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Adel Ayed Alshammari  
University of Hafr Al-Batin/ Saudi Arabia

## **The Role of Female School Leaders in Enhancing Intellectual Security Among Saudi Arabian Female Students: A Teachers' Perspective**

### **Abstract**

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*This study addresses the role of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security within government-run middle schools in the Hafr Al-Batin region of Saudi Arabia from the perspective of female teachers. Utilizing a descriptive survey method, the research targeted 858 female teachers in the region, with a randomly selected sample of 248 participants. The results indicate a high level of awareness among teachers regarding the importance of intellectual security, emphasizing the crucial role of female school leaders in creating a supportive educational environment. The study identifies four basic dimensions of intellectual security: religious, respecting dialogue and accepting the other opinion, national identity and critical thinking. While national identity and religious values were given high priority, less emphasis was placed on dialogue and critical thinking, indicating areas for improvement. No significant differences were found in perceptions of intellectual security based on educational qualifications or years of experience, except in the proposals dimension, where more experienced teachers perceived its importance more acutely. The research highlights the necessity of continuous training and development programs for female school leaders and recommends integrating social media into the educational process, providing specialized training to manage intellectual aspects, and conducting workshops to enhance critical thinking skills. These findings underscore the pivotal role of educational leadership in promoting intellectual security and indicate the need for further research that includes diverse educational stages and environments. This study provides valuable insights for developing educational programs that address contemporary intellectual and security challenges in Arab and global educational contexts. It advocates for the principles of whole schooling by reinforcing social structures that reject extremism, promote citizenship, and foster a safe and supportive learning environment.*

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**Keywords:** School leaders; middle schools; intellectual security; Saudi Arabia.

### Introduction

The contemporary global landscape, profoundly transformed by globalization, has introduced significant shifts across political, social, cultural, and economic spheres. These transformations have dramatically altered thought patterns across society's diverse segments, raising concerns about the intellectual security of communities (Jose, 2009; United Nations, 2020). In response, government bodies and social institutions, including educational entities, are increasingly tasked with addressing and bolstering intellectual security, transcending traditional national security measures (Waswas & Gasaymeh, 2017; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China, 2023).

Intellectual security is crucial in modern societies, encompassing critical thinking and societal resilience against destabilizing intellectual movements (Shrestha, 2019; Robbins et al., 2019; Evaristus, 2022). It aims to equip individuals, especially adolescents, with skills in critical thinking, creativity, and innovation to counter harmful ideologies and promote national cohesion (Butnor, 2012; Carothers, 2018; Gad & Ahmed, 2019). Intellectual security safeguards individuals and communities from threats, ensuring their development and integration into society (Clark et al., 1994; Van Overschelde & Piatt, 2020). Ensuring security is no longer solely the responsibility of state institutions; educational institutions, especially schools and universities, now play a crucial role in society's security framework. They act as protective barriers against deviant influences that threaten societal stability and must actively engage in fostering environments that resist extremist ideologies and promote the development of security-conscious individuals. As youth face declining levels of intellectual security (Almahaireh et al., 2021), schools are increasingly recognized for their role in addressing this issue (Almaamari et al., 2020). They serve as vital institutions in immunizing young people against extremist ideologies, complementing family and social structures. Khattab (2020) suggests that educational institutions should adopt preventive, supervisory, and remedial roles to foster intellectual security among citizens. Ali (2018) highlights schools' importance in shielding students from behavioral issues that threaten societal security and addressing their intellectual, psychological, and social challenges. Dradkeh and Abu Hamam (2018) argue that school leadership must monitor and address negative phenomena, while Ashby (2010) emphasizes the importance of creating a secure and dialogue-friendly educational environment.

While the focus often lies on protecting boys from ideological deviations, the impact on girls is equally significant, necessitating awareness of educational environments tailored for them (Guzzetti & Wayne, 1996). The middle stage is crucial for female students' education, considering their unique psychological and physical attributes. Emphasis is placed on providing age-appropriate programs and safe, stimulating educational settings, given their susceptibility to external influences. This aligns with the principles of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 (Vision,2030, 2023), which views a vibrant society

as a fundamental pillar, underscoring the need to reevaluate educational realities to protect thoughts, especially in vulnerable age groups.

This study addresses a critical issue where entities exploit rights and freedoms to influence young girls negatively, opposing family, religion, state, and society. This situation has prompted intensified efforts by public and private institutions to foster intellectual security and counter extremism. Educational institutions bear significant responsibility, especially in Saudi Arabia where schools are segregated by gender at the middle and high school levels. This study specifically explores the role of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security among middle school girls, a crucial age group susceptible to environmental influences. Recommendations are proposed to enhance and develop this leadership role. This research responds to calls from several studies emphasizing the importance of focusing on the intellectual security of youth (Altamimi, 2018; Ismail, 2022; Alrajhi, 2020). These studies emphasize the critical role of school administrations in countering extremist ideas, advocating for awareness programs and workshops for communities, families, and students. They also stress the importance of partnerships between schools and social institutions to enhance female students' awareness of intellectual security issues (Ali, 2018; Alsharari, 2021). The research also highlights the need to strengthen girls' intellectual development, especially during the middle school years when intellectual challenges may arise (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2019).

Researchers have addressed the issue of intellectual security in educational institutions, and one of the most prominent studies in this field is that conducted by Al-Ghaferi and Al-Ajmi (2023), which explored the impact of school leadership in enhancing intellectual security among 11th and 12th graders in Omani public schools. The study found moderate levels of implementation, with notable gender-based differences favoring female students. Rahamneh's (2021) research also underscored the vital role of schools in nurturing intellectual security, as perceived by teachers. Conversely, Alsharari's (2021) study in the Al-Jouf region of Saudi Arabia revealed a perceived weak role of school administration in this area. Aljuhani et al.'s (2019) study, focusing on female high school students, confirmed the significant impact of school leadership in this domain, aligning with Almaamari et al.'s (2020) findings. Ali's (2018) study delved into the secondary schools' role in this context, revealing a need for enhanced training and development in five key dimensions. Almasri and Makhamra's (2018) study in Hebron, Palestine, indicated a high level of school administration involvement in promoting intellectual security. Waswas and Gasaymeh's (2017) research in Jordanian schools also echoed these high levels of engagement. In terms of external influences, Alzboun et al.'s (2021) study investigated the role of electronic media in Jordanian university students' intellectual security, finding an average level of effectiveness. Similarly, ALmwadih and Kanan's (2019) study assessed the role of Jordanian university education colleges in this area, also

noting average effectiveness. Schrader's 2004 study sought to define intellectual security, finding that religious backgrounds significantly influenced female students' perceptions. Several studies, such as those by Alazmi (2020), Alomari (2014), Alsaqrat (2019), and Ozmena et al. (2010), critiqued current curricula for their inadequacy in fostering security and intellectual tolerance values. Alqarraleh and Altakayneh's (2021) research emphasized the need for enhanced intellectual security programs for students. In reviewing existing literature, it was observed that significant attention has not been given to the concept of intellectual security within non-Arab educational systems. This lack of focus might stem from differing ideological challenges in Western educational environments compared to those in Arab societies. The study is organized around the following research questions:

1. How do teachers evaluate the role of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security of female middle school students?
2. Are there significant differences in teachers' evaluations based on educational qualification and years of experience?
3. What proposed measures can activate the role of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security for female middle school students?

### **The concept of intellectual security**

Despite the differences among researchers and educational scholars specifically in defining intellectual security, Alqahtani (2020:432) defines intellectual security as "protecting students' thinking from extremism, providing protection for this thinking by enhancing intellectual security, directing it in the right direction by leaders, which is reflected in the form of academic and organizational practices that seek to establish a sense of responsibility towards national security and preserve its capabilities and achievements". Intellectual security in the current study refers to safeguarding the thinking of female students from internal or external pollutants and preserving the integrity of their values, ideas, and culture from deviant and foreign ideas that pose a threat to society and undermine its security and stability.

### **Methodology**

Utilizing a descriptive survey design, this study meticulously examines and delineates the phenomenon to unveil facts about the research problem and ascertain its current status. An objective and reliable questionnaire was employed to collect data. The study targeted middle school teachers for girls, focusing on assessing the roles of middle school principals in enhancing intellectual security among female students and suggesting improvements for these roles. The study population included all middle school teachers in government schools in the Hafr Al-Batin region of Saudi Arabia, comprising (858) teachers according to the latest data (Open Data, 2021).

A simple random sampling technique was used to select 248 individuals, representing 29% of the study population, based on statistical equations by Jaeger (1984) and Steven (2012). Educational qualifications and years of experience were examined for their potential impact on the responses, as shown in Table 1. Descriptive statistics, including means and (SD, s), were computed using SPSS for data analysis. To assess differences between variables, t-tests and ANOVA were conducted.

**Table 1***Description of the sample*

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Num.</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>percent</b>
Less than 5 years	60	24%	Pure Sciences (Scientific)	106	57%
5 to 10 years	86	35%	Humanities	142	43%
More than 10 years	102	41%			

### **Instrumentation**

In order to achieve the study's objectives, the questionnaire used to collect data, was constructed after referring to the theoretical literature and relevant previous studies. The questionnaire comprised 33 statements: 23 distributed across four dimensions of intellectual security, and 10 focusing on proposals to activate the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security of female students. It was distributed across these dimensions as follows: Religious Dimension (6 statements), Dialogue and Acceptance of Other Opinions Dimension (6 statements), National identity Dimension (6 statements), Critical Thinking Dimension (5 statements). The questionnaire began with three general questions for the teachers, serving as a starting point and providing a theoretical basis for understanding the problem. The questions were: Do you believe that intellectual deviation poses a real danger to females in Saudi Arabia? Do you agree that there are responsibilities and roles for female school leaders in consolidating the principles of intellectual security for female students? Can you evaluate the role of school leadership in consolidating the intellectual security of female students in a good manner? After constructing the final version of the tool, its validity and reliability were ensured through the following methods:

- **Face and Content Validity:** The questionnaire was presented to 8 experts who are specialized university professors and have extensive experience in arbitration. Their opinions were sought regarding the questionnaire statements in terms of linguistic accuracy, the relevance of the statements to their dimensions, as well as their importance and measurability. The questionnaire was modified based on their opinions and guidance, by incorporating some statements, modifying others, and adopting the final version. The questionnaire included 33 statements in its final form, after initially consisting of 36 statements, in addition to the three general questions. All statements that were accepted by 80% of the experts were included. At the same time, the questionnaire underwent content validity assessment to ensure its questions comprehensively and accurately measure intellectual security dimensions relevant to leadership in female middle school settings.

- **Internal consistency reliability:** After ensuring the apparent validity of the questionnaire, it was applied to a sample of 20 teachers to confirm the internal consistency reliability of its items. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the score of each item and the total score of the dimension it belongs to, as well as the correlation coefficients between each dimension and the total score of intellectual security dimensions. These coefficients ranged from 0.57 to 0.94 and all of them were significant at the 0.01 level, indicating high internal consistency coefficients and high validity indicators that can be trusted in applying the tool.

- **Instrument stability:** The stability of the questionnaire was verified by calculating Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the responses of the survey sample. The results showed that the value of this coefficient was statistically high for each dimension and for the entire questionnaire, ranging from 0.88 to 0.95. The value for the entire tool was 0.95, confirming that the tool has high stability.

The study used a criterion where the length of cells on a five-point Likert scale was determined by calculating the range between the scores of the alternatives in the questionnaire. This method ensures equal interval lengths on the scale (e.g.,  $(5-1)/5 = 0.8$  for a scale ranging from 1 to 5), facilitating accurate analysis and interpretation of collected data.

**Table 2**

*The standard of judgment for the role of female leaders in promoting intellectual security.*

Alternate value	limits of the arithmetic mean Upper-minimum limit	Verbal significance	Degree of approval of proposals
1	1.00 - 1.80	Very low	Totally Disagree
2	1.81 - 2.60	Low	Disagree
3	2.61 - 3.40	Moderate	Moderately Agree
4	3.41 - 4.20	High	Agree
5	4.21 - 5.00	Very high	Strongly Agree

## Results

The study began with three general questions aimed at respondents to gauge the significance of the topic. The results, shown in Table 3, revealed a high evaluation by the sample and indicated their ability to objectively assess its dimensions, thus achieving the study's objectives.

**Table 3**

*Arithmetic means and SD, s of the sample's responses to the general questions*

questions	Mean	S D	Score
Do you believe that intellectual deviation poses a real threat to females in Saudi Arabia?	3.97	.78	High
Do you agree that there are responsibilities and roles for female school leaders in consolidating the principles of intellectual security for female students?	3.85	.73	High
Can you evaluate the roles of the school leader in instilling intellectual security for female students in a good manner?	3.64	.65	High

Arithmetic means were calculated to answer the three questions according to a five-point Likert scale. All three answers came with a high degree of agreement, albeit with varying levels of agreement. The arithmetic means indicate a genuine sense of the importance of instilling intellectual

security for female students among the teachers, and a high agreement that this poses a real threat to them. The results also indicate a high level of awareness among the teachers regarding the importance of intellectual security and a strong understanding of the contemporary intellectual challenges faced by female students. This evaluation is based on the reality experienced by the teachers with the students within the school. They also strongly agree that there are roles and responsibilities that female school leaders must fulfill to protect female students from expected intellectual deviations. The high mean score 3.85 in response to the question about the roles of female school leaders in instilling the principles of intellectual security confirms a strong belief in the important role of female school leaders in this field. This belief demonstrates an appreciation for the leadership role in guiding and promoting a mentally safe educational environment. The teachers' answers about their ability to evaluate the roles of female school leaders in establishing intellectual security, which averaged 3.64, also provide high reliability regarding their evaluation of the dimensions of intellectual security that will appear in the questionnaire. This indicates the presence of interaction and collaboration between the teachers and female school leaders in this context, which supports the methodology, approach, and choice of the study's community.

**First question:** To answer How do teachers evaluate the role of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security of female middle school students were used Arithmetic means and (SD, s), and the results are presented in Table 4 as:

**Table 4**

*Arithmetic means and SD, s of the sample's responses to the general questions*

N	Intellectual security dimensions	Mean	SD	Ranking	Semantics
1	Religious	3.60	.64	2	High
2	Respecting dialogue and accepting the other opinion	3.19	.83	3	Moderate
3	National identity	4.17	.63	1	High
4	Critical thinking	3.14	.88	4	Moderate
<b>Arithmetic mean of the intellectual security as a whole</b>		<b>3.54</b>	<b>.61</b>		<b>High</b>

Table 4 presents the arithmetic means and (SD, s) of the sample's responses to general questions regarding intellectual security dimensions. The overall mean score for intellectual security is 3.54, with a SD of 0.61, indicating a moderate level of consensus among respondents. This measurement allows us to assess whether evaluations of female school leaders' roles in enhancing intellectual security among middle school students are perceived positively or negatively by readers. A mean score above 3.54 would suggest a positive evaluation, indicating that respondents generally agree on the effectiveness of female school leaders in this role. Conversely, a mean score below 3.54 would indicate a more negative evaluation, suggesting that respondents perceive weaknesses in the leadership's impact on intellectual security. The standard deviation of 0.61 shows that responses across the sample are relatively consistent, underscoring the reliability of these findings. This interpretation contrasts with previous studies that reported varying degrees of leadership effectiveness

in promoting intellectual security. Therefore, while the mean and SD indicate the level of consensus and variability in responses, their interpretation as 'high' or 'low' reflects the degree of positivity or negativity attributed to the evaluation of female school leaders' roles. This result is consistent with several previous studies that have revealed a high role of leadership in enhancing intellectual security, such as the study by Aljuhan et al. (2019), the study by Alqahtani (2020), and the study by Almasri and Makhamra (2018). However, it contradicts the findings of the study by Alsharari (2021) and the study by Ali (2018), which showed a weakness in the roles of school leaders in promoting students' intellectual security. It should be noted that the standard deviations (SD, s) for the study questions, their expressions in all dimensions, and the suggestions, which were presented in the data tables, were at an acceptable and non-elevated level. This indicates a lack of variation in the sample responses and provides greater reliability for the results. These results are presented in detail as follows:

**The religious dimension:** To reveal the evaluation of teachers for the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in the religious dimension, arithmetic means and SD, s were used, and the results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Arithmetic means and SD, s for the religious dimension*

N	Religious dimension	Mean	SD	Ranking	Semantics
1	Directing teachers firmly towards any behaviors that involve mockery and underestimation of religious sanctities	3.86	.89	2	High
2	Activating religious occasion activities in a way that connects the student to these events	4.18	.86	1	High
3	Raising awareness among students about the effects of bias towards an opinion or doctrine	3.54	.95	3	High
4	Organizing school activities that reinforce moderate thinking among female students	3.36	.91	4	Moderate
5	Establishment of guidance programs to strengthen religious motivation and self-monitoring of female students.	3.28	.99	6	Moderate
6	Organizing guidance programs that develop the personal independence of the student and protect her from adhering to extremist ideologies.	3.36	.91	5	Moderate
<b>General arithmetic mean</b>		<b>3.60</b>	<b>.64</b>		<b>High</b>

It is evident from Table 5 that the evaluation of female teachers for the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in the religious dimension was rated as "high", with an mean of 3.60 and a SD of 0.64. This dimension ranked second among the four dimensions. This indicates that female school leaders place great emphasis on the religious dimension in enhancing students' intellectual security. A high score indicates that this aspect receives significant attention and serious participation from leaders. These data reflect more detailed insights into how middle female school leaders in Saudi Arabia respond to the religious dimension. They highlighted their commitment to enhancing intellectual security and religious education among students, with a particular focus on intensifying religious activities and guidance programs to achieve the goals of religious education and cultural awareness.



In the detailed analysis of the statements in the table 5, it is clear that Statement 2, "Activating religious occasion activities in a way that connects students to these events," received the highest score, with an mean of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.86. This statement received the highest rating among the statements included in the study, indicating that the female school leaders place substantial importance on organizing and activating religious activities that connect students with significant religious events, such as religious celebrations and activities with a religious theme. Statement 5, "Establishment of guidance programs to strengthen religious motivation and self-monitoring among female students," received the lowest score, with an mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 0.99. This statement received the lowest rating among the statements, indicating that there is room for improvement in the guidance programs aimed at enhancing students' religious awareness and self-monitoring. The lower score suggests that these programs may be incomplete or may not effectively reach all students. Additionally, female school leaders encounter challenges in establishing guidance programs for female students, possibly due to constraints such as limited time or the diversion of focus to other issues. This result is consistent with the findings of the study by Almaamari et al. (2020) which showed a high rating for the religious dimension.

**Respecting dialogue and accepting the other opinion dimension:** To determine the evaluation of female teachers for the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in this dimension, arithmetic means and SD, s were used, and the results were presented as in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Arithmetic means and SD, s for the dimension of Respecting dialogue and accepting the other opinion*

<b>N</b>	<b>Respecting dialogue and accepting the other opinion</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Semantics</b>
1	Utilizing social media to give the student space for dialogue and expression of opinions.	3.00	.99	6	Moderate
2	Encouraging teachers to equip female students with skills to accept constructive criticism.	3.27	.94	2	Moderate
3	Encouraging constructive dialogue between students and teachers in all areas.	3.57	.90	1	High
4	Emphasizing respect for rules and regulations governing relationships within the school.	3.15	.88	3	Moderate
5	Organizing awareness programs for students to clarify the negative effects of division and conflict.	3.04	.97	5	Moderate
6	Using dialogue and discussion to address student problems.	3.11	1.00	4	Moderate
<b>General arithmetic mean</b>		<b>3.19</b>	<b>.83</b>		<b>Moderate</b>

It is evident from Table 6 that the evaluation of teachers regarding the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in the dimension of dialogue and acceptance of other opinions was rated as "moderate" with a mean of 3.19 and a SD of 0.83. This result indicates the need for increased efforts by female school leaders to encourage students to participate in dialogue and accept different opinions. Although female leaders show interest in promoting dialogue and acceptance of other opinions, enhancements are needed to boost the effectiveness of these initiatives

within the school context. In the detailed analysis of the statements in table 6, statement 3, which states, "Encouraging constructive dialogue between students and teachers in all areas", achieved the highest score with a mean of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 0.90. The high rating indicates that constructive dialogue is highly valued by both students and teachers. This reflects a mutual recognition of the importance of open communication and discussion within the school environment. Such an approach can lead to a more inclusive and interactive educational setting, thereby enhancing the relationships between teachers and students. Conversely, Statement 1, "Using social media to provide students with a space for dialogue and expression of opinion," received the lowest rating, with a mean of 3.00 and a standard deviation of 0.99, which means that using social media to promote dialogue and expression of opinion may be less effective compared to other strategies. This finding contrasts with the results of the study by Almaamari et al. (2020), which showed a high rating for the dimension of dialogue and acceptance of other opinions.

**National identity dimension:** To determine the evaluation of teachers regarding the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in the National identity dimension, mean scores and SD, s were used, and the results are presented in Table 7 as follows:

**Table 7**

*Arithmetic means and SD, s for the National identity dimension*

N	The national identity dimension	Mean	SD	Ranking	Semantics
1	Directing female students towards fostering pride in Saudi identity through targeted activities	4.66	.57	1	Very high
2	Raising students' awareness about the dangers of rumors and ideas that target the security and stability of the nation	3.75	.98	6	High
3	Activation of activities that enhance students' sense of loyalty and national belonging	4.36	.81	2	Very high
4	Activation of programs and activities that empower individuals to understand their rights and national responsibilities	4.12	.98	4	High
5	Utilizing national occasions to enhance the intellectual security of female students	4.34	.73	3	Very high
6	Appreciation of national symbols that have contributed to the upliftment of the nation in various domains	3.77	.97	5	High
	<b>General arithmetic mean</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>.63</b>		<b>High</b>

It is evident from Table 7 that the evaluation of teachers regarding the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in the dimension of national identity intellectual security was rated as "high". The mean score was 4.17 with a SD of 0.63, and it ranked first among all dimensions. This indicates that female leaders regard National identity dimension as one of the fundamental and crucial aspects in enhancing the intellectual security of female students in middle schools. The high score and low standard deviation reflect positive engagement and consensus on the importance of this dimension. These data offer insights into how teachers assess the roles of female school leaders in promoting intellectual security concerning National identity dimension. High scores signify success in implementing certain strategies, while low scores may highlight areas requiring

improvement or enhancement in educational and administrative practices. This result aligns with the ongoing directives of the Ministry of Education to schools, emphasizing the activation and continuous investment in national activities within schools. In the detailed analysis of the statements in the table 7, the statement 1 that states, "Directing female students towards fostering pride in Saudi identity through targeted activities" received the highest grade with an mean of 4.66, and a SD of 0.57, which indicates that female leaders rely heavily on guiding female students towards pride in Saudi identity through directed activities. The high score indicates that this aspect of education is appreciated and positively interacted with by teachers. The statement "Raising awareness among female students about the dangers of rumors and ideas that target the security and stability of the nation," identified as Statement 2, received the lowest score with an mean of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 0.98, this indicates that, although it is important to educate female students about the dangers of rumors and ideas that threaten national stability, there is a need for improvements to enhance the effectiveness of the programs designed for this purpose. This result is consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Almaamari et al. (2020), which indicated that the religious dimension received the highest evaluation score among the dimensions.

**Critical Thinking Dimension:** The teachers' evaluation the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security in the critical thinking dimension, arithmetic means and SD, s were used, and the results were presented as in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*Arithmetic means and SD, s for the critical thinking dimension*

N	Critical thinking dimension	Mean	SD	Ranking	Semantics
1	Establishing educational training activities that focus on equipping students with decision-making skills	3.10	1.00	4	Moderate
2	Encouraging teachers to develop research and investigation skills for students	3.24	.98	1	Moderate
3	Encouraging students to be transparent in presenting intellectual issues through school radio and various activities	3.10	1.00	5	Moderate
4	Providing opportunities for students to discuss contemporary social problems and issues	3.17	.93	2	Moderate
5	Encouraging students to freely express their opinions on intellectual security issues	3.10	.97	3	Moderate
	<b>General arithmetic mean</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>.88</b>		<b>Moderate</b>

Table 8 shows that teachers rated the role of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security in critical thinking as "moderate," with a mean of 3.14 and an SD of 0.88, ranking last among the four dimensions. This suggests a need for further efforts to improve critical thinking among female students and teachers. The data highlight challenges and opportunities in promoting intellectual security in this area and provide guidance on enhancing the learning experience and intellectual development of female students. The data from Table 8 reveals that all the statements recorded similar average scores, suggesting that the aspect of critical thinking requires greater focus from school administrators. The statement 2 obtained the highest score with an average of 3.24 and a standard

deviation of 0.98. The average score indicates recognition of the importance of developing research and investigation skills for female students, but efforts may be needed to further enhance this aspect. The statement 3 obtained the lowest score with an average of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 1.00. This indicates that despite attempts to encourage transparency in presenting intellectual issues, there is a need for more work to further enhance this aspect, and current strategies may not be sufficient to achieve the desired goals. This result differs from the study by Almaamari et al. (2020) which showed a high assessment of the critical thinking dimension.

**Second Question:** After verifying the normal distribution and homogeneity of the data, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to determine statistically significant differences in teachers' evaluations in four dimensions based on educational qualification and years of experience. The results showed no significant differences, as the p-value (Sig) was greater than 0.05. However, differences were found in the second dimension, "Dialogue and Acceptance of Other Opinions," attributable to the variable of years of experience, as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9**  
*Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA)*

Source	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Years of Exp.	Religious dimension	2.452	2	1.226	.785	.457
	Dialogue and Acceptance of Other Opinions dimension	28.657	2	14.329	3.176	.043
	National identity dimension	47.334	2	23.667	2.678	.071
	Critical thinking dimension	13.709	2	6.854	.418	.659
	Proposals to Activate the Roles of Female School Leaders	109.321	2	54.660	1.983	.140
Educational qualification	Religious dimension	.031	1	.031	.020	.889
	Dialogue and Acceptance of Other Opinions dimension	2.842	1	2.842	.630	.428
	National identity dimension	.630	1	.630	.071	.790
	Critical thinking dimension	12.010	1	12.010	.733	.393
	Proposals to Activate the Roles of Female School Leaders	3.684	1	3.684	.134	.715

These results indicate that the academic qualification and years of experience of the teachers did not affect their evaluation of the roles of school leaders in enhancing intellectual security. This outcome may be attributed to the shared experiences and interests that the teachers possess, as well as their presence in the same cultural and institutional environment, which is based on unified directives issued by the Ministry of Education. All these factors have led them to have a unified perspective on the roles of their school leaders. However, the impact of years of experience emerged in the evaluation of the second dimension related to dialogue and acceptance of other opinions. To determine the direction of this difference, the LSD test was used, as shown in Table 10.

**Table 10***LSD test for post hoc comparisons of the dimension of Dialogue and Acceptance of Other Opinions*

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Years of experience</b>		<b>Differences</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Dialogue and Acceptance of Other Opinions	Less than 5 years	5 to less than 10 years	-.6929-	<b>.298</b>
		10 years or more	-.7354-*	<b>.014</b>

The results of the LSD post-hoc test in Table 10 indicate that the differences in the means for the dimension of dialogue and acceptance of other opinions are between teachers with less than five years of experience and those with ten or more years of experience. The differences favored those with ten or more years of experience. This may be attributed to the educational depth possessed by teachers with longer experience, derived from their extensive practical exposure, real-life interactions, and numerous educational situations.

**Third question:** Arithmetic means and standard deviations (SD) were used to measure the degree of agreement among the study sample members on the proposals that may activate the role of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security for female middle school students. The results are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11***Arithmetic means and SD to measure the degree of agreement of the study sample members on the proposals*

<b>N</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
1	Engaging students in social activities aimed at promoting social responsibility	4.55	.70	3	Strongly Agree
2	Encouraging safe openness to other cultures without conflicting with national identity	4.18	.93	8	Agree
3	Supporting schools with research, books, studies, and films that help strengthen social cohesion and combat intellectual deviation	4.52	.68	5	Strongly Agree
4	Correcting students' misconceptions through activating activities that promote belonging and citizenship	4.57	.69	1	Strongly Agree
5	Activating educational media in raising awareness about intellectual security	4.43	.82	6	Strongly Agree
6	Careful selection of those responsible for intellectual security affairs in schools, based on their qualifications and experience	4.57	.81	2	Strongly Agree
7	Preparation and awareness of teachers regarding their important roles in enhancing the aspects of intellectual security for female students	4.55	.81	4	Strongly Agree
8	Enhancing partnership with students' families to address intellectual issues that may arise among them	4.32	.94	7	Strongly Agree
9	Activating the roles of student councils within the school	3.85	.78	9	Agree
10	Developing scientific and practical programs for early detection of students' ideological deviation	3.85	.86	10	Agree
<b>General arithmetic mean</b>		<b>4.34</b>	<b>.63</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Table 11 shows that the degree of agreement of the sample individuals on the proposals that may contribute to activating the roles of female school leaders in enhancing the intellectual security of female students came with a very high agreement, with an arithmetic mean of 4.34 and a SD of 0.63. This refers to the widespread consensus among the leaders regarding the importance and necessity of these proposals. The significant agreement with the findings of the study by Almasri and

Makhamra (2018) enhances the validity of the current results and emphasizes that the proposed educational methods for enhancing intellectual security are widely accepted and recognized for their importance by the leaders. This result is consistent with the findings of Almasri and Makhamra's (2018), which showed a very high agreement on the proposed educational methods to enhance intellectual security in schools. As for the degree of agreement of the sample individuals on the proposals at the level of Statements, it is evident from Table 12 as follows:

Statement 4 obtained the highest degree of agreement with an arithmetic mean of 4.57 and a SD of 0.69. This refers to the fact that the individuals in the sample see that selecting the right people to deal with intellectual security issues is a crucial and fundamental factor. This may reflect an awareness of the importance of competence and experience in achieving intellectual security-related objectives. The respondents believe that appointing qualified individuals with good skills and knowledge of intellectual security issues can significantly impact the effectiveness of implementing intellectual security policies and procedures. Statement 10, received the lowest agreement with a mean of 3.85 and an SD of 0.86. This indicates divergent opinions on these programs' effectiveness and importance. The higher standard deviation suggests significant differences among the sample, possibly due to challenges like limited resources, lack of specialized training, or doubts about the current programs' accuracy. Additionally, varying experiences and understanding among leaders and the constraints of busy school schedules might contribute to this variance.

### **Discussion**

The study's results confirmed the importance of the roles played by female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security among female students. The findings reflect a high evaluation of the leaders' role in this aspect, indicating their deep awareness of intellectual challenges and the importance of providing a safe educational environment. These results serve as a positive indicator of the school leadership's commitment to guiding students towards balanced intellectual growth, aligning with national goals to promote intellectual security in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Recognizing the importance of intellectual security within schools aligns with the fundamental principle of comprehensive education, which calls for schools to become active environments that contribute to the development of effective learners. These learners should possess the necessary abilities to contribute effectively and democratically to community development.

The study's findings showed that teachers significantly understand the importance of establishing intellectual security for female students, agreeing with Almaamari et al. (2020) on the crucial role of schools in this regard. The high mean score indicates a strong consensus among teachers about the importance of intellectual security for female students, reflecting a deep awareness of the contemporary intellectual challenges facing students. This evaluation reinforces the vital role schools

play in guiding students and protecting them from intellectual deviations, in line with Saudi Vision 2030, which aims to build a vibrant and interactive society. The high evaluation of the roles of female school leaders also reflects recognition of the importance of leadership in shaping an educational environment focused on intellectual security. This underscores the need for continuous training and development programs for female school leaders in this field.

The results showed a high evaluation of the roles of female school leaders in promoting intellectual security, with a mean score of 3.54. This finding is consistent with similar studies such as Aljuhan et al. (2019), Alqahtani (2020), and Almasri and Makhamra (2018), which highlighted a high level of agreement on the leadership roles of school principals in enhancing intellectual security. This consensus further indicates broader recognition within the educational community of the importance of intellectual security. One reason for the sample's recognition of the effectiveness of female school leaders' roles in promoting intellectual security might be bridging the gap pointed out by several studies regarding the inadequacies of curricula in fostering this aspect (Alazmi, 2020; Alomari, 2014; Alsaqr, 2019; Ozmena et al., 2010).

It is noteworthy that this result differed from Alsharari's (2021) findings, which revealed a weak role for male school leaders in promoting intellectual security among students in Saudi schools. This suggests the possibility of fundamental differences between male and female school leadership, warranting further research and investigation into the underlying causes. The religious dimension received a high evaluation with a mean score of 3.60, indicating that leaders place significant emphasis on promoting religious values and deepening religious awareness among female students. This aligns with the nature of the conservative and Islamic Saudi society. The high evaluation of religious event activities with a mean score of 4.18 highlights the importance of linking students with religious events to strengthen religious identity. This result aligns with the significant religious status of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its reinforcement of the concept of virtuous citizenship based on the moderation of Islam, which is reflected in the educational environment.

The dialogue and acceptance of others' dimension received an average evaluation of 3.19, indicating a focus on promoting this dimension, though it requires further improvement. This suggests that leaders recognize the importance of dialogue, but its effective implementation remains challenging. This decline may be attributed to the general education institutions' reluctance to utilize social media in serving the educational process and not encouraging participation and dialogue through these platforms, a practice not yet adopted by the Ministry of Education.

The national dimension received the highest evaluation with a mean score of 4.17, reflecting leaders' commitment to promoting national identity and patriotism among female students. This high evaluation indicates the success of leaders in enhancing national values through targeted activities. It is a natural outcome of the national dimension receiving attention from school leadership, resulting

from the government's adoption of comprehensive concepts and values that reinforce the principle of citizenship, leading to comprehensive development. Additionally, school leaders focus on implementing the Ministry of Education's directives that emphasize attention to activities and enrichment competitions aimed at promoting students' citizenship values and providing new programs to develop citizenship education in various fields.

The critical thinking dimension received a mean score of 3.14, indicating the need for further efforts to promote critical thinking. This result is important as it highlights the necessity of developing critical thinking skills among female students to face intellectual challenges. This decline may be due to the lack of time and effort required to prepare and implement critical thinking development programs, which cannot be accommodated within a busy school schedule. The medium level of this dimension may also be due to the insufficient training of female school leaders and teachers in critical thinking skills. This is why the Ministry of Education has recently focused on training leaders and teachers in critical thinking skills and directing them to participate in training courses for this purpose. The results indicate no statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ) between teachers' evaluations of the roles of female school leaders based on educational qualification or years of experience, except for the proposals dimension. More experienced teachers see a greater importance in promoting intellectual security. The similarity in responses across different qualification and experience levels may be due to the shared organizational climate and common social and religious culture among teachers. This similarity also suggests that proficiency in promoting intellectual security is not significantly affected by these factors, reflecting the role of institutional training and support available to leaders. However, the difference in proposals based on years of experience indicates that experience contributes to a diversity of ideas and suggested methods to activate roles. The researcher attributes this similarity to teachers practicing their duties in the same environment, which has the same organizational climate and shared social and religious culture, making their responses similar regardless of educational qualification.

The results indicate significant agreement among sample members regarding the importance of proposals to enhance intellectual security, with slight variations in certain areas. This underscores teachers' awareness of intellectual security's significance and their readiness to adopt effective strategies. However, it also suggests the need for further discussion and development, particularly concerning proposals related to early detection of intellectual deviation. These findings underscore the importance of ongoing training and development for leaders, along with adequate resource provision to ensure effective implementation of all proposals. Additionally, conducting further studies to understand the reasons behind variance in leaders' opinions on certain proposals and improving them to better suit educational needs would be beneficial.



The study used a descriptive methodology, relying on a questionnaire to collect data from a relatively large sample (248 female teachers), giving credibility to the results. However, it should be noted that relying on teachers' perceptions may be limited by their personal views and experiences, necessitating the need for studies that use other objective evaluation methods, such as classroom observations or interviews with students. It might also be beneficial to expand the scope of research to include other educational stages and a broader range of schools.

### **Conclusion**

The primary aim of this study was to explore the roles of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security among female students. The study focused on three main questions: How do teachers evaluate the roles of female middle school leaders in promoting intellectual security among female students? Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the mean responses of the sample members in evaluating the roles of female middle school leaders in promoting intellectual security among female students based on the variables of educational qualification and years of experience? What are the proposals that can contribute to activating the roles of female school leaders in promoting intellectual security among middle school students?

The results of this study revealed a positive reality for the roles of female school leaders in enhancing intellectual security among female students, as evidenced by the high evaluation of their roles. This indicates their success in promoting religious and national values and in supporting religious event activities that strengthen the religious and national identity of the students. However, the results also highlighted the need to improve certain dimensions, such as enhancing critical thinking and dialogue and accepting differing opinions, reflecting the ongoing challenges in achieving comprehensive and balanced education.

Regarding the statistical differences, the results indicated no statistically significant differences between teachers' evaluations of the roles of school leaders based on educational qualification or years of experience, except for the proposals dimension. In the realm of proposals, there was significant agreement among the sample members on the importance of the proposals mentioned in the study to enhance intellectual security. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended to design training programs to develop critical thinking skills among students, implement workshops that encourage dialogue and acceptance of differing opinions, and enhance religious and national activities through organizing events and programs that reinforce national identity. In terms of educational policies, the study recommends integrating intellectual security into the curricula to include topics related to intellectual security and raise awareness of contemporary intellectual challenges, thereby promoting inclusive education. Finally, the study suggests enhancing school leadership development programs and providing continuous training for teachers in the areas of critical thinking, dialogue, and accepting differing opinions.

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