

# The Role of Educational Leaders in Ensuring Academic Integrity with Online Assessments

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## Abstract

The swift transition to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a reevaluation of academic integrity within digital assessments. This study investigates the pivotal role of educational leaders in preserving academic integrity during online assessments in Sharjah, UAE, focusing on policy formulation and implementation discrepancies. The research adopted a mixed-methods design to examine the credibility of online assessments in five private American curriculum schools in Sharjah, through surveys and interviews with 30 educational leaders and analysis of policy documents. Quantitative data was collected using a Likert scale survey focused on leaders' perspectives on online assessment credibility, their role in policy implementation, and recommendations for improvements, while qualitative data came from semi-structured interviews addressing online assessment practices and policies. A document analysis of the schools' assessment policies was then conducted to identify gaps between current practices and best practices as reflected in the literature and leader insights. The findings reveal significant gaps between existing assessment policies and their implementation, highlighting the outdated nature of many policies that failed to accommodate the nuances of online education introduced by the pandemic. Educational leaders were found to exert a critical influence on the maintenance of integrity, yet the effective alignment of policy with practice remains inconsistent. This research underscores the need for continuous policy evaluation and adaptation to technological advancements, and for fostering an ethical educational environment that actively discourages academic dishonesty. Recommendations for future research include expanding the geographical and demographic scope to enhance generalizability and delving deeper into the collaborative roles of different educational stakeholders in policy implementation.

# **Keywords**

Academic Integrity, Educational Leadership, Online Assessment, Digital Education

## **1. Introduction**

"Academic integrity" is a term susceptible to a variety of interpretations. It is sometimes used to refer to the conduct of students, particularly regarding plagiarism and cheating. The English term "integrity" stems from the Latin words "integer" and "integritas", which signify whole, integrating many aspects of one's actual nature. Integrity is strongly related with the attributes that create a "good" person in philosophical ethics (MacIntyre, 1981). Numerous authors have emphasized character excellences, such as modesty as a scholar or (appropriate) confidence as a professor, in relation to academic functions by using virtue ethics (e.g. Macfarlane 2009; Nixon 2004; Pring 2001). Fjellstrom (2005) believes that, from a legal perspective, integrity can also be regarded as the existence of specific rights, such as those linked with being a citizen or holding property. One should not, for instance, harm the "integrity" of a person's or private property. Burke and Sanney (2018) assert that most students will surely cheat in order to earn a passing mark. Various factors can determine the reasoning supporting this conclusion. The fraud triangle, which consists of three circumstances that might lead to cheating, is one theory underlying cheating. The three elements are "incentive/pressure," "opportunity," and "rationalization/attitude" (King, Guyette & Piotrowski 2009, p. 3). Bressler & Bressler (2007) proposed a modification to the fraud triangle in the form of a square. They uncovered four components of the fraud square: incentive, opportunity, capability, and realization.

Academic integrity is composed of core principles such as honesty, dependability, justice, esteem, and responsibility. According to Cole and Swartz (2013), it is a mutual commitment that begins with the institution fostering a culture which does not tolerate academic wrongdoing. Proctoring (or invigilating) is one of the simplest, low-tech ways to ensure academic integrity during an exam held on-campus, but is not so easy when an exam is held online in the cloud. Consequently, in recent years, online proctoring services have gained popularity; asking pupils to utilize webcams or specialist software for voice and facial recognition. These are very useful because if a proctor observes anything suspect because they can immediately halt a student's exam (Howell et al. 2010). However, the reality is that online proctoring tools are very expensive and beyond the budget of many schools. Schools can adopt more affordable technologies, for example using a lockdown browser software. Still, weaknesses and deficiencies with these lockdown browsers can quickly become apparent because students are able to outwit them using numerous strategies.

Some private sector schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have been using online exams for formative assessment since the coronavirus pandemic by integrating them within the school's Learning Management System (LMS); however, the success of such online assessments vary quite remarkably. In their study, Hussain and Ain (2021) found that high achievers felt disadvantaged by online evaluation. Their criticisms, which primarily concern fairness and accuracy, are legitimate and at least somewhat reasonable. Arguably, online assessments do not accurately reflect the actual performance of pupils due to a variety of factors, including access to the Internet, and the involvement of parents or tutors during examinations. Although there is some published research about online assessments (Pedersen, White, & Smith, 2012), particularly on effective online assessment strategies (Gaytan & McEwen, 2007), little research has examined the role of leaders in establishing the validity of learners' performance on these assessments.

With the growing acceptance of online learning in the UAE, there have been commendable efficiency improvements, but there have also been drawbacks (Alruwais et al., 2018). In practice, one summative assessment activity is unlikely to fulfil the requirements of diverse cohorts of learners from significantly varying cultural, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds. However, meeting this issue poses important questions regarding the validity of present-day assessments (Siddiquah, & Salim, 2017). It is essential to analyze the validity and appropriateness of newly generated assessment forms because new technologies are intriguing, although the same functions and purposes of assessment remain independent of the technology. Those who plan to employ ICTs in evaluation must consider the fact that as technology and media evolve, so do student behaviors (Alruwais et al., 2018). Bonk (2000), among others, has showed that learners may need to embrace new roles, such as co-learner, coach, advisor, learning coordinator, especially regarding formative assessment activities. Therefore, summative assessment activities must reflect these responsibilities and the variety of learning experiences each student had throughout the course.

Authentic leadership is a relatively recent leadership paradigm, which is the root construct to other forms of positive leadership theories; especially "transformational, charismatic, servant and spiritual leadership theories" (Covelli & Mason, 2017, p. 14). It encompasses attitudes, behaviours, styles, and skills that promote ethical and honest behavior and, as a result, has better beneficial long-term effects for leaders, their followers, and their organizations. Authenticity, according to proponents of the theory, enables leaders to be more effective, to lead with purpose, reason, and ethics, and to be more equipped to face organizational difficulties (Covelli & Mason, 2017). Needless to say, Educational Leaders play a significant role in securing a transparent evaluation process, which is why it is essential to examine their efforts to produce credible testing results, such as updating examination policies and incorporating the feedback of stakeholders, such as teachers' and students' awareness. Fostering academic integrity ideals ethically is the most successful social intervention technique for dispelling the false assumptions that people use to justify their behaviour and creating an academic environment that inhibits academic dishonesty (Jordan 2001; Carpenter et al., 2006). Academic integrity, according to Cole and Swartz (2013), is a mutual commitment that begins with the institution fostering a culture that does not tolerate academic wrongdoing. This is consistent with research showing the crucial importance of convictions and values in deterring academic dishonesty (Hsiao, 2015; Rundle et al., 2019; Sullivan, 2016). Furthermore, the utilization of technological tools in conjunction with social responsibility is very important. Bombaro and Mitchell's (2012) research evaluation determined that this technique was helpful in bolstering faculty trust that their students have received fundamental knowledge concerning academic integrity, academic dishonesty, and its repercussions. This ethical technique is the greatest social norm approach to behavioral intervention for debunking the erroneous views individuals use to rationalize their behavior, as well as for fostering an academic atmosphere that supports an honor code and discourages academic dishonesty (Jordan, 2001; Carpenter et al., 2006).

Since the coronavirus pandemic, there have been numerous research studies conducted in the UAE which have looked at digital assessment practices (Charles, 2021), digital pedagogies (Elsawah & Charles, 2023; Hill et al., 2023; Shehzad & Charles, 2023), technology enhanced learning (El Haddad & Charles, 2024; Miles et al., 2021), and the management of digital learning spaces (Charles & Hill, 2023). Inspired by that literature, the aim of this study was to understand the role of educational leadership in maintaining academic integrity in online assessments during the pandemic from the perspectives of various leaders, identifying areas of misalignment between assessment policy and its implementation. Hence, we posed the following research questions: (RQ1) What are the main policies that regulate online assessments in Sharjah schools? (RQ2) What is the school leaders' role in maintaining academic integrity during online assessment policies and their implementation? (RQ4) What are some strategies to ensure academic integrity during online assessment?

# 2. Methodology

A mixed-methods design was adopted by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) in the form of a survey, semi-structured interviews, and document analyses. Data was collected from five private schools in Sharjah, UAE, which all follow an American curriculum. Survey respondents included a sample of 30 educational leaders within these five schools, whose job titles were "executive director of academic affairs", "department head", and "academic coordinator". In terms of demographics, out of the 30 participants, 22 were female and 8 were male. Regarding nationality, respondents were 3 Americans, 20 Arabs, 3 Asians, 1 Canadian, 1 European, and 2 Emiratis. 14 of the respondents held a bachelor's degree, 14 had a master's degree while 2 had a high school diploma. Participants included senior and middle leaders. 17 of these leaders were heads of departments, 5 were vice principals, 3 were curriculum coordinators, 3 were principals and 2 were assessment coordinators. Regarding the number of years in the current job, half of the respondents spent 2 to 7 years working in the school, while 11 worked for 8 to 13 years. 3 of the leaders were relatively new to the institution with only one year or less contrasted with 1

leader with 14-19 years of experience in the same school. 18 of the leaders were employed for a range of 2 to 7 years. In contrast only 1 had an employment of 20 years or more. Furthermore, 4 respondents had the least experience with the same role with a range of 1 year or less, compared to 7 respondents with 8 to 13 years of employment with the current position.

As for the semi-structured interviews, these were held with 5 educational leaders, with one leader as a representative of each school; their job titles included "principal", "vice-principal", and "assessment coordinator". A 5-point Likert scale survey (Joshi et al., 2015) was designed with 34 items, 6 were demographic questions, while the remaining 28 enquired about participants' perspectives in relation to 1) the primary impediments to credible online assessments, 2) the role of leaders in maintaining this credibility, including effective policy implementation, and 3) leaders' recommendations for addressing credibility issues. The survey was created using Microsoft Forms and shared with participants via email. It included a summary of the research objectives, the study's context, and a consent statement (Peterson, 2000); ensuring the participants' right to choose whether or not to participate, as well as their right to privacy and anonymity.

As for the semi-structured interview, it was composed of the following ten questions: 1) Does your institution use online assessment to assess student learning? 2) Working to reduce academic dishonesty in online assessment has become important to most educational institutions. Does your institution have policies related to online assessment? 3) Who writes assessment policies in your school? 4) What do you take into consideration when creating this policy? 5) How do you ensure that these policies are implemented efficiently? 6) As an academic leader, could you share the strategies you use to ensure an effective assessment design that reduces academic dishonesty in online assessment? 7) From your experience, are there instances in which you observe that students' online assessment results do not reflect their academic skills/abilities? 8) Do you have any policy in your school to guide the length of time (hours) allowed for online assessment? 9) Based upon your experience, do you think the length of time allowed for online assessment is justified and facilitates academic honesty? 10) Do you think it is hard to achieve credible online assessment results?

The third phase of data collection included a document analysis of the assessment policies of those schools that participated in the first two stages in order to identify the aforementioned gap. This gap was to be confirmed or not by the qualitative and quantitative findings collected from the responses of school leaders. We identified the appropriate policy at each school first, which was not a simple task considering that many schools have several, linked, overlapping policies that are not always up to date, then perform preliminary coding based on the literature. These policy documents encompassed assessment policies, review or evaluation of these policies (if any), documents of instructions and circulars sent to stakeholders, such as: exam guidelines for students and exam invigilation guidelines for teachers and heads of departments. In terms of the policy analysis, provisional categories were utilized, which corresponded to an overview of the key stakeholders' responsibilities, integrity, the concept of academic dishonesty, the punitive measures for academic dishonesty, the potential for resubmitting missed work, and updates of assessment policy or other related policy documents to incorporate online assessment criteria. Following this, we chose a selection of assessment policies that could serve as potential examples. The policy documents were reviewed to determine the extent to which current institutional policy appeared to mirror best practice as articulated in international literature and leaders' perceptions gleaned from the survey and interview.

## 3. Results

The quantitative data from the students' and teachers' surveys were analysed using SPSS, while the qualitative data were examined using NVIVO for a thematic data analysis. The policy documents were analysed to establish the extent to which current schools' policies appeared to reflect best practice as outlined in contemporary literature and leaders' perspectives gained from the survey and interview. Participants' responses to the survey questisons were interesting. 80% of the leaders agreed or strongly agreed that students justify academic misconduct in order to achieve high grades. 17% were neutral in their answer and only 3% strongly disagreed with this statement. The majority of the school leaders confirmed that students care about marks more that learning. This was demonstrated by 57% of them strongly agreeing with the statement and 37% showing agreement. This is contrasted with a minority of 7% against the idea. Around 47% of the leaders agreed or strongly agreed that with the ease of access to digital learning materials, academic misconduct is facilitated. This is contrasted with similar percentages of the neutral and disagreeing respondents (23% and 27% respectively). As for leaders' perspectives on technology role in facilitating sharing test answers among peers, the majority either agreed or strongly agreed with the notion while only 7% had an opposite view.

With respect to excuses made by students to repeat or postpone exams, most leaders agreed that these instances occurred in their schools during the pandemic with a share of 80% while 17% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Most leaders (93.5%) agreed with the statement that students might be assisted by other adults at home during online assessment. In contrast, only 3% had a different opinion. There was an approximately equal percentage of school leaders who were with or against the statement that their students were educated about referencing and citation tools to avoid plagiarism in both assignments and assessments (with 33% and 37% respectively). The other 30% preferred to stay neutral. Regarding whether online assessment results true reflection of learners' real competencies, 63% disagreed with this idea while 16% provided a neutral response and only 23% agreed.

As per the second part of the questionnaire concerning leaders' role in maintaining credible assessments. Around two thirds of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the school leaders are the ones who control the online assessments, while 23% had an opposite point of view. A similar number of leaders agreed that they updated the assessment policy to accommodate with the changing situation such as the pandemic. This accounted for 73% of the participants which is contrasted with 27% who claimed that they do not do that. 90% of the leaders asserted that the school assessment policy is shared with stakeholders such as parents, students and teachers. The remaining 10% were either neutral or had a negative response Regarding the efficient implementation of this policy through preventative and punitive measures, 91% of the participants claimed that the implementation was efficient compared to 23% who disagreed and 10% who remained neutral. All leaders confirmed that they work collaboratively to maintain a credible assessment procedure. As for responses pertaining to reinforcing academic integrity values among students in a variety of ways, most school leaders (90%) affirmed that idea while the other 10 either disagreed or remained neutral. Most of the respondents ensured the integration of academic integrity values in school curricula and learning outcomes (93%). The other minority were divided equally showing neutrality and disagreement. A relatively large number of the school leaders agreed that they implement innovative assessment strategies in order to control academic dishonesty (83%). Only 7% disagreed and the other 10 provided a neutral response.

The third part of the questionnaire required leaders' suggestions regarding the best strategies to enhance academic integrity during online assessment. Their suggestions included: randomisation of questions, lockdown browsers and plagiarism identification techniques (22%, 23% and 20% respectively). This was followed by reducing allocated time (17%), personalisation of exams, online proctoring companies, usernames and passwords, and promoting academic integrity values at 13% each. Only 10% were with the strategy of limiting feedback after exams. Identification techniques and implementing assessment policy more efficiently, reducing exam pressure received equal emphasis (8%) and educating students about referencing received the least number of responses (4%). In summary, the data analysed from the questionnaire contributed to answering some research questions like school leaders' role in maintaining academic integrity during online assessments. However, more information was required regarding which leaders are involved in this process, how they collaborate to meet this end and how their role is emphasized through maintaining an ethical school culture and continuous communication with stakeholders.

Nvivo was used to analysed the interviews with leaders, and several themes were identified. These themes included 1) the need for an online assessment policy; 2) transparant communication among all stakeholders; 3) collaborating with other leaders; 4) acknowledging that students' results do not always reflect their capabilities; 5) the need for consistent measures to maintain academic integrity; 6) the credibility of online assessments is debatable. This thematic analysis provided clear answers to the research questions and achieved the research aim. However, a deeper investigation was required to answer the second research question; whether there is a solid link between online assessment policies

and their implementation and whether online assessment policies created as a response to the pandemic or old policies were used instead. Therefore, it was necessary to analyse some policy documents to further explore this question.

Documents collected from the 5 schools included assessment policies, additional supplementary elements, and instructional documents which are not core elements of the assessment policy but serve the same purpose. These policies addressed issues such as using assessment to inform planning, tracking students' progress, raising standards to guarantee the rights of all students, the roles and responsibilities of teachers in designing quality assessment and that of the leaders in monitoring this process, also that of learners in integrating the feedback they receive from teachers to improve their skills. In terms of online assessment, most of the documents did not address them at all. In two of the schools, an additional evaluation policy was created and communicated with parents, but this included only the change in the division of marks and disregarded other essential aspects and elements. Instead, all the new accommodations were shared as instruction lists to HoDs, teachers, students and parents, or not shared at all. Instances of academic dishonesty are ignored in most of the polices as well as any related punitive or preventative measures. This analysis supported the data needed to answer the research questions by confirming the gap between online assessment policies and their implementation and the failure to regularly update, review and assess these policies by school leaders to accommodate for the changing situations like the pandemic.

#### 4. Discussion

#### 4.1. Policies

The main policies that regulate online assessment policies are the policies which are claimed to be created by the school itself to account for the changes that occurred during the pandemic. However, most of the policy documents were found to be old versions of the assessment policies used before the pandemic with no reference to online assessment. The main elements of these policies, as school leaders reported, include the age groups of students, as students of lower grades are more likely to be dependent on their parents to launch the test and receive instructions and support, while other students are more independent in this aspect. Another main element of these policies is proper and relevant rubrics that provide guidance for teachers to objectively evaluate students' responses. The mechanism of conducting the online exam, interventions when encountered with any technical issue were also claimed to be other elements of these policies. Other aspects include accommodation with the curriculum and its standards, internal and external exams, and reporting methods. This clear contrast between leaders' claims and policy documents show that these documents were neither updated nor assessed even though some changes were implemented due to the outbreak.

Assessment policies, as perceived through leaders' claims, are created by dif-

ferent groups of stakeholders in different schools. Some schools involve only senior leadership, others include middle leadership and teachers as well. School leaders stated that academic integrity ideals are emphasized in curriculum, daily learning objectives, and school culture through meetings and student conversations and innovative evaluation methods. These leaders lead the online assessment process and maintain a thorough assessment policy that is periodically reviewed and communicated with all stakeholder groups and these updates account for emergencies like the coronavirus pandemic. School leaders also claimed that preventative and punitive approaches are implemented like teacher professional development, communication with parents and other stakeholders to deliver instructions before the exam or provide support during it, and technical platform training. To maintain an ethical culture in school, all leaders had to collaborate on various levels to facilitate a credible assessment process. This collaboration was done through meetings where integrity and other issues were reported, discussed and solutions suggested.

## 4.2. Implementation

As mentioned above, there is evidence that a gap between assessment policies and their implementation exist. This is consolidated through leaders' claims that there was an inconsistent application of these policies among the various stakeholder groups. This is accommodated to teachers' and parents' unawareness of how much support they could provide during an online assessment. Online assessment policies which were implemented through leaders, teachers, and support staff collaboration, ignored the procedure of online exam delivery and supervision for different age groups and accommodations for special educational needs students as leaders claimed. These assessment policies failed to mention any preventative or punitive methods like staff or parents' trainings or proper communication with stakeholders except for one school's policy.

Unfortunately, most strategies implemented by schools to minimize dishonesty are inconsistent and not always effective. These strategies include fixed exam timings, or preventative measures like video recording assessment evaluation, different versions of exams, open cameras, and recordings of students during oral and written exams and using interviews for assessment for lower grades. Other schools reduced the exam weightage to 25% and replaced the other part with projects, assignments and research, classwork and engagement during online classes. Other measures included proper training of teachers and implementation of assessment policies, virtual seminars with students and parents on the significance of behaviour management and code of conduct as well as repercussions of cheating on tests. Some of the motives behind "cheating" as school leaders reported was students' beliefs that their ability to cheat is a smart action and the lack of awareness of the harmful consequences. Another motive is to prove to their parents that they were attentive during online classes and not distracted as a result of inefficient online learning settings or demotivation. A lack of understanding of these motives contributed to a difficulty to maintain credibility during examination. Some leaders suggested a slow but consistent change of culture among stakeholders which can be maintained through a process of raising awareness, effective communication and implementation of assessment policies which need to be reviewed and assessed on continuous basis. In conclusion, understanding motives and types of misconduct is essential to maintain a credible assessment process, but it is more essential to believe in the value of integrity and honesty to have more effective results.

The results of the study highlight the previously acknowledged necessity for authentic leadership, which is linked to the integrity and adaptability of leaders in changing settings, as exemplified by the pandemic situation. In addition, it is the basis for leaders' ability to match their practices and decisions with their position and organizational context by implementing high ethics and morals, teamwork, understanding of the context and related problems, and self-controlled positive aptitudes (Covelli & Mason, 2017). However, this leadership style was not completely followed because of the failure to update assessment policies during conronavirus crisis. Based on these research findings, seveal recommendations can be made. Leaders recommended educating parents and kids about academic dishonesty to increase academic integrity. Lockdown browsers and plagiarism detection solutions require sufficient financing and investment, so school leaders have to increase investment in these technologies. However, students' reference and citation awareness and policy proper execution were not prioritized. This stands as a striking contradiction to many prominent studies highlighting the significance of educating learners about referencing and bibliography (Tayan, 2016).

## 4.3. Summary of Findings

Most schools were operating under outdated assessment policies which were not substantially revised in response to the online shift necessitated by COVID-19. However, schools claimed to have their own unique policies that catered to this new mode of learning and assessment. It was found that the actual implementation of these policies varied significantly, with some schools not adequately updating or assessing their policies to reflect the new challenges posed by online learning environments. Additionally, school leaders played a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of online assessments. Their strategies included the implementation of policies designed to mitigate academic dishonesty, the promotion of ethical school culture, and continuous communication with stakeholders to reinforce the importance of academic integrity. The study revealed that while policies were in place, their execution and the consistent involvement of leadership in maintaining and updating these policies were lacking. Furtheremo, the study identified a gap between the existing policies and their enforcement. There was a general lack of regular assessment and update of these policies, contributing to challenges in handling academic dishonesty effectively. The inconsistency in policy enforcement was evident, as many schools struggled to adapt their strategies to the rapidly changing educational environment brought on by the pandemic. Moreover, effective collaboration and communication among school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders were emphasised as essential for maintaining assessment integrity. The study highlighted that frequent and clear communication is critical in ensuring that all parties are aligned with the school's academic integrity goals. However, there were instances where communication and collaboration did not meet the necessary standards to support effective policy implementation. Notably, schools employed various technological tools such as plagiarism detection software, lockdown browsers, and randomization of questions to prevent cheating. Additionally, pedagogical strategies were also highlighted, including modifying assessment formats to reduce opportunities for dishonesty. However, the effectiveness of these tools and strategies varied, and there was no consensus on the best practices to uphold academic integrity in online assessments.

# **5.** Conclusion

This study investigated the role of school leaders in maintaining credible assessments during the pandemic. The study was conducted in five different schools in Sharjah City where three tools were used for investigation: a leaders' questionnaire, a semi-structured interview with leaders and assessment policy document analysis. Findings revealed that assessment policies used during online instruction were rarely modified and updated to accommodate with the pandemic, which contradicts the findings of the questionnaires and the interviews done with school leaders. This shows a lack of knowledge and consistency among various schools' leaders and among leaders in the same school. Leaders' roles in maintaining integrity during online assessments were evident through emphasizing this value in school curriculum and culture, communication with students and parents, and teachers' professional development.

However, credibility of assessments was difficult to sustain because of many factors such as the dominant beliefs and culture among various stakeholders, mainly parents who prefer a high mark rather than a mark that reflects their children's actual acquired skills. Other threats to credibility included ease of access to learned material and resources, tutors, peers and parents and lack of awareness among stakeholders on how much support should be given to students during these assessments. Adding to this is the fact that assessment policies were neither updated nor implemented efficiently to accommodate to the urgent changes made during the pandemic. In conclusion, understanding motives behind academic dishonesty is significant to reduce and control this behaviour. Implementing various strategies such as lockdown browsers, innovation in assessments' design, and modifying test weightage, raising awareness, and educating stakeholders are significant. However, the belief in the value of integrity and honesty is the key driving force to control this issue. This study clearly has its limitations, for example, the sample size of the school leaders was only 30, so the results cannot be generalized to all leaders. The second limitation of this research is that it is limited to a single region; therefore, it cannot be extrapolated to all regions of the UAE nor the rest of the world. In addition, leaders responded to the questionnaire and interviews according to their partially manipulable perspectives. Future research should include a larger sample size, it should look at multiple regions, and the data collection instruments should be enhanced.

# **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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