership) as recommended by the arbitrators. Thus, the number of items in this theme in its final form became 27 items. For the second theme (job gratitude for teachers), the phrasing of all items was modified where the source of the verb was used at the beginning of each item instead of the verb. They were also modified to suit the use of the source of the verb, thus, the number of items remained 27.

To answer the items of the study tool, the five-point Likert scale was adopted: (very large, takes 5 points; large, takes 4 points; medium, takes 3 points; small, takes 2 points; very small, takes 1 point). The questionnaire was applied to a pilot sample of 30 principals and teachers working in Arab schools in Haifa District outside the target study sample, to calculate the values of Pearson correlation coefficients for the relationship of items to the axis and the domains they belong to (see Table 2).

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients for items with their axis and the domain they belong to (n=30)

First theme: Innovative Leadership among School Principals						
Domain	Item No. Axis	Item Correlation with Domain	Item No.	Item Correlation with Axis	Item No. Domain	Item Correlation with Domain
Innovative Behavior	1	*0.53	*0.37	Dealing with Teachers	10	*0.70
2	*0.64	*0.51	11	*0.54	*0.67	
3	*0.42	*0.23	12	*0.60	*0.67	
4	*0.75	*0.64	13	*0.75	*0.66	
5	*0.54	*0.49	14	*0.73	*0.76	
6	*0.71	*0.70	15	*0.71	*0.72	
7	*0.47	*0.49	16	*0.56	*0.50	
8	*0.62	*0.71	17	*0.66	*0.65	
9	*0.58	*0.67	18	*0.83	*0.70	
Second theme: Job Gratitude among Teachers						
Domain	Item No. Axis	Item Correlation with Domain	Item No.	Item Correlation with Axis	Item No. Domain	Item Correlation with Domain
School Principal	1	*0.76	*0.69	Colleagues at Work	10	*0.72
2	*0.76	*0.67	11	*0.80	*0.81	
3	*0.88	*0.72	12	*0.80	*0.78	
4	*0.76	*0.73	13	*0.59	*0.54	
5	*0.82	*0.73	14	*0.82	*0.79	
6	*0.84	*0.80	15	*0.54	*0.39	
7	*0.64	*0.67	16	*0.63	*0.57	
8	*0.87	*0.78	17	*0.48	*0.57	
9	*0.80	*0.76	18	0.54*	0.65*	

*Statistically significant at the level (0.05)

It is observed from the results of Table 2 that the values of Pearson correlation coefficients for items with domains in the first theme (innovative leadership among school principals) ranged between 0.42 and 0.85. The values of correlation coefficients of items with their theme as a whole ranged between 0.23 and 0.89. Also, the values of Pearson correlation coefficients for items in the second theme (job gratitude among teachers) ranged between 0.48 and 0.88. However, the correlation value of items with their themes as a whole ranged between 0.39 and 0.83. As shown in previous work, these values are considered acceptable (Al-Kilani & Al-Sharifin, 2011, p. 431). Therefore, no items were deleted from the tool items. In addition to the above, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for the relationship of domains to the theme, in addition to calculating

the values of intercorrelation Pearson correlation coefficients for domains among each other for each theme, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Pearson correlation coefficients for the relationship of domains to their axis, and values of intercorrelation Pearson correlation coefficients for domains in each axis

First theme: Innovative Leadership among School Principals				
Relationship	Statistic	Innovative Behavior Dealing with Teachers Work Environment		
Dealing with Teachers	Correlation Coefficient	*0.68		
Work Environment	Correlation Coefficient	*0.76	*0.92	
Total for Axis	Correlation Coefficient	*0.87	*0.94	*0.97
Second theme: Job Gratitude among Teachers				
Relationship	Statistic	School Principal	Colleagues at Work	Local Community
Colleagues at Work	Correlation Coefficient	*0.70		
Local Community	Correlation Coefficient	*0.74	*0.84	
Total for Axis	Correlation Coefficient	*0.90	*0.91	*0.94

*Statistically significant at the level (0.05)

Table 3 above shows the values of correlation coefficients of (innovative leadership) domains with their themes. It also shows the values of inter-correlation coefficients for domains with each other, which were appropriate. The correlation values with the axis as a whole ranged between 0.87 and 0.97, while the intercorrelations between domains ranged between 0.68 and 0.92. Also, the Table shows the values of correlation coefficients of job gratitude among teachers' domains with their theme as a whole, and the values of intercorrelation coefficients for domains were also appropriate. The correlation values with the axis as a whole ranged between 0.90 and 0.94, while the intercorrelations between domains ranged between 0.70 and 0.84. These values are considered suitable for the purposes of the current study (Al-Kilani and Al-Sharifin, 2011, p. 431).

Reliability

To verify the internal consistency reliability of the tool, Cronbach's α equation was used based on the data of the first application for the pilot sample. To verify the test-retest reliability of the tool and its two themes and domains, it was reapplied to the pilot sample with a time interval of two weeks between the two applications. Then, the Pearson Correlation coefficient was calculated between the values of the two applications. Table 4 shows the tool's internal consistency reliability coefficients and test-retest reliability.

Table 4. Cronbach's alpha coefficients and test-retest reliability for the tool and its two axes and their domains

First theme: Innovative Leadership among School Principals				
Domain	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Test-Retest Reliability	
Innovative Behavior	11	0.97	0.92	
Dealing with Teachers	9	0.95	0.97	
Work Environment	7	0.94	0.96	
Innovative Leadership Axis as a whole	27	-	0.98	
Second theme: Job Gratitude among Teachers				
Domain	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Test-Retest Reliability	
School Principal	9	0.96	0.92	
Colleagues at Work	9	0.94	0.93	
Local Community	9	0.93	0.98	
Job Gratitude Axis as a whole	27	-	0.97	

It is observed from Table 4 that the values of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the domains of the (innovative leadership) theme ranged between 0.94 and 0.97. In contrast, the test-retest reliability values for the domains of the same theme ranged between 0.92 and 0.97. The test-retest reliability coefficient for the (innovative leadership) theme was 0.98. It is also observed that the values of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the domains of job gratitude among teachers ranged between 0.93 and 0.96. Also, the test-retest reliability values for the domains of job gratitude among teachers ranged between 0.92 and 0.98. The test-retest reliability coefficient for the job gratitude among teachers theme was also 0.97. These values are considered

appropriate and make the tool applicable to the original sample, as Al-Kilani and Al-Sharifin (2011, p. 431) indicated.

Correction of the Instrument

To make analyze the arithmetic means of the two two themes of the study tool and their domains and the items that follow them, the researcher used the five-point scale to correct the study tool to analyze the degree of innovative leadership practice among school principals, and the level of job gratitude among teachers by dividing the range of numbers (1-5) into five categories to obtain the range of each level, i.e. $(5-1/5=0.80)$. Accordingly, the levels are in Table 5, as follows:

Table 5. Statistical criterion for determining the degree of arithmetic means and their levels

Degree of Practice	Level of Gratitude	Category of Arithmetic Means
Very large	Very high	4.20-5.0
Large	High	3.40- less than 4.20
Medium	Medium	2.60- less than 3.40
Small	Low	1.80- less than 2.60
Very small	Very low	1- less than 1.80

Variables of the Study

The study included the following variables:

Main Variables:

- Degree of innovative leadership practice among school principals in Haifa District.
- Level of job gratitude among special education teachers.

Intermediate Variables:

- Gender: males and females.
- Academic qualification: bachelor's degree and postgraduate studies.
- Job title: school principal and teacher.
- Years of experience: less than 10 years and 10 years or more.

Statistical Treatments

To answer the study questions, the following statistical treatments were used in this study:

- To answer the first question, arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of the study sample about the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership.
- To answer the second question, arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of the study sample members about the level of job gratitude for special education teachers.
- To answer the third question, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership and its domains, and the level of job gratitude among teachers and its domains.

Discussion of Results

Results of the First Question

The first question stated: "What is the degree of innovative leadership practice among Arab school principals in Haifa District within the Green Line from the perspective of principals and teachers?" To answer this question,

arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership in Haifa District from the perspective of principals and teachers (See Table 6).

Table 6. Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the degree of innovative leadership practice on domains arranged in descending order

Rank	Domain No.	Scale and its domains	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Practice
1	1	Innovative behavior	3.69	0.76	Large
2	2	Dealing with teachers	3.61	0.79	Large
3	3	Work environment	3.59	0.87	Large
Total for domains			3.63	0.77	Large

It is observed from the results in Table 6 that the sample members' estimates of the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership on the domains of the theme came to a large degree. The arithmetic mean is 3.63, and the standard deviation is 0.77. The domains came according to the following order: the domain of (Innovative Behavior) in the first rank, with an arithmetic mean of (3.69), a standard deviation of (0.76), and a large degree, followed by the domain of (Dealing with Teachers) in the second rank, with an arithmetic mean of (3.61), a standard deviation of (0.79), and a large degree, and finally the domain of (Work Environment) came in the third rank, with an arithmetic mean of (3.59), a standard deviation of (0.84), and a large degree.

This result can be attributed to the fact that the study sample members are consciously aware of the extent of Arab school principals' interest in the Green Line, in the importance of practising innovative leadership, and its positive impact on improving teachers' performance and raising the level of the educational process and its outputs. This result reflects the school principal's passion to embody the image of the innovative leader. This is achieved through applying leadership practices that support creativity and innovation. The principal provides an encouraging and stimulating educational environment. Additionally, they adopt innovative methods in dealing with educational challenges. Moreover, the principal is viewed as a role model for teachers. They bear the responsibility of investing in technical developments. These developments are employed effectively in the educational field. Consequently, this achieves the desired goals for the school.

Regarding the coming of the innovative behaviour domain in the first rank, with a large degree of practice, this can be attributed to the awareness of principals and teachers of the importance of adopting innovative behavior in light of schools' pursuit of excellence and innovation, especially in light of increasing competition between public and private schools. Therefore, the administrations of these schools seek to enhance this behaviour to achieve excellence. This is seen in principals' support for teachers. They encourage teachers to use different teaching methods and cooperate with them. In addition, school principals are interested in educational issues and work to motivate teachers to address them innovatively. They are keen to provide an educational environment supportive of creativity and involve teachers in developing an innovative vision that contributes to developing the school and improving its performance. Regarding the coming of the domain of dealing with teachers in the second rank, with a large degree of practice, this may be attributed to the awareness of school principals of the importance of the role played by the teacher in the educational process. Therefore, they are keen to strengthen the relationship with them and build bridges of mutual trust by showing appreciation for their creative energies and allowing them to participate in developing the school system. They seek to support their professional growth by enrolling them in training programs and qualification courses that provide them with skills and competencies that enable them to perform their tasks innovatively, especially in light of the rapid technical developments witnessed in the current era.

As for the coming of the work environment domain in the third and last rank, with a large degree of practice, this may be attributed to the realization of principals and teachers of the importance of the educational environment and its effective role in stimulating creativity and excellence among teachers, students, and staff alike. Therefore, school principals are keen to provide an educational environment that is equipped with facilities that enhance innovation. They work to promote the spirit of cooperation and teamwork and encourage positive competition among teachers, which is one of the effective ways to develop creative leadership.

The current study's results align with previous work completed by Sagir (2017). Sagar showed that the level of school principals' practice of innovative leadership behaviors was high. However, the results differ from those of Al-Quraan and Al-Shaqran (2021). Their study showed a medium degree of innovative leadership. The results are also different from the results of Al-Hajjaj (2019). Their study showed that the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership was low.

Results of the Second Question

The second question stated: "What is the level of job gratitude among special education teachers in Arab schools in Haifa District in the Green Line from the perspective of principals and teachers?" To answer this question, arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the axis of job gratitude among special education teachers and its domains, considering arranging the domains in descending order according to their arithmetic means (See Table 7).

Table 7. Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the level of job gratitude among special education teachers and its domains arranged in descending order

Rank	Domain No.	Scale and its domains	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level of Gratitude
1	2	Colleagues at Work	3.75	0.81	High
2	1	School Principal	3.65	0.78	High
3	3	Local Community	3.56	0.89	High
Total for Domains			3.65	0.75	High

It is observed from the results in Table 7 that the arithmetic mean of the sample members' estimates in Haifa District for the level of job gratitude among special education teachers was 3.65. The value of the standard deviations for their estimates was 0.75, with a high level of appreciation. The domains came according to the following order: the domain of colleagues at work in the first rank, with an arithmetic mean of 3.75, a standard deviation of 0.81, and a high level of appreciation, followed by the domain of school principal in the second rank, with an arithmetic mean of 3.65, a standard deviation of 0.78, and a high level of appreciation. Finally, the local community domain comes in the third rank, with an arithmetic mean of 3.56, a standard deviation of 0.89, and a high level of gratitude.

This result can be attributed to the fact that principals and teachers recognize the importance of gratitude as a moral value that has been established by various segments and divine religions (Al-Shirawi et al., 2022). Gratitude is also found to support the school community staff, build healthy social relationships, and enhance school culture in general. From this perspective, practicing gratitude is considered an effective means to enhance awareness of the social domain and strengthen human bonds between all school community members. Additionally, gratitude generates mutual positive effects between principals, teachers, students, and parents, contributing to job satisfaction and enhancing professional life, happiness, and well-being. Furthermore, gratitude facilitates communication and interaction processes, develops humanitarian behaviours, and strengthens social relationships. Teachers' satisfaction with the quality of their work life represents an influential factor in improving the educational process.

The domain of colleagues at work comes in the first rank. Results showed that it has a high level of gratitude. This can be attributed to the fact that the sample members see that special education teachers enjoy the respect and appreciation of their colleagues in the profession, which is clearly evident through their positive behavior and good dealings inside and outside the school, and their support for their colleagues in performing tasks, and filling classes instead of them in cases of illness or fatigue. Therefore, they are grateful to their colleagues for their help in returning favours, appreciation, and praise. They have become a large part of their professional and personal lives since they spend most of their time with them. This may be because school principals show their appreciation for colleagues' cooperation by praising their positive role and their contributions to supporting teachers psychologically and socially and helping them face daily challenges. In fact, this encourages them to achieve school goals. Hence, the estimates of principals and teachers on this domain came within a high level of gratitude.

The domain of the school principal comes in the second rank with a high level of gratitude. This may be due to the fact that the sample members see that special education teachers' feeling of satisfaction towards the services and facilities provided to them by school principals, and their understanding and appreciation of their special circumstances, and dealing with them with fairness, enhances the feelings of gratitude towards them. This may be due to the fact that the positive relationship based on mutual respect and appreciation between the principal and the teacher plays an important role in this, in addition to the principal's motivation of the teacher, and praising his achievements in front of his colleagues inside and outside the school, enhances their feeling of job satisfaction, generates a feeling of gratitude, and pushes him to continue their work within the school without thinking about shifting to other schools.

The local community domain comes in third place with a high level of gratitude. This is perhaps because principals and teachers recognize the importance of the effective role played by local community institutions and individuals. The local community collaborates with the school to follow up on children's issues. The local community also addresses its special educational problems. They show expressions of appreciation to the teacher. The community appreciates the teaching profession and supports teacher issues. They maintain the teacher's status. They participate in the school's various activities and provide moral and material support to students with special needs. This enhanced feelings of gratitude among teachers and principals. These results agree with Al-Fatlawi and Khuraibet's (2020) study, which showed that teachers have a high feeling of job gratitude.

Results of the Third Question

The third question of the study stated: "Is there a statistically significant correlation at the statistical significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the degree of innovative leadership practice among Arab school principals in Haifa District in the Green Line, and the level of job gratitude among special education teachers?" To answer this question, Pearson correlation coefficient values were calculated between the theme of innovative leadership among school principals and its domains and the theme of job gratitude among special education teachers, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Correlation coefficients of the innovative leadership axis and its domains and the job gratitude axis and its domains

Relationship	Statistic	Innovative Behavior	Dealing with Teachers	Work Environment	Total for Domains
School Principal	Correlation Coefficient	0.70	0.73	0.73	0.75
Statistical Significance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Colleagues at Work	Correlation Coefficient	0.60	0.63	0.62	0.65
Statistical Significance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Local Community	Correlation Coefficient	0.58	0.61	0.63	0.64
Statistical Significance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total for Domains	Correlation Coefficient	0.69	0.72	0.73	0.75
Statistical Significance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

*Statistically significant at the level (0.05)

The results in Table 8 indicate a strong positive statistically significant correlation at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the theme of innovative leadership among school principals and its domains and the theme of job gratitude among special education teachers and its domains. This means that the higher the degree of school principals' practice of innovative leadership, the higher the level of job satisfaction among special education teachers. This can be attributed to the fact that the principal's practice of innovative leadership creates a positive educational environment that is stimulating and supportive for teachers. It also enhances their feeling of job stability, psychological security, and reassurance. Additionally, it encourages them to present creative initiatives that contribute to achieving school goals. Similarly, the principal's adoption of innovative behaviour and dealing with teachers sophisticatedly, characterized by tact and respect, pushes them to appreciate and respect him, recognizing his efforts in providing a safe and stable educational environment that enhances their performance and supports their professional journey.

In light of the results, the researcher recommends the following:

- Inviting school principals to continue practising innovative leadership, due to its tangible positive effects on their performance, teachers' performance, and the quality of educational process outputs.
- Directing school principals towards adopting a shared educational vision for school work that enhances feelings of job gratitude among male and female teachers, and ensures its effective continuity.

- Researchers may conduct studies to address innovative leadership and job gratitude from multiple perspectives that differ from what the current study addressed. They are also advised to conduct such studies on different educational communities and link them to variables such as job satisfaction, professional stability, happiness in the work environment, and educational excellence.

Scientific Ethics Declaration

* The author declares that the scientific ethical and legal responsibility of this article published in EPESS Journal belongs to the author.

Conflict of Interest

* The author declares that she has no conflict of interest

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