

Tracing the Footprints of Authentic Leadership Literature: A Bibliometric Journey

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Abstract

This study presents a bibliometric analysis of Authentic Leadership Research (ALR) publications in Scopus from 1979 to 2024. 961 articles were analyzed using BiblioMagika, Open Refine, Biblioshiny, and R packages to examine publication trends, authorship patterns, institutional contributions, international collaborations, and citation impact. The findings reveal a steady increase in ALR research, predominantly led by US-based scholars, with a strong focus on business management and accounting. However, studies on ALR in education and the public sector remain limited. Leading Western universities, particularly in the United States, have played a key role in shaping ALR scholarship and offering opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. The study underscores the need for further research on ALR in diverse organizational and cultural contexts, particularly in educational contexts. Future research should explore ALR's role in educational systems outside the Western context, its impact on teacher effectiveness, and its intersection with other leadership frameworks.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership, Bibliometric Analysis, Open and Refined, Biblioshiny, R Studio, BiblioMagika

Introduction

Authentic leadership has emerged as a prominent leadership theory in the past two decades focused on promoting transparency, ethics, and positive behaviors in leaders to build trust and engagement among followers. This Bibliometric study aims to analyze global research trends and the scholarly impact of academic literature on authentic leadership originating specifically from the countries over the 22 years between 1977 and 2024. Bibliometric analysis enables a quantitative examination of publication and citation trends to understand research productivity, global collaboration networks, prominent contributors, and influential papers over time. This study shall adopt a methodology incorporating keyword searches in the database analysis using Bibliometric software tools and presentation of results across standard indicators such as publication volume growth, authorship patterns, institutional participation, key subject areas, and citation impact. The focus is not just on quantity but also on assessing the quality and influence of authentic leadership research. This study will provide insights into overall contributions and individual regional player performance to inform future research priorities in this field such as publication, countrywide, institution, and citation by year. This research also identifies the gap in educational context on authentic leadership.

Authentic leadership has been defined comprehensively since the year 1960 Yuki and Gardner (2020) defined authentic leadership as a leadership approach where behaviors promote positive capacities and ethics in both leaders and followers. Specifically, authentic leaders display self-awareness, integrity, balanced processing, and relational transparency. This fosters positive self-development among followers by building self-awareness, strengthening moral reasoning, facilitating unbiased evaluation, and nurturing trust through open communication. In this manner, authentic leadership develops genuine, ethical relationships between leaders and team members. The focus is on moral modeling as much as goal achievement to nurture individual growth and cooperation (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Authentic leadership has gained significant attention as a positive and effective leadership approach in leadership studies (Durrah et al., 2022). Henderson Hoy (1983, pp.67-68), Bhindi & Duignan (1997, p,119). However, there is a notable lack of Bibliometric reviews analyzing research trends on authentic leadership, particularly studies originating from educational context. Bibliometric reviews can quantify research productivity and reveal international collaborations, influential scholars, key focus areas, methodological preferences, and citation impact over time through a systematic, evidence-based methodology. This can illuminate gaps in understanding the dynamics between Asian cultural values systems and authentic leadership behaviors. As Asian corporations and educational institutions prioritize ethical governance and crisis management, this analysis can inform policies and interventions around developing authentic leadership talent indigenously. In specific, the study endeavors to answer the following research questions:

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the emerging landscape of authentic leadership research?

RQ 2: What is the annual scientific publication growth in authentic leadership?

RQ 3: Which are the topmost productive authors, institutions, sources contributed and most cited countries in ALR?

RQ 4: What landmark papers have shaped the discourse and direction of authentic leadership research?

RQ 5: What are the conceptual structures of authentic leadership?

Significance and Limitations of the Study

The answer to these questions will aid in determining the direction of current research and would undoubtedly offer value to the authentic leadership field. Various Bibliometric indicators were calculated over the 22 years examined, including publication volume, author productivity, country-wise distribution, institutional contributions, collaborative authorship patterns, most influential authors, temporal publication trends, identified focus areas or themes, citation impact, and analysis of top-cited papers. Publication by year, countywide, institution, citation by year, and journals, Visualizations including co-authorship networks and conceptual structure maps were generated to uncover collaboration dynamics and intellectual milestones respectively.

Literature Review

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is a leadership style that focuses on the leader's self-awareness, transparency, and ethical behavior (Walumbwa, 2008). Authentic leaders are true to their values and principles, and they lead with integrity and honesty. Authentic leaders foster open communication, build trust, and create a positive and inclusive work environment. Authentic leadership is centered around being genuine, fostering deep connections with employees, and empowering them to be their best, resulting in improved engagement, motivation, and overall organizational effectiveness. Relational transparency, which demonstrates how the preaching style of the leader aligns with their value. Authentic leaders convey what they believe in and foster an openness with others by promoting others' views and opinions. They also have an open mentality and freely share knowledge with others. An internalized moral perspective, demonstrating a leader's commitment to morality and ethical behavior. The third dimension is balanced processing, which refers to the ability of leaders to carefully consider relevant data, information, and facts before drawing any conclusions. which relates to the leader's self-belief and self-knowledge, is the first element, understanding one's strengths or limitations and how others see it.

Authentic leadership is identified as a constructive psychological approach that significantly contributes to enhancing organizational performance. It emphasizes the development of self-awareness and constructive behaviors, which can be cultivated through mentorship and support from colleagues. Leaders practicing authenticity not only facilitate the professional growth of their teams but also enhance their own leadership capabilities (Agué et al., 2020). Moreover, this leadership style offers a structured and pragmatic framework aimed at improving organizational effectiveness and overall performance (Asim, 2023).

Authentic leadership plays a critical role in promoting followers' well-being by enhancing their dedication, happiness, and self-efficacy. Its effects are significant for both teachers and organizations like schools (Enola et al., 2021). Research by Pinelli (2018) indicates that leaders who adopt this approach are more effective in guiding, motivating, and engaging their followers. The core of this leadership style is the alignment of actions with personal beliefs, ensuring consistency between a leader's values and behaviors, which helps build trust and respect among followers (Leroy et al., 2012). Avolio et al. (2018) highlights that fairness, a key component of authentic leadership, strengthens the relationship between leaders and

followers by positively impacting followers' attitudes, well-being, and behavioral intentions. Additionally, self-awareness allows leaders to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, which supports the achievement of organizational goals and objectives (Avolio et al., 2018). Authentic leadership is increasingly relevant in educational institutions. This leadership style is associated with fostering trust among teachers by emphasizing the importance of positive relationships and ethical behavior (Lopez, 2019). In organizations, authenticity relies on the positive energy of all stakeholders to create engaging and productive environments, ultimately leading to improved organizational performance. By articulating their core beliefs and practicing self-reflection, authentic leaders enhance their ability to connect with their teams, thereby fostering a supportive atmosphere conducive to positive change (Juna & Leeb, 2024). Samriangjit, (2016) believes that effective authentic leadership is crucial for shaping the strategies and objectives of organizations in Pakistan. This leadership approach empowers leaders to inspire their followers, enhance job performance, and cultivate supportive environments within organizations (Yousaf & Attia, 2020). Furthermore, this leadership style promotes positive self-development among employees by ensuring transparent communication, balanced information sharing, and strong collaborative relationships (Semedo et al., 2017) and significantly improves teachers' effective and normative commitment in both public and private schools' context (Khan et al., 2023).

Bibliometric analysis has previously been carried out on authentic leadership across various contexts. Nevertheless, there is a lack of specific bibliometric research on authentic leadership in an educational context (Del Valle Garcia Carreño, 2020). Research has been conducted through bibliometric analyses to examine authentic leadership with a focus on evaluating academic publications, identifying trends, and exploring research domains, utilizing various databases, studies have scrutinized the literature and uncovered a notable increase in publication post-1997, with a particular emphasis on the effects of genuine leadership on outcomes such as performance and trust (Gümüş et al., 2020, Idris & Zariah, 2022). These analyses have pinpointed distinct grouping within the literature such as precursors, dedication, and organizational development, offering valuable insight for scholars and professionals seeking to enhance the development of genuine leadership (Al Subahi., 2023). Noteworthy measurement instruments like the authentic leadership questionnaire have been underscored, indicating a prevalence of quantitative inquiries from 2008 onwards (Pioli et al., 2020). Furthermore, influential papers in educational leadership and management have gendered critical areas like social equity and transformational leadership, thereby steering impactful research opportunities in the field (Maude et al., 2021).

Methodology

Data Source and Search Strategy

This bibliometric analysis examined publications indexed in the Scopus database, retrieved in January 2025. The study identified literature focused on "authentic leadership" by searching publication titles, which condense key concepts and highlight core areas, as noted by Zakaria et al. (2020). The analysis covered publications from 1977 to 2024, capturing current trends and including articles, reviews, book chapters, and conference papers. Unpublished documents and retracted publications were excluded to ensure accuracy. This systematic approach facilitated a precise bibliometric analysis of authentic leadership research literature over the past two decades.

Information Extraction, Tools and Analysis

The study selection process is depicted in Figure 1. Erratum notices and retractions were excluded to prevent inaccurate counts. Every retained publication underwent Bibliometric analysis using a combination of software tools for different purposes. Metadata Compilation and Frequency Analysis: Key parameters such as authorship, year-wise distribution, country-wise breakup, subject categories, and journal names were compiled from individual articles into a master spreadsheet. Frequency counts and percentages across these parameters were calculated using Microsoft Excel 2016 to reveal research productivity patterns.

Network Visualization and Analysis: Co-authorship linkage analysis was conducted by extracting authorship data. Co-occurrence networking of keywords was also done to map research themes. For both, visualization software Vos Viewer v1.6.15 was utilized to generate graphs/maps depicting collaboration and conceptual networks respectively over time.

This combination methodology leverages the strengths of different analytical tools to support a robust, multi-faceted Bibliometric review methodology from data sourcing to reporting key research trends. The next section elucidates the emerging trends.

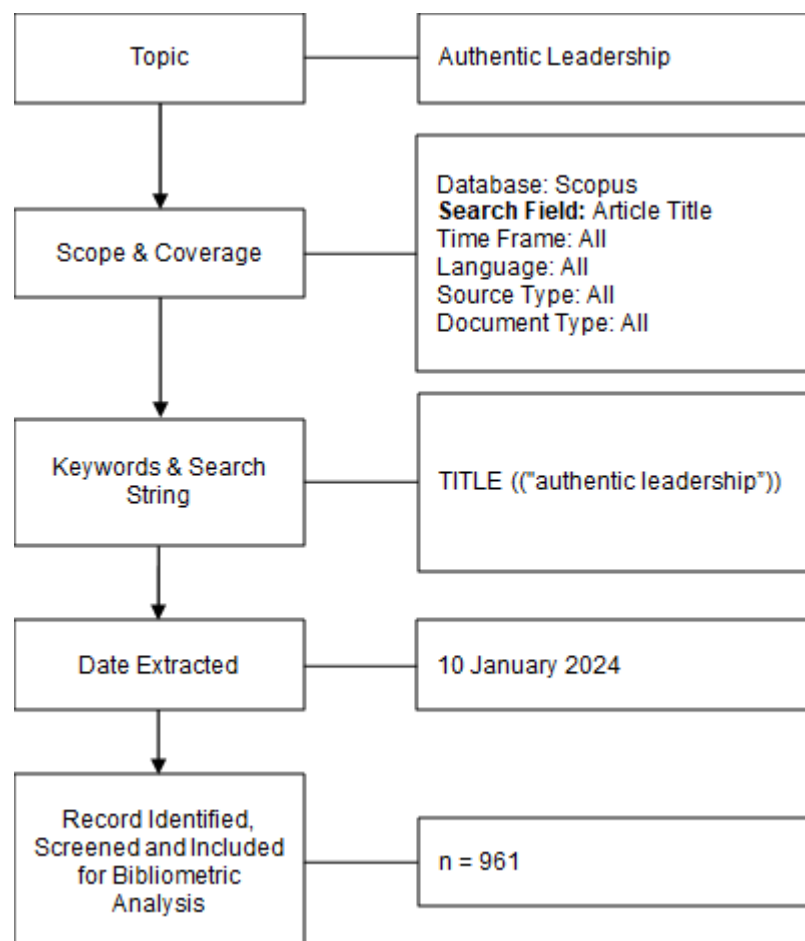


Fig. 1. Flow diagram of the search strategy.

Source: Zakaria et al. (2021)

Data Cleaning and Harmonizing

The researcher employed open Refine and BibilioMagika (Ahmi,2024). To cleanse and standardize bibliometric information, encompassing details like author names, affiliations, and keywords. Scopus data was acquired in CSV format and clustering methods were applied to detect and revise author names and affiliations. BibilioMagika was especially for in-depth bibliometric analyses, including citation per paper, author and year. Subsequently, the information was reimported into its original form for further examination. Through the application of these methodologies, the scholar ensured the integrity and dependability of the data, thereby enhancing the granularity and lucidity of the data and establishing a robust foundation for an authentic inquiry.

Results

The result section delivers a thorough analysis of the authentic leadership research landscape, dressing the research questions (RQs) detailed in the introduction. By aligning the findings with these RQs the study aims to provide comprehensive insights for scholars, practitioners and policymakers.

The Current Landscape of Authentic Leadership Research

To address the first research question which seeks to understand the current landscape of authentic leadership research, Research Question “What is the landscape of authentic leadership research”? This section analyzes the distribution of publications by numerous factors, such as document type, source type, language, and subject areas. Additionally, this research will discuss the overall citation metrics for publication with the authentic leadership domain to gain insight into their impact and relevance. Table 1 presents the citation metrics and various parameters of bibliometrics analysis, offering insights into the impact and relevance of the publication in the ALR domain. The analysis was conducted using BibilioMagika software, which transformed Scopus data into meaningful metrics such as the number of papers, number of citations, total years, citations per year, citation per author, paper per author, h-index, g-index, and m-index. As shown in Table 1, the study considered 961 publications, receiving a total of (n=30,036) citations for 48 years. The average number of citations received per year is 639.06. with an average of (n=31.19) citations per paper. Furthermore, the data revealed an average of (27.16%) papers per author and 11.06 citations per author. The h-index, which measures the impact of a publication, stood at h-index (n=77), while the g-index which considers both the productivity and impact of the publication and places more weight on highly cited papers was average of (n=153), m-index (n=1.60).

Table 1

Main Information about the Dataset

Main Information	Data
	1977 - 2025
Publication Years	
Total Publications	961
Citable Year	48
Number of Cited Papers	775
Total Citations	30,002
Citation per Cited Paper	38.71
Citation per Author	11.10
Author per Paper	2.81
Citation sums within h-Core	26,860
h-index	77
g-index	153
m-index	1.60

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

The citation metrics provided in Table 1 suggest that authentic leadership research has significantly impacted the academic community. The high h-index and g-index values indicated that the publications in this domain have been influential and well-received by researchers. Furthermore, the average number of citations per year highlights the importance and relevance of the research conducted in authentic leadership fields. The data also reveals that multiple authors frequently collaborate on authentic leadership research, as evidenced by the average of 2.83 authors per paper. This finding underscores the interdisciplinary nature of authentic leadership research and collaboration among researchers from various fields. The 961 documents retrieved for Bibliometric analysis based on keyword search in Scopus represented different scholarly publication categories. As shown in Table 2, an overwhelming majority were Journal Articles (n=763, 79.37%) followed distantly by Book Chapters (n=10.26), Conference Papers (n=33, 3.39%), and Review Articles (n=2.86). Other marginal document types like Notes, Editorials, and Short Surveys constituted less than 5% combined. This breakdown indicates a strong preference for journal articles as the primary publication medium for authentic leadership scholars over the past two decades. In terms of language composition delineated in Table 3, English was overwhelmingly the top medium with 97.46% of all publications (n=937). This cements the status of English as the universal language of modern research enabling wider dissemination. All other languages combined accounted for less than 3% of total output. Specifically, (n=11) documents were published in Spanish making it a distant second. Other niche languages with minimal representation included Korean (n=8), Portuguese (n=8), German (n=3), Persian (n=2), Arabic (n=1), Chinese (n=1), Japanese (n=1) and Polish (n=1).

Table 2

Document, and Language Type

Document Type	TP	%	Language	TP	%
Article	763	79.40%	English	937	97.50%
Book Chapter	98	10.20%	Spanish	11	1.14%
Conference Paper	33	3.43%	Korean	8	0.83%
Review	27	2.81%	Portuguese	8	0.83%
Note	12	1.25%	German	3	0.31%
Book	9	0.94%	Persian	2	0.21%
Erratum	15	0.62%	Arabic	1	0.10%
Retracted	2	0.21%	Chinese	1	0.10%
Letter	1	0.10%	Japanese	1	0.10%
Short Survey	1	0.10%	Polish	1	0.10%

Note: TP=Total Publication; %=Percentage.

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

The Emerging Trends

Addressing the second research question, “What are the emerging trends in Authentic Leadership Research (ALR)?” The growth trajectory of this rapidly expanding field has been charted in this section. Since the year 1999, there has been an enormous rise in authentic leadership research, with a peak number (n=127) publications in 2023 indicating a growing interest in the topic (Figure 2, Table 4), Figure 2 shows the trajectory of total publications and citations over time, demonstrating extraordinary increases. The bar chart indicates an increasing trend in publications, with several notable jumps in recent years. The line graph (peak) shows an increase in total citations, indicating the growing impact of this research. total publication increases from (n+) in 1977 to 2024, and so does the number of contributing authors to NCA, reflecting a thriving research work. Authentic Leadership requires expertise from multiple disciplines, including education. Table 1 shows that the h-index and g-index values have steadily increased over time, indicating the growing importance of authentic leadership research. m-index changes indicating variability in the rate of highly cited publications. Table 2 shows citations per publication (C/p) and average citations per cited publication (C/CP) have fluctuated, with a recent decrease. This observation may indicate changing citation patterns or changes in publication quality and relevance. In summary, the authentic leadership area is expanding with more publications, diverse authors, and increasing research impact and relevance. However, swings in citation rate highlight the need for further investigation into citation method in authentic leadership.

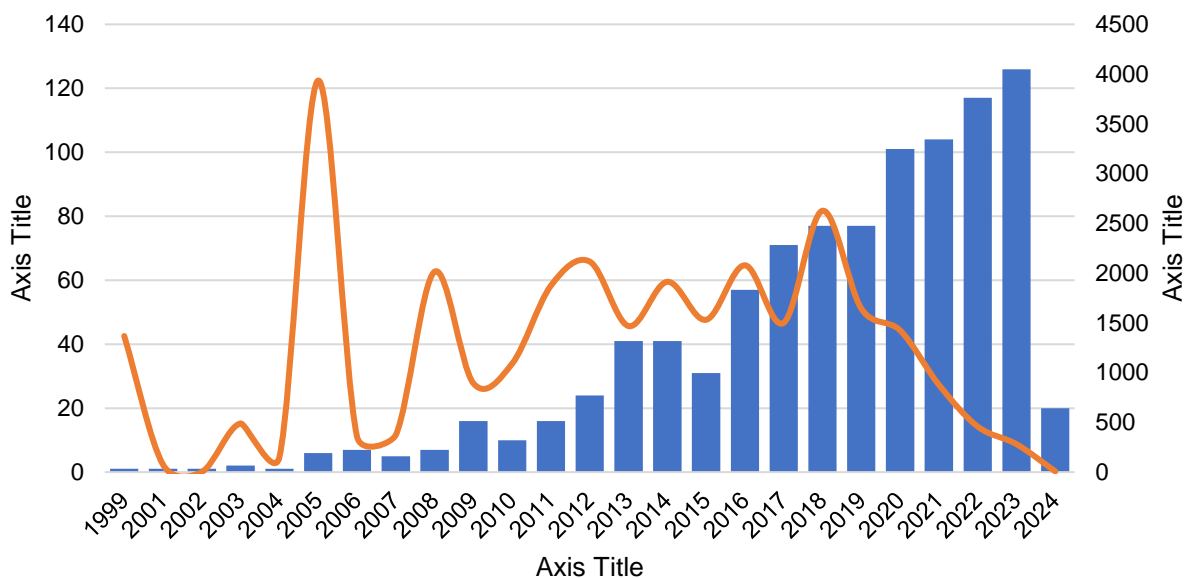


Figure 2: Growth of Publications Based on Total Publications and Total Citation

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Addressing the third research question, this section examines emerging trends in authentic leadership research by identifying the most influential authors, leading institutions, contributing countries and journals.

Most Productive Authors

Table 3 presents the leading contributors to authentic leadership research, highlighting their significant influence in the field: Avolio B.J. emerges as the most prolific author, contributing to 14 publications. His work is foundational in leadership development and positive leadership forms. Gardner W.L. follows closely with 13 publications, recognized for his comprehensive literature reviews and influential research agendas that have shaped authentic leadership discourse. Wong C.A. has made substantial contributions with 11 publications, focusing on the impact of authentic leadership on job satisfaction and empowerment, particularly in organizational settings. Laschinger H.K.S. has authored 10 publications, significantly advancing understanding of authentic leadership within healthcare environments. Walumbwa F.O. is documented in 9 publications and is noted for his pivotal role in validating theoretical measures of authentic leadership. Bernard has contributed 8 publications, exploring complex leadership dynamics within organizational contexts. Mariano J.A. and Stander M.W. have each produced 8 publications, examining the effects of authentic leadership on organizational behavior and employee engagement. Ma J. is credited with 8 publications, focusing on leadership authenticity and its influence on work outcomes. Molero F. has contributed 7 publications, enriching the discourse on leadership and follower well-being. These key authors have significantly shaped the field of authentic leadership research, influencing theoretical development and practical applications.

Table 3

Most Productive Authors

S. N	Author Name	Total Publications (TP)	Percentage (%)
1	Avolio, B.J.	14	1.46%
2	Gardner, W.L.	13	1.35%
3	Wong, C.A.	11	1.14%
4	Laschinger, H.K.S.	10	1.04%
5	Walumbwa, F.O.	9	0.94%
6	Bernardes, A.	8	0.83%
7	Mariano, J.A.	8	0.83%
8	Stander, M.W.	8	0.83%
9	Ma, J.	7	0.73%
10	Molero, F.	7	0.73%

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Institution-wise Publications

Table 4 shows the most important affiliations (Institutions or universities) in authentic leadership research. Here is a full explanation within the framework of authentic leadership research (ALR). Western University leads with (n= 31 articles), making it the most influential University in authentic leadership research (ALR). Universidad Nacional de Education a Distancia (n=14 article) Texas Tech University (n=11 articles) Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (n=11 articles) Zhejiang University (n=10 articles) University of Tasmania (n=10 articles) University of Nebraska–Lincoln (n=10 articles) North-West University (n=10 articles), Universidade de São Paulo (n=9 article) University of Washington (n=8 documents) This table helps to identify the leading institutions in authentic leadership research, providing insight into where significant research is being conducted.

Table 4

Institution wise Publications

Institution	Total Publications (TP)	Percentage (%)
Western University	31	3.23%
Universidad Nacional de Education a Distancia	14	1.46%
Texas Tech University	11	1.14%
Polytechnic Institute of Leiria	11	1.14%
Zhejiang University	10	1.04%
University of Tasmania	10	1.04%
University of Nebraska–Lincoln	10	1.04%
North-West University	10	1.04%
Universidade de São Paulo	9	0.94%
University of Washington	8	0.83%

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Journal Publications

The data extracted from the data set, found to have the top 10 most active Journals across disciplines that have been published on ALR. The findings in this Bibliometric study reveal that The Journal of Leadership and Organizational Development is ranked at number one with the maximum number of publications (n=35) followed by the Leadership Quarterly (n=29).

Frontiers in Psychology (n=25) and Journal of Nursing Management (n=25) also have a considerable number of publications. Along with them are other journals with a similar number of publications Authentic Leadership: Clashes, Convergences and Coalescences (n=18), Sustainability (Switzerland) (n=14), Leadership (n=13), The Emerald Handbook of Authentic Leadership (n=13), Educational Management Administration and Leadership (n=12) and Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies (n=11).

Table 5

Top 10 Most Productive Journals

S. N	Source Title	TP	NCA	NCP
1	Leadership and Organization Development Journal	35	96	33
2	Leadership Quarterly	29	78	28
3	Frontiers in Psychology	25	68	22
4	Journal of Nursing Management	25	68	22
5	Authentic Leadership: Clashes, Convergences and Coalescences	18	63	17
6	Sustainability (Switzerland)	14	31	14
7	Leadership	13	31	13
8	The Emerald Handbook of Authentic Leadership	13	34	4
9	Educational Management Administration and Leadership	12	34	9
10	Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies	11	29	11

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Topmost Countries Contributed to the Publications

The table 6 shows the most active countries in the context of authentic leadership research (ALR), indicating the academic importance and impact of their research. This is a thorough breakdown: the United States leads strongly with (n= 239 Publications), showing a strong influence in authentic leadership research. China (n=91 publications) United Kingdom has (n=81 Publications), indicating significant contributions and impact. Canada has accumulated (n= 65 Publications), indicating its expanding importance in the sector: Australia with (n=59 Publications), it has a significant presence in the research community Australia has accumulated. Pakistan (n=51 Publications), south Korea has (n=48Publications), India has (n=37 Publications), Spain received (n=37 Publications), Turkey has accumulated (n=33 Publications). This Table shows which nation has the highest referenced research on authentic leadership research. Suggesting where prominent and effective research is being conducted. Researchers can use this data to identify leading countries and seek partnerships, resources, or references from these locations to supplement their study.

Table 6

Topmost Countries Contributed to the Publications

Country	Continent	TP	%
United States	North America	239	24.87%
China	Asia	91	9.47%
United Kingdom	Europe	81	8.43%
Canada	North America	65	6.76%
Australia	Oceania	59	6.14%
Pakistan	Asia	51	5.31%
South Korea	Asia	48	4.99%
India	Asia	38	3.95%
Spain	Europe	37	3.85%
Turkey	Europe	33	3.43%

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Top 10 Highly Cited Documents

This section highlights the most influential papers that have shaped the discourse and development of authentic leadership theory. These seminal works, distinguished by their high citation counts, underscore their substantial impact on the academic community, reflecting the evolving significance of authentic leadership. However, despite the extensive research, several gaps remain that warrant further investigation.

Key contributions include

Avolio et al. (2005): This paper explores the role of collaboration in fostering positive leadership, significantly influencing the development of authentic leadership with 2058 citations. Its sustained relevance over more than a decade highlights its foundational contribution to positive leadership discourse. However, the contextual applicability of positive leadership collaboration in diverse organizational settings remains underexplored.

Walumbwa et al. (2008): This study develops and validates a theory-based measure of authentic leadership, amassing 1627 citations and the highest citations per year. It underscores the emerging importance of authentic leadership theory. Nevertheless, limited empirical evidence exists regarding its impact on job performance, particularly within educational contexts.

Bass et al. (1999): By examining ethics and authentic transformational leadership behaviors, this paper has garnered 1358 citations, establishing a critical link between ethical considerations and authentic leadership. Yet, further exploration is needed to understand how ethical leadership influences employee commitment and work engagement.

Ilies et al. (2005): Investigating the relationship between authentic leadership and eudaemonic well-being, this work has been cited 725 times, emphasizing the impact of authentic leadership on leader-follower outcomes. However, the psychological mechanisms underlying this relationship require deeper examination across different organizational levels. Gardner et al. (2011): This comprehensive literature review sets a research agenda for authentic leadership, receiving 695 citations. Despite its influence, the dynamic interaction between authentic leadership and organizational culture remains insufficiently addressed.

Hoch et al. (2018): Conducting a meta-analysis of ethical, authentic, and servant leadership, this paper, with 630 citations, advances the understanding of leadership styles beyond transformational leadership. Nonetheless, comparative studies focusing on leadership styles across sectors are scarce.

Shamir & Eilam (2005): Introducing a life-stories approach to authentic leadership development, this influential work has been cited 575 times. Yet, the narrative approach's effectiveness in enhancing authentic leadership among organizational leaders has not been fully explored.

Rego et al. (2012): Examining the role of authentic leadership in enhancing psychological capital and creativity, this study has received 384 citations. However, its applicability in promoting psychological capital and job performance remains under-investigated.

Banks et al. (2016): Through a meta-analytic review of authentic and transformational leadership, this paper, with 362 citations, critically assesses the distinctiveness of these leadership constructs. Yet, the implications of these distinctions for job performance and work engagement require further research.

Clapp-Smith et al. (2009): Investigating the mediating role of trust at the group level, this study explores the relationship between authentic leadership and positive psychological capital, receiving 326 citations. However, the role of trust in enhancing work engagement across teams and organizational contexts remains unexplored.

These landmark publications have significantly influenced the scholarly discourse on authentic leadership, offering foundational insights and guiding future research directions. However, gaps persist in understanding the contextual application of authentic leadership across various organizational settings. Addressing these gaps will enhance the practical relevance and theoretical development of authentic leadership in educational settings.

Table 7

Top 10 Highly Cited Documents

No	Author(s)	Title	Source Title	TC	C/Y
1	Avolio et al., (2005)	Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership	Leadership Quarterly	2058	102.90
2	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	Authentic leadership: Development and validation of a theory-based measure	Journal of Management	1627	95.71
3	Bass B.M. et al., (1999)	Ethics, character, and authentic transformational leadership behavior	Leadership Quarterly	1358	52.23
4	Ilies R.; Morgeson F.P.; Nahrgang J.D. (2005)	Authentic leadership and eudaemonic well-being: Understanding leader-follower outcomes	Leadership Quarterly	725	36.25
5	Gardner et al., (2011)	Authentic leadership: A review of the literature and research agenda	Leadership Quarterly	695	49.64
6	Hoch J.E et al., (2018)	Do Ethical, Authentic, and Servant Leadership Explain Variance Above and Beyond Transformational Leadership? A Meta-Analysis	Journal of Management	630	90.00
7	Shamir B.; Eilam G. (2005)	"What's your story?" A life-stories approach to authentic leadership development	Leadership Quarterly	575	28.75
8	Rego A.; Sousa F.; Marques C.; Cunha M.P.E. (2012)	Authentic leadership promotes employees' psychological capital and creativity	Journal of Business Research	384	29.54
9	Banks et al., (2016)	A meta-analytic review of authentic and transformational leadership: A test for redundancy	Leadership Quarterly	362	40.22
10	Clapp-Smith et al. (2009)	Authentic leadership and positive psychological capital: The mediating role of trust at the group level of analysis	Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies	326	20.38

Source: Generated by the author(s) using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

Research Themes and Conceptual Structure

In exploring the fifth research Question, RQ5, this study examines the conceptual framework that underlies it. (ALR), Authentic leadership research. The investigation made use of keyword co-occurrence analysis and biblioshiny software in R package to identify the predominant themes and ideas related to global authentic leadership. The keyword map illustrated in figure 2 shows the interrelation among different keywords. With emphasis placed on the 25 frequently occurring terms, each represented by the size of the label.

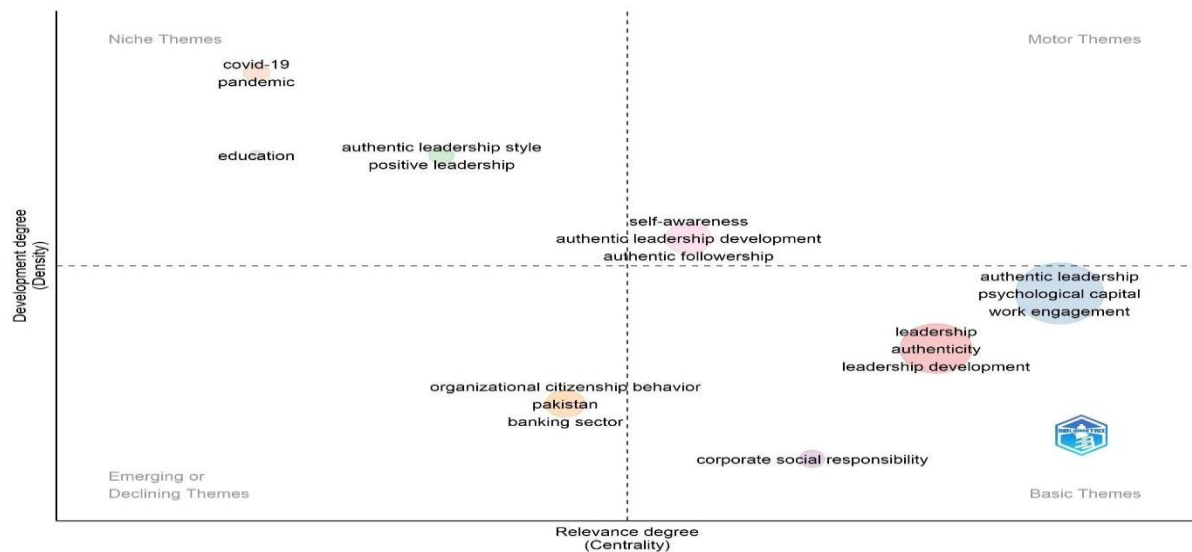


Figure 4: Thematic map of the author's keywords in authentic leadership research. (for a time refers to the web version of this article)

The word cloud and thematic map present offer complementary perspectives on the landscape of authentic leadership research. The word cloud provides a broad or most frequently occurring keyword in literature. The thematic map offers a more structured view of how these concepts relate to each other and their relative importance in the field. The word cloud prominently features "Leadership" as the central and largest term, indicating its primary focus in the literature surrounding it are items that suggest the diverse context and approaches in leadership studies "Human ", "Male" and "female "point to demographic interestingly, terms the "nurse" and "middle-aged" suggest specific populations or sectors that have been subjects of authentic leadership studies.

In context, the thematic map provides a more nuanced view of the field structure it organizes into concepts into quadrants based on their centrality and density. The upper right quadrant, with "contains "authentic leadership style "and positive leadership." Represents well-developed and central themes in authentic leadership research. The lower-right quadrant, with "organizational commitment "and "job satisfaction," indicates important but less developed areas. The upper-left quadrant, featuring "self-awareness "and balance processing," suggests niche areas that are well developed but less central to the overall field. The lower-left quadrant, with terms like "corporate social responsibility "represents emerging or peripheral topics. While the word cloud gives equal visual weight to terms like adult, human, and articles, which are broad and potentially less informative about the specific focus of leadership research, the thematic map provides a clear picture of the theoretical constructs central to authentic leadership, such as self-awareness and balanced processing.

Finally, according to the results, the word cloud offers quick, intuitive gasps of the most common terms in the field of authentic leadership research. The thematic map provides a more sophisticated analysis of the relationship and relative importance of key concepts in authentic leadership research. Together, word clouds and thematic map offer a compressive view of the field's current states and potential future directions.

Discussion

This study employs comprehensive bibliometric analysis to assess the evolution, impact, and future research directions of authentic leadership scholarship. Drawing from a dataset of 961 articles indexed in Scopus (1979–2024), the study systematically maps the intellectual structure of the field, identifying key themes, influential authors, institutional contributions, and publication trends. A multifaceted analytical approach was adopted, utilizing advanced bibliometric tools such as BiblioMagika, Open Refine, and R Studio to examine publication frequency, authorship networks, institutional affiliations, journal impact, and citation patterns (Nobanee et al., 2023; Vengadesh et al., 2023).

The findings indicate a sustained increase in authentic leadership research, with the United States emerging as a dominant contributor. The *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal* is identified as a leading publication outlet, reflecting the field's strong orientation toward business management and organizational studies. However, a significant research gap persists in educational and public sector contexts, particularly within Asian countries. The prominence of studies originating from China and the United States suggests that their leadership frameworks and policies may provide valuable insights for other regions (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Moreover, the overwhelming dominance of English-language publications raises concerns regarding inclusivity and accessibility, potentially limiting contributions from scholars in non-English-speaking contexts. Addressing these linguistic and regional disparities could enhance the field's diversity, fostering a more globally representative discourse on authentic leadership (Tourish, 2014).

This study underscores the urgent need for expanded research on authentic leadership within educational institutions and diverse cultural settings. Collaborations with globally recognized universities could drive cross-disciplinary advancements, facilitating a broader exploration of authentic leadership's role in different organizational and societal contexts (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). The study highlights the role of authentic leadership in fostering ethical decision-making, transparency, and trust, which are critical for organizational sustainability and workforce engagement. Despite the increasing volume of research, bibliometric assessments focusing on authentic leadership within underrepresented regions remain scarce, underscoring the need for further empirical exploration (George, 2003). While Scopus provides a robust dataset for bibliometric assessments, reliance on a single database may introduce selection biases and coverage limitations. To mitigate these constraints, this study integrates multiple bibliometric tools, including VOSviewer, R Studio, and MS Excel, ensuring a more comprehensive analysis of research trends, citation networks, and thematic evolutions. This methodological rigor strengthens the validity of findings and offers a nuanced understanding of the field's progression (Donthu et al., 2021).

Future research should focus on broadening the scope of authentic leadership studies beyond business and management, particularly in education, healthcare, and public administration. Empirical investigations into its applicability across diverse cultural and institutional contexts are necessary to refine theoretical frameworks and practical implementations (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Additionally, interdisciplinary research incorporating psychological, sociological, and technological perspectives could offer deeper insights into the mechanisms through which authentic leadership influences organizational outcomes (Kernis, 2003). Expanding bibliometric assessments to include alternative databases, such as the Web of

Science and Google Scholar, could further enhance the comprehensiveness of future studies, mitigating database-specific biases.

By addressing these research gaps and methodological limitations, future studies can contribute to a more holistic and globally inclusive understanding of authentic leadership, fostering innovative approaches to leadership development across diverse professional landscapes (Avolio, 2007).

Conclusion

Research on authentic leadership has been predominantly shaped by scholars from the United States, contributing significantly to the development of both theory and practice in this field (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, a leading US-based publication, has played a crucial role in advancing authentic leadership as a distinct area of inquiry. Over the past two decades, the journal has published numerous groundbreaking papers, establishing its importance in the dissemination of critical research on the subject (Walumbwa et al., 2008). However, the journal's focus has been primarily on business management and accounting contexts, with much of its research examining the application of authentic leadership in corporate settings, organizational behavior, and the accounting profession (Avolio & Luthans, 2006). As a result, the exploration of authentic leadership in sectors such as education, politics, and the public sector remains limited.

Western universities, particularly those in the United States, have become central to the academic discourse on authentic leadership. Many leading scholars in the field are affiliated with these institutions and lead dedicated research centers or institutes that focus on authentic leadership (Northouse, 2018). These universities present valuable opportunities for collaboration on cross-disciplinary projects, which could expand the scope of authentic leadership research beyond the business domain. Collaborating with these institutions would allow scholars to explore authentic leadership in new environments and generate knowledge that can be applied across various organizational, cultural, and societal contexts (Gardner et al., 2011). Such collaborations could facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of authentic leadership and contribute to its application in diverse settings.

Implications of the Study and Recommendations

Given the escalating importance of Asian economics, this study underscores the significance of delineating Asia's scholarly input to authentic leadership recommendations encompassing the promotion of international partnerships and the undertaking of innovative research to delve into the distinct viewpoint offered by Asian cultures and organizational milieus.

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Conflict of interest statement

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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