



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Adaptive leadership practices and their relationship to the performance of school teachers in the West Bank - Palestine

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 24(03), 2145-2158

Publication history: Received on 05 November 2024; revised on 17 December 2024; accepted on 19 December 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.24.3.3823>

### Abstract

Leadership is one of the crucial matters that determine the work of educational institutions. As it provides a good framework for principals to improve teachers' performance. The study aim is to Examining the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and the performance of school teachers in Palestine. mixed method was used. 245 questionnaires were distributed, answered by 245 male and female teachers in the West Bank using a simple random sample. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 school principals and 15 teachers using a purposive sample. The results showed that adaptive leadership behaviors that affect teacher performance in schools are poor, with the average response for the overall score of 2.56. The results were indicated that there are positive adaptive leadership practices that have an impact on teacher performance, such as (supporting teacher professional development, encouraging teamwork and cooperation among teachers, and emphasizing empathy). It was also found that the performance of school teachers was average, the average total response was 3.095, and a statistically significant positive relationship was found between adaptive leadership and the job performance of school teachers in Palestine ( $r = 0.63$ ;  $p \geq 0.01$ ). This study has practical implications for educational policymakers and school leaders, emphasizing the importance of developing adaptive leadership competencies to improve teacher effectiveness and, by extension, student results.

**Keywords:** Adaptive Leadership; Teacher Performance; Mixed Method; Palestine; Leadership Practices

### 1. Introduction

Since the education sector is one that is changing quickly, school administrators need to stay up to date on new developments and find creative solutions to a range of problems (Heifetz & Linsky, 2009), developed the concept of adaptive leadership, which places an emphasis on problem-solving, collaboration, and flexibility in dynamic environments to help leaders deal with situations for which there are no obvious answers. A key position in the administration of the school is held by the principal. being It is crucial to use adaptability and flexibility in management since these qualities can boost student and teacher performance (Jolie lina a. bawit, 2023). Adaptive leadership refers to the capacity to comprehend and adjust to varying degrees of situational demands. This implies that schools are able to recognize positive opportunities and some aspects of needless situations regardless of what occurs. It entails maintaining an upbeat and confident environment (Jolie, 2023). Additionally, if the school has adaptive leadership, it will be able to quickly adjust to any changes that may occur in the workplace. In order to improve education, teacher effectiveness is essential, especially when it comes to encouraging student achievement (Sirait, 2016). Although various policies have been implemented to help teachers teach, there are still some serious barriers. Regarding improvement strategies in general, schools should focus on adopting new measures that can reduce some of these obstacles that affect improving student performance, which is expressed by the result and work ethic achieved to complete the assigned

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tasks and responsibilities within the given time frame (Sunderman, Headrick, & McCain, 2021). The tools themselves must be able to demonstrate their long-term relevance, adaptability to societal change, and the ability to combat ongoing difficulties (Sumiati, et al., 2024). According to numerous studies, the idea of adaptive leadership has the benefit of enabling an organization to become more adaptable while also increasing employee commitment and engagement in finding and putting challenges into practice (Dunn, 2021). The long-term objectives of adaptive leadership, is to create an environment where educators feel encouraged and empowered to contribute, engage and stay (Xu & Zhang, 2022). practicing adaptive leadership can expect to experiment, embrace ambiguity, and play an active role in their own development (Xu & Zhang, 2022). Adaptive leaders help educators to do their best work together and learn, especially during times of crisis or transition. Recent research indicates that teachers who work under adaptive leaders report higher motivation and are more effective because they are better able to navigate the complexities of today's educational demands (Astuti, Fitriana, & Rohana, 2020). Although the literature on leadership in education is growing, empirical studies that specifically examine the relationship between adaptive leadership and staff performance in public schools are still limited (Dolan, 2022). More research is needed on leadership models that foster adaptability, flexibility, and innovation in educational settings. Given the unique challenges that public schools face, including budget constraints, changing educational policies, and diverse student needs, adaptive leadership offers a promising means of improving staff performance by equipping leaders to deal with these complexities effectively. (Wase, 2023). Investigating and exploring this relationship can provide valuable insights into how adaptive leadership enhances motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance among school employees, contributing to better educational outcomes. Additionally, this research can inform school administrators on effective leadership strategies that foster a positive work environment and improve organizational effectiveness in schools.

### **1.1. Important of study**

Adaptive leadership promotes flexibility, problem solving, and adaptability to changing circumstances. This study can help school officials understand how to effectively support teachers in improving student outcomes in Palestinian schools. Examining the influence of adaptive leadership techniques on teacher motivation, engagement, and effectiveness will assist in identifying solutions for promoting a more dynamic and productive learning environment. Adaptive leadership practices can implement specialized curricula in Palestinian educational institutions. They work to address challenges to raise the level of flexibility among teachers and adapt them to the current circumstances. Examining and exploring the relationship between adaptive leadership and teacher performance Providing information about improving and developing adaptive leadership practices leads to improving teachers' performance, and thus the outcome is effective learning outcomes. Therefore, understanding adaptive leadership practices helps create a positive organizational climate. The importance of this study was that it combines two types of (quantitative and qualitative research), and this provides a broad understanding of the link between adaptive leadership and teacher performance. Therefore, using the mixed approach promotes the emergence of strong results that reflect the experiences of school teachers in Palestine. Therefore, this study provides a clear vision for developing leadership models that have a positive impact on Palestinian educational institutions.

### **1.2. Study problem**

Schools in the West Bank suffer from a variety of challenges, including political factors and a lack of financial and human resources. These challenges affect the quality of education and the performance of teachers in their schools. Therefore, traditional leadership is considered important in solving save these issues. In contrast, traditional leadership models fail in solving these problems. the more challenging and having transformation of meaning as optimal as more modern model that select abettor scope of performance if adopted as the adaptive leader of the study is: "How do adaptive leadership practices affect the performance of Palestinian school teachers?"

### **1.3. Aim of study**

Examining the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and the performance of school teachers in Palestine.

### **1.4. Study objective**

- Identify specific adaptive leadership practices that positively impact teachers' performance in educational settings.
- Evaluating the performance of school teachers from the principal's point of view
- Studying the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and employee performance in Palestine schools.

## 2. Literature Review

This study looked at analyzed scientific publications, previously published articles, and books that dealt with the same topic, objectives, and keywords. The database was searched using the following keywords: adaptive leadership, performance, school principals, teachers, schools, Palestine. The following are the most significant past studies connected to the issue of this research, which were presented through the study's objectives as follows:

### 2.1. Adaptation leadership practices in educational context

Heifetz and Linsky (Heifetz & Linsky, 2009) initially introduced the concept of adaptive leadership, which is a leadership strategy meant to assist organizations in navigating complicated, dynamic challenges. A theoretical model that is commonly used in leadership studies is adaptive leadership. This idea is not limited to the field of education; rather, it has been incorporated into leadership strategies in American educational systems as a standard practice in recent years (Wilson, 2024). This leadership style has become popular in the educational setting because it places a strong emphasis on adaptability, teamwork, and the capacity to promote change in fast-paced settings (Waale, Kpakol, & Gabriel, 2023). Technological innovations, changing curricula, and a range of student needs are just a few of the difficulties that educational institutions must overcome. In order to address these problems, it is believed that adaptive leadership practices in colleges and universities are crucial because they enable teachers to be creative problem solvers. Adaptive leadership is a concept that goes beyond traditional notions of leadership, focusing on the ability to overcome uncertainty, mobilize stakeholders, and create tangible change in dynamic environments. Unlike technical challenges that have known solutions, adaptive challenges require innovative approaches, experimentation, and learning through experience (busa, yakubu, & olabode, 2024). Leadership that can swiftly adjust to the obstacles it encounters is known as adaptive leadership. precise and pertinent. This adaptive leadership model is comparable to Flexible driving. Both ideas can be used in context-based learning to develop flexible and adaptable instructional leadership. Additionally, adaptive leadership can be used in the classroom by: Context Analysis: Considering the difficulties they encounter, school administrators choose appropriate tactics. establishing policies, prioritizing tasks for the team, establishing human resources (HR), and Track, assess, and act upon the evaluation's findings (Fitriani, 2023). In order to apply adaptive leadership theory to education, school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders must create a dynamic environment in which complex problems are solved through collaboration and experimentation (Northouse, 2015). By putting adaptive leadership theory into practice, schools can empower both teachers and students to overcome difficult obstacles and foster a culture of lifelong learning and development. This method is highly applicable in developing educational settings such as Palestine, where creative and context-appropriate solutions are needed to address institutional and societal problems.

### 2.2. Teacher performance in educational institution

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of teacher performance in the classroom as a crucial step in the educational process. (Afandi, Wahyuningsih, & Mayasari, Cakrawala Pendidikan,) , Teacher performance was described as the behaviors or responses that lead to the results that teachers achieve and are evaluated against standardized competency standards that teachers must meet. Mixed research has been conducted to understand how teacher performance relates to academic performance, which argued (Fadlun & Fatmawati, 2023) that teachers are professional in their work and professionally committed. This indicates that improving performance and application would lead to improving the learning process. Therefore, student success can serve as a measure of how well teachers do their job. Teachers, as leaders in the classroom and at school, need to implement change or make a difference. Consequently, Fadlun came to the conclusion that Performance of the teacher has a positive effect on the academic performance of students in the class, as evidenced by the value of ( $P \leq 0.050$  while the value of the correlation coefficient ( $r^2$ ) = 0.116 or only 11.6% . On the other hand, as (ÖZGENEL & MERT , 2019) points out in his article, teachers' performance at the school level directly adds to the school's success by attaining their educational goals. In addition ,özgenel & mert who relied on the research findings, indicated that teachers' evaluations of school performance do not differ statistically significantly by gender or seniority. But it depends on their educational background and degree of studies. Teacher performance has been the subject of various studies, focusing on several different factors. One of these studies was conducted by (Kanya, Fathon, & Ramdan, 2021) who studied the effect of school principals' leadership, organizational culture, and teachers' competence on teachers' performance and the extent to which these measures affect achieving educational goals partially or completely. After achieving the objectives of the study, Kania concluded that the variables (principal leadership, organizational culture, and teacher competence) have a significant impact on teacher performance.

### 2.3. Adaptive Leadership practices and its relation with teacher performance

Many prior research has focused on the positive effect of adaptive leadership in developing and increasing teacher performance in educational institutions, whether in teacher education or university education. (herrity, 2024) in his article, he stated that adaptive leadership is a leadership style developed by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky to solve complicated and long-term issues or obstacles. It can also help businesses adapt to change. Pujiato 'through a systematic review of past studies, asserted that timely implementation of effective strategic changes and decision-making relies on enhancing the dynamically changing environment to address current issues (Pujiato, Haque, Dyatmika, & Ferry, 2023). As a result, adaptive leadership is the best fit for dynamic situational difficulties. The research analysis revealed that the keywords form a network between one study and another, allowing researchers to determine the most and least used terms. In this study, "adaptive leadership" is one of the most often used keywords in organizational and leadership research. However, "adaptive leadership" is still not commonly used in education, accounting for only approximately 1.5% of research (Pujiato, Haque, Dyatmika, & Ferry, 2023). According to research conducted between 2007 and 2022, 10 keywords were the least common in the study connected to "adaptive leadership." The three terms with the fewest overall links are "model," "school," and "adaptive action," as well as the burgeoning subject that rarely investigates "adaptive leadership," "education. There are some studies that have demonstrated adaptive.

Ineffective leadership can have a negative impact on employee performance. Poor leadership performance may result in failure in the business or governmental institution. In a quantitative study by Wase (2023), it investigated the adaptive leadership style adopted by different directorates in Ethiopia's Federal Ministry of Education. The findings showed that implementing adaptive leadership in an organization has a substantial predictive potential for employee performance. This suggests that the more adaptive leadership is practiced in an organization, the better the attainment of goals and organizational success.

Exploring teacher performance in order to improve educational quality and student progress is an important topic in Indonesian education. The study by (Sumiati Sumiati, et al., 2024) sought to investigate the impact of adaptive leadership on teachers' performance, with collaborative school culture serving as a mediating variable. The results showed that adaptive leadership has a large and favorable impact on teacher performance. Teacher. It was also observed that collaborative school culture served as an effective mediating variable during the process.

### 2.4. Gap of the study

There is already a lot of research on adaptive leadership which sheds light on the significance in different organizational settings. However, studies focusing on the associations between adaptive leadership practices and performance among school teachers are meager that too in Palestinian context is almost absent. There is a relative dearth of literature specifically on this application of adaptive leadership, and despite numerous studies that discuss various leadership styles and their educational outcomes, there have been few reports of how remote school principals are using it. In addition, schools in Palestine operate within a very specific socio-political context that represents particular challenges for school leadership; the complexity of adaptive leadership and its impact on teacher performance may be influenced by these particular circumstances. With the gap of knowledge given, it can be inferred that this study is needed to investigate the specific adaptive leadership practices characteristics used according to Palestinian schools, and outline its impact on teacher performance at the same time in mixed-methods design towards an optimal view.

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## 3. Method

This study adopts a mixed approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods. Obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the impact of adaptive leadership on employee performance in Palestinian schools. A quantitative approach will allow the relationship between adaptive leadership and employee performance to be measured, while a qualitative approach will provide insight into the underlying dynamics, challenges and perceptions of leadership and performance. The study population consists of 40,000 school teachers distributed among 3,190 schools (PCBS, 2023). A probability cluster simple random sampling technique was used for teachers in schools, with a confidence rate of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. 245 samples were obtained and distributed to teachers. As for the sample of principals and teachers using the qualitative method, the purposeful sampling technique was chosen, as 15 principals and teachers were reached, all of whom answered the study's questions. In this study, two types of study tools were used: a questionnaire created by the researcher: an interview about school teachers' perception of adaptive leadership practices and distributed to school teachers. Another questionnaire about teachers' performance was created by the researcher and distributed to school principals. A semi structure -interview was also conducted. An organization for school principals and teachers. In the qualitative method, the validity of the interview questions for school principals was verified through expert review, and the Constant Validity Ratio (CVR) test was conducted to

ensure the clarity and suitability of the questions. The results indicated that CVR = 86%. To measure the reliability of interviews using percent agreement (also known as inter-rater reliability), the formula is:

$$\text{Percentage Agreement} = (\text{Number of Agreements} / \text{Total Number of Ratings}) \times 100$$

$$\text{Number of Agreement} = 11 \quad \text{Total Number of Ratings} = 15$$

$$\text{Percentage Agreements} = (11/15) \times 10\% = 73\%$$

As for quantitative research, the validity of the tool was tested by conducting a pilot study on 30 teachers and their data will not be included in the results of the study in order to ensure internal consistency through the survey tool of measures regarding the practice of adaptive leadership and employee performance. Pearson correlation coefficients were found between the statements and the total scores for each scale as shown in Table (1).

**Table 1** Internal consistency validity of the adaptive leader practice scale

Statement	R	sig
Involves employees in decision-making processes.	0.78	0.000**
It encourages employees to think about their work and adapt to new challenges	0.85	0.000**
Supports the professional development of employees.	0.73	0.000**
Provides a clear vision while allowing flexibility in how to achieve goals	0.80	0.000**
Facilitates open communication and encourages feedback from employees.	0.79	0.000**
Pro0.88motes a culture 581of innovation and risk-taking	0.69	0.000**
Shows flexibility when dealing with unexpected challenges.	0.88	0.000**
Encourages teamwork and cooperation among employees.	0.81	0.000**
Shows empathy and understanding toward employees' concerns	0.77	0.000**

\*\*Significant correlation at (p ≤ 0.01).

The results in Table (1) showed that all items were statistically and significantly related to the total degree of adaptive leader practice, and the correlation values ranged between (r = 0.69- 0.88; p ≥ 0.01). These results confirm that the scale achieves what it aims to measure.

**Table 2** Internal consistency validity of the performance scale from the point of view of school principals

Statement	R	sig
Students' academic performance has improved in recent years.	0.69	0.000**
Teachers show higher levels of job satisfaction and engagement.	0.71	0.000**
the school environment supports teachers and makes them feel appreciated and respected	0.790	0.000**
The ability to solve problems in cooperation with teachers by implementing innovative strategies in education.	0.82	0.000**
The overall school climate (student-teacher relations, staff morale, etc.) has improved due to leadership actions.	0.71	0.000**
The school's performance has been positively impacted by implementing adaptive leadership practices such as encouraging innovation and flexibility.	0.61	0.000**

\*\*Significant correlation at (p ≤ 0.01).

The results in Table (2) showed that all items were statistically and significantly related to the total score of the performance scale, and the correlation values ranged between ( $r = 0.61- 0.82$ ;  $p \geq 0.01$ ). These results confirm that the scale achieves what it aims to measure.

### 3.1. Reliability

Cronbach's alpha equation was used to ensure the reliability of the scale. The reliability coefficient values for the adaptive leadership practice and efficiency scales were (0.93, 0.92), respectively. These results confirm that the study measures were reliable and valid to achieve the study objectives

### 3.2. Data collection tool

After conducting the validity and reliability of the quantitative and qualitative tools, data was collected in two stages: The first is to collect quantitative data: distributing the questionnaire to teachers, which is a measure of the practices of adaptive leaders, from the point of view of teachers, created by the researcher, which discussed the involvement of employees in decision-making, innovation, flexibility, communication. The second measure of the questionnaire is a performance measure that was distributed to principals and discussed job performance, job satisfaction, and the general climate of the school. Second, qualitative data collection: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals and teachers, to explore their experiences and perceptions about adaptive leadership and its impact on employee performance. The interview guide will focus on topics such as leadership practices, challenges, support systems, and direct and indirect impact on teacher performance. Conduct interviews with teachers to identify adaptive leadership practices that positively impact teacher performance.

### 3.3. Statistical Analysis method

Quantitative data were processed through descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, and standard deviations) to describe the characteristics of the sample. This is done by entering the data into SPSS V 26, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to verify the internal consistency of the two measures of the tool. The Cronbach alpha test was also conducted to ensure the stability of the tool's measures. The Pearson correlation test was used to determine the relationship between adaptive leadership and teachers' performance. Qualitative data: was analyzed using thematic analysis. Interview transcripts were coded, and emerging themes were identified to provide deeper insights into how adaptive leadership practices impact employee performance.

## 4. Result

### 4.1. Demographic characteristics of participants

The data was subjected to descriptive analysis and divided into ratios and numbers to determine the distribution of variable values. The term "frequency" in descriptive analysis refers to the quantity of responses given by respondents. Table (3) presents the demographic analysis of teachers in Palestine schools. According to the results, 29.4% of the study participants were male, while 70.6% of the study participants were female. In addition, they succeeded in the fact that 51% of the participants who responded to the study belonged to the age group of 30-39 years. The study also indicated that 60.4% of the people who responded had a bachelor's degree, and the results also indicated that (46.1%) of the respondents had less than 10 years of experience.

**Table 3** Demographic characteristics of participants (n=245)

Demographic variables	Level of variable	N	%
Gender	Male	72	29.4
	Female	173	70.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age	Less than 30 years	81	33.1
	30- 39 years	125	51
	40 years and above	39	15.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100%</b>

Education level	Diploma	53	21.6
	Bachelor	148	60.4
	Higher studies	44	18
	<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100%</b>
Experience	Less than 10 years	113	46.1
	10- 15 years	73	29.8
	Above 15 years	59	24.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100%</b>

Identify positive adaptive leadership practices that affect employee performance in educational settings.

To determine adaptive leadership practices that positively impact employee performance in educational settings, descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and percentages) were calculated for each item and the domain to which it belongs as shown in Table (4). (5- point Likert scale

**Table 4** Adaptive leadership practices based on the participant answers

Likert scale	interval	Difference	Description
1	(1.80 and below)	0.8	Very low level
2	(1.81 - 2.60)	0.8	Low level
3	(2.61- 3.40)	0.8	Moderate level
4	(3.41- 4.20)	0.8	High level
5	(4.21 and above)	0.8	Very high level

**Table 5** means and standard deviations to determine adaptive leadership practices that affect the performance of teacher in schools (n = 245).

N	Statements	Mean* ± SD	Level
1-	Involves employees in decision-making processes.	2.06± 0.43	Low level
2-	It encourages employees to think about their work and adapt to new challenges	1.96± 0.41	Low level
3-	Supports the professional development of employees.	3.73± 0.77	High
4-	Provides a clear vision while allowing flexibility in how to achieve goals	2.02±0.39	Low level
5-	Facilitates open communication and encourages feedback from employees.	2.06±0.42	Low level
6-	promote innovation and risk-taking	2.30±0.47	Low level
7-	Shows flexibility when dealing with unexpected challenges.	1.75±0. 39	Very low level
8-	Encourages teamwork and cooperation among employees.	3.69±0.73	High
9-	Shows empathy and understanding toward employees' concerns	3.68±0.69	High
	Total score	2.58 ± 0.52	Low level

SD= standard deviation

The results in Table (5) indicate that adaptive leadership practices that affect teachers' performance in schools are low, as the average response for the total score was 2.56. In addition, the response was high in the questionnaire, item 3, "supports the professional development of employees," with an average response of 3.73, and in the total questionnaire, item 8, "encourages teamwork and cooperation among employees," the average response was also high, 3.69, and in item 9, "shows empathy and understanding toward the interests of Employees" where the average response was 3.69 high. While the average responses were in Item 1, "Involves employees in decision-making," Item 2, "Encourages employees to think about their work and adapt to new challenges," Item 4, "Provides a clear vision while allowing flexibility in how to achieve goals," and Item 5, "Facilitates open communication and encourages feedback." of employees" and Clause 6 "enhances the culture of innovation and risk-taking". All of them had low response averages (2.06, 1.96, 2.02, 2.06, 2.30), while the lowest response, with an average of 1.76, was in favor of the questionnaire statement, item 7, "Shows flexibility when dealing with unexpected challenges." The results indicated that there are positive adaptive leadership practices that have influenced On teachers' performance, it consists of supporting teachers' professional development, encouraging teamwork and cooperation among teachers, and having empathy and understanding toward teachers' concerns.

#### 4.2. School teachers' performance from the principal's point of view.

In order to determine the performance of school teachers and according to the principals' responses, descriptive statistics were used (means and standard deviations) as shown in Table (6).

**Table 6** means and standard deviations to determine the current performance of public school teachers in Jenin (n = 245).

Statement	Mean $\pm$ SD	Level
Students' academic performance has improved in recent years.	3.02 $\pm$ 0.53	Moderate level
Teachers show higher levels of job satisfaction and engagement.	1.90 $\pm$ 0.45	Low level
The school environment supports teachers and makes them feel appreciated and respected	3.35 $\pm$ 0.67	Moderate level
The ability to solve problems in cooperation with teachers by implementing innovative strategies in education.	3.85 $\pm$ 0.7	High level
The overall school climate (student-teacher relations, staff morale, etc.) has improved due to leadership actions.	2.70 $\pm$ 0.42	Moderate level
The school's performance has been positively impacted by implementing adaptive leadership practices such as encouraging innovation and flexibility.	3.75 $\pm$ 0.69	High level
TOTAL SCORE	3.095 $\pm$ 0.57	Moderate level

The results shown in Table (6) indicated that the performance of school teachers is average, as the overall average response was 3.095, while the lowest average response was in favor of item 2, "Teachers show higher levels of job satisfaction and participation," with an average response of 1.90, while the highest average response was in favor of Item 4, "The ability to solve problems that arise in cooperation with teachers through implementing innovative strategies in education," with an average response of 3.85.

#### 4.3. The relationship between adaptive leadership practices and teachers' performance in schools.

To find the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and teachers' performance, the Pearson correlation test was used, where the results in Table (7) showed a positive statistically significant relationship between adaptive leadership and the job performance of school teachers ( $r = 0.63$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

**Table 7** The relationship between adaptive leadership and job performance of teachers in, West Bank schools in Palestine (n = 245).

Variable	Teacher performance
Adaptive leadership	0.63

\*\* Significant correlation at ( $p \leq 0.01$ ).



#### **4.4. Results of the qualitative method**

The results of the semi-structured interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, which was divided after the coding process into main themes and sub-themes, where teachers and principals were asked the same previous questions, but with a qualitative approach.

- Results related to the first question
- Interviews with teachers
- What are the adaptive leadership practices that affect the performance of teachers ?
- The first main topic: supporting professional development

#### **4.5. Sub-theme**

##### *4.5.1. Encouraging continuous learning and skills development*

All participating teachers indicated that adaptive leadership practices always encourage the process of enhancing lifelong learning opportunities and building skills for the teacher. This is an approach that the Ministry of Education adopts periodically, as it focuses on the process of training cadres, and these trainings have been intensive, especially in the Corona pandemic, with regard to the subject of intensive training on technology, especially giving lessons through electronic platforms to ensure the continuation of education.

##### *4.5.2. Ways for teachers to participate in decision-making*

Participants indicated that their participation in decision-making regarding educational decision-making, which allows them to take ownership of their teaching methods, is almost non-existent. The adaptive leader is the one who makes the decision without referring to the teachers, especially in teaching methods, and that anyone who creates a special method is a waste of time. This is because the classes are crowded with students, which makes the innovation process difficult.

#### **4.6. The second main theme: Promoting a cooperative and comprehensive school culture**

##### *4.6.1. Sub-theme*

- Promoting teamwork and peer support

10 of the participants indicated that adaptive leadership behaviors encourage and support teamwork and cooperation among employees in order to exchange experiences, especially when hiring a new employee, and in order to solve challenges collectively. While five of the sample members indicated that they were neutral on the topic of cooperation and teamwork.

- Creating a comprehensive environment for diverse needs

Participants indicated that adaptive leadership practices show empathy and understanding, regardless of academic qualifications or years of experience, toward teachers' concerns, and this creates a good climate within the school. The reason is that the social context in Palestine is an intertwined context, meaning that members of one school may have a kinship, lineage, or Certain political affiliations.

#### **4.7. The third main theme: Encouraging innovation and flexibility**

##### *4.7.1. Sub-theme*

- Promoting creative solutions to problems

Participants indicated that the adaptive leader often does not encourage the culture of innovation and does not promote overcoming risks. Perhaps one of the most prominent reasons for this is that the adaptive leader is still a traditional leader who always likes to stand in the comfort zone and does not like to deviate from the context, but he is obligated to adapt to special circumstances because the obligation comes from the senior leadership.

- Adapting to change

The participants indicated that the adaptive leader in his organization does not show flexibility when dealing with unexpected circumstances. He is the one who makes decisions based on senior management. He never allows us to

provide creative solutions to deal with these unexpected circumstances. He does not provide a clear vision in dealing with the new goals that arise with change.

- Contact and communication

The participants indicated that the practices of the adaptive leader in their school never help in open communication and do not accept the teachers' reactions, claiming that it is of no benefit, as everyone in the institution complies with the laws set by the Ministry of Education, and that coming up with the teachers' reactions poses a threat to job security.

Results related to the second question for managers

The current performance of Palestinian school teachers

- **The first main theme:** organizational performance
- **Sub-theme:** Teachers' performance in light of adaptive leader practices

The participants, who were principals, indicated that the academic achievement of students had improved by an average rate, but in reality, as the teachers indicated, student achievement, especially in the basic stages, had declined due to the lack of a long-term plan to create programs that take care of educational loss, and this is considered one of the biggest challenges facing schools.

The main participants also indicated a lack of job satisfaction among teachers, and attributed this dissatisfaction to the irregularity of their salaries, but in reality, as the teachers indicated, one of the biggest reasons for their dissatisfaction with the practices of the adaptive leader is that teachers are a tool for implementing what the ministry dictated, and that Principals never encourage innovation and coming up with ideas that benefit the educational process, especially since there is a good group estimated at 18% of teachers who have advanced degrees. While the participants indicated that the school is effective in achieving its annual goals, the teachers indicated otherwise, as they completed the curriculum, but not effectively. The participating principals also reported that the Ministry of Education does not provide the necessary resources to advance the educational process, and that the school is forced to follow a policy of austerity in spending the available resources. While the participants indicated that the school is effective in achieving its annual goals, the teachers indicated otherwise, as they completed the curriculum, but not effectively. The participating principals also reported that the Ministry of Education does not provide the necessary resources to advance the educational process, and that the school is forced to follow a policy of austerity in spending the available resources. Meaning that the leader does not work to adapt what is available to serve the educational process. As for employee morale, principals indicated that their morale was low, which affected the general climate and their relationship with their students. This in turn affected organizational performance, which in turn affected teachers' performance.

#### 4.8. Results related to the third question

- **Theme "1"** The relationship between adaptive leadership and teachers' performance in schools

#### 4.9. Manager interviews

- **Sub-theme 1** Problem solving and decision making

The participants indicated that solving problems under political circumstances was difficult, and that they were the ones who made the decision after returning to higher authorities, and that the role of the teacher in decision-making was almost non-existent because the teacher was always busy giving classes and finishing the curriculum on time.

- **Sub-theme 2** Encouraging innovation and flexibility

The participants reported that the strategies already exist, that their implementation is within a plan, and that there is no need to waste time in order to innovate in their implementation, especially since there are many external factors that limit the trend towards innovation due to the irregularity of school hours throughout the week.

- **Sub-theme 3** Promoting a supportive and inclusive school environment

The participants reported that they support the teacher psychologically. As for providing an environment that supports teaching methods by providing sources of financial support, this does not exist due to the restrictions imposed on government institutions, which has affected the lack of a supportive and comprehensive school environment that supports the implementation of training and development programs for teachers and thus affected the performance of teachers.

#### 4.10. Interview with teachers

Teachers reported that there is a relationship between the adaptive leadership style and organizational performance, meaning that the more positive the adaptive leader's practices are, the higher the performance. When asked about whether there is a relationship between the adaptive leader in your school and your performance, teachers indicated that the principal does not involve teachers in decision-making and that promoting innovation in the curriculum is almost non-existent due to several circumstances, the most important of which is the leader's application of traditional leadership in the sense of maintaining what is as it is.

External circumstances, represented by political and economic factors, led to the emergence of lower levels of leader practices in the school. They also reported that the principal cannot differentiate between adaptive leadership and change leadership, and that this gap in meanings constituted a fundamental obstacle for educators in implementing and developing innovative strategies in education.

#### 4.11. Summary

In this study, the mixed method was used, as a questionnaire was distributed to the study sample, which was selected using the simple random technique, and semi-structured interviews were also conducted on the study sample, which was selected using the purposive sampling technique. The study questions were answered in two ways, once through the questionnaire and once through an interview, and the following was revealed: When asked to identify positive adaptive leadership practices that affect employee performance in educational settings. In two ways: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative results showed that the leader practices that positively affect teachers' performance for the total score are low. There are adaptive leader practices that positively affect teachers' performance, including supporting professional development, encouraging cooperative work, and showing empathy. The qualitative results for the same question were similar to the quantitative results, as they confirmed that the adaptive leader practices that positively affect teachers' performance are low, while the adaptive leadership practices that positively affect are training, development, and cooperative work. Therefore, using both methods enables researchers to verify the results, which increases the validity and reliability of the results. If both methods produce similar results, the evidence is stronger. When answering the second question of the study, which was about the performance of teachers from the point of view of school principals, the results indicated that the performance of the teachers was average when analyzing the results in the quantitative research, but when analyzing the data qualitatively, we found that the performance of the teachers was average. While answering the third question, which studies the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and the performance of school teachers. The results, which were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, indicated that there is a relationship between adaptive leadership and teachers' performance.

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## 5. Discussion

The rapidly changing educational landscape, characterized by increasing complexity and demands, has highlighted the need for strong leadership capable of guiding schools through ongoing transformation. In this context, adaptive leadership has emerged as a vital means, allowing leaders to deal with volatility while encouraging innovation and flexibility in their teams. This study aimed to explore the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and the performance of school teachers in Palestine. The results indicated that the positive adaptive leadership practices that affected the performance of teachers were training and development, as this practice constituted 74.6% of the rest of the practices. The reason is that the policy of the Ministry of Education includes the subject of training employees in order to keep pace with any change developments taking place, but in the years Over the past three years, due to political pressures, the subject of training has declined while facing challenges. The results of the current study supported a study by (Bawit, 2023). The results indicated that adaptive leadership practices positively affect the performance of teachers and enhance the training and development of the educational staff. The results also indicated that the performance of public school teachers was 61.8%, it was an average performance, while there was no satisfaction from the adaptive leader with the teachers' performance due to his lack of knowledge of the most important adaptive leadership practices, while the result of this study contradicted a study conducted in Indonesia by (Sumiati S., et al., 2024). It indicated that the performance of employees was high as adaptive leadership was well applied in their schools. The study confirms the importance of adaptive leadership in helping teachers overcome complex challenges in their work. Teachers today face various challenges, such as changing curricula, pressures integrating technology into the

classroom, lack of infrastructure, and political pressures, all of which are factors that have led to a decline in adaptive leader practices, especially in the always complex Palestinian context. The results also indicated that there is a positive, statistically significant relationship between adaptive leadership practices and teachers' performance, as the Pearson correlation coefficient was  $r = 0.63$  at a  $P$  value  $\leq 0.01$ , while the results of the current study supported the study (Hifarva, 2023). The study indicated that there is a relationship between adaptive leadership and employee performance. In another study, the results of the study were supported (Sumiati Sumiati, et al., 2024). The study indicated that adaptive leadership provides teachers with ways to innovate, cooperate with others, and participate in decision-making in the school, and this in turn led to an increase in the performance of teachers in schools.

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## 6. Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between adaptive leadership practices and the performance of school teachers in Palestine, using a mixed methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of this dynamic. The results indicate that adaptive leadership positively affects teacher performance by providing ways to train and develop teachers and qualify them to face challenges, and by encouraging ways of teamwork and cooperation among teachers. Through quantitative and qualitative data, it became clear that school principals have a gap in understanding the meanings regarding adaptive leadership. Furthermore, the study underscores the critical importance of ongoing leadership training and development in the education sector in equipping school leaders with the necessary skills to deal with complex and changing situations. Schools that embrace adaptive leadership can improve not only the performance of their teachers, but also the overall quality of education provided to students. Finally, the study underscores the importance of the link between adaptive leadership and teacher performance in public schools, arguing that this leadership style must be widely adopted to support long-term progress in educational outcomes in Palestine and elsewhere.

### *Recommendation*

- Encourage the adoption of adaptive leadership practices at all levels of school administration. This can be achieved by providing training and professional development to school principals and supervisors that focuses on enhancing their adaptability, flexibility and innovation skills.
- Promote inclusive leadership models that engage teachers in decision-making processes, allowing them to contribute to the development of school policies, curriculum change, and student engagement strategies.
- Develop and implement ongoing professional development programs that are aligned with the principles of adaptive leadership. These programs should enhance teachers' ability to respond to changes in student performance, curricular needs, and educational policies.
- Provide resources and support systems that enable teachers to effectively implement these changes, such as access to educational technology, peer mentoring programs, and additional planning time.
- Provide more qualitative assessments, such as peer reviews and self-reflection tools, that allow teachers to assess their ability to adapt and respond to challenges in the classroom.

It is highly recommended to conduct more studies and research based on focus groups and observations to shed light on adaptive leadership practices and their relationship to the performance of public school teachers in Palestine.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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