

# Navigating Turnover Tides: A Decade-long Meta-analysis of the Impact of Authentic Leadership on Employee Turnover Intentions (2011-2021)

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## **Abstract**

In the dynamic landscape of organizational behaviour and management, understanding leadership styles' impact on employee outcomes is crucial. This research delves into the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention through a comprehensive meta-analysis spanning a decade (2011-2021). The study, guided by PRISMA guidelines, amalgamates findings from 14 primary studies, revealing a nuanced and robust correlation. The negative overall correlation of -0.30 underscores Authentic Leadership's protective influence against Turnover Intention. Reporting bias analysis, heterogeneity measures, and practical implications for organizations enhance the credibility of the findings. As organizations strive for talent retention, cultivating Authentic Leadership emerges as a strategic imperative.

**Keywords:** authentic leadership, turnover intention, meta-analysis

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## 1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of organizational behaviour and management, the exploration of leadership styles and their impact on employee outcomes has become imperative. One such leadership approach that has gained substantial attention is “Authentic Leadership.” Rooted in the principles of transparency, self-awareness, and ethical decision-making, authentic leadership is postulated to foster positive employee attitudes and behaviours.

A critical aspect of organizational effectiveness lies in understanding and mitigating turnover intentions among employees. Turnover intention, often considered a precursor to actual turnover, carries significant ramifications for organizational stability, productivity, and the overall work environment. Consequently, there is a growing interest in scrutinizing the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention.

The proposed research endeavours to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by conducting a meta-analysis, synthesizing findings from a decade-long span, ranging from 2011 to 2021. The chosen timeframe allows us to capture a comprehensive understanding of the evolving dynamics between authentic leadership and turnover intention, considering potential shifts in organizational cultures, leadership practices, and external influences over the years.

### 1.1 Rationale for the Meta-Analysis:

**1.1.1 Cumulative Insight:** Meta-analysis offers a systematic and comprehensive approach to amalgamate findings from individual studies, providing a more nuanced understanding by synthesizing a diverse range of research outcomes.

**1.1.2 Temporal Analysis:** Examining the relationship over an extended period facilitates the identification of trends, variations, and potential modifications in the authentic leadership-turnover intention dynamics, offering insights into the adaptability and sustainability of this leadership style.

**1.1.3 Holistic Perspective:** By incorporating studies from various industries, geographical locations, and organizational contexts, the meta-analysis aims to provide a holistic perspective on how

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authentic leadership functions as a mitigating or exacerbating factor in turnover intention across diverse settings.

**1.1.4 Practical Implications:** The outcomes of this research hold practical implications for organizational leaders, human resource practitioners, and scholars, offering evidence-based insights that can inform leadership development programs and retention strategies.

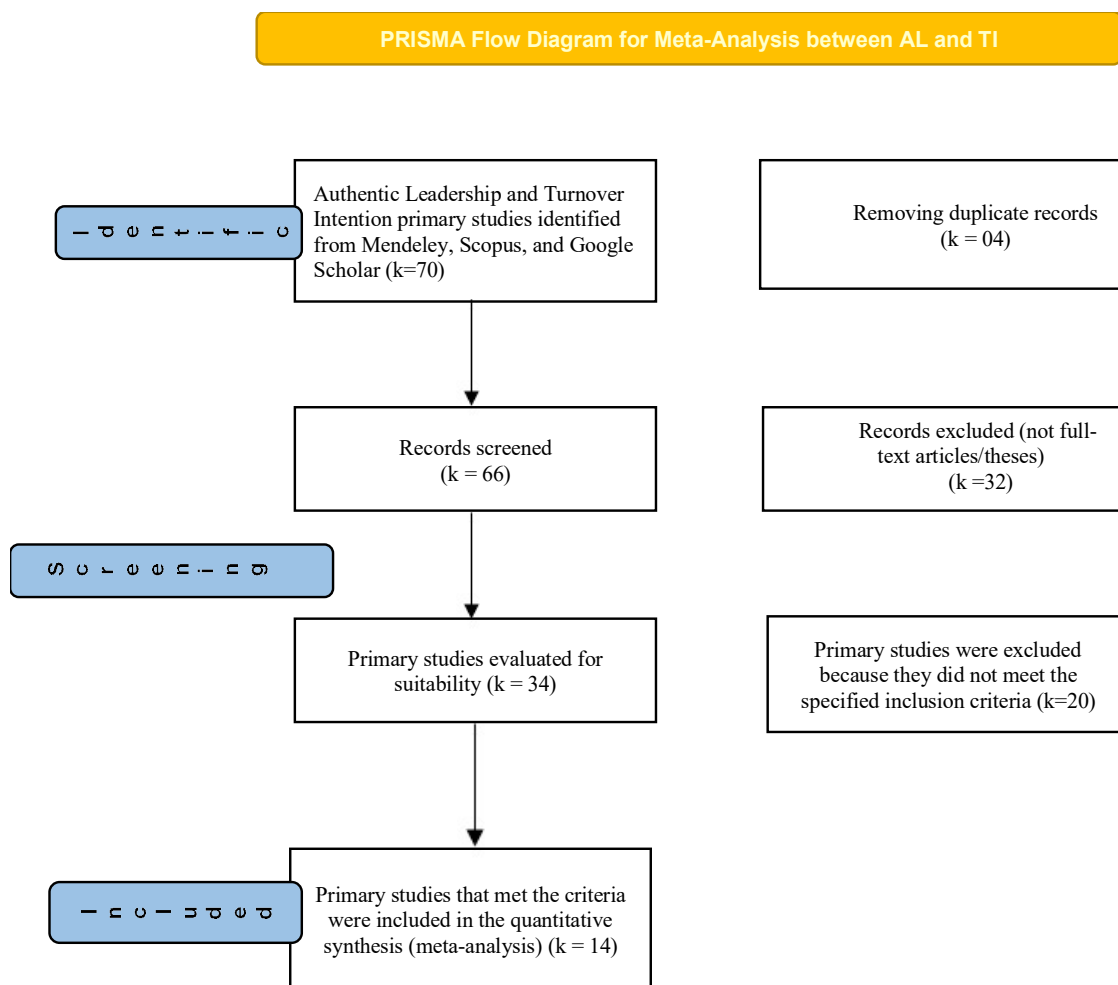
As we delve into the meta-analysis, it is anticipated that the synthesis of research findings will not only deepen our understanding of the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention, see figure 1, but will also contribute valuable knowledge for fostering organizational cultures that support employee well-being and organizational sustainability.



**Figure 1: Relationship Between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention**

## 2. Literature Review

**2.1 Methodological Approach:** PRISMA Flow Diagram for Meta-Analysis - The methodological rigor of a meta-analysis is foundational to its reliability and validity. Adhering to established guidelines, this study employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. As depicted in Figure 2, the PRISMA flow diagram illustrates the systematic process undertaken to identify, screen, and select primary studies for inclusion in our meta-analysis.



**Figure 2 - PRISMA flow diagram for Meta-analysis**

*Note:* k = Number of Studies

**2.2 Identification of Primary Studies:** Our comprehensive search strategy, spanning the years 2011 to 2021, led to the identification of a total of 70 primary studies exploring the intricate relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention. These studies were sourced from reputable academic databases, scholarly journals, and relevant publications in the field of organizational behaviour.

**2.3 Screening and Inclusion Criteria:** The initial screening process involved a meticulous examination of titles and abstracts, eliminating studies that did not align with the focus of our research. Subsequently, the full texts of the remaining studies

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were rigorously scrutinized against predetermined inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria were designed to ensure the relevance, quality, and consistency of the studies included in our meta-analysis. Studies that met the following criteria were considered for inclusion: (i) Directly addressed the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention. (ii) Published between the years 2011 and 2021. (iii) Employed robust research methodologies and statistical analyses. (iv) Available in English language.

**2.4 Qualification for Analysis:** After stringent screening and application of inclusion criteria, a refined set of 14 primary studies emerged as eligible for the meta-analysis. These studies, carefully selected for their methodological soundness and thematic relevance, form the bedrock of our investigation into the nuanced dynamics between authentic leadership and turnover intention during the specified time frame.

In the subsequent sections of this literature review, we delve into the key findings and synthesized outcomes derived from the meta-analysis of these 14 primary studies as shown the Table 1. Through this meticulous process, we aim to offer a consolidated understanding of the authentic leadership-turnover intention relationship, acknowledging both the common trends and potential variations across diverse organizational contexts.

**3. Meta-Analysis Methodology:** Application of a Random Effects Model- We conducted a meta-analysis on 14 primary studies investigating the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention from 2011 to 2021. Following PRISMA guidelines, the Random Effects Model was chosen due to expected heterogeneity. The model accounts for both within-study variance and between-study variability, acknowledging potential differences in effect sizes. The Random Effects Model provided a conservative overall effect size, considering both within-study and between-study variances. We applied Meta-Essential Tool – Workbook 5 developed by Suurmond et al. (2017).

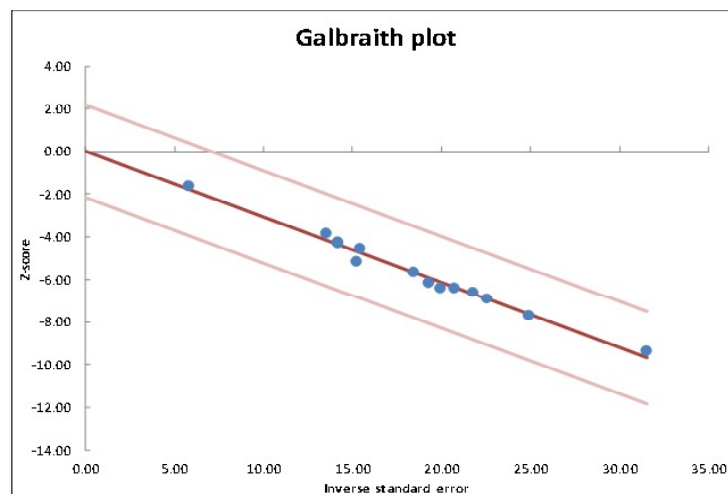
**Table 1 – Primary Studies Included in Present Study**

PV	OV	Name of the Studies	Participants in the Study	Country	Published	n	r	Scale Used for PV	α of PV	Scale Used for OV	α of OV
AL	TI	1) Alkadash, (2020)	Employees	Palestine	Yes	235	0.41	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.82	Cammann et al., (1979)	0.77
AL	TI	2) Kalay et al., (2018)	Employees	Israel	Yes	512	-0.37	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.87	James et al., (1985)	0.88
AL	TI	3) Aziz & Latif, (2018)	Nurses	Pakistan	Yes	432	-0.27	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.88	Kelloway, Gottlieb & Barham, (1999)	0.85
AL	TI	4) Smith et al., (2018)	Nurses	Canada	No	478	-0.25	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.96	Kelloway et al., (1999)	0.81
AL	TI	5) Fallatah, Laschinger & Read, (2017)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	998	-0.23	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.93	Kelloway et al., (1999)	0.87
AL	TI	6) Oh & Oh, (2017)	Employees	South Korea	Yes	375	-0.32	Neider & Schriesheim, (2011)	0.80	Kim, (2013)	0.89
AL	TI	7) Sharon et al., (2017)	Employee	South Africa	Yes	204	-0.34	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.89	Sheldon et al., (1983)	0.90
AL	TI	8) Olaniyan & Hystad, (2016)	Employees	Norway	Yes	402	-0.27	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.95	Nielsen et al., (2013)	0.74
AL	TI	9) Kiersch & Byrne, (2015)	Employees	USA	Yes	187	-0.56	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.96	Gaty, (1998)	0.92
AL	TI	10) Kiersch & Byrne, (2015)	Employees	USA	Yes	37	-0.51	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.96	Gaty, (1998)	0.92
AL	TI	11) Garazi et al., (2015)	Students	Spain	Yes	623	-0.29	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.90	Meyer et al., (1993)	0.83
AL	TI	12) Laschinger & Fida, (2014)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	342	-0.29	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.88	Konovsky & Cropanzano, (1991)	0.86
AL	TI	13) Laschinger & Fida, (2014)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	205	-0.22	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.88	Konovsky & Cropanzano, (1991)	0.89
AL	TI	14) Spence et al., (2012)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	242	-0.30	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.95	Kelloway et al., (1999)	0.87

Note. For all the published studies, the Predictor Variable is Authentic Leadership and the Outcome Variable is Turnover Intention; n = Total Sample Size; r = Correlation; α = value of Cronbach's alpha.

## 4. Results

**4.1 Galbraith Plot Analysis:** To ensure the robustness of our meta-analysis outcomes, a Galbraith Plot, as illustrated in Figure 3, was employed to identify potential outliers among the 14 primary studies. The Galbraith Plot visually represents the standardized effect sizes against their standard errors, aiding in the identification of studies that may exert disproportionate influence on the overall meta-analysis results. This methodological step is crucial for maintaining the reliability and validity of the synthesized outcomes.



**Figure 3 - Galbraith plot of 14 primary studies related to Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention**

**4.2 Meta-Analysis Results:** The synthesized outcomes of the meta-analysis are presented in Table 2, providing a comprehensive overview of the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention across the selected studies. Table 2 includes effect sizes, confidence intervals, and heterogeneity statistics, offering valuable insights into the overall impact of authentic leadership on turnover intention.

**Table 2 - Meta-Analysis Results**

Variable	k	N	r	$\rho^+$	$\rho^+X$	CI <sub>LL</sub>	CI <sub>UL</sub>	PI <sub>LL</sub>
AL → TI	14	5,272	-0.27	-0.26	-0.3	-0.3	-0.29	-0.3
	PI <sub>UL</sub>	Q	P <sub>Q</sub>	I <sup>2</sup>	P <sub>ERT</sub>	P <sub>BMT</sub>	TFM <sub>T+C</sub>	IS <sub>TFM</sub>
	-0.29	0.65	1	0.00%	0.99	0.412	-0.31	0

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Our meta-analysis, based on data from 14 primary studies involving 5,272 individual participants see Table 2, elucidates the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention. The overall correlation across these studies is -0.27, signifying a negative association. In simpler terms, higher levels of Authentic Leadership are, on average, linked to lower levels of Turnover Intention. Upon closer scrutiny, we considered potential artifacts introduced by sampling error. After their removal, the correlation adjusted slightly to -0.26. This step aimed at mitigating distortions arising from variations in sample sizes among the primary studies. Further refinement involved addressing artifacts from both sampling and measurement error. After this adjustment, the correlation shifted to -0.30, enhancing the precision of our estimate by accounting for potential distortions introduced by variations in both sampling strategies and measurement tools.

In essence, these results underscore the nuanced nature of the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention. The negative correlation values imply a protective effect of Authentic Leadership on reducing the likelihood of turnover. The meticulous adjustments made in our analysis reflect a dedication to refining our estimates and ensuring a more accurate portrayal of this significant organizational relationship. In the evaluation of the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention through our meta-analysis, reporting bias was rigorously examined through various statistical measures, shedding light on the robustness of our findings.

**4.2.1 Confidence and Prediction Intervals:** The Confidence Intervals ( $CI_{LL}$ : -0.30,  $CI_{UL}$ : -0.29) provide a narrow range within which the true correlation is likely to fall. Simultaneously, Prediction Intervals ( $PI_{LL}$ : -0.30,  $PI_{UL}$ : -0.29) anticipate the correlation of a future study, offering a comprehensive view of the potential effect size.

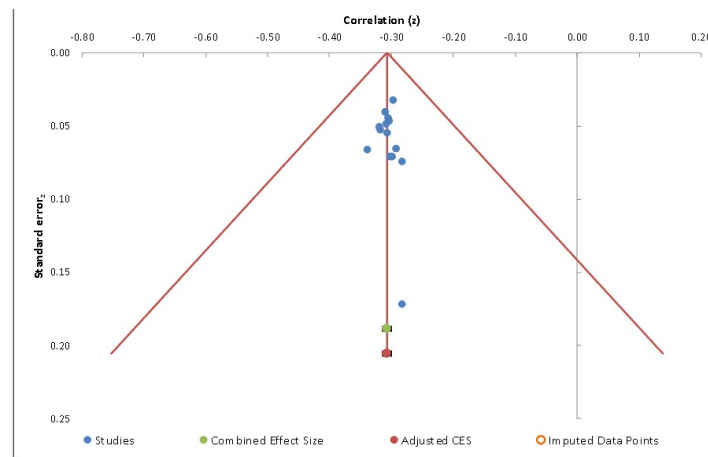
**4.2.2 Heterogeneity Measures:** The Q value (0.65) and its associated p-value ( $P_Q$ : 1.0), along with the  $I^2$  value (0.00%), collectively indicate low heterogeneity across studies. This suggests a consistent relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention.

**4.2.3 Publication Bias Analysis:** The Egger Regression Test ( $P_{ERT}$ : 0.99) and Begg & Mazumdar Test ( $P_{BMT}$ : 0.412) p-values



demonstrate the absence of publication bias, assuring the reliability of the meta-analysis outcomes.

**4.2.4 Trim and Fill Method:** Employing the Trim and Fill Method, the Combined Effect Size adjusted with Trim and Fill ( $TFM\tilde{n}_{+C}$ : -0.31) indicates a slight adjustment from the original correlation, reinforcing the stability of the overall effect size. Notably, no imputed studies ( $IS_{TFM}$ : 0) were added during this process, affirming the robustness of the results see figure 4.



**Figure 4 - Funnel plot for publication bias analysis in which trim and fill method applied in studies related to AL and TI, (k=14), (IS=0)**

This comprehensive reporting bias analysis ensures the validity of our meta-analysis outcomes, emphasizing transparency in the reporting of study results. The narrow Confidence and Prediction Intervals minimize the impact of potential reporting bias, while low heterogeneity and non-significant p-values in publication bias tests strengthen the credibility of the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention. These insights set the stage for a nuanced interpretation of the findings and their practical implications in organizational settings.

**5. Discussion:** Interpreting the Nexus Between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention in the Present Study - In unravelling the dynamics between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention within the context of our meta-analysis, the synthesized outcomes present a nuanced narrative with practical implications.

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- 5.1 Affirmation of Protective Influence:** The negative overall correlation of -0.30 reinforces the protective influence of Authentic Leadership against Turnover Intention. In the present study, higher levels of Authentic Leadership are associated with a reduced likelihood of employees expressing the intention to leave their positions. This finding aligns with the theoretical underpinnings of Authentic Leadership, emphasizing its potential as a mitigating factor in turnover intentions.
- 5.2 Robustness Across Diverse Studies:** The consistency observed across studies, as reflected in the narrow Confidence and Prediction Intervals, enhances the robustness of our findings. The low heterogeneity ( $I^2$ : 0.00%) signals a uniformity in the observed relationship. This suggests that, irrespective of variations in sample characteristics and methodologies across the primary studies, the negative association between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention persists.
- 5.3 Addressing Reporting Bias:** Our comprehensive reporting bias analysis instils confidence in the reliability of the meta-analysis outcomes. The non-significant p-values from the Egger Regression Test ( $P_{ERT}$ : 0.99) and Begg & Mazumdar Test ( $P_{BMT}$ : 0.412) assure that our results are unlikely to be skewed by publication bias. The slight adjustment through the Trim and Fill Method ( $TFM\check{m}_{+C}$ : -0.31), with no imputed studies ( $IS_{TFM}$ : 0), further supports the stability of the correlation.
- 6. Practical Significance for Organizations:** For organizational leaders and managers, understanding the practical implications of these results is paramount. The negative correlation suggests that cultivating Authentic Leadership within an organization could serve as a strategic approach to mitigate turnover intention among employees. Leaders fostering authenticity may contribute to a positive workplace culture, thereby enhancing employee commitment and reducing the likelihood of turnover.
- 7. Study Limitations and Future Directions:** Acknowledging the limitations of the present study, such as variations in measurement
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tools and contextual factors, opens avenues for future research. Exploring these contextual nuances and conducting longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into the sustained impact of Authentic Leadership on turnover intentions.

- 8. Conclusion:** In conclusion, the present meta-analysis underscores the relevance of Authentic Leadership in shaping employee turnover intentions. The synthesized outcomes not only affirm the negative relationship but also highlight its robustness across diverse studies. As organizations navigate the challenges of talent retention, the cultivation of Authentic Leadership emerges as a valuable strategy, fostering employee well-being and organizational resilience.

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