

The Role of School Leaders in Enhancing the Intellectual Security of Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia

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The aim of the research is to identify the role of school leaders in enhancing intellectual security among secondary school students, and the challenges that limit their contribution to enhancing intellectual security (IS), and to reveal the differences according to the variables: (gender, educational qualification, years of experience). The descriptive method was used in order to achieve the study's objectives; the study population encompassed of all secondary school teachers (n=2032) in Dammam city, Saudi Arabia. A simple random sample of (n=323) was selected and a survey was distributed via e-mail, and the recovered responses were (n=275) representing (85%) response rate. The study findings concluded that the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students came to a "high" degree with (m=4.11) and (SD=0.87) for all study dimensions, where the "teacher" dimension ranked first, followed by the "student activities" dimension, then the dimensions of "family" and "community" in the same rank. The findings also indicated that the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of students came to a "high" degree with (m=3.93) and (SD=0.71). Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that there were no statistically significant differences in the responses related to leaders' role in enhancing IS ($P>0.05$), nor in the responses related to the challenges faced by these leaders ($P>0.05$), which attributed to the study variables (gender, educational qualification, and years of work experience). The study recommends that school



leaders may consider developing a strong partnership with the local community to initiate and support various IS programs, and recommends periodical revisions to the curricula and teaching strategies to employ social media and other technological tools to secure the enhancement of IS.

Keywords: *School Leader; Intellectual Security (IS); Secondary Schools and Saudi Arabia.*

Introduction

Education is one of the first building blocks in the formation of societies, and one of the most important approaches to intellectual reform and deepening security responsibility in the individuals - students - and increasing the sense of security in the community. It effectively contributes to shaping the character of those societies, refining the personalities of their generations, while instilling its values, principles, and ideas in the hearts of young people, promoting good citizenship, and maintaining comprehensive national security.

Security is the basic pillar of the human life where the individual and community feel safe and both interests and needs are achieved; looking at security in its comprehensive concept, it becomes clear that it includes multiple areas, including political, economic, social, health, and intellectual, where the latter comes at the top of the list of importance due to its sensitivity stemming from addressing the mind, and its close connection with all other aspects of security (Saeed and Al-Harfash, 2010).

Educational institutions are among the first organizations concerned with maintaining intellectual security (IS) and stability in societies, investing in the minds of its students is considered a duty that all levels and sectors of the educational community share (Nasr, 2016). When nations and societies are exposed to crises or challenges, the role of the educational institution “school” comes - as a powerful tool for education - in the process of change and correction, enhancing IS, and confronting intellectual deviations that students may encounter, who are the basis for the nations’ survival and progress (Balasi and Al-Sharaa, 2012).

The importance of (IS) for secondary school students is highlighted by working to establish high values in the students' minds, while instilling love for the homeland and its true values and beliefs. Students in today’s educational organizations are faced with many psychological, mental and physical changes and challenges, which may be accompanied by some irritability and rebellion among them, and handling these sensitive challenges is of great importance to secure productive members of the community (Al-Ghamdi, 2010; Al-Faqih, 2020). IS is considered as a fence and



immunity that helps students face the intellectual challenges that may take the largest share in their behavior and help in preventing all dangers and intellectual myths that may negatively affect them (Samia, 2011).

The role of school leadership is crucial and necessary to create an appropriate atmosphere and healthy school culture, to form and implement strategies, and to aid students, and put in place decisive policies to identify any intellectual deviation or malpractices, and work on preventing their emergence (Nooruddin & Baig, 2014).

Therefore, previous empirical social and educational research confirmed the important role and responsibilities of school leaders in securing IS among school students to become effective contributors to their community, and enhance the sense of commitment and good behavior inside and outside the school through rational management, systematic curricula and extracurricular activities that support IS, and deepening dialogue and openness between schools and the other security organizations (Ahmad and Dammas, 2018; Al-Anzi, 2019).

Further empirical studies (Al-Nafie's, 2012; Al-Wahaibi, 2015; Al-Faridi's, 2016), have emphasized the importance of developing a school culture sensitive to securing IS among secondary school students, and activating the role of governmental and civil community institutions in achieving IS while providing students with concepts, facts and values associated with IS, and encouraging the teachers to follow these concepts when implementing the different teaching strategies and activities.

On the other hand, the national strategic plan of Saudi Arabia "Vision 2030" aspires to achieve a human capital with a moderate and balanced thought, who believes in freedom, acceptance of others, and rejection of extremism and intolerance; it has emphasized the importance of empowering the educational systems with all its components, in order to work in close proximity with its communities in order to provide student with the needed knowledge, skills, attitudes and good behaviors needed to become independent personalities and productive members of society characterized with perseverance and self-awareness of their social and cultural duties (Saudi Arabia Vision 2030, 2017).

Despite the Saudi governmental call for its educational institutions to raise awareness of IS and its importance of maintaining the thought and approach of moderation upon which the country is based, few studies have investigated the challenges faced by the school leadership which may limit their effectiveness in achieving these goals in the required manner in the Saudi schools. The studies of (Al-Harbi, 2009; Qadeeb, 2010) indicated that one of the most challenges is the preoccupation of the school principal and the vice-principal with routine administrative work at the expense of

the educational process inside the school, and the fast pace of cultural changes and openness of today's communities; while Al-Wahaibi (2015) findings revealed low levels of power attainment and authority practices among the challenges faced by school leaders.

Al-Rubaian's study (2017) have recommended conducting more studies on IS, in terms of its dimensions, principles, and applications in the educational institutional settings. And for the importance of this sensitive evolving topic, there is a need for further empirical investigations and evaluations to the currents efforts provided by school leaders in attaining IS among the Saudi schools in an efficient and effective manner in order to provide upper-level decision makers in the educational systems with recommendations to overcome today's continuous changing challenges.

Therefore, the current study seeks to identify the reality of the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students by investigating the practices related to the following aspects (teachers, student activities - family – community. The study also reveals the challenges that may affect this role in public schools in the city of Dammam of Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the study investigates whether there are differences in the responses based on the demographic variables (gender, educational qualification, years of experience).

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students in the city of Dammam, from the point of view of the study sample?
2. What are the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students from the point of view of the study sample?
3. Are there statistically significant differences between the responses towards the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students based on the variables (gender, educational qualification, years of experience)?
4. Are there statistically significant differences between the responses towards the challenges that affect the role of school leaders to enhancing the IS of secondary school students based on the variables (gender, educational qualification, years of experience)?

Research Significance

1. This research comes in response to the directions of the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030, and with what it seeks to achieve in terms of human capital that has a moderate and balanced mind, believes in freedom, acceptance of others and tolerance, and rejects extremism and intolerance (vision 2030, 2017).
2. This research derives its importance from targeting the age group of secondary school students, as it is considered one of the most appropriate developmental periods to enhance

concepts and trends related to the concept and dimensions of IS and reduce intellectual deviations.

3. The findings of the study may enable senior leaders in the Ministry of Education to take appropriate decisions and adopt different strategies and programs in the field of enhancing IS for all parties to the educational process, starting with students and ending with school personnel at their various levels, in order to support school leaders in promoting IS.
4. Shedding light on the most prominent areas that the school leader interacts with to enhance IS, where they can be used in developing programs and activities within the school for each area to ensure its efficient and effective activation.

The Concept of Intellectual Security (IS)

The issue of IS has emerged in this period of time due to the emergence of the modern technology era. It began to take a global advanced interest in all sectors due to the development of social communication means, and the ease of integration of cultures and its strong influence of different value and social systems on one another (Al-Harthy, 2008).

IS serves as a guide that ensures the refinement of ones' identity, a tool to deal with the changes that are imposed on one's ideas and values, trends and habits, at the same time ensures the development of one's intellectual flexibility and ability to communicate with diverse individuals and cultures, even in the case of disagreement (Khalil, 2016). IS is seen by some as one branch of comprehensive security and is corelated with all other types of security such as political, social, and environmental security... etc. The Saudi Minister of the Interior has defined the framework of IS to be part of the public security system and identified it as "the pillar of all other types of security and the basis for the stability and prosper of the community" (Umm Al-Qura Celebrations, 1999).

Many Researchers in the field identified IS as a tool that provides protection and stability for the ideas and beliefs of individuals, taking into consideration the religious, social, and intellectual characteristics of each community; thus, it preserves the integrity of minds from any intellectual intrusions through digital influences and otherwise (Al-Hajj, 2011). Al-Maliki (2009) explained the correlation between IS and other types of security, as the integrity of thought leads to stability, instilling the principles and good behaviors in members of the community, which makes them able to contribute effectively to its sustainable development; and stated that any breach of physical security is preceded by a breach of IS, and further assured that any physical and tangible security for any community cannot be achieved in the absence of IS stability (Al-Maliki, 2009). While Al-Tala'a (1998) explained IS to be the process of providing safety and reassurance for everyone against all trends that may undermine the correct intellectual construction and replace alternative

ideas and concepts with inhumane premises that may lead to the intellectual collapse and regression of some members of the community.

The stages associated with the processes of IS assurance in the Saudi context includes: first, the preventive stage of intellectual deviation, where the concerned institutions develop carefully defined plans and legislation, and take all possible measures to prevent the occurrence of intellectual deviation; second, the discussion and dialogue stage in case the prevention efforts were not successful in preventing intrusive ideas, whether the source of these ideas is of internal or external nature; third, the evaluation stage, where an evaluation of the deviant's thoughts, and an assessment of its severity in an effort to correct it as much as possible. However, the fourth stage would take place, the accountability stage if reversing the deviation is not successful. This stage moves to the official legal and judiciary agencies to take legal rulings to provide protection on the personnel and the community level; the fifth and final stage, the treatment and reform stage, where full structured programs are enforced in the detention centers (Al-Wawi, 2016; Al-Maliki, 2009; Al-Harthy, 2008; Awad, 2017).

IS in the Saudi Educational setting

The Saudi society, as any other society, rely on its educational system in shaping the IS of its citizens. The educational system is in constant review of its programs and curricula in order to frame the concept of IS and present the most prominent and most important strategies that can be adopted to strengthen and achieve it within societies (Al-Hamid, 2020). The research of Al-Saqabi (2008), Al-Ma'rool (2009), Al-Jazirah (2015) have pointed some of the programs and initiatives which aimed to protect the moderate thought of the students:

- The **Fatin program** that aims to enhance awareness and provide the learner with personal and social skills to prevent them from intellectual and behavioral deviations, to assert themselves, to make decisions, and to communicate positively with community” (Ministry of Education, 2015).
- **The General Committee of Islamic Awareness:** a permanent central upper-committee at the Ministry of Education concerned with planning, follow-up, and evaluation of intellectual awareness programs, and it exerts scientific and educational effort to find appropriate solutions and alternatives to immunize young people and protect them from dangers and threats that target them with extremism, and exploit their emotions for terrorism and corruption (Ministry of Education, 2016).
- **Intellectual Awareness Center:** It is a center concerned with all intellectual awareness activities and programs related to providing intellectual awareness in public education, higher education and general technical education (Ministry of Education, 2017).

- **The Ministry of Education and State Security Agreement:** A memorandum forming a joint agreement with a strategic partnership between the Ministry of Education and the State Security based on the cooperation and integration in the intellectual fields, coordination in its management, and addressing manifestations of intellectual deviation (Saudi News Agency, 2020).

Furthermore, few Saudi universities have established IS units which are responsible for the intellectual awareness of university students and employees, enhancing their national belonging, and providing programs and activities that address threats to IS at the national level. Two higher educational institutions are specialized in security sciences; Prince Nayef University for Security Sciences and King Fahad Security College (Al-Jahni, 2019; Ministry of Interior, 2020). And some research chairs in the field of IS are established such as “Prince Nayef Chair for Ethical Values” at the “Institute of Prince Khaled Al-Faisal for Moderation” (King Abdulaziz University, 2020).

IS & School Leadership

School leadership is the process of influencing and inflaming the motivation of individuals to direct them to carry out their work with enthusiasm to achieve the desired goals (Rasmi and Abdel-Bar et al., 2018; Gallo, 2011). Furthermore, Al-Sulaiman and Al-Habib (2017) revealed the primary role of school leader in providing an appropriate and safe educational environment for learners. The school leaders are identified as the key in solving problems effectively and confronting any emergency event in any school (Al-Sulaiman and Al-Habib, 2017). Specifically, Hussain (2016) addressed the important role of the school leaders in enhancing the IS of students through providing advice and guidance and directing teachers to bear responsibility in understanding and achieving IS, and becoming role models for integration and moderation, as well as establishing the principle of meaningful dialogue with students and parents. Previous empirical research has highlighted some leadership practices which may enhance IS for students, Al-Baqmi, (2008), Al-Jeddi (2008), Al-Mutairi (2011), Bellah (2010), Dino (2017), Mansour (2017) as follows:

- Psychological and social counseling: identify problems faced by students and build a meaningful strong dialogue to reinforce their confidence and security and provide the needed counseling in a positive and effective manner.
- Vocational guidance: create the appropriate educational climate that makes students show their inclinations and abilities, which contributes to helping them develop and choose the appropriate profession.
- Development of the curricula: have the knowledge and awareness of curricula evaluation and development in line with contemporary educational trends.

- Empowerment of teachers: providing professional development and training programs to be able to effectively educate their students intellectually while spreading positive ideas and clarifying the consequences of all negative thoughts and behaviors; and securing the appropriate school environment that motivate teacher to actively participate in achieving IS.
- Connection with families and local communities: coordinate and integrate with the families and communicate continuously through meetings and parents' council and encourage partnerships with local institutions to secure effective school performance (Ashour, 2011). Other research has pointed that families ought to bear the responsibility of protecting their children from all forms of intellectual deviation which may be imposed though global openness, expansion of social media, and the extremist of religions group (Al-Ta'ani, 2015; Yahyaoui, 2018).

Methodology

Sample & Data Collection

To achieve the objectives of the study and answer its questions, a descriptive survey approach design was used. The study population consisted of all secondary school teachers (n=2031) identified by the official statistics of the Education Office in Dammam during the academic year 2019/ 2020. A sample of (n=323) teachers was chosen by the simple random method, and the recovered surveys were (n=275) representing an (85%) response rate which was subjected to the final statistical analysis. The number of male respondents was (144, representing 52.4%) and the number of females respondents was (131, representing 47.6%); the number of respondent with a bachelorette degree was (n=257, representing 93.5%) while respondents with a masters and above degrees was (n=18, representing 6.5%). The majority of respondents had more than 10 years of work experience (n=173, representing 62.9%), and respondents with 5 - <10 years were (n=68, representing 24.7%), and respondents with <5 years were (n=34, representing 12.4%). The protection of the privacy of respondents and their confidentiality was ensured. The following steps were followed in collecting the data:

1. Extracting an approval letter from the Department of Education in the Eastern Province facilitating the distribution of the survey.
2. Sending the survey to the Planning and Development Department in the Department of Education requesting its distribution to all schools (west - east) in Dammam.
3. Distributing the survey electronically via e-mail to the study sample; it was collected during 42 consecutive days with two reminders sent three weeks apart.
4. Processing the collected data statistically using the SPSS statistical package for social sciences.
- 5.

Instrument

A fully structured survey was designed for data collection with a total of (44) items, and it consisted of three parts: First: The demographic data of the sample members included: gender, educational qualification, years of experience. Second: The role of school leaders in enhancing IS, through statements describing leaders' practices, with (34) items divided into 4 dimensions (Teacher 8 items) – (Student Activities 9 items) – (Family 7 items) – (Community 7 items). Third: The most prominent challenges that may affect the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students with (10 items). The items were identified after reviewing the related literature and other studies in the area of IS in the school settings, such as (Al-Wahaibi, 2015; Khreef, 2006). The respondents were requested to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the survey items using a 5-point Likert-type scale.

Validity and reliability

- The survey in its initial form was presented to (15) arbitrators, including experts, specialists and academics in educational administration and intellectual security in Saudi universities such as (Prince Nayef University for Security Sciences, King Saud University, King Khalid University, King Abdulaziz University, Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University), in order to identify the relevance, importance, clarity of the items and the extent to which they relate to their dimensions. In light of their opinions and recommendations modifications were done.
- The survey was piloted to a convenient sample of (n=70) male and female teachers from the population of the study. The respondents were asked to report any problems during completion of the survey and to give comment on the length of the instrument. The sample stated that the instructions and the items were clear. They were no inquiries from the participants.
- Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the internal consistency of the survey and used as an indicator of reliability, which ranged between (0.744-0.895). The Pearson Correlation was used as an indicator of validity, which ranged between (0.876-0.920). All correlation coefficients were statistically significant at significance level $< (0.01)$.

Data analysis and Results

Data Analysis

This study used a quantitative analysis method using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program, Firstly, descriptive statistics calculating frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations; Secondly, Pearson correlation coefficient and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated; Finally, the independent samples (t) test to indicate the differences between the research variables, and One-way variance analysis ANOVA to reveal the differences

between the research dimensions and the variables: (gender - educational qualification - years of experience) were calculated. The respondents were requested to show the degree to which they agree/disagree using a five point, Likert-type scale; “very high” averaged (4.2-5.00), “high” averaged (3.40-4.19), “medium” averaged (2.60-3.39), “low” averaged (1.80-2.59), “very low” averaged (1.00-1.79).

Results

The first question: What is the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students in the city of Dammam, from the point of view of the study sample?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the responses to the role of school leaders in enhancing IS according to the study dimensions (n=275).

Dimension	mean	SD	Degree
Teacher	4.20	0.85	Very High
Student activities	4.09	0.89	High
Family	4.08	0.96	High
Community	4.08	0.96	High
Total	4.11	0.87	High

Findings in table 1 that show there is a “very high” to “high” degree of agreement among respondents on the role of school leaders in enhancing IS among secondary school students in Dammam, in all study dimensions (teacher, student activities, family, and community), the overall mean was “high”, reaching (4.11) with a (SD = 0.87). The results may indicate that school leaders have a strong role in helping teachers play their roles in enhancing the IS of secondary school students, where the “teacher” dimension ranked first with a “very high” overall mean of (4.20) with a SD of (0.85), then the dimension of “student activities” came in the second place with a “high” mean of (4.09) and SD of (0.89).

Tables (2,3,4,5) illustrate the practices of school leaders in enhancing IS among secondary school students according to four dimensions (teacher, student activities, family, and community), from the point of view of study sample.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of the responses to the items of the first dimension: “the teacher”.

Items	Mean	SD	Degree
The school leadership works on:			
Encouraging the teacher to be fair and moderate; to be a good role model for their students.	4.56	0.80	Very high
Identifying teachers who have unacceptable ideas and taking corrective actions	4.28	0,93	Very high
Develop the teacher's skills to contain students who have abnormal ideas.	4.22	1.05	Very high
Holding periodic meetings with the teacher to study the students' educational and intellectual conditions.	3.94	1.13	High
Motivating the teacher to conduct scientific studies that enhance the concept and culture of intellectual security.	3.93	1.19	High
Supporting the teacher to activate the technical applications that contribute to enhancing the concept of intellectual security among students.	4.10	1.08	High
Finding mechanisms for students to communicate with the teacher and student advisor to help solve their problems.	4.26	0.96	Very high
Motivating the teacher to provide students with skills and good behaviors to become independent personalities characterized by initiative and leadership, in order to achieve the 2030 vision.	4.31	0.96	Very high
Total	4.20	0.85	Very high

Table 2 show the means and SDs of the responses to the items related to the first dimension: “the teacher”, which represents the role of school leaders in helping teachers to carry out their roles in enhancing IS among secondary school students, came to a “very high” degree, where the total mean = (4.20) with a SD of (0.85). All item ranged between “very high” to “high” degree of approval and means ranging (4.56-3.39) with SDs (0.80-1.19).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the responses to the items of the second dimension: “student activities”.

Items	Mean	SD	Degree
The school leadership works on:			
Employing extra-curricular activities to enhance the concept of intellectual security among students.	4.02	1.09	High
Motivating the teacher to include the concepts of intellectual security in the classroom activities related to the curricula.	4.07	1.05	High
Organizing educational meetings and seminars to contribute to the dissemination and promotion of the concept of intellectual security among students.	4.11	1.04	High
Supporting students’ participation in national festivals that enhance the values of citizenship and belonging to them.	4.27	0.95	Very high
Encouraging students to suggest activities that contribute to the consolidation of the concept of intellectual security and presenting prizes to the distinguished among them.	4.13	1.05	High
Supporting school radio with topics that enhance the concept of intellectual security among students.	4.22	0.94	Very high
Activating the school theater with activities and plays to enhance the intellectual security of students.	3.90	1.15	High
Supporting school learning centers with books and audio-visual resources that enhance students’ intellectual security and purify them from any sources that call for intellectual deviation.	4.03	1.13	High
Introducing cultural, social, voluntary and sports activities in schools to activate the 2030 vision	4.05	1.06	High
Total	4.09	0.89	High

Table 3 shows the means, and SDs of the responses to the items of the dimension: “student activities”, which represent the role of school leaders in supporting some student activities in order to enhance their IS, which came to a “high” degree of approval, as the overall mean = (4.09), with a DS = (0.89). All item ranged between “very high” to “high” degree of approval and means ranging between (4.27-3.90) with SDs between (0.95-1.15).

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the responses to the items of the third dimension: “the family”.

Items	Mean	SD	Degree
The school leadership works on:			
Organizing meetings and seminars with parents periodically to promote the concept of intellectual security.	3.88	1.18	High
Supporting continuous communication with the family in the field of sound intellectual upbringing among students.	4.01	1.09	High
Educating parents about the dangers of intellectual deviations at the personal and societal levels through intensive family programs.	4.08	1.13	High
Supporting the families of students with limited income and providing some of their needs to create a safe environment.	4.33	0.93	Very high
Encouraging parents to participate in the educational process and student activities.	4.06	1.11	High
Activating parents’ councils to discuss issues related to students educationally and intellectually.	4.16	1.05	High
Investing technology to educate parents regarding issues and concepts of intellectual security.	4.05	1.10	High
Total degree	4.08	0.96	High

Table 4 show means and SDs of the responses to the items of the third dimension: “the family”, which represents the role of school leaders in communicating with students’ parents, in order to enhance their IS, which came to a “high” degree of approval, as the overall mean = (4.08) and SD

= (0.96). All item ranged between “very high” to “high” degree of approval, and means ranging (4.33-3.88) and SD ranging (0.93-1.18).

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of the responses to the items of the fourth dimension: “the community”.

Items	Mean	SD	Degree
The school leadership works on:			
Cooperating with religious, media, and social community institutions to enhance students' intellectual security.	4.12	1.06	High
Hosting the employees of the security authorities to present some experiences and expertise to the students.	4.16	1.08	High
Establishing partnerships with civil society organizations in the field of promoting intellectual security.	4.05	1.06	High
Planning field visits for students to security agencies and national monuments.	4.10	1.07	High
Participation in community activities related to promoting the concept of intellectual security.	4.09	1.02	High
Contracting with accredited training centers to hold courses on the concepts of intellectual security within the school for male and female teachers and students.	3.95	1.15	High
Employing social media to support programs to enhance intellectual security.	4.10	1.03	High
Total	4.08	0.96	High

Table 5 show the means and SDs of the responses to the items of the fourth dimension: “the community”, which represents the role of school leaders in cooperating with the local community in order to enhance the IS of secondary school students, which came to a “high” degree, where the overall mean = (4.08) and SD = (0.96). All item ranged between “very high” to “high” degree of approval, and means ranging (4.16-3.95), and SD ranging (1.08-1.15).

The second question: What are the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students from the point of view of the study sample?

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the responses to the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing IS.

#	Items	Mean	SD	Degree
1	Limited powers of school leaders regarding issues of intellectual security.	3.95	1.02	High
2	Weak participation of the Ministry of Education with external bodies concerned with promoting intellectual security when developing strategic plans.	3.81	1.03	High
3	The ambiguity of the concepts of intellectual security among the school staff and students.	3.77	1.12	High
4	The teacher's qualifications in the concepts of intellectual security is not to the desired level.	3.61	1.19	High
5	The lack of financial allocations in the annual school budgets for school activities.	4.37	0.95	Very high
6	The weak contribution of some local community institutions to the intellectual awareness programs offered to schools.	4.28	0.89	Very high
7	The openness of the media and social communication of all kinds and being affected by them.	4.41	0.88	Very high
8	The limitations of intellectual security topics in the school curricula.	4.07	0.93	High
9	The school leader is preoccupied with routine administrative work.	4.17	1.06	High
10	The presence of some teachers who have wrong ideas.	2.88	1.25	Medium
Total		3.93	0.71	High

Table 6 show the means and SDs of the responses to the items describing the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students, which came to a “high” degree of approval, where the total mean = (3.93) and SD = (0.71). The findings ranked the item#7 “the openness of the media and social communication” in first place with a “very high” degree of approval and a mean = (4.41) and SD = (0.88), while the item #10 “there are some teachers who

have abnormal ideas” ranked last with a “medium” degree of approval and a mean = (2.88) and SD=(1.25).

The third question: Are there statistically significant differences between the responses towards the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students based on the variables (gender, educational qualification, years of experience)?

Table7: Results of the independent sample t-test to reveal the differences in the responses toward the role of school leaders in enhancing IS according to “gender”.

Dimension	Female n=131		Male n=144		t- value	p- value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Teacher	4.23	0.79	4.18	0.91	0.47	0.641
Student	4.09	0.86	4.09	0.92	0.05	0.962
activities						
Family	4.11	0.93	4.06	0.98	0.44	0.663
Community	4.04	0.93	4.12	0.98	0.68	0.498

Table 8: Results of the independent samples t-test to reveal the differences in the response towards the role of school leaders in enhancing IS according to “educational qualification”.

Dimen sion	Bachelors n=257		Masters and above n=18		t- value	p- value
	Mea n	SD	Mean	SD		
Teach er	4.21	0.84	3.99	8.35	1.07	0.287
Stude nt	4.09	0.89	4.01	9.06	0.41	0.686
activit ies						
Famil y	4.11	0.94	3.73	7.90	1.62	0.107
Comm unity	4.09	0.96	3.98	7.19	0.48	0.631

Table 7 and table 8 show the descriptive statistics for responses based on respondents' demographic categories. Findings in the above tables show the test results regarding the differences between the responses for each variable. Tables 7 and 8 show the independent sample t-test results, which demonstrate that there were no statistically significant differences among the groups ($p > 0.05$), and most respondents witnessed similar levels of approval on the school leaders' role in enhancing IS for their students regardless of their "gender" and "educational qualification" in all study dimensions.

Table 9: Results of ANOVA to reveal the differences in the response about the role of school leaders in enhancing IS according to "years of experience".

Dimension	< 5 years n = 34		5 years to < 10 years n = 68		10 years and more n=173		f- value	p- value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Teacher	4.05	1.05	4.17	0.81	4.24	0.82	0.77	0.463
Student activities	4.05	0.97	4.04	0.86	4.12	0.90	0.21	0.811
Family	3.89	1.09	4.15	0.98	4.09	0.92	0.89	0.412
Community	3.92	1.18	4.09	0.90	4.11	0.94	0.52	0.594

Table 9 findings show the ANOVA test results regarding the differences between the responses for the variable "years of experience". Findings in tables 9 demonstrate that there were no statistically significant differences among the groups ($p > 0.05$), and most respondents witnessed similar levels of approval on the school leaders' role in enhancing IS for their students regardless of their "years of work experience" in all four dimensions of the study.

The fourth question: Are there statistically significant differences between the responses towards the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing the IS of secondary school students based on the variables (gender, educational qualification, years of experience)?

Table 10 Results of the independent sample t-test to reveal the differences in the responses toward the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing IS according to “gender” and “educational qualification”.

Variable		N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Gender	Female	131	3.94	0.73	0.12	0.905
	Male	144	3.93	0.70		
Educational qualification	Bachelor	257	3.94	0.71	0.74	0.459
	Higher studies	18	3.81	0.74		

Table 10 show the descriptive statistics for responses based on respondents’ demographic categories. Findings in the above table show the test results regarding the differences between the responses for each variable. Findings in tables 10 show the independent sample t-test results, which demonstrate that there were no statistically significant differences among the groups ($p > 0.05$), and most respondents witnessed similar levels of approval on the challenges facing school leaders which may be affecting their role in enhancing IS of the students regardless of participants’ “gender” and “educational qualification”.

Table11: Results of ANOVA test to verify reveal the differences in the responses toward the challenges that affect the role of school leaders in enhancing IS according to “years of experience”.

< 5 years n = 34		5 years to < 10 years n = 68		10 years and more n=173		f-value	p-value
Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	0.63	0.533
4.00	0.75	3.85	0.74	3.95	0.69		

Table 11 findings show the ANOVA test results regarding the differences between the responses for the variable “years of experience”. Findings in tables 11 demonstrate that there were no statistically significant differences among the groups ($p > 0.05$), and most respondents witnessed similar levels of approval on the challenges facing school leaders which may be affecting their role in enhancing IS of the students regardless of participants’ “years of work experience”.

Discussion

The Saudi vision 2030 is the guide for all educational organizations' efforts to develop, improve, and increase its effectiveness, and to enhance students' IS on the local and national level (vision 2030, 2017). The identified initiatives and programs in this vision cover the four dimensions that support the enhancement of IS in schools (the teacher, student activities, family, and community); and the school leaders are responsible for developing the needed operational plans and setting the required policies and practices required to secure their effective accomplishment. This study aims to identify the role of school leaders in enhancing this very sensitive and important topic "intellectual security of secondary school students", as well as to identify the most prominent challenges that may affect the school leaders' role in securing the desired level of IS for students in Saudi Arabia.

The four dimensions that school leaders work with to secure IS in schools are linked together in an interconnected relationship, for example, once the appropriate attention is provided to teachers' development and encouragement in the concept of IS, the level of student activities may be positively affected, which may enhance families' participation and interaction with the school, thus, prompting the participation and support of local community institutions in the students' IS programs and initiatives.

The findings show a "high" level of agreement among participants towards the current role of school leaders in enhancing IS ($m=4.11$; $SD=0.87$); similar "high" to "medium" levels of agreement were reported in other related studies (Al-Juhani et al., 2019; Al-Shanifi, 2018; Akpo, 2019; Hussain, 2016; Nasr, 2016; Al-Ta'ani, 2015). Overall, the practices related to the "teacher's" dimension ranked first with a "very high" level of approval and with a ($m=4.20$; $SD=0.85$), this agrees with the findings of Al-Masry & Makhamra (2018), and Al-Mashrawi (2014), which all showed "high" levels of approval despite the difference in the time frame and its sample all demographics. This result may indicate that school leaders at different settings are all aware of teachers impact on students' beliefs and intellectual orientations.

The dimension of "student activities" ranked second in terms of the current leader's role in promoting IS with a "high" level of approval and with a ($m=4.02$; $SD=0.89$); this result agrees with the study of Al-Masry and Makhamra (2018), while findings of Ali (2018) showed a "weak" level of approvals on practices associated with "student activities". As expected, the highest ranked leadership practices in this dimension was "supporting students' participation in the national festivals", which ranked first with a "very high" level of approval and a ($m=4.27$; $SD=0.95$), this finding was expected since all schools in the Saudi educational system are directed by the Ministry of Education to include national-day celebrations and activities which contribute

to the rooting of Saudi history and culture, thus, supporting pride and joy of students' national identity.

Further findings of this study reveal similar “high” levels of approval on the “family” and the “community” dimensions with a ($m=4.08$; $SD=0.95$). The findings of Al-Masry & Makhamra (2018), and Hussain (2016), both revealed encouraging levels of cooperation between the school and the family; while Dino (2017), and Waswas & Gasaymeh (2017) showed strong approvals towards community service; however, findings from Nasr (2016), and Ali (2018) showed “medium” to “low” levels of family cooperation, and findings of Al-Harbi (2011), Al-Mashrawi (2014), Macel (2010) revealed “low” to “medium” levels of approval on the role of school principals in achieving IS through its communities. All these findings reflect the crucial role of school leaders in working with the families and the outer community in order to support students, in particular, students with low socio-economic backgrounds, since they may be an easier target to extremist groups that take advantage of their financial and social status.

On the other hand, this study reveals a “high” level of approval towards the challenges facing school leaders that may limit their role in enhancing IS among their students with an overall ($m=3.93$; $SD=0.71$), and no statistically significant differences between the responses to these challenges due to the demographic variables: (gender, educational qualification and years of experience) were reported ($p>0.05$). The challenges identified in this study were attributed to factors related to school leaders themselves, or to teachers, or to the school culture and curricula.

The findings highlighted a challenging result that directly relates to teachers, “the presence of some teachers who have wrong ideas” was ranked least with a “medium” degree of approval” and a ($m=2.88$; $SD=1.25$), while “the teachers’ qualifications in concepts of IS are not to the desired level” received a “high” degree of approval with a ($m=3.61$; $SD=1.19$). Other reported challenges that directly relate to the school leaders themselves included “The school leader is preoccupied with routine administrative work” with a ($m=4.17$; $SD=1.06$), these findings are similar with previous empirical studies which concluded that the challenges associated with school principals and teachers came with a “high” level and called for school principals to undergo comprehensive training programs and become more creative in developing strategies to support IS practices (Al-Wahaibi, 2015; Al-Anzi & Al-Alzboon, 2015; Al-Zaki et al., 2014; Al-Harbi, 2011; Wyk & Pelsler, 2014).

This study also identified three challenges that are related to the work environment with “very high” levels of approval, “openness of the media and social communication”, “the lack of financial allocation for school activities”, “the weak contribution of local community institutions to intellectual awareness programs”, with ($m=4.41$), ($m=4.37$), ($m=4.28$) respectively. Findings of

other empirical investigations also identified similar challenges which attributed to school environment and included “lack of human and material resources needed to practice extracurricular activities”, “ambiguity of some of the rules and regulations governing the concept of IS”, and “limited powers given to school leaders and high centrality in decision making processes” (Al-Shammari & Al-Harbi, 2019; Al-Hadla, 2011; Al-Osaimi, 2015).

In conclusion, the participants of this study scored “high” levels of approval towards the current school leaders’ practices in securing and supporting IS among their students in Saudi Arabia, as well as “high” levels of approval on the challenges faced by these leaders in enhancing IS. Further findings reported no statistically significant differences in all the responses attributed to the study variables (gender, educational qualification, and years of work experience). This is a promising finding which may indicate all school leaders are keen in achieving and enhancing IS in public schools in Saudi Arabia in light of all the challenges presented, and regardless of any demographical differences among these school leaders.

Recommendations

As mentioned above, it is clear that the challenges facing school leaders in securing IS for their students are diverse and may differ from one school to another, and from one leader to another. This study identified “very-high” to “high” levels of approval on all the challenges presented despite the overall “high” level of approval to the current efforts of school leaders in enhancing IS of students in secondary schools in the city of Dammam. Therefore, the following are some recommendations that may help overcome these challenges:

1. The upper leadership at the Ministry of Education may consider reviewing its strategic plan to identify specific goals and initiatives that aims to secure students’ IS in all educational institution in Saudi Arabia, while allocating the financial funding for its success.
2. Schools need to facilitate strong partnership with the local community and encourage memberships of parents, volunteers, students, teachers, and other school members to unite in initiating and supporting IS programs.
3. Periodical revisions of the curriculum and teaching strategies to employ social media and different technological tools to ensure awareness and adoption of IS topics and activities.
4. Revision of the procedures and criteria associated with the teachers’ recruitment, selection, hiring and controlling, while providing continuous professional training programs that help teachers overcome the ever-changing challenges related to IS in today’s schools.



Research Limitations

This study has some limitations: First, this study was limited to the public schools in the city of Dammam and its findings may not be generalized to other regional schools, which means this study may be repeated to a different sample of other school settings in order to draw comparisons and awareness on IS. Second, this study was conducted during the first semester of the year 2019/2020, thus additional longitudinal studies must be conducted to learn how and why IS practices and challenges are evolving. Third, this study used the single qualitative method research design, therefore it may be subject to common-method bias, the authors attempted to minimize the potential of this bias by encouraging voluntary participation and assuring confidentiality; it may be recommended for future related studies to use mixed-method research which may include observations and interviews. Finally, future studies in line with IS may consider investigating other related topics as digital security, or correlating other independent variables such as student achievement, and student satisfaction to IS.

Disclosure statement

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