Self-Perceived Authentic Leadership and Self-Awareness on Faculty Burnout During COVID-19

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This study aimed to bridge the gap in the existing literature on self-perceived authentic leadership to burnout and self-awareness of burnout for faculty who taught during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study used a non-experimental Pearson Correlation Coefficient to provide quantitative answers to relationships between variables of self-awareness and authentic leadership correlations to burnout during COVID-19. The findings revealed a significant correlation between higher levels of self-perceived authentic leadership and lower levels of burnout. It is a starting point for articulating faculty and administration voices in their institutions regarding potential burnout to set an action plan for future crises.

Keywords: faculty, authentic leadership, self-awareness, burnout, pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the novel Coronavirus disease, also known as COVID-19, is an infectious disease that rapidly took over the world and ended with mandatory stay-at-home orders to ensure safety (WHO, n.d.). These stay-at-home orders caused faculty educators to flip their courses to an online offering nearly overnight to abide by the Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) mandate. Unfortunately, many faculty members lacked the proper online teaching methodologies to ensure their student's success. Hodges et al. (2020) explained that when you fully understand ERT, you can separate it from online learning. ERT was not a long-term solution to the urgent problem. Effective online learning results from careful instructional design and planning, with more long-term plans placed on quality online learning, teaching, and course design.

Faculty members with high self-efficacy and self-awareness understand the need for transparency to dig through those difficult times while looking forward to normalcy. Pressley and Rangel (2022) explained that the demands of working in school considerably changed during COVID-19, including in-person teaching with distanced classrooms, hybrid instruction, or an all virtual approach. As a result of the new challenges teachers faced, their self-efficacy was impacted. Faculty had to cling to something to keep them pushing through navigating the unknown of the global COVID-19 pandemic while trying to ensure minimal interruption to students but still maintaining healthy levels of motivation.

Lee et al. (2023) suggested that employees who identify with their leader's transformational leadership skills, ethical climate, and emotional intelligence trust their supervisor, positively influencing job performance. Studies have shown that the more a leader pours into a follower, the harder they will work and the more satisfied they will be within their working environment, reducing the potential for workplace burnout. Authentic leaders predict a trusting environment where employees' creativity can be enhanced,

leading to a more positive work experience (Zeb et al., 2019). Mota Matos et al. (2022) found that working conditions are essential to align with personal and professional needs, and sources of self-efficacy protect lecturers from the adverse effects of workload demand. Mosleh et al. (2022) discovered that the sudden shift to emergency teaching and learning increased staff levels, and the mean level of perceived burnout during the transition was high. Lastly, Hobbs (2021) found that higher levels of self-efficacy, optimism, and self-awareness were positively associated with high levels of coronavirus coping and adaptation.

Despite these results, few studies demonstrate the impact of authentic leadership and self-awareness on levels of burnout during a pandemic. This study addressed these gaps by evaluating the results from a globally distributed survey to those who taught from January 2020 to May 2023. Understanding whether a higher level of authentic leadership and self-awareness resulted in a lower level of burnout during the COVID-19 pandemic is crucial for planning future pandemics or other world crises. The findings of this study can allow education administrators to get a feel for their faculty as it relates to burnout for those who taught during the pandemic and to maximize plans moving forward to ensure a more accessible and successful implementation of any switches from typical on-campus course offerings to those online.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory is human learning from a function of triadic reciprocal causation where the influence of behavioral, cognitive, affective, environmental, and other personal factors is studied. Ford et al. (2020) explained that Bandura points to self-efficacy as the belief that one can perform a given task, and how individuals experience their environment predicts how successful an outcome is. Work by Mahler et al. (2018) within the framework of social cognitive theory is self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief that they can perform behaviors required for a desired outcome. Compared to general constructs like self-esteem, self-efficacy is related to a specific context. Work by Bachrach et al. (2022) explained that with roots in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is commonly seen as positive, where it can enhance performance by increasing the difficulty of self-setting goals and improving persistence toward goal accomplishment.

Self-Awareness

Bracht et al. (2021) explained that it is crucial to understand the processes behind how and why people emerge as leaders. There is a lack of understanding of how work context helps individuals emerge as leaders. They found that leaders' self-awareness was positively related to their followers' emergence and that the followers' nomination for future promotions was mediated by self-leadership and self-efficacy of the leader. Bracht et al. (2021) found that personality factors like agreeableness, extraversion, dominance, and narcissism were relevant in predicting possible leadership emergence. They are connected beyond social context impacting situations; social cognitive theory suggests that individuals can influence their attitudes and behaviors. Leader self-awareness triggered followers' internal development processes towards self-leadership.

Teacher Self-Awareness

Žydžiūnaitė and Daugėla (2020) explained that many factors influence a teacher's thinking or life path, and a teacher must be self-aware of what leads to a deeper self-understanding. Teachers find themselves to be human beings first and then professionals. Through self-knowledge, teachers recognize their values and biases that may color their perception of others and assess the effects of their behaviors on students. Thus, self-reflection is a part of teachers' self-awareness. They also discovered that emotional intelligence is a massive part of the professional self-awareness development of a teacher within their interactions with students. Emotional intelligence includes empathy, problem-solving, optimism, and self-awareness, allowing people to reflect, react, and understand various situations. Park et al. (2020) took a similar approach to Žydžiūnaitė and Daugėla (2020) in that they argue that mindfulness is a pathway for the development of self-awareness that is necessary for personal and professional growth.

According to Park et al. (2020), mindfulness is an emerging concept in teacher education as it provides benefits such as psychological well-being, personal development, professional development, and self-awareness. It is derived from being mindful of the purpose in the present moment without judgment. The first principle is outlined as paying attention to the present and bringing focus to the full awareness in the present moment, where teachers can reflect and gain insight on feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, resulting in an improved intellectual engagement with students. The second principle is developing the ability to be open-minded and non-judgemental toward others. Mindfulness assists with keeping a non-biased and open-minded perspective where students can be accepted without judgment. The third principle is intentionality, which is being aware of the purpose of behaviors. Park et al. (2020) reviewed previous literature that pointed to mindfulness as a pathway for teachers to develop their ability for self-care and well-being to apply to future students. Not only does it help navigate prospective students, but it also helps reduce teacher's work stress, improve overall well-being, build a culturally inclusive environment, and increase the quality of relationships between teachers and students. Mindfulness practices improve concentration, focused attention, decision-making, and coping skills to deal with personal and professional stress. Self-awareness emphasized through social and emotional competence helps teachers become conscious of the impact of their emotions and behaviors on their students and aids in making deliberate decisions about teaching practices.

Hobbs (2021) and Atmojo et al. (2020) researched self-awareness, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hobbs (2021) took an optimistic look at teaching during COVID-19, saying it was both a crisis and an opportunity for educators to dig into their digital and literacy interests in online learning environments. It assisted with encouraging educators to engage in online communities where it could be both inspiring and transformational. Through creating an online intentional gathering space, a group of strangers learned to deepen their emotional self-awareness and cultivate a spirit of optimism. They understood how language can divide people and create harmful feelings of distrust and disrespect.

According to Atmojo et al. (2020), the gap in teacher knowledge of online learning with innovative demands must be adaptive to changes such as during the COVID-19 pandemic. The levels of self-regulation and self-awareness were analyzed during the pandemic era. They found that Zoom, Google Classroom, WhatsApp Group, and UPY E-Learning applications had advantages and disadvantages. Indicators of self-regulated learning are independence from others, having self-confidence, behaving in discipline, having a sense of responsibility, acting on your initiative, and exercising self-control. Indicators of self-awareness are outlined as recognizing one's feelings, strengths, and weaknesses, having an independent attitude, and being skilled in expressing thoughts, feelings, opinions, and beliefs. The study's results found a connection between self-regulated learning, self-awareness, and student learning achievement as they all connect (Atmojo et al., 2020).

Authentic Leadership

As Whiteside and Dixon (2022) discussed, authentic leaders strive to be true to themselves, ideals, and morals as they lead others by owning their own experiences and acting per their true selves. Authentic leaders are open and honest in sharing feelings, motives, and opinions to build relationships based on trust and respect (Whiteside & Dixon, 2022). Erickson (2021) defined five dimensions of authentic leaders: pursuing purpose with passion, practicing solid values, leading with heart, establishing connected relationships, and demonstrating self-discipline.

Banks and Mhunpiew (2012) found that components of authentic leadership consisted of self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. Work by Ortiz-Gomez et al. (2022) found that authentic leadership implies that leaders get to know themselves and their environment. It was also found that authentic leadership fosters excellent self-awareness. Through authentic leadership behaviors, leaders can increase their followers' satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and personal and social identification with the organization (Ortiz-Gomez, 2022).

Nederhand et al. (2023) expressed that trust and transparency are necessary and can increase student participation. They found that transparency is crucial in improving student faith and participation, but few studies examine its effects. According to Iqbal et al. (2019), positive organizational relationships are

essential in shaping the organization's reputation and boosting employee effectiveness. They also discussed the importance of trusting a leader and how it is affected by the actions and character of the leader. Authentic leaders show authenticity and can enhance followers' respect, dignity, integrity, and trust.

Work by Fladerer and Braun (2020) found that authentic leadership can provide positive outcomes for employees and their organizations. They discovered that sometimes managers could act authentically one day and not the next, and transformational leaders can be the same. Additionally, personal resources are aspects of the self related to resiliency and successful control of the environment. Self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism are linked to positivity. On the other hand, managers with low self-efficacy are more likely to protect their self-worth through self-enhancement and defensiveness (Fladerer & Braun, 2020). According to Chaudhary and Panda (2018), authentic leadership reinstates stakeholders' confidence, trust, hope, resilience, and optimism. The positive psychological capacities of an ethical climate foster greater self-awareness and moral perspective, and stakeholders work with leaders to promote positive self-development. Findings supported that authentic leadership affects creativity and work engagement through direct and indirect psychological meaningfulness. Similar to the work by Chaudhary and Panda (2018), Keselman and Saxe-Braithwaite (2021) found that ethical behavior is essential for followers, while the costs of unethical behavior are more significant.

Braun and Peus (2018) researched authentic leadership's impact on work-life balance and job satisfaction. They discovered indirect effects could link authentic leadership to job satisfaction through work-life balance perceptions. Authenticity is the free operation of one's true self with components of the administration of awareness, unbiased processing, action, and relational orientation. Authentic leadership fosters positive self-development of leaders and followers, which drives health and well-being in organizations (Braun & Peus, 2018). On the same page, Weiss et al. (2018) researched authentic leadership in light of the mental well-being of the leader to discover that enacting authentic leadership tends to increase the leader's well-being through reduced job stress and strengthened work engagement.

Srivastava et al. (2022) analyzed the effects of authentic leadership on inclusive classrooms with the role of academic optimism. Their research was applied to educational institutions as the central behavior of teachers and students, suggesting self-knowledge through reflection and ongoing dialog. In another study by Srivastava et al. (2020), authentic leadership is applied to sustainability in higher education. They found a positive and significant relationship between sustainability in higher education institutions and authentic leaders. Zeb et al. (2019) discovered that the degree of authentic leadership is a positive predictor of knowledge sharing and results in employee creativity applied to a team environment where psychological safety and trust affect knowledge sharing and employee creativity levels.

Burnout

According to Mar Molero Juardo et al. (2019), burnout is characterized by dealing with symptoms that can include psychological exhaustion, impaired relations, and professional inefficacy with disillusion. Flynn and Walt (2023) had a similar definition for burnout, including being a prolonged response to chronic emotional and physical stressors, which typically has a negative affective state and is likely irreversible. Similar to the work by Flynn and Walt (2023), Candeias et al. (2021) also touched on stress emerging as a significant predictor of burnout.

Work by Alessandri et al. (2018) defined burnout as a work-related syndrome resulting from prolonged exposure to emotional and interpersonal stressors associated with negative individual and organizational outcomes. Symptoms of job burnout include anxiety, depression, life dissatisfaction, mood disturbance, turnover, and impaired job performance. One must consider self-efficacy to manage negative emotions at work as the mediator of emotional stability and social cognitive theory (Alessandri et al., 2018). Borrelli et al. (2023) stated that two ethical climates influence employee burnout: role overload and clarity.

Role overload was significantly related to low-ranking employees due to the more vital ability of experienced employees to develop resilience mechanisms. Additionally, work overload was positively associated with burnout, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment, along with an overall burnout measure. On the other hand, ethical workplace climate has been reported to be associated with lower turnover intention with burnout increasing turnover intentions.

Estévez-Mujica and Quintan (2018) explained the negative effect of burnout on individuals' well-being and its consequences for employees, organizations, and society; therefore, the importance of identifying job burnout earlier due to the time and cost of employee turnover is emphasized. Job burnout captured the attention of various professionals, including academics, doctors, and managers. Burns et al. (2021) reviewed the impact of culture and professional fulfillment on burnout in academic medicine. Many respondents found their work meaningful, and two-thirds felt worthwhile. Half of the respondents felt physically exhausted at work and had a sense of dread when thinking about the work they had to do. A little less left emotionally exhausted at work.

According to Wu et al. (2021), job relationships lack support and trust, leading to a greater risk of burnout, while social support effectively reduces burnout. Just as Estévez-Mujica and Quintan (2018) explained that job burnout captured the attention of a variety of professionals, including academics, doctors, and managers, Wu et al. (2021) demonstrated that the association of job stress and job burnout has been confirmed in many professions such as teaching.

Popov et al. (2023) stated that many definitions, models, and concepts of burnout have been developed. Some commonly realize burnout is a syndrome with three dimensions, while others emphasize fatigue, exhaustion, and emotional weariness. They found a new construct of "work engagement, defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 32). Vigor is the high level of energy and resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort, and persistence in dealing with difficulties. This goes along with the work completed by Fynn (2022) that researched understanding academic burnout amongst e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. They noted that the exhaustion component is the most frequently reported symptom of burnout and is the first sign that people are having a problem. They begin to distance themselves from the workplace both cognitively and emotionally. They noted that the transition to online learning at a time of intensive efforts also placed intense pressure on both staff and students with the increased workload. That increased workload placed students at risk of being burnout. They found the same burnout in the workplace also has a growing impact on students.

Pandemic Teaching

Limniou et al. (2021) outlined that COVID-19 had a significant disruptive change in higher education regarding curriculum challenges, student accessibility, and affordability, resulting in a modified teaching process. It also discussed how student learning engagement and attitudes were disrupted due to teachers' digital competencies, communication, and teaching during the pandemic. Almulla and Al-Rahmi (2023) saw E-Learning on the rise and where successful interventions needed to be ensured for the success and sustainability of students in learning. Education sustainability requires students to obtain knowledge, competencies, skills, and values while engaging in social interactions, and this has been hindered due to the emergency remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Al-Freih (2022) outlined faculty perceptions of presence and non-presence concerning Ely's eight change conditions. Moving from face-to-face to online during COVID-19 was challenging as it required transformative and systemic changes to structure, beliefs, attitudes, skills, teaching culture, and support provisions. Parte and Herrador-Alcaide (2021) also discussed the unexpected teacher stress and emotional problems leading to burnout with the COVID-19 switch from face-to-face to strict lockdown confinement. Self-efficacy positively affects the degree of involvement, allowing teachers to deal with situations and cope with stress while positively impacting student learning and outputs.

Couris (2020) explained that successful leadership includes authenticity and vulnerability, and COVID-19 emphasized the importance of vulnerability and showing authentic compassion for others. The vulnerability allowed leaders to foster a supportive environment where a safe space was created for others to communicate and collaborate on their needs (Couris, 2020). Open communication allows others to express their needs and feelings during the difficult time of the global pandemic. Pobegaylov (2021) also discussed the significance of feedback from students to instructors being hindered by distance learning during the emergency shift to teaching online during COVID-19. Liang and Shen (2021) outlined that the

biggest challenge of COVID-19 was teaching, as students could not come to school and stayed indoors for a long time, so their anxiety levels were higher than before.

Heriyanto et al. (2022) outlined a valid concern regarding the quality of emergency remote teaching. When instruction consists only of a video with an instructor lecturing, without collaboration, interaction, or timely feedback, it creates teacher-centered learning that does not inspire confidence. Cutri et al. (2020) shared a similar vision. If teachers were to be supported during unprecedented efforts, then attention must be given to developing a powerful means of assessing teacher readiness to transition during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The effects of emergency remote teaching during COVID-19 were widespread, including worldwide shortcomings. Rashid and Yadav (2020) researched the rise of digital technology for eLearning and virtual education during COVID-19, revealing the impact on higher education to be dramatic and transformative. It is suggested that educators in universities must pay close attention to training educators and ensuring they have the required technology to succeed. Y. Li et al. (2021) also found that launching a questionnaire survey could allow students to adapt and improve in the new learning environment, which should conform to the new teaching development in the new era.

H. Li et al. (2021) discussed the vulnerability of COVID-19 on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Psychological needs were impacted in the form of physical health during the pandemic. Safety needs were directly affected as there were attempts to feel safe and seek security, all while including the risk of the pandemic and the loss of control in lives when confronting the pandemic. Furthermore, social needs where love and belongingness were impacted as the social distance eroded relationships. Ansorger (2021) researched educational reforms of the 20th and 21st centuries on low-socioeconomic students (Low-SES). It revealed that those with the most significant impact were marginalized as they faced obstacles such as healthcare, mental health support, food, proper nutrition, and safe places due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Multiple factors could impact a faculty member's burnout teaching during a global pandemic. Therefore, a multidimensional theoretical frame was used to provide context for this study. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, self-awareness, and George's authentic leadership theory, along with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, were examined to develop an understanding of the impact these variables had on faculty who taught during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Self-efficacy and environment are relevant to the Social Cognitive Theory, which suggests that individual behaviors can be changed or modified based on personal cognitions, behaviors, and environment (Zhou, 2018). Veiga-Diaz (2023) researched the evolution of self-efficacy and self-awareness, where assessing the self-efficacy beliefs of a student was conducted by analyzing the development of self-perception. Žydžiūnaitė and Daugėla (2020) defined self-awareness as one's ability to think, relate, and express feelings, thoughts, and actions. It describes the overall concept, which includes many sub-concepts such as self-esteem, self-concept, self-description, self-control, self-evaluation, self-image, self-perception, self-presentation, self-reflection, and self-understanding. People have diverse backgrounds and upbringings; even a person has a life story that is interrelated with self-awareness. They found that self-awareness is hidden in every person. Still, reflection on personal experiences helps actualize them, and self-awareness is a developmental process concerning self, others, and one's environment.

According to Walumbwa et al. (2008), authentic leadership theory contains components such as self-awareness, relational transparency, and balanced processing. Self-awareness outlines one's strengths and weaknesses, which helps one be true to oneself and is critical to authenticity. Žydžiūnaitė and Daugėla (2020) defined self-awareness as being hidden in every person, but through the reflection of personal experience, it becomes actualized. It includes values, attitudes, prejudices, beliefs, assumptions, feelings, counter-transferences, personal motives, needs, competencies, skills, and limitations. Winton et al. (2022) found that authentic leadership attempts to improve transformational leadership behaviors by extending to morality and ethics, where leaders are selfless, honest, and honorable.

Erickson (2021) expanded on the need for transparency because communication is at the heart of leadership and management. Authentic leaders can stay focused on long-term results and values as beacons in the storm during a crisis. To maintain trust in a leader, the leader must be transparent, which comes from authentic leadership. The transparency of authentic leaders has been linked to communication literature, trust, and employee engagement. Erickson (2020) also explained that how decisions are made in an organization is very important. Trusting how decisions are made through an authentic leader is important during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Howard et al. (2020) sought to establish transparency in the virtual classroom to help mitigate any adverse effects of being virtual.

Rashid and Yadav (2020) found that the COVID-19 outbreak caused a downward spiral and significantly impacted education. It exposed shortcomings of the current system and the need for more training in educators of digital technology. Face-to-face classes were switched to online learning systems for educators with little experience. Ortiz (2020) found that the unexpected shift to online learning had some faculty struggling to make the smooth transition, as the call to the situation was not for lowering standards or challenging learning outcomes but to revisit courses with critical learning outcomes. The sudden shift to adapt and implement online learning has led to overwork and stress among teaching faculty, thus leading to higher teacher burnout. Studies by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020) found that burnout is conceptualized as a syndrome of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment. They conceptualized that job demands, resources, and well-being are mediated through teacher burnout. Since this study sought to address whether perceived authentic leadership levels and self-awareness are correlated to faculty burnout, decisions on how to proceed with the current educational system and future potential crises should be grounded in this theoretical framework.

Research Question 1: *Is there a significant correlation between faculty with self-perceived authentic leadership and corresponding perceptions of burnout during COVID-19?*

Research Question 2: *Is there a significant correlation between faculty with self-awareness and corresponding perceptions of burnout during COVID-19?*

DATA AND METHOD

The research design was a non-experimental correlation coefficient. Spatz (2019) explained that a correlation coefficient can be used in various fields. A correlation coefficient allows the researcher to provide quantitative answers to relationships between variables. Because this study compares self-awareness and authentic leadership correlations to burnout during COVID-19, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient was employed to find possible correlations between variables. A quantitative approach was chosen over a qualitative approach to allow more objective findings than those in previous studies. The dependent variable was the burnout of faculty during COVID-19. The independent variables are self-awareness and self-perceived authentic leadership levels.

Participants

The target population for which the sample was drawn from faculty who taught during January 2020 and May 2023, which falls during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were excluded if they did not teach during this time. The survey was purchased through SurveyMonkey with a targeted number of 100 participants through their global panel of participants that meet the required industry criteria, education, job function, and educator (teacher, lecturer, professor). A G*Power analysis using version 3.1.9.7 was conducted to establish a rigorous sample size for a medium correlation/effect =.30, power = .80, and α = .05. The minimum sample size of $N = 67$ for the correlation: bivariate normal model. The obtained sample of $N = 67$ is adequate to test the correlation hypothesis. The minimum sample size for the study is 67 participants. Therefore, the requested 100 surveys allow the minimum number of participants to be met.

Instrument

The survey was 44 questions, with 16 referring to the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, 4 of the 16 Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) referring to self-awareness, 22 referring to the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), and 6 non-demographic questions along with the initial informed consent page/question to proceed. This allowed data to be gathered regarding self-perceived authentic leadership, self-awareness levels, and workplace burnout factors to determine correlations. Permissions were purchased and received for the ALQ and MBI through Mind Garden (https://www.mindgarden.com/). Spatz (2019) outlined that correlation coefficients are used to assess reliability in questionnaires and instruments, which refers to consistency. The ALQ and the MBI are proven to be valid and reliable instruments for data collection. The reliability of the ALQ was obtained using Cronbach's alpha of internal consistency with produced alpha scores of .76-.92, with best-fit model factor loadings of .66-.93. The reliability of the MBI- ES was also obtained using Cronbach's alpha of internal consistency with estimates of .90 for Emotional Exhaustion, .76 for depersonalization, and .76 for Personal Accomplishment. Reliable devices produce consistent scores and are not subject to risk fluctuation (Spatz, 2019).

Procedure

To answer the Research Questions, a statistical Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was used to determine if there was a correlation between the independent (self-perceived authentic leadership and self-awareness) and dependent (corresponding levels of burnout during COVID-19) variables. The independent variables were collected via questions from the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire. SurveyMonkey distributed it as a 6-point scale rating of how frequently the statement fits their classroom management/leadership skills [*not at all, once in a while, sometimes, fairly often, frequently if not always*]. The responses were divided into two groups: "lower" self-perceived authentic leadership with total scores from 0-31 and "higher" self-perceived authentic leadership with total ALQ scores of 32-64. The same was done for self-awareness with "lower" self-awareness consisting of total scores of 0-8 and "higher" self-awareness of 9-16. The dependent variable was collected via questions from the Maslach Burnout Inventory: MBI: Educators (ES) was distributed through SurveyMonkey as a 7-point scale of how they felt in their job [*never, a few times a year or less, once a month or less, a few times a month, once a week, a few times a week, every day*].

FINDINGS

Research question one asked, is there a significant correlation between faculty with self-perceived authentic leadership and corresponding perceptions of burnout during COVID-19? The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire was applied to determine levels of self-perceived authentic leadership as asked in the research question. The ALQ used a Likert scale to analyze the 16 questions. The corresponding perceptions of burnout outlined in the question were determined by applying the MBI. The MBI-ES used a Likert scale to analyze the 22 questions.

Before conducting hypothesis testing, verifying that data met assumptions was essential. The assumption checks included testing normality and ensuring the minimum G*Power participant met the total Authentic Leadership and Maslach Burnout Inventory scores. For the initial assumption check, the Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to assess the normality of data for the two variables. The test in Table 1 yielded a W statistic of 0.969, with a p-value of .054. The p-values for both groups were more significant than the conventional alpha level of .05; therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis of normality. Hence, the data for both groups were considered to approximate a normal distribution, as there was no significant deviation from normality.

TABLE 1
RESEARCH QUESTION ONE – SHAPIRO WILK TEST FOR NORMALITY

			Shapiro-Wilk	p
High ALQ	–	MBI	0.969	0.054

Once the assumption checks were confirmed, the data for research question one examined the correlation between self-perceived authentic leadership and corresponding burnout for faculty who taught during the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 92 participants ($N = 92$), comprised of K-12 and post-secondary adjunct and full-time faculty, were included in this study. The participants were divided into two groups: those with higher self-perceived authentic leadership levels consisting of total scores of 0-31 and those with lower levels of self-perceived authentic leadership consisting of total scores of 32-64. Cortés-Denia et al. (2023) stated that higher levels of authentic leadership increase overall job satisfaction, lessening the potential for workplace burnout. Participants with higher self-perceived authentic leadership levels were first analyzed, including 79 participants ($N = 79$), with the remaining 13 participants ($N = 13$) having lower self-perceived authentic leadership levels. The null and alternative hypotheses stated:

$H_0$1a. *There is no statistically significant correlation between higher levels of authentic leadership and lower levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

H_a1a. *There is a statistically significant correlation between higher levels of authentic leadership and lower levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

$H_0$1b. *There is no statistically significant correlation between lower levels of authentic leadership and higher levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

H_a1b. *There is a statistically significant correlation between lower levels of authentic leadership and higher levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

For null and alternative hypothesis one a, located in Table 2, the analysis revealed the value of R is -0.2225, rounding to -0.223, resulting in a negative correlation. However, the relationship between variables is weak. The value of the coefficient determination $R^2 = 0.0495$. The p-value was determined to be $p = .049$, meaning it was significant at $p < .05$. Total results are (r [77] = -0.223, $p = .049$); therefore, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test results showed a significant correlation between higher self-perceived authentic leadership levels and the corresponding perception of burnout. Thus, $H_0$1a was rejected. Unfortunately, for $H_0$1b and H_a1b, there were not enough participants ($N = 13$) who outlined lower levels of self-perceived authentic leadership to determine any possible correlation to burnout during COVID-19.

TABLE 2
RESEARCH QUESTION ONE - HYPOTHESIS ONE A

			Pearson's r	p
High ALQ	–	MBI	-0.223	0.049

Research question two asked, is there a significant correlation between faculty with self-awareness and corresponding perceptions of burnout during COVID-19? The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire was applied to determine levels of self-awareness as asked in the research question. The ALQ used a Likert scale to analyze the 16 questions. However, only 4 questions of the ALQ were utilized as they related directly to self-awareness specifically. The corresponding perceptions of burnout outlined in the question were determined by applying the MBI. The MBI-ES used a Likert scale to analyze the 22 questions.

Before conducting hypothesis testing, verifying that data met assumptions was essential. The assumption checks included testing normality and ensuring the minimum G*Power participant met the self-awareness and Maslach Burnout Inventory scores. For the initial assumption check, the Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to assess the normality of data for the two variables. The test in Table 3 yielded a *W* statistic of 0.980, with a *p*-value of .206. The *p*-values for both groups were more significant than the conventional alpha level of .05; therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis of normality. Hence, the data for both groups were considered to approximate a normal distribution, as there was no significant deviation from normality.

Once the assumption check was confirmed, the data for research question two was utilized to examine the correlation between self-awareness and corresponding burnout for faculty who taught during the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 92 participants ($N = 92$), comprised of K-12 and post-secondary adjunct and full-time faculty, were included in this study. The participants were divided into two groups: those with higher self-awareness levels, consisting of total scores of 0-8, and those with lower levels of self-awareness, consisting of total scores of 9-16.

According to Hamaideh et al. (2024), those with higher levels of empathy and self-awareness equate to lower levels of stress, which would lessen the potential for burnout. Participants with higher self-awareness levels were first analyzed, including 84 participants ($N = 84$), with the remaining 8 participants ($N = 8$) having lower self-awareness levels. The null and alternative hypotheses stated:

TABLE 3
RESEARCH QUESTION TWO – SHAPIRO WILK TEST FOR NORMALITY

			Shapiro-Wilk	p
High Self-Awareness	–	MBI	0.980	0.206

$H_0$2a. *There is no statistically significant correlation between higher levels of self-awareness and lower levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

H_a2a. *There is a statistically significant correlation between higher levels of self-awareness and lower levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

$H_0$2b. *There is no statistically significant correlation between lower levels of self-awareness and higher levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

H_a2b. *There is a statistically significant correlation between lower levels of self-awareness and higher levels of burnout during COVID-19.*

For null and alternative hypothesis two a, located in Table 4, the analysis revealed the value of *R* is -0.1498, rounding to -0.150, resulting in a negative correlation. However, the relationship between variables is weak. The value of the coefficient determination $R^2 = 0.0224$. The P-value was determined to be $p = .174$, meaning it was not significant at $p < .05$. Total results are (r [82] = -0.150, $p = .174$); therefore, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test results showed no significant correlation between higher self-awareness levels and the corresponding perception of burnout. Thus, $H_0$2a was failed to be rejected. Unfortunately, for $H_0$2b and H_a2b, there were not enough participants ($N = 8$) who outlined lower levels of self-awareness to determine any possible correlation to burnout during COVID-19.

It is important to note that these findings are specific to the sample of participants in this study and may not be generalized to all faculty who taught during COVID-19. Furthermore, it is recommended that in the future, this study be conducted with a larger, more diverse sample to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the correlations between self-awareness and corresponding perceived burnout.

TABLE 4
RESEARCH QUESTION TWO - HYPOTHESIS TWO A

			Pearson's r	p
High Self-Awareness	–	MBI	-0.150	0.174

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study assessed the correlation between self-perceived authentic leadership and self-awareness to burnout of faculty who taught during the COVID-19 pandemic. Afsar and Umrani (2020) found the need for future research on the vast amount of leadership styles, while Candeias et al. (2021) pointed out the need for future research on the stress and burnout of teachers. The purpose of the non-experimental correlational study was to determine any correlations between self-perceived authentic leadership or self-awareness and burnout of faculty that taught during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Completing this study provided the opportunity to examine the possible burnout factor of faculty who taught during the COVID-19 outbreak, which had everyone doing emergency remote teaching while on lockdown. The results revealed a statistically significant correlation between higher self-perceived authentic leadership levels and the corresponding perceptions of burnout. This goes alongside the previous literature that confirms the greater someone regards their authentic leadership, it lessens the potential for workplace burnout. Burnout is costly; therefore, leaders should strive to exhibit high levels of self-perceived authentic leadership.

As previous research shows, authentic leadership traits include self-awareness, transparency, empathy, building trust, and vision. Educational leaders will benefit their faculty, administration, and students by recognizing their levels of self-perceived authentic leadership and self-awareness to the impact of teaching during COVID-19. The more authentic traits a leader exhibits, the greater trust the faculty and staff will have in being openly honest about their feelings and needs. The COVID-19 pandemic threw a loop in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs because many basic needs could not be met with the stay-at-home orders. Self-awareness and reflection play a big part in this by being able to take a step back to reflect and determine if they are higher or lower in their self-perceived authentic leadership or self-awareness levels. If they are found to be lower than preferred or expected, that leader can work towards training or professional development to grow their authentic leadership skills and self-awareness levels.

Furthermore, this study provided a basic understanding of the impact of world crises on the educational system. It allows leaders and faculty to use it moving forward to have contingency plans for everyday functions, such as the potential for another emergency remote teaching event or, the opposite, a cyber attack that prevents any online education. Another recommendation is for leaders to have a plan for effective communication and wellness checks to determine if any other mental support mitigation is necessary for their followers. Lastly, this study also contributes to the limited research on self-perceived authentic leadership and self-awareness of faculty that taught during the most recent pandemic.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Several limitations of the findings existed that should be considered when conducting additional research. The first limitation was that the sample size was smaller than anticipated. Additionally, the small sample size of those with lower self-perceived authentic leadership and self-awareness failed to meet a level for adequate testing of correlations. Thus, the study identified the results of those two hypotheses as inconclusive. The geographic scope might have proven to be an implication given that different states had different COVID-19 mandates. Lastly, participants may not have answered honestly and accurately or understood the terminology listed in the survey.

Despite the limitations, the findings offer new insight into self-perceived authentic leadership and self-awareness factors that could have led to higher burnout of faculty who taught during COVID-19. Future studies can hone in on the limitations to offer further insight into possible correlations between variables

that impact faculty burnout teaching during the global pandemic. These future studies could investigate post-secondary specific geographic scope and offer a larger sample size to understand any correlations better. Additionally, it could narrow down age groups or faculty educational levels.

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