

Authentic leadership in the educational system and in nursing education: an integrative review

A liderança autêntica no sistema educacional e no ensino da enfermagem: revisão integrativa
Liderazgo auténtico en el sistema educativo y en la formación de enfermería: revisión integradora

Cezar Augusto da Silva Flores¹

ORCID: 0000-0003-2278-4195

Suellen Rodrigues de Oliveira Maier¹

ORCID: 0000-0002-4677-1674

André Almeida de Moura¹

ORCID: 0000-0003-2990-5375

Alexandre Pazetto Balsanelli¹

ORCID: 0000-0003-3757-1061

Bruna Moreno Dias¹

ORCID: 0000-0002-7346-4848

Andrea Bernardes¹

ORCID: 0000-0002-9861-2050

¹Universidade de São Paulo. Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil.

²Universidade Federal de São Paulo. São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil.

How to cite this article:

Flores CAS, Maier SRO, Moura AA, Balsanelli AP, Dias BM, Bernardes A. Authentic leadership in the educational system and in nursing education: an integrative review. Rev Bras Enferm. 2022;75(1):e20220122. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2022-0122>

Corresponding author:

Andrea Bernardes
E-mail: andreab@eerp.usp.br



EDITOR IN CHIEF: Antonio José de Almeida Filho
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Priscilla Valladares Broca

Submission: 02-25-2022 **Approval:** 05-30-2022

ABSTRACT

Objectives: to identify and analyze the knowledge produced in literature about authentic leadership in the educational system, as well as in nursing education. **Methods:** an integrative review, carried out in the Scopus, Web of Science, CINAHL, MEDLINE/PubMed, ERIC, LILACS databases. Articles that addressed authentic leadership in the educational system from a general perspective and within the nursing scope, as well as teaching practices of this leadership model, were eligible. **Results:** twenty-three articles met the inclusion criteria, most published in 2019, highlighting studies in the context of teaching, with a predominance in the nursing course and which were synthesized into three thematic categories. **Final Considerations:** it was found that the higher the levels of authentic leadership in the educational system, the higher the rates of other positive factors related to it, such as trust, involvement, academic optimism, responsibility, creativity, among others.

Descriptors: Leadership; Education; Faculty; Students; Education, Nursing.

RESUMO

Objetivos: identificar e analisar o conhecimento produzido na literatura acerca da liderança autêntica no sistema educacional, assim como na educação em enfermagem. **Métodos:** revisão integrativa, realizada nas bases de dados Scopus, Web of Science, CINAHL, MEDLINE/PubMed, ERIC, LILACS. Foram elegíveis artigos que abordassem sobre a liderança autêntica no sistema educacional de uma perspectiva geral e no âmbito da enfermagem, assim como as práticas de ensino desse modelo de liderança. **Resultados:** 23 artigos atenderam aos critérios de inclusão, a maioria publicada em 2019, sobressaindo-se estudos no contexto do ensino, com predomínio no curso de enfermagem e que foram sintetizados em três categorias temáticas. **Considerações Finais:** constatou-se que, quanto maiores os níveis da liderança autêntica no sistema educacional, mais elevados serão os índices de outros fatores positivos a ela relacionadas, como confiança, envolvimento, otimismo acadêmico, responsabilidade, criatividade, entre outros.

Descritores: Liderança; Educação; Docentes; Estudantes; Educação em Enfermagem.

RESUMEN

Objetivos: identificar y analizar el conocimiento producido en la literatura sobre el liderazgo auténtico en el sistema educativo, así como en la formación de enfermería. **Métodos:** una revisión integradora, realizada en bases de datos Scopus, Web of Science, CINAHL, MEDLINE/PubMed, ERIC, LILACS. Fueron elegibles los artículos que abordaran el liderazgo auténtico en el sistema educativo desde una perspectiva general y en el ámbito de la enfermería, así como las prácticas docentes de este modelo de liderazgo. **Resultados:** 23 artículos cumplieron con los criterios de inclusión, la mayoría publicados en 2019, destacándose estudios en el contexto de la enseñanza, con predominio en el curso de enfermería y que fueron sintetizados en tres categorías temáticas. **Consideraciones Finales:** se encontró que a mayores niveles de liderazgo auténtico en el sistema educativo, mayores índices de otros factores positivos relacionados con el mismo, como confianza, involucramiento, optimismo académico, responsabilidad, creatividad, entre otros.

Descriptor: Liderazgo; Educación; Docentes; Estudiantes; Educación en Enfermería.

INTRODUCTION

According to the theoretical model, authentic leadership can be understood as a process related to positive psychological capabilities in a developed organizational environment, resulting in positive behaviors on the part of leaders and followers, generating positive self-development for all involved⁽¹⁾. Authentic leaders' behavior is based on the assessment of items arranged in four domains: transparency in relationships; moral and ethical perspective; balanced information processing; and self-awareness⁽²⁻³⁾.

Authentic leaders create a work environment that allows followers to express sincere and authentic self-expression, reducing negative practices and allowing leaders and followers to work together for the organization's overall effectiveness and success⁽⁴⁾. Thus, authentic leadership can be considered one of the theoretical models of leadership that best suits the work process developed in the educational system, both in elementary and secondary education and in higher education, especially because it is based on character, values, ethics, morals, transparency and decision-making⁽⁵⁻⁶⁾. Currently, this leadership model is considered the most genuine, positive, transparent and ethical in organizations⁽⁷⁾, including educational institutions⁽⁸⁾.

In nursing, research demonstrates how beneficial authentic leaders can be in professional practice, especially as they significantly influence nurses' work process, promote healthy work environments, in addition to reflecting on nursing team engagement, satisfaction, retention and organizational commitment. However, these studies show the need to develop studies about authentic leaders, considering the teaching context, especially in nursing⁽⁷⁻⁹⁾.

In this way, the understanding of the benefits of authentic leadership in the business sector is evidenced through a positive organizational climate, trust, satisfaction, retention, commitment, citizenship behavior and better performance of workers⁽¹⁰⁾. However, it is observed that authentic leadership has not received the same attention in the development of school curricula, both in Brazil and in the world, much less in nursing education.

Considering the relevance of this theoretical model of leadership, there is an interest in analyzing the scientific studies that addressed authentic leadership in the educational system in a broad way, as well as analyzing the perspective of teaching/using authentic leadership in undergraduate nursing courses, given that, in this profession, there is a need for increasingly efficient leaders committed to teaching and working.

It is therefore essential to advance knowledge about scientific evidence in the use of authentic leadership in the world education system, but especially in the Brazilian scenario, as no reviews of any nature on the subject were identified, which is why the development of this research is justified.

OBJECTIVES

To identify and analyze the knowledge produced in literature about authentic leadership in the educational system, as well as in nursing education.

METHODS

This is an integrative literature review, characterized as a study method that provides broad and updated knowledge, in addition to synthesizing relevant information on a given subject. Its elaboration is based on six distinct stages, namely: theme recognition and research hypothesis selection for the integrative review production; establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies; definition of the information to be extracted from the selected studies; assessment of studies included in the integrative review; analysis and interpretation of results; and presentation of the review/synthesis of knowledge⁽¹¹⁾.

To define the research question, the PCC (Population, Concept and Context) strategy was used, present in the systematic scoping review recommendations guides⁽¹²⁾. For the present study, the following components were considered: P – "Managers, professors and students", C – "Authentic Leadership" and C – "Educational system in elementary, high and higher education". The following guiding question was also established: how has authentic leadership been exercised in the educational context, with emphasis on nursing education?

Primary articles, available in full, with an approach to authentic leadership in the educational system, both in management and in teaching/development, in English, Portuguese and Spanish, with no restrictions on the year of publication were included. Articles that discussed the authenticity of the leader without referring to the theory of authentic leadership were excluded.

The search was carried out in the main databases related to the areas of health and education: Scopus, Web of Science, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), National Library of Medicine (MEDLINE)/PubMed Central, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS).

Controlled descriptors extracted from MeSH and CINAHL Headings were used: Leadership; Education; Faculty; Students; Education, Nursing, as well as the Authentic Leadership keyword. The descriptors in Portuguese extracted from the Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS) were also used, such as *Liderança, Educação, Docentes, Estudantes, Educação em Enfermagem*, in addition to keyword Authentic Leadership. To perform the combinations between the terms, the Boolean logical operators "AND" or "OR" were used.

The searches were carried out in January and February 2021, and repeated in June of the same year, in order to minimize biases in the application of eligibility and exclusion criteria during the selection process. Two reviewers participated in the search process, with a third reviewer being used in cases of divergence between the studies selected by the other reviewers.

All articles included in the final sample were classified according to the levels of evidence proposed by Melnyk and Fineout-Overholt⁽¹³⁾, which are classified as: I – systematic review or meta-analysis; II – controlled and random test; III – controlled trial without randomization; IV – case-control or cohort study; V – systematic review of qualitative or descriptive studies; VI – qualitative or descriptive study; VII – expert opinion or consensus.

After extracting the results, they were categorized according to each study's central theme, in order to explain the applicability of authentic leadership in the educational context in a systematic way.

RESULTS

We identified 141 articles, 52 in Scopus, 33 in the Web of Science, 25 in CINAHL, 19 in MEDLINE/PubMed, 11 in ERIC and one in LILACS. Twenty-three articles met the inclusion criteria, as shown in Figure 1, prepared in accordance with the PRISMA recommendation⁽¹⁴⁾.

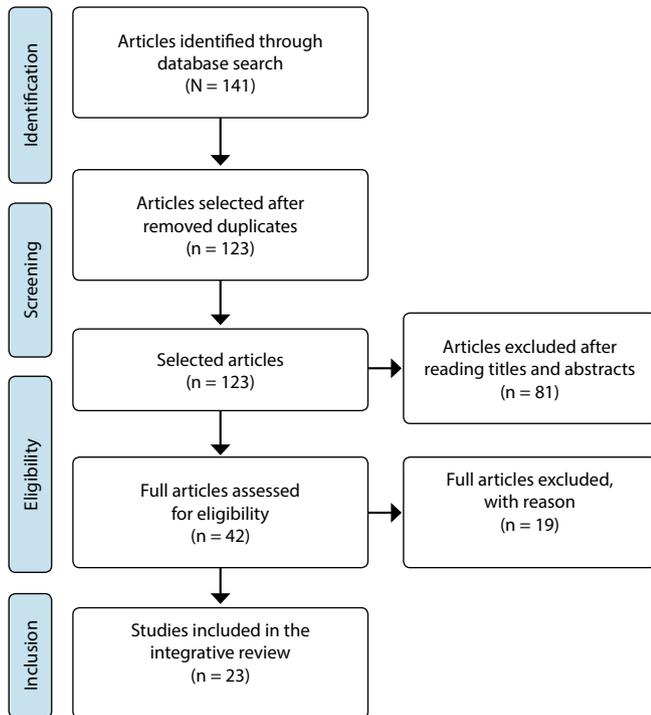


Figure 1 - Flowchart synthesis of article extraction for integrative review

Article characteristics is briefly presented in Chart 1, in which the authorship, country, database, objective(s), number of participants, design, data collection instrument and outcome stand out.

It was found that there was a dispersion in relation to the year of publication, with emphasis on the year 2019, with six publications on the subject, which represents 26.08% of the productions. It is noteworthy that this is a theme that began to be investigated in 2009 in the educational context.

Regarding the developing countries of the research, there is a predominance of productions in the Asian continent, with a total of 15 articles (65.21%). However, the country with the highest number of publications was the United States of America (USA), which presented four articles (17.39%). In Brazil, only one study with this scope was identified (4.35%).

Finally, the research was published in journals in the areas of education, with eight articles (34.78%), leadership, with five articles (21.74%), academics, with four articles (17.39%), psychology, with three articles (13.04%), nursing with two articles (8.70%) and medicine, with one article (4.35%).

Nine studies (39.13%) were developed in primary and/or secondary education (elementary and/or high school), and 14 studies were carried out in higher education (60.87%), with emphasis on health courses, with four studies (17.39%).

DISCUSSION

The discussion of selected articles was established from three thematic categories, namely: *The relationship between authentic leadership with positive and negative factors*; *Assessment of managers' authentic leadership in the educational system*; and *Authentic leadership in undergraduate nursing and health courses and teaching authentic leadership in higher education*.

Chart 1 - Synthesis chart with articles according to authorship, country, database, level of evidence, objective(s), number of participants, design, data collection instrument and outcome, Sinop, Mato Grosso, Brazil, 2020

Authorship, country, database and level of evidence	Objective(s)/number of participants	Delineation/data collection instrument	Outcome
Eriksen ⁽¹⁵⁾ USA, Scopus, VI	Demonstrate an authentic leadership teaching strategy. N = 43 students.	Sharing their audio-recorded belief statements in the classroom, telling their life experiences.	Students considered the exercise significant for developing authentic leadership.
Rahman et al. ⁽¹⁶⁾ Pakistan, Scopus, IV	Investigate the pattern of authentic leadership in schools in a developing country. N = 195 professors and 9 directors.	Quantitative research. 1. Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ)	The four components of authentic leadership were found to be relevant to democratic practice in the educational environment.
Bird et al. ⁽¹⁷⁾ USA, ERIC, VI	Relationships between authentic leadership of school directors with trust, involvement, and intention to return to work in the next school year. N = 28 directors and 633 professors.	Quantitative descriptive research. 1. ALQ; 2. Workplace trust survey; 3. Gallup Organization Q12 Survey; 4. Professors' intention to return.	The school director's authenticity is positively related to professors' trust and engagement levels, and is also associated with their intention to return to work in the next school year.
Bento and Ribeiro ⁽¹⁸⁾ Brazil, CINAHL, VI	Know professors' perception about the authentic leadership of their immediate leader and to verify if there is a difference between public and private organizations. N = 86 professors.	Descriptive and exploratory research. 1. ALQ.	The leader's authenticity level is above the moderate level. Considering the type of school organization, private schools showed slightly higher values in the four domains analyzed.

To be continued

Chart 1

Authorship, country, database and level of evidence	Objective(s)/number of participants	Delineation/data collection instrument	Outcome
Opatokun et al. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Malaysia, CINAHL, VI	Test whether the four domains are predictors of authentic leadership among directors. N = 214 administrative staff workers.	Case study. 1. ALQ.	The administrative staff rates directors' authentic leadership as moderately high on all dimensions of authentic leadership.
Shapira-Lishchinsky ⁽²⁰⁾ Israel, Web of Science, VI	Explore the ethical decision-making of nurses in teamwork simulation, in order to identify the benefits of these simulations for the development of authentic leadership. N = 50 nurses.	Qualitative research. The study consisted of subdividing nurses into ten work groups, which participated in 50 teamwork simulation sessions lasting 45 minutes each.	The study highlighted the importance of incorporating simulations into nursing practice, such as simulating power conflicts and their resolutions, for the development of authentic leadership.
Shapira-Lishchinsky ⁽²¹⁾ Israel, ERIC, VI	Identify whether educational leaders can develop authentic leadership through teamwork simulations with lived cases. N = 50 educational leaders.	Qualitative research. The study consisted of subdividing educational leaders into ten work groups, which participated in 50 teamwork simulation sessions lasting 45 minutes each.	The study encouraged the use of simulation in leadership programs to familiarize leaders with a variety of ethical issues and thus develop their authentic leadership.
Waite et al. ⁽⁸⁾ USA, Scopus, VI	Develop/implement an authentic leadership course for nursing students. N = 18 students.	Quanti-qualitative research. They examined students' knowledge of course content, specifically authentic leadership, before and after completion of the course.	Authentic leadership provided a solid framework for students to develop a repertoire of leadership skills and personal identity, contributing to the advancement of nursing practice.
Pavlovic ⁽²²⁾ Serbia, Scopus, VI	Define the character of authentic leadership in educational institutions using the factors "communication", "self-awareness", "self-discovery" and "self-concept". N = 227 directors.	Quantitative research. 1. ALQ.	Authentic leaders in educational institutions have a specific behavior, recognized through communication, self-awareness, self-discovery and self-concept.
Al-Moamary et al. ⁽²³⁾ Saudi Arabia, CINAHL, VI	Study authentic leadership characteristics among academic leaders at a health sciences university. N = 75 academic leaders.	Cross-sectional research. 1. ALQ.	Academic leaders' authentic leadership has shown consistency in all their dimensions, except transparency in relationships. The nursing course academic leaders had better scores in authentic leadership.
Srivastava and Dhar ⁽²⁴⁾ India, Scopus, VI	Analyze the impact of authentic leadership on academic optimism through mediation of affective commitment. N = 623 professors and 124 directors.	Descriptive quantitative research. 1. ALQ; 2. Affective behavior scale; 3. Academic optimism scale; 4. Training coverage scale.	Authentic leadership can indirectly influence academic optimism through the significant mediating effect of affective commitment.
Frederick et al. ⁽²⁵⁾ USA, ERIC, VI	Examine whether the three factors (responsibility, openness, and response) can predict authentic leadership. N = 324 workers.	Cross-sectional quantitative study. 1. Demographic items questionnaire; 2. ALQ; 3. Leader Accountability Index.	Authentic leadership, responsibility, openness and response scales showed a high correlation between them. Strong predictive relationship with 82% variation.
Erkutlu and Chafra ⁽²⁶⁾ Turkey, Web of Science, VI	Examine the relationship between authentic leadership and insertion into organizational work through mediation of psychological ownership and self-agreement. N = 1,193 professors and 13 deans.	Descriptive quantitative research, with random sampling by cluster. 1. ALQ; 2. Organizational work implementation; 3. Psychological ownership; 4. Perceived Locus of Causality Questionnaire	Authentic leadership was positively related to workers' perceptions of psychological ownership and self-compliance; these, in turn, were positively related to job insertion.
Kotzé and Nel ⁽²⁷⁾ South Africa, Scopus, VI	Relationship between authentic leadership and the personal factors of emotional intelligence, personality, cognitive ability and gender. N = 341 workers and future students.	Exploratory quantitative research, with convenience sampling. 1. ALQ; 2. Rahim Emotional Quotient Index (REQI); 3. Occupational Personality Questionnaire 32r (OPQ32r); 4. Verbal Reasoning and Numeral Reasoning.	Findings suggest that one dimension of emotional intelligence (self-awareness) and four personality attributes (emotion control, appraisal, independence of mind, and adaptation) predict authentic leadership.

To be continued

Chart 1 (concluded)

Authorship, country, database and level of evidence	Objective(s)/number of participants	Delineation/data collection instrument	Outcome
Adil and Kamal, ⁽²⁸⁾ Pakistan, Scopus, VI	Explore the relationship of authentic leadership and psychological capital with Burnout through the mediation of promoting and preventive psychological ownership. N = 500 professors.	Correlational descriptive research. 1. Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ); 2. ALQ; 3. Psychological Ownership Questionnaire (POQ); 4. Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES).	The promoting psychological ownership had a negative effect, while the preventive psychological ownership had a positive relationship with Burnout.
Aria et al. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Iran, ERIC, VI	Analyze the relationship between authentic leadership and professors' intention to stay at work, through the mediating effect of psychological capital and organizational support. N = 412 professors.	Exploratory quantitative research. 1. ALQ; 2. Perceived Organizational Support (POS); 3. PCQ; 4. Professors' Intention to Stay at Work.	Authentic leadership influenced professors' intention to stay at work, with the mediation effect of psychological capital and organizational support being significant.
Bahzar ⁽⁶⁾ Indonesia Scopus, VI	Examine authentic leadership practices in Islamic secondary schools and discuss leadership style for professor performance. N = 30 directors and 60 professors.	Cross-sectional, observational study. 01. ALQ. 02. Questionnaire developed by the researcher.	Authentic leadership is generally well implemented by directors. However, directors who hold master's and/or doctoral degrees have higher levels of authentic leadership.
Hassan and Din ⁽²⁹⁾ Malaysia, Scopus, VI	Investigate the relationship between intrinsic motivation, high performance work system and authentic leadership with creativity, through the mediation of knowledge sharing. N = 286 professors.	Exploratory quantitative research. 1. Employees' creativity 2. Knowledge sharing; 3. Intrinsic motivation; 4. High performance work system; 5. ALQ.	Authentic leadership and the high-performance work system had a significant effect on creativity. Knowledge sharing only mediated the high-performance work system with creativity.
Ismail, Abdullah and Abdullah ⁽³⁰⁾ Malaysia Scopus, VI	Determine the relationship and effect of authentic leadership of school leaders in relation to professors' work stress. N = 330 professors.	Observational and cross-sectional study. 1. ALQ. 2. Teachers' Work Stress (TWS).	There is a significant negative relationship between authentic leadership by school leaders and work stress by professors.
Saeed and Ali ⁽³¹⁾ Pakistan, ERIC, VI	Investigate authentic leadership of leaders and professors and measure the relationship between authentic leadership and classroom engagement. N = 12 deans, 195 directors, 350 supervisors and 410 professors.	Mixed methods approach. 1. ALQ; 2. In-depth interviews.	A significant average correlation was found between authentic leadership and involvement in the university classroom, and in the private sector this relationship is superior to the public sector.
Srivastava and Dhar ⁽¹⁾ India, Scopus, VI	Analyze the effect of authentic leadership on behavior rule, through the mediation of academic optimism. N = 192 directors and 576 professors.	Random sampling technique to select a sample of professors and directors in elementary schools. 1. ALQ; 2. Affective behavior scale; 3. Academic optimism scale; 4. Training coverage scale.	Positive influence of authentic leadership on behavior rule through partial mediation of academic optimism.
Luu and Vo ⁽³²⁾ Vietnam PubMed, VI	Examine the effects of authentic leadership of medical professors on task-making behaviors. N = 100 outpatient and 100 surgical tutorials.	Mixed methods approach. 1. ALQ; 2. Observation and interviews.	It provided empirical evidence that medical students guided by authentic professors express increased levels of elaboration of study tasks.
Soares, Lopes ⁽³⁾ Portugal, ERIC, VI	Report the impact of authentic leadership, psychological safety, and the strengths of work relationships on academic performance. N = 199 students.	Observational and longitudinal study. Four forms of measurement were performed.	A positive impact of authentic leadership and professor psychological safety was found on academic performance.

The relationship between authentic leadership with positive and negative factors

In this first category, 12 studies were selected that carried out the relationship (direct association) between authentic leadership and positive or negative factors, as well as with some mediating factors (factors that influence the direct relationship between this theoretical model and the positive or negative factor). To carry

out a thorough analysis of the articles, they were subdivided into studies carried out in elementary and high school^(1,10,17,24,30) (21.74%) and higher education^(3,25-29,31) (30.43%).

In a study by Bird et al.⁽¹⁷⁾, carried out in elementary and high schools, the relationship was between authentic leadership and trust, involvement and the intention to return. In the research by Srivastava and Dhar⁽²⁴⁾, authentic leadership was related to academic optimism, through the mediation of affective behavior

and training coverage. In a research by Aria et al.⁽¹⁰⁾, authentic leadership was related to professors' intention to stay at work, mediated by psychological capital and organizational support. A study by Ismail, Abdullah, and Abdullah⁽³⁰⁾ relates authentic leadership to faculty stress, while in Srivastava and Dhar's research⁽¹⁾, authentic leadership was related to extra-role behavior, mediated by academic optimism and training comprehensiveness.

Regarding the studies carried out in higher education, a research by Frederick et al.⁽²⁵⁾ highlights that three factors were related to authentic leadership: responsibility, openness and response. In a study by Erkutlu and Chafra⁽²⁶⁾, authentic leadership was related to insertion in organizational work, mediated by psychological ownership and self-agreement. In a research by Kotzé and Nel⁽²⁷⁾, authentic leadership was related to emotional intelligence, personality, cognitive abilities, and gender. In a research by Adil and Kamal⁽²⁸⁾, authentic leadership and psychological capital were related to Burnout Syndrome through the mediation of promoting and preventive psychological ownership. In a research by Hassan and Din⁽²⁹⁾, intrinsic motivation, high performance work system and authentic leadership were related to creativity, mediated by knowledge sharing. In a research by Saeed and Ali⁽³¹⁾, there was a relationship between authentic leadership and classroom management/involvement. Finally, in a research by Soares and Lopes⁽³⁾, authentic leadership, psychological safety, and network density were related to academic performance.

When analyzing the results of the research presented, it appears that, in most studies, there is a predominance of relationships and mediations of authentic leadership with positive factors, such as trust, academic optimism, intention to stay at work, responsibility, cognitive skills, personality, creativity, among others. It is observed that in these relationships and mediations, when authentic leadership scores are moderate or high, the other positive factors related or mediated will also be present at the same level, which demonstrates the importance of the leader developing authentic leadership, especially in the educational system.

Through the study of human psychology, it was discovered that human behavior is influenced by the environment, that is, a perceived environment positively affects human behavior in a positive way⁽¹⁾. Therefore, there is evidence of the positive influence of authentic leadership on job satisfaction⁽³³⁾, as an increase in followers' optimism through positive emotions⁽³⁴⁾, increased optimism of workers through personal identification⁽³⁵⁾, and influence of authentic leadership in increasing confidence, hope, optimism and resilience⁽³⁶⁾.

As for the negative factors, it is noted that only two were related to authentic leadership, namely workplace stress and Burnout Syndrome. However, there is an inverse relationship, that is, if authentic leadership is present, negative factors will be absent or with negative indices on the part of those who are led, which confirms the importance of this theoretical model in health scenarios.

Thus, it is observed that authentic leaders create a work environment that allows subordinates to have sincere and authentic self-expression⁽⁴⁾, reducing various negative practices and enabling leaders and followers to work together for the overall effectiveness and success of the organization⁽³⁷⁾.

Hence, authentic leadership has been shown to facilitate good management practices also in the educational environment, being positively related to the commitment of educational actors (directors, coordinators, professors and students) with the

organization and engagement at work, and may even influence the non-development of negative factors among workers⁽³⁸⁾.

It is observed that the 12 studies included in this category were classified with level of evidence VI (qualitative or descriptive study), reinforcing the need to develop other studies that relate authentic leadership with positive and negative factors, with a better level of evidence.

Assessment of managers' authentic leadership in the education system

In the second category, five field surveys^(6,16,18-19,22) (21,74%), carried out in the educational environment, were listed, which intended to measure the degree of authentic leadership attributed by managers, professors and/or students, with moderate and high levels being identified among educational managers, demonstrating the importance of authentic leadership in this system. However, divergences were found between the perception of the followers and the self-perception of the leaders, which demonstrates that the leaders are not exactly familiar with how followers perceive them⁽¹⁶⁾ as well as they self-assess very well in any situation⁽³⁹⁾.

It can be seen that, of the five articles, in only two^(6,16), there was an assessment of leaders' and followers' perception to compare the results, as proposed in the authentic leadership theory, through the ALQ SELF and RATER versions^(2,35). In the other works, only the assessment of one-dimensional authentic leadership was carried out, i.e., only by the professors⁽¹⁸⁾, by the administrative team⁽¹⁹⁾ or by the directors⁽²²⁾, bringing only the vision of how these professionals assess their leaders through the ALQ RATER form.

It is observed, in the analyzes carried out through the use of ALQ, that followers can be more precise when analyzing leader characteristics, suggesting that they can assess them better than the leader himself/herself^(16-17,39-40).

By demonstrating moderate and/or high indices in the assessment of authentic leadership, research converges in pointing out that authentic leaders put the needs of the organization and those they lead above their own, in search of ethical practices that, consequently, benefit learning⁽⁴¹⁾. Still, in this leadership model, managers can develop authentic led and enable educational institutions of democratic exercise⁽¹⁶⁾.

Therefore, it appears that authentic leadership is a conceptually new leadership model in education⁽¹⁷⁾. However, it could not be more pertinent to this scenario, since it is based on character, values, ethics, morality, transparency and decision-making⁽⁴²⁾. Currently, authentic leadership is considered one of the most genuine, positive, transparent and ethical models in organizations and specifically in educational institutions⁽⁴³⁾.

It should be noted that the five studies listed in this category present level VI of evidence, which demonstrates that more robust studies on this model of leadership in the educational system still need to be developed.

Authentic leadership in undergraduate nursing and health courses and authentic leadership teaching in higher education

In this third category, studies on authentic leadership in the educational system of health courses^(8,20,23,32) were pointed out, as

well as studies in which initiatives to teach authentic leadership as an inherent competence of leaders are observed, developed in higher education^(15,21).

Three studies stand out, as they address authentic leadership in nursing education, and the study by Shapira-Lishchinsky⁽²⁰⁾ demonstrated the benefits of clinical simulation for developing authentic leadership among nursing students. In a study by Waite et al.⁽⁸⁾, there was the creation of an authentic leadership course for undergraduate nursing students, whose applied dynamics allowed students to discover their own authentic self. Finally, the study by Al-Moamary et al.⁽²³⁾ assessed the authentic leadership scores of academic leaders of undergraduate courses in the health area, which were slightly higher than the scores of academic leaders of other courses, such as the medical course. About this course, it was proven that professors who lead with authenticity have the potential to develop students more positively⁽³²⁾.

Leadership competence can be learned, as demonstrated in the study by Eriksen⁽¹⁵⁾, through the creation of a leadership course in a Master Business Administration (MBA), the activities proposed for the development of authentic leadership being considered significant. Also, in order to promote the development of authentic leadership, Shapira-Lishchinsky⁽²¹⁾ proposed team simulations to familiarize leaders with various ethical problems.

It appears that the studies carried out in the health area, especially in nursing courses, highlight the importance of such a theoretical model of leadership. In the case of the nursing course, there seems to be a strong relationship between authentic leadership domains and this profession, since the competence to lead was incorporated as a role of nurses, who must organize the work and management of people, through physical, financial, material resources, in addition to administrative knowledge, such as planning, coordination, direction and control⁽⁹⁾. In addition to this, the American Association of Critical Nursing Care (AACN) emphasizes that authentic leadership is one of the six competencies necessary to create healthy work environments and promote positive results for patients and nurses⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Despite the above, it is noteworthy that there is an imminent shortage of leaders in the labor market, especially in nursing, demonstrating gaps in the teaching offered by universities, as well as failures in in-service training, which must invest in the introduction of organizational ethics, essential for the training of such leaders, especially in authentic leaders⁽⁴⁵⁾. Thus, it is necessary to invest in management and leadership skill teaching from the undergraduate and graduate curricula and maintained throughout professional life⁽⁴⁶⁾.

As demonstrated in the studies, one of the active teaching strategies of authentic leadership occurs through clinical simulations, which is considered a teaching-learning process that creates an artificial or synthetic environment, aiming at managing an individual's (or team's) experiences with reality, providing students with a more constructivist learning experience⁽⁴⁷⁾. Such simulations contribute to both teaching and management, in order to improve clinical awareness and develop competencies in advanced clinical management, including leadership and collaborative work skills, as it involves the facilitation of processes by which knowledge is created, shared, accumulated, internalized and used in organizations⁽⁴⁸⁾.

In this last category, it was also found that the six articles listed here present level of evidence VI, reinforcing again the need to develop more robust research on the subject.

Study limitations

The limitation of this study is related to the choice of databases for article searches, since investigating other international databases may contribute to the inclusion of other scientific articles.

Contributions to nursing and health

It is important to emphasize the benefits for health professionals' practice, especially nursing, given that the results have the potential to contribute to the advancement of knowledge regarding authentic leadership in the educational system, especially for nursing education. Three essential aspects are highlighted, identified from the results: the advancement that authentic leadership has had in the education system; the importance of teaching/developing this theoretical model as a competence for students, whether in elementary, high school or higher education; and the importance of educational leaders in developing authentic leadership, since factors such as optimism, academic performance, creativity, involvement, among others, will also be present, in addition to this leadership model being an impediment to the development of stress at work and the Burnout Syndrome.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is noted that authentic leadership has been used in educational management and has been taught in some undergraduate and graduate courses. In this way, it is essential to invest in the teaching of authentic leadership in this context, as well as in the production of new scientific evidence, especially in higher education, given that, the greater the adoption of this leadership model, the greater the indexes of positive factors related to it (trust, involvement, academic optimism, responsibility, creativity, among others). Still, this leadership was seen as a protective factor against workplace stress and Burnout Syndrome.

In the context of the educational system management, the articles converged by pointing out that authentic leaders put the needs of the organization and those they lead above their own, in search of ethical practices that, consequently, benefit learning. It is also observed that authentic leadership is not yet a model strongly adopted in education in the area of health sciences, including nursing courses.

In this perspective, although some researchers are investing in the theme of authentic leadership in the educational system, more robust evidence must be developed. In order to solidify the knowledge produced, given that there is growing concern about how educational organizations are being managed, in addition to the fact that such a theoretical model tacitly fits into the democratic school model, so envisioned today.

FUNDING

The present study was carried out with support from the Higher Education Personnel Improvement Coordination - Brazil (CAPES - *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior*) - Financing Code 001.

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