

Research Article

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# The Practice of Management by Wandering Around and Its Impact on School Performance: Evidence from Irbid Governorate

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## Abstract

**Background/purpose.** Effective leadership is widely recognized as a key factor in shaping school performance. This study examined the relationship between Management by Wandering Around as practiced by principals and the overall performance of schools in Irbid Governorate, as perceived by teachers. The intention was to provide empirical evidence on how principals' visible presence, engagement, and motivational practices contribute to the improvement of educational outcomes.

**Materials/methods.** A descriptive survey design was employed, with a structured, validated questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The study population consisted of public school teachers across Irbid Governorate, from which a stratified random sample of 380 male and female teachers was selected to ensure broad representation across school stages and genders. Data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, including correlation analysis, to test the relationship between MBWA and school performance.

**Results.** The findings revealed that teachers rated both the level of MBWA practiced by principals and the degree of school performance as high. Moreover, results demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between MBWA and school performance. This suggests that principals who actively engage in MBWA practices foster stronger communication, enhance teacher motivation, and create more effective school environments.

**Conclusion.** The study concludes that MBWA should not be viewed merely as a managerial tool but as a strategic leadership approach that can significantly contribute to raising school performance. The results highlight the importance of integrating MBWA principles into training and professional development for school leaders.

## 1. Introduction

Education today operates in an era of rapid and complex change. Globalization, digital transformation, and rising societal expectations have reshaped the mission of schools, requiring them not only to transfer knowledge but also to cultivate creativity, adaptability, and lifelong learning. In this climate, leadership is viewed as a decisive factor in how schools respond to challenges and opportunities. Without effective school leadership, even well-resourced institutions may struggle to achieve their goals, while visionary leadership can transform ordinary schools into models of excellence (Dockrill, 2023; Pollock, Nielsen, & Singh, 2023).

Among the various leadership models, Management by Wandering Around (MBWA) has attracted renewed interest. Originally popularized in business organizations, MBWA emphasizes a leader's physical and relational presence among staff, rather than being confined to an office or engaging only through formal channels (Al-Khodairy, 2000). In the educational setting, MBWA involves principals moving through classrooms, hallways, and school facilities to engage in informal conversations, observe practices firsthand, and offer encouragement or feedback. This style is not about surveillance but about building trust, strengthening relationships, and identifying issues at their source. By practicing MBWA, principals demonstrate attentiveness and accessibility, which, in turn, foster a school culture of openness and cooperation (Starrett, 2015; Whalen, 2021).

The concept is especially important because school performance depends heavily on the climate leaders create. School performance, broadly defined, refers to the extent to which administrators, teachers, and students achieve desired educational outcomes. It encompasses administrative efficiency, teacher professionalism, and student learning results. Research shows that when principals engage directly with teachers, they can identify professional needs, motivate staff, and encourage innovation, which leads to improved outcomes at multiple levels (Abu Madiqham, 2019; Al-Ghamdi, 2020). Conversely, when principals remain distant and overly focused on paperwork, performance tends to stagnate, and opportunities for improvement are overlooked.

Studies across different countries support this connection. In Kuwait and Oman, MBWA was found to strengthen organizational commitment and teacher satisfaction (Al-Azmi, 2017; Al-Khaifiya, 2017). Research in Saudi Arabia and Egypt has shown that the practice enhances both morale and job satisfaction (Al-Sibai, 2024; Mohammad, 2023). Similarly, findings from Jordan indicate that leadership practices directly influence teacher motivation, creativity, and student achievement (Tayfour, 2018; Abu Aisha, 2019; Al-Sharaman, 2018). Despite these promising results, other studies suggest that MBWA is not consistently applied. Some principals adopt it only occasionally, often citing administrative workload and a lack of training as barriers (Qudoumi, 2014; Jolani, 2023). This inconsistency raises important questions about how MBWA is understood and practiced across different educational contexts.

In Jordan, the issue is particularly significant. The country's educational system has long been recognized for its commitment to modernization, yet schools still face structural and resource-related challenges (Al-Rashaida, 2007). Within this context, MBWA may serve as a practical leadership strategy to enhance communication, foster innovation, and elevate school performance without requiring extensive financial investment. However, little is known about how principals in northern regions such as Irbid Governorate implement this practice and how it translates into measurable performance outcomes. Given that Irbid is one of the largest and most diverse educational regions in Jordan, understanding this relationship is both timely and necessary.

Theoretically, MBWA can be viewed as a leadership approach that positions the principal as both a manager and a participant in the daily life of the school. By being present, principals not only identify challenges but also reinforce positive behaviors, encourage creativity, and provide immediate feedback. These actions create an environment in which teachers feel valued and supported,

enhancing their motivation and performance. At the same time, students benefit from principals who visibly demonstrate interest in learning activities and student well-being. This aligns with a growing body of research linking leadership practices to organizational culture, teacher morale, and student outcomes (Al-Omaira, 2022; Gamala & Marpa, 2022).

From a practical standpoint, MBWA offers several advantages. It reduces communication barriers by allowing principals to hear concerns directly rather than relying on reports filtered through multiple layers of administration. It also allows them to respond quickly to problems, preventing small issues from escalating. Moreover, informal interactions foster trust and collegiality, making teachers more willing to share ideas and innovations (Al-Zahrani, 2022; Alhamoud, 2021). However, the effectiveness of MBWA depends heavily on the principal's leadership style. If applied as a tool of control rather than encouragement, it may generate resistance rather than motivation.

Despite its relevance, MBWA has not been sufficiently examined in Jordan, particularly with respect to school performance. While some studies point to high levels of leadership engagement in certain regions, others reveal gaps and inconsistencies (Abu Tair, 2021; Rantisi, 2022). This suggests that MBWA remains underutilized and unevenly understood. Therefore, examining its role in Irbid Governorate provides an opportunity to expand empirical knowledge and offer practical recommendations for improving leadership practices.

This study is therefore significant in two respects. First, it addresses a gap in the literature by focusing specifically on the relationship between MBWA and school performance in the Jordanian context. Second, it provides evidence that can guide educational policymakers and school leaders in adopting leadership practices that are cost-effective, context-sensitive, and performance-oriented. The conceptual framework guiding this study positions MBWA as the independent variable and school performance as the dependent variable, with teacher motivation, administrative efficiency, and student achievement serving as critical dimensions of performance.

In conclusion, MBWA is more than a management technique; it is a leadership philosophy that aligns closely with the demands of modern education. By adopting this approach, principals can bridge the gap between leadership theory and classroom practice, ensuring that schools not only meet immediate goals but also prepare for long-term challenges. In Irbid Governorate, where schools face mounting pressure to deliver excellence, understanding and applying MBWA may represent a vital step toward sustained educational improvement.

## 2. Literature Review

MBWA is a modern approach in which the manager wanders among subordinates, interacts with them, and spends time with them. The manager may resort to this method instead of traditional formal communication to obtain information and make decisions directly from the field. The goal of this approach is to break down authoritarian barriers between the leader and subordinates and to strengthen personal relationships among them. Important information can be obtained from its primary source without distortion by different departments. This method requires trust between the principal and subordinates to succeed. It is also similar to the open management style. On the surface, it seems like a simple method, but it achieves results and benefits for the organization, the principal's goal of touring the various sites of the organization is not surveillance, control, or domination; rather, it is to instill enthusiasm and boost the morale of the employees by making them feel the principal's interest in their work and interacting with them (Al-Mohammadi, 2022).

MBWA is one of the management approaches that emerged to resist stagnation and monotony, eliminate deadly routines, encourage creativity and innovation, discover talent, and give everyone a chance to showcase their talents and energies. It works on providing incentives and rewarding those

who work actively and diligently to achieve project goals and success, not just to please their direct supervisor (Al-Khudairy, 2000).

School performance is the ability of individuals to carry out their assigned tasks. To achieve an acceptable level of performance, an individual must possess a number of competencies necessary to perform that work. Performance is a set of activities and practices closely linked to objectives and the means necessary to achieve them. It combines the activities and practices that take place in the school with the outcomes they produce (Al-Omleh, 2022; Dahla, 2022).

School performance may be linked to the principal's style and practices, and this is one topic to consider when planning school development. Through it, developmental programs are designed and prepared to suit the school's needs and actual capabilities. School performance is of great importance because it saves time and effort, utilizes available resources, and ensures coordination among various activities (Al-Hamoud, 2021).

Most institutions strive to provide a suitable environment for employees to work in, where they involve employees in decision-making and encourage cooperation to meet their needs and achieve a balance among their functional, psychological, and social roles, ensuring a high level of performance. Performance is a set of activities and procedures implemented by the school to achieve satisfactory results and avoid wasted time, ensuring quality in work (Jabareen, 2019).

School performance is considered an important topic that researchers and administrators have paid close attention to, as it is a means of achieving institutional goals. It reflects the level of civilizational progress of all developing and developed countries. School performance primarily depends on teachers, who are the foundation and spirit of the educational process. They carry out all the tasks and educational activities in schools, are the focus of modern educational administration, and are the essential element for the success of education. The success of school administration relies on the efficiency of the human element (Al-Hamoud, 2021).

Many studies have examined the extent of MBWA and its relationship to school performance. They have been arranged chronologically from the most recent to the oldest as follows: The study by Al-Subaie (2024) aimed to understand the reality of sustainable leadership practices and their relationship with school performance from the perspective of principals and educational supervisors in the Taif (Saudi Arabia) Education directorate. The researcher used the descriptive survey method and employed a questionnaire to collect data.

The study population comprised 120 secondary-level principals and educational supervisors affiliated with the Taif Education Administration. A random sample of 60 principals and supervisors was selected. The results showed that the level of school performance in the Taif Education Administration, as perceived by educational supervisors, was high.

Another study by Bhutto, Channa, Ilyas, Memon, Sarwar, and Sumeera (2024) aimed to identify the effects of school principals' administrative skills on students' academic performance in the Larnaca area and to propose strategies to improve them. The researchers used a mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative) to collect data, and the study population comprised school principals in the Larkana area. Twenty-five public high school principals in the Larkana region were selected as the study sample. The results showed that most school principals were able to utilise administrative skills that impact school performance, but their administrative abilities were insufficient, which negatively affected students' academic achievement.

Jolani (2023) conducted a study to understand the extent of administrative creativity culture among private school principals in Hebron Governorate and its relationship with teachers' job performance. The researcher used a correlational, descriptive research design and selected a questionnaire as the data collection instrument. The study population comprised all teachers in

private schools in Hebron Governorate, totalling 1,008. A random sample of 282 teachers, representing 28% of the study population, was selected. The results showed that the job performance of private school teachers in Hebron Governorate was high, and there were no statistically significant differences in the average ratings of private school teachers regarding their job performance, attributable to gender.

The purpose of Mohamed's (2023) study was to identify the reality of MBWA among leaders and its role in employees' job satisfaction from the perspective of educational administrators in Qena Governorate, Egypt. The researcher used a descriptive research design and selected a questionnaire as the data collection instrument. The study sample consisted of 346 employees and administrators from some educational administrations. The results highlighted that the reality of MBWA among educational administration leaders was low.

Rantisi (2022) conducted a study to identify the reality of educational supervision in schools in the Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate and its relationship with outstanding teacher performance, from the perspective of school principals. The researcher used the correlational descriptive method. The study population comprised all school principals in Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate, totalling 283, of whom 163 were sampled. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The study results showed that the level of outstanding performance among teachers was high, and there were no statistically significant differences in the means of outstanding performance levels among teachers as perceived by school principals in Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate, attributed to the gender variable.

The study by Al-Ola (2022) examined, from teachers' perspectives, the relationship between strategic planning and school performance among private high school principals in Amman, the capital. A correlational descriptive method was used, and the study population comprised 1,299 male and female teachers. The sample included 310 male and female teachers, selected through simple random sampling. The questionnaire was chosen as the data collection tool. The study results showed that school performance among high school principals was high, and there were statistically significant differences favouring males, attributable to the gender variable.

A study by Gamala and Marpa (2022) aimed to identify the extent of the impact of the school environment and school principals' administrative skills on school performance. The present study employed a correlational, descriptive approach, using a standardized questionnaire, reviewed and validated by field experts, as the primary instrument for data collection. The population included all public elementary schools in the sixth electoral district of Negros Occidental, Philippines. From this population, the sample encompassed 115 school principals, 4,401 teachers, 511 students, and 511 parents. Findings indicated that both the administrative skills of school principals and the overall performance of the schools were rated at very high levels.

Comparable insights emerge from regional studies. Al-Zahrani (2022), for example, examined the extent to which female school principals in the Al-Baha region practiced walk-through management. Using a descriptive design and a questionnaire, the study targeted the entire population of 187 female principals in public schools across the region. Given the manageable size of the population, the instrument was distributed to all principals. Results revealed that principals' reliance on walk-through management was consistently high, suggesting that this leadership style has become an established feature of school administration in that context.

Similarly, Al-Hamoud (2021) investigated self-evaluation practices among public school principals in the Koura District of Irbid Governorate and their connection to school performance, as perceived by teachers. The study used a correlational, descriptive survey method with a population of 1,938 teachers. From this group, a random sample of 320 teachers was selected, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The analysis showed that overall school performance was rated highly. No statistically significant differences were observed by school level, though gender-based

differences were noted across all domains, with female teachers reporting higher evaluations of principals' practices.

Abu Tair (2021) conducted a study to identify the extent of management by wandering among the principals of secondary schools affiliated with the Jerusalem Municipality. The researcher used the correlational descriptive method and employed a questionnaire as a data collection tool. The study population comprised 750 male and female teachers, of whom 255 were randomly selected using stratified sampling. The results indicated that, from the teachers' perspective, the degree of MBWA practice among the principals of secondary schools affiliated with the Jerusalem Municipality was high. Additionally, there were no statistically significant differences in the average ratings of secondary school teachers affiliated with the Jerusalem Municipality regarding the degree to which their principals practiced MBWA, attributed to the gender variable.

Whalen (2021) conducted a study to uncover administrators' and teachers' perceptions of the impact of classroom walkthroughs on education and student achievement. The researcher used both qualitative (individual interviews) and quantitative (questionnaire) methods to collect data. The study population consisted of 100 teachers across various subjects and nine administrators at the public middle school. The questionnaire was administered to 25 teachers in core subjects at the middle schools and to 8 administrators at the same schools in two public educational districts in southeastern Pennsylvania. The online survey tool, which included Likert and open-ended questions, was completed. Moreover, interviews were conducted with (9) teachers and (4) administrators. The study results showed that teachers and administrators believe formative feedback during walkthroughs is essential to increasing student achievement by improving teachers' instructional practices.

The purpose of Al-Rifai's (2021) study was to reveal the reality of MBWA practice among high school principals in Yanbu Governorate and its relationship with teachers' job satisfaction. A descriptive-analytical method was used, and the researcher chose the questionnaire as the data collection tool. The study population comprised all teachers in public high schools in Yanbu Governorate, totalling 674, while the study sample was randomly selected and comprised 275 teachers. The study results showed that the practice of MBWA among public high school principals in Yanbu Governorate was high.

In a study by Al-Sulaiman (2020) examining school performance in the Al-Baha region from the perspectives of school leaders and teachers, a correlational, descriptive design was used. Data were collected by distributing a questionnaire to the study sample, which comprised all school leaders and general education teachers in the Al-Baha region (4481 leaders, deputies, and teachers). The questionnaire was administered to a sample of 354 individuals selected using stratified random sampling. The study results showed that the level of school performance was rated as often.

Al-Ghamdi's (2020) study aimed to identify the availability of future school components in schools in the Al-Baha region and their relationship to academic performance, as perceived by female teachers. The researcher used a correlational descriptive method and a questionnaire as the data collection tool. The study population consisted of 3,954 general education female teachers, and a sample of 348 was selected using stratified random sampling. The results showed that school performance in the Al-Baha region was moderate, and no differences were observed across educational stages.

As for Al-Shunaq's study (2019), its aim was to identify the degree of MBWA among vocational school principals in the northern region of Jordan. The researcher used the correlational descriptive survey method in her study. To achieve the study's objectives, the researcher developed a questionnaire to collect data. The study population comprised all male and female teachers in government secondary vocational schools in the northern region, totalling 1,232. A sample representing 22% of the population, or 271 teachers, was randomly selected. The results indicated

that the degree of MBWA among vocational school principals was moderate, and there were no statistically significant differences in MBWA levels by gender.

The study by Abu Aisha (2019) aimed to identify the prevailing administrative style in public schools in the city of Aqaba and its impact on school performance from the staff's perspective. The predictive-descriptive method was used, and the study population comprised all employees in public schools (teachers, counsellors, administrators), totalling 1,293 employees. A random sampling method was used to select a study sample of 200 employees, and a questionnaire was administered to collect data. The study results showed that school performance was high.

Abu Madigham (2019) conducted a study to identify the extent to which school administration fulfils its role in fostering creativity and the relationship between this role and school performance, from the perspective of primary school teachers in the Negev region within the Green Line. The descriptive survey and correlational method were used, and the questionnaire was employed as a tool for data collection. The study population consisted of 3,975 male and female teachers in primary schools in the Negev region. A random sample of 417 male and female teachers was selected. The study results showed that school performance across all aspects was high, and there were no gender differences in performance.

While Jbarin's (2019) study aimed to reveal the effectiveness of professional training for teachers in the Negev region and its relationship with school performance as perceived by them, the researcher used the correlational descriptive method. The study population comprised all teachers in the Negev region who participated in training programs over the past 3 years, totalling 5,451. A simple random sample of 500 teachers was selected, and a questionnaire was used to collect data. The results showed that school performance was high and that there were statistically significant differences in favour of females, attributable to the gender variable.

Al-Hawashleh's (2019) study aimed to identify administrative problems in secondary schools in the Negev area within the Green Line and examine their relationship to school performance. The researcher employed a descriptive correlational survey design and administered a questionnaire to the study sample to collect data. The study population comprised 960 male and female teachers from secondary schools in the Negev area, and the sample included 402 teachers. The results showed that overall school performance in secondary schools in the Negev area was high, and that there were statistically significant differences attributable to the school stage variable.

The study by Al-Rubaie (2019) aimed to identify the extent of knowledge management practices among school principals in Irbid Governorate, as perceived by school teachers, and their relationship to school performance. To address the objectives of this study, a correlational descriptive design was adopted. The population included all male and female teachers working in public schools under the educational directorates of Irbid Governorate, amounting to 16,178 teachers. From this population, a stratified random sample of 375 teachers was selected, and a structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. Analysis of the responses revealed that overall school performance was rated at a high level. Moreover, statistically significant differences emerged in perceptions of school performance, particularly with respect to gender.

Comparable findings have been reported in related contexts. For instance, Al-Jumai'i (2018) investigated the practices of female secondary school principals in Taif City. Using a descriptive-analytical approach and a questionnaire survey, the study targeted principals, supervisors, and administrators, drawing a stratified random sample of 36 participants, which represented about 64% of the total population. Results indicated that MBWA practice among these principals was consistently high.

Similarly, Tayfour (2018) examined the extent to which school principals in Ajloun Governorate practised MBWA and its relationship to teachers' achievement motivation. Employing descriptive, correlational, and comparative approaches, the study surveyed 255 teachers across elementary, intermediate, and secondary levels. Findings showed that MBWA was generally practised at a high level, with significant differences associated with both gender and school level. These differences suggested that contextual factors—such as school stage—can shape how MBWA is applied and perceived.

In another study, Makhamra (2018) assessed the degree of MBWA among high school principals in the Jericho and Jordan Valley governorates and its relationship to organizational culture. Using a correlational descriptive method and a questionnaire distributed to 120 randomly selected teachers from a population of 293, the study found that MBWA was practiced at a moderate level overall. Interestingly, gender differences reappeared, with male principals showing higher levels of MBWA than their female counterparts.

Al-Khaifi (2017) examined how far basic education school principals in Oman's Al-Dakhiliyah Governorate engaged in MBWA, drawing on the perspectives of principals, assistants, and senior teachers. Using a descriptive survey design and a structured questionnaire, the study included a population of 745 individuals and a final sample of 294 participants, representing both genders. The findings indicated that MBWA was widely practiced at a high level, and no significant gender-based differences were observed in participants' responses.

In a related context, Al-Sharman (2017) investigated the practice of MBWA among school principals in Irbid Governorate and its relationship to teachers' morale. The study employed a descriptive survey approach with a stratified random sample of 1,064 teachers, representing 5% of the total population of 20,222 teachers across public and private schools. Results showed that teachers perceived principals' use of MBWA as moderate, suggesting room for improvement in its application to enhance teacher motivation and workplace climate.

Al-Shahri (2017) focused on administrative performance in primary schools in Jeddah, analyzing how principals practiced MBWA in their daily leadership. Using the descriptive-analytical method and a questionnaire administered to 107 principals from a total population of 246, the study concluded that participants rated principals' administrative performance highly within the MBWA framework. This suggests that MBWA is integrated into leadership practices in Jeddah's primary schools, at least from the principals' perspectives.

Similarly, Al-Azmi (2017) assessed the degree to which general education school principals in Kuwait practiced MBWA. Adopting a descriptive correlational design, the study surveyed 724 teachers randomly selected through cluster sampling from a population of 58,869 across primary, intermediate, and secondary levels. The results confirmed that MBWA was applied at a high level, suggesting its value as a leadership approach across Kuwait's school system.

Starrett (2015) conducted a study to identify the impact of principals' MBWA on teacher effectiveness. The study used qualitative research, with interviews to collect data. The study population consisted of 20 schools in Texas. The study sample included six principals, and the study concluded that MBWA is an effective management style for dialogue between the principal and the teacher, as it provides an opportunity for idea exchange and improves education.

The study by Kubicek (2015) aimed to assess the impact of MBWA on improving educational processes in public schools in Nebraska. The study used qualitative research methods, with interviews to collect data. The study sample included (5) principals and (17) teachers, and the study concluded that MBWA improves the educational process and encourages professional growth.

A study by Saleh (2015) aimed to determine the extent of MBWA practiced by UNRWA school principals in the Gaza Strip governorates and its impact on teachers' job performance from their perspective. The study used a descriptive-analytical method, and data were collected via a questionnaire distributed. The study population consisted of all teachers in UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip governorate (7,719 teachers). A sample of 420 teachers was randomly selected. One of the most notable findings was that the extent of MBWA practiced by UNRWA school principals in the Gaza Strip governorates was high.

Al-Qudumi's study (2014) aimed to identify the extent of management by wandering among vocational school principals and its relationship with teachers' job performance in those schools. The researcher used the analytical method and employed a questionnaire to collect data. The study population consisted of 422 male and female teachers, and a purposive sample of 335 male and female teachers was selected. One of the most notable findings was that, from the teachers' perspective, the degree of management by wandering among vocational school principals in Palestine was moderate.

Al-Mawadih (2014) conducted a study to identify the extent of management by wandering and its impact on kindergarten teachers' professional development. The researcher used a descriptive-analytical method and distributed a questionnaire to collect data. The study population consisted of 118 teachers. Given the small sample size, the researcher applied the performance to all members of the community. One of the most notable results of the study was that the degree of practicing management by wandering was moderate.

Booth (2013) conducted a study aimed at understanding the perceptions of school principals in the Kansas Learning Network (KLN) regarding MBWA in the classroom and its impact on students. The study used a descriptive method, data were collected during classroom walkthroughs, and the study population consisted of all school principals in Kansas. The study sample comprised 345 school principals in the Kansas Learning Network, and the study concluded that conducting classroom walkthroughs leads to increased student learning, higher-quality teaching, and more effective professional development.

The concept of MBWA is a modern concept that should be addressed due to its positive impact in the educational field, its effects on teachers' performance, and its role in enhancing their competencies and helping achieve the school's goals.

Although the need is for the principal to be among the teachers and students continuously, motivating them and making decisions based on observing the problems they face, in many cases the principal spends most of his time in the office on routine clerical tasks, issuing orders and instructions. Therefore, most studies, most of which are Arab, indicate disparities among school principals in the use of MBWA (Al-Rifai, 2021; Al-Rubaie, 2022; Al-Zahrani, 2022; Mohammed, 2023), which may affect overall school performance. Additionally, researchers, through their field interactions with fellow teachers and principals, have noticed this disparity in MBWA use and in school performance.

Therefore, this study revealed the degree of MBWA among school principals in Irbid Governorate and its relationship with school performance from teachers' perspectives. Specifically, the current study seeks to answer the following questions:

What is the level of MBWA practiced by school principals in Irbid Governorate from teachers' viewpoint?

What is the level of school performance in Irbid Governorate from the teacher's viewpoint?

Is there a statistically significant correlation at the significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the degree of MBWA practiced by school principals in Irbid Governorate and the level of school performance?

### 3. Methodology

The descriptive survey method was adopted for this study, with the questionnaire as the primary tool for collecting data to achieve the research objectives. The study focused on two main variables: the extent to which school principals practice MBWA and the level of school performance. In addition, three demographic variables were examined as control variables to understand better variations in perceptions: gender (male, female), school stage (primary, secondary), and school ownership (public, private). This design allowed for a comprehensive exploration of how leadership practices interact with contextual factors to influence overall school performance.

#### 3.1. Research Population and Sample

The study population comprised 25,018 teachers from eight educational directorates in Irbid Governorate. A stratified random sample of 401 teachers was drawn to ensure proportional representation by gender, school stage, and school type. The sample included 298 females (69%) and 103 males (31%); 280 teachers from basic schools and 121 from secondary schools; and 391 participants from public schools and 10 from private schools. This sample size meets the requirements suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) for representative survey research and provides sufficient statistical power at a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

#### 3.2. Instrument Development

The researchers developed a structured questionnaire after reviewing relevant literature (Al-Zahrani, 2022; Mohammad, 2023; Al-Rifai, 2021). The instrument consisted of two main sections:

- Demographic data (gender, school stage, school type).
- Main axes: (a) MBWA practices (28 items across four domains: follow-up and fact discovery, communication, continuous improvement, and motivation), and (b) school performance (27 items across school administration, teacher performance, and student performance).

Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very low to 5 = very high), a common scale in social sciences research (Likert, 1932).

#### 3.3. Validity of the Instrument

Content validity was confirmed through expert review by academics in educational leadership, who ensured clarity and relevance. Construct validity was assessed through Pearson correlation coefficients between each item and its domain and variable. As presented in Table 1, all items demonstrated statistically significant correlations ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) above the acceptable threshold of 0.30 (Brown, 1983), confirming that the questionnaire items measured their intended constructs effectively.

**Table 1.** Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Questionnaire Items and Their Dimensions and Variables

MBWA	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Overall MBWA	School Performance	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Overall Performance
Follow-up and Discovering Facts	0.610 – 0.802	0.423 – 0.705	School Administration	0.629 – 0.888	0.467 – 0.796
Communication	0.608 – 0.886	0.505 – 0.794	Teacher Performance	0.463 – 0.849	0.361 – 0.746

Continuous Improvement	0.566 – 0.849	0.498 – 0.799	Student Performance	0.738 – 0.918	0.536 – 0.702
Motivation	0.433 – 0.865	0.376 – 0.687	–	–	–

### 3.4. Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability was tested using internal consistency and stability measures. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated for each variable, and test–retest reliability was assessed over a 2-week interval using a pilot sample of 31 teachers who were excluded from the main study. As shown in Table 2, Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.807 to 0.936, indicating strong internal consistency. Test–retest values ranged from 0.429 to 0.741, confirming the instrument's stability over time (Nunnally, 1978).

**Table 2.** Cronbach's Alpha and Test–Retest Stability Coefficients

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Test–Retest Stability
MBWA – Follow-up and Fact Discovery	0.826	0.663
MBWA – Communication	0.807	0.522
MBWA – Continuous Improvement	0.855	0.741
MBWA – Motivation	0.828	0.634
School Administration Performance	0.913	0.707
Teacher Performance	0.912	0.429
Student Performance	0.936	0.713

### 3.5. Data Collection Procedures

Ethical approval was obtained from Yarmouk University (IRB/2025/046). The final version of the questionnaire was distributed in person across schools in Irbid Governorate. Teachers were informed of the study's purpose and assured that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be kept confidential. Completed questionnaires were coded and prepared for analysis.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated to answer the first and second research questions regarding MBWA practices and school performance. For the third research question, Pearson correlation coefficients were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between MBWA and school performance, consistent with the non-experimental design and the continuous nature of the study variables.

### 3.7. Correction of the Study Tool & Analyzing the Data

In this study, a five-point Likert scale was used to capture teachers' perceptions of both the independent variable (MBWA dimensions) and the dependent variable (school performance dimensions). The scale ranged from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), with the values in between reflecting levels of disagreement, neutrality, and agreement. Using this approach allowed

the researchers to transform participants' qualitative judgments into measurable data that could be analyzed statistically. The categories were defined as shown in table 3.

**Table 3.** Measurable Levels

Level	Range of Category
Strongly disagree	From 1.0 to less than 1.8
disagree	From 1.8 to less than 2.6
Neutral	From 2.6 to less than 3.4
Agree	From 3.4 to less than 4.2
Strongly Agree	4.2 and above

These thresholds provided a clear framework for classifying responses and enabled consistent interpretation across both variables of the questionnaire. Then, the data were statistically processed using appropriate methods aligned with the study's objectives and research questions. To answer the first and second research questions, concerning the degree of MBWA among principals and the level of school performance, arithmetic means and standard deviations were computed. These descriptive statistics provided insights into central tendencies and variations within participants' responses.

To address the third research question, examining the relationship between MBWA and school performance, Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed. This test was selected because it measures the strength and direction of associations between continuous variables, which was consistent with the study's non-experimental design.

## 4. Results

The study aimed to examine the level of MBWA practice among school principals in Irbid Governorate and its relationship with school performance. Below are the study results presented in the order of the questions:

### 4.1. Results of the First Question

Which states: "What is the degree of practice of MBWA among school principals in Irbid Governorate from the perspective of teachers?" To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the MBWA areas were extracted, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Description of MBWA Levels

MBWA	Mean	S.D	Ran
Motivation	4.23	0.69	Very high
Follow-up and Fact Discovery	4.12	0.71	High
Continual improvements	4.07	0.74	High
Contact and communicate	4.03	0.79	High
All	4.11	0.67	High

Table 4 shows that the arithmetic means of the study sample's estimates of the degree of MBWA practice among school principals in Irbid Governorate, from teachers' perspective, ranged from 4.03 to 4.23. The motivation field ranked first, with the highest arithmetic mean of 4.23 and a standard

deviation of 0.69, at a very high degree. It was followed in second place by the field of monitoring and fact-finding, with an arithmetic mean of (4.12) and a standard deviation of (0.71), With a high degree, the third place was the area of continuous improvement with a mean of (4.07) and a standard deviation of (0.74), with a high degree. Fourth place was the area of communication and interaction, with a mean of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.79, indicating a high degree. The overall mean of the scale was 4.11 with a standard deviation of 0.67, with a high degree.

This result, according to the teachers in the study sample, can be attributed to the fact that a large percentage of school principals practice MBWA because they are aware of its importance. It is one of the modern methods that can clearly contribute to improving work efficiency. Their practice of this method indicates their constant commitment to monitoring teachers in their workplaces with the aim of improving the educational process. Additionally, MBWA allows for direct communication between the principal, teachers, and students, enhances positive interaction among them, and encourages the creation of a school environment that motivates work. This is because teachers feel supported and cared for by the administration, which encourages them to be creative and innovative. Furthermore, it provides the principal with the opportunity to see the reality for themselves and make more effective decisions based on real-world observations.

The field of motivation ranks first due to its importance to teachers, who consider it the foundation for the success of the educational process. The role of the principal is also very important in encouraging teachers and motivating students. Additionally, the school administration clearly focuses on motivating teachers and students by providing material and moral incentives, which, in turn, improve their performance and strengthen teachers' sense of belonging and loyalty to the school they work in, as well as encouraging them to be creative and innovative.

As for the field of monitoring and discovery, which comes in second place, the administration is concerned with following up with teachers to ensure they perform their assigned tasks, monitoring student performance to identify weaknesses and address them, and discussing educational issues to make decisions based on what is happening in reality. However, this is not sufficient to address all the issues raised.

The fact that the area of continuous improvement ranks third indicates that the efforts made toward improvement are present but need more work and follow-up, which affects teachers' performance and, consequently, the educational process in general. Continuous improvement encourages teachers to seek ways to enhance their performance and motivates them to propose new ideas that contribute to the development of the educational process and increase their self-confidence.

The reason for the communication and interaction field being ranked fourth is the manager's preoccupation with administrative pressures and daily tasks that he must follow up on and deliver by specific deadlines. All of this reduces the time the manager allocates for meetings with teachers.

#### ***4.2. The Results of the Second Question***

Which states: "What is the level of school performance in Irbid Governorate from the perspective of its teachers?" To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of school performance were calculated, as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Statistical Description of the Schools' Performance in Irbid Governorate

The field	Mean	Standard deviation	Rank
Teacher's performance	4.25	0.68	Very high
School administration	4.19	0.72	High
Student's performance	3.76	0.79	High
All	4.08	0.62	High

Table 5 shows that the mean scores of the study sample's estimates of school performance ranged from 3.76 to 4.25. The first rank was held by the teachers' performance area, with the highest mean score of 4.25 and a standard deviation of 0.68, at a very high degree. This was followed in the second rank by the school administration area with a mean score of (4.19) and a standard deviation of (0.72), at a high degree. Finally, the students' performance area had a mean score of (3.76) and a standard deviation of (0.79), at a high degree. The overall mean score of the scale was 4.08 with a standard deviation of 0.62, at a high degree.

This result can be attributed to teachers' agreement that school performance is outstanding, that the educational system is strong, and that the school administration provides a learning environment that motivates teachers and offers the necessary support to both teachers and students. They monitor their performance with the aim of improving the educational process, promoting a culture of creativity and excellence, continuously overseeing school facilities to provide a suitable and healthy environment, in addition to teachers possessing the skills that enable them to perform their duties and develop themselves, and students' commitment to performing their duties.

Teachers' performance ranking first is because they completed the questionnaire; it is natural for them to evaluate their performance positively and enhance their competence and professionalism. This could be a form of self-bias, as well as teachers' feeling that they are the backbone of the educational process and their perception that it would not succeed without their efforts. Additionally, they want to demonstrate that they are performing their roles to the fullest and striving to achieve the school's vision and mission.

As for the school administration coming in second place, it indicates that teachers view their principals' performance positively, but it needs some improvement. This is a sign that the principal is using effective administrative strategies to guide and support teachers, but these need development. The lack of some resources, poor communication, and failure to build human relationships may have caused the school administration to rank lower than the teachers' performance.

As for the students' performance ranking third, it may indicate challenges they face that affect their academic achievement, such as a lack of motivation towards learning, frequent absences, engagement with technology, and a lack of a study environment that encourages them to improve their performance. This indicates the need to enhance students' performance and develop strategies to support them.

The results of the current study agreed with those of Al-Rifai (2021), Al-Zahrani (2022), and Al-Rubaie (2022), which showed that the level of MBWA was high. However, they differed from Al-Masajdi's (2020) findings, which indicated that MBWA was low.

### **4.3. Results of the Third Question**

Which states: Is there a statistically significant correlation at the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the estimates of the study sample members between the degree of MBWA practiced by school principals

in Irbid Governorate and the degree of school performance there? To answer the third research question, Pearson correlation coefficients were extracted between the degree of MBWA among school principals in Irbid Governorate and the degree of school performance there, as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Pearson Correlation Coefficients between MBWA and School Performance

Correlation	School administration	Teacher's performance	Student's performance	School performance as in all
Follow-up and Fact Discovery	0.708	0.548	0.503	0.704
Contact and communicate	0.787	0.567	0.573	0.758
Continual improvement	0.808	0.620	0.568	0.785
Motivation	0.845	0.627	0.558	0.800
MBMA	0.857	0.651	0.600	0.829

The table shows a statistically significant positive relationship between the degree of MBWA by school principals in Irbid Governorate and the degree of school performance. Accordingly, school performance increases with the degree of MBWA used by school principals. The table also shows a statistically significant positive relationship between the degree of MBWA reported by school principals in Irbid Governorate and the degree of school performance. The correlation coefficient value was (0.829). This result can be attributed to the principal's application of the MBWA approach. His follow-up with the teachers and his awareness of their performance, and monitoring the workflow, all of this leads to building a friendly relationship between the principal and the teachers based on trust and cooperation, and providing a comfortable work environment that increases job satisfaction among teachers.

Consequently, this boosts their motivation to work and fosters a spirit of creativity and innovation, which is reflected in the teachers and, in turn, in school performance. Additionally, the principal's rounds enable him to understand the challenges that teachers may face up close and work on solving them before they affect the quality of education. It also enables the principal to assess teachers' performance, identify any gaps in their teaching and professional skills, and recommend courses to develop those skills. The principal's rounds help discover successful experiences and new ideas, guiding teachers to benefit from them to improve school performance. Additionally, feedback can be provided to teachers to enhance their teaching strategies, which positively reflects on student performance.

## 5. Discussion

This study found that principals in Irbid Governorate generally practice MBWA at a high level. Among its dimensions, motivation proved to be the strongest, followed by follow-up and fact discovery, then continuous improvement, with communication ranking last. The emphasis on motivation suggests that principals are especially attentive to supporting and encouraging both teachers and students, whereas the lower score for communication may reflect the time pressures and administrative demands that reduce opportunities for direct interaction. Comparable patterns have been observed in earlier studies. Al-Rifai (2021), Al-Zahrani (2022), and Al-Rubaie (2022) all reported similarly high levels of MBWA, pointing to its growing role as a standard leadership practice in Arab educational contexts. In line with this, Mohammad (2023) highlighted how MBWA enhances job satisfaction and nurtures teacher creativity, lending further support to the finding that motivation

is the key driver of this leadership style. By contrast, the results differ from Al-Masajdi (2020), who reported low levels of MBWA. Contextual variations may explain the discrepancy: while schools in Irbid appear to support principals' active engagement, other settings may constrain the practice due to limited resources, rigid administrative structures, or cultural differences in leadership expectations.

Regarding school performance, the study showed high overall scores, with teacher performance ranked first, followed by school administration and finally student performance. The strong rating of teacher performance may partly reflect self-perception, as teachers completed the survey, but it also suggests that principals' practices create an environment where teachers feel valued and supported. These results align with Gamala and Marpa (2022), who demonstrated that principals' managerial skills directly influence teacher performance and school effectiveness. However, the relatively lower ranking of student performance is noteworthy. Challenges such as absenteeism, lack of motivation, and distraction by technology, identified in this study, have also been observed in other contexts. For instance, Rantisi (2022) reported similar obstacles in Palestinian schools, reinforcing the argument that student achievement requires targeted interventions beyond what MBWA alone can provide.

The most striking outcome of the study is the strong, statistically significant positive correlation between MBWA and school performance, with an overall coefficient of 0.829. The analysis revealed that all dimensions of MBWA were positively linked with school administration, teacher performance, and student performance, with motivation emerging as the strongest factor. This highlights the importance of MBWA not just as a managerial routine, but as a leadership practice that shapes both organizational culture and instructional quality. These results are consistent with the arguments of Al-Sibai (2024) and Mohammad (2023), who emphasized that leadership grounded in presence, observation, and interaction builds trust and cooperation, ultimately improving school outcomes. Earlier contributions by Al-Azmi (2017) and Al-Sharaman (2018) also reinforce this point, showing that MBWA helps raise teacher morale, enhances communication, and drives continuous improvement in schools.

The findings point to MBWA as more than a technical tool—it represents a strategic leadership approach with the potential to elevate school performance significantly. Principals who consistently apply MBWA are able to motivate their teachers, streamline administrative processes, and respond quickly to emerging challenges, thereby cultivating an environment built on trust, accountability, and ongoing development. At the same time, the relatively lower scores associated with student performance suggest that MBWA should be complemented by targeted strategies that directly address student engagement and achievement. This conclusion aligns with Jolani (2023), who stressed the value of fostering creativity and supporting teachers' professional growth as an indirect pathway to better student outcomes.

In essence, this study strengthens the evidence base showing that MBWA has tangible effects on school performance in Jordan, positioning it as a leadership model capable of bridging managerial effectiveness with educational excellence.

The results are largely consistent with previous research conducted in Arab and international contexts, but they also highlight contextual differences that should be considered when applying MBWA. Policymakers and educational leaders are therefore encouraged to integrate MBWA into training and professional development programs for school principals while also designing interventions that directly target student performance. This dual focus will ensure that the benefits of MBWA extend across all dimensions of the school system.

## 6. Conclusion

This study set out to examine the extent to which school principals in Irbid Governorate practice MBWA and to explore its relationship with school performance. The results clearly indicate that MBWA is widely practiced at a high level, with motivation standing out as the most influential dimension. Principals' efforts to encourage teachers and students, coupled with their commitment to observation and continuous improvement, reflect the growing importance of this leadership style in schools.

School performance was also found to be high overall, particularly in relation to teacher performance and school administration, though student performance lagged behind. This highlights the dual strength and limitation of MBWA: while it effectively enhances teachers' professionalism and administrative efficiency, it must be complemented with more targeted interventions to address challenges facing students.

Most importantly, the study demonstrated a strong positive correlation between MBWA and school performance. Principals who consistently applied MBWA created more supportive, motivating, and effective school environments. These findings reinforce the growing body of literature confirming MBWA as not only a leadership approach but also a strategic tool for fostering educational quality and organizational success.

Having all, the study suggests that MBWA should be integrated into principal training and professional development programs, with an emphasis on balancing motivational practices with communication and systematic follow-up. At the same time, policymakers and educational leaders must design initiatives that focus directly on student engagement and achievement to ensure that the benefits of MBWA extend across all dimensions of school performance.

## 7. Recommendations & Future Work

Based on the findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be made. First, school principals should be encouraged to continue practicing MBWA, as the results show its strong positive influence on school performance. Training programs for educational leaders should therefore include MBWA as a core component, equipping principals with the skills to balance motivational practices, observation, and communication despite the administrative pressures they face.

Second, while MBWA proved effective in enhancing teacher performance and strengthening administrative processes, the lower scores related to student performance suggest a need for more focused strategies. Schools should develop targeted initiatives to motivate students, reduce absenteeism, and create learning environments that foster engagement. Principals could complement MBWA with student-centered interventions, such as mentoring programs, extracurricular activities, and stronger family–school partnerships.

Third, exchange visits and professional networks between principals could be activated to share best practices in MBWA. Learning from successful experiences in other schools would provide principals with practical strategies to overcome challenges and maximize the benefits of this approach. Additionally, delegating some administrative responsibilities to senior teachers or assistants would free principals' time, allowing them to practice MBWA more consistently and effectively.

For future research, it would be valuable to examine MBWA in different educational settings across Jordan and the wider Arab region, as leadership practices are often shaped by local culture, resources, and policy frameworks. Future studies could also link MBWA to other variables such as organizational trust, job satisfaction, innovation, or professional growth to broaden the

understanding of its impact. A mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative data may provide deeper insights into how MBWA is perceived and applied in practice.

## Declarations

**Author Contributions.** Muna Al-Qura'an: Literature review, collection of data, original manuscript preparation. Nawaf Mousa Al-Shatnawi: data analysis, review editing, and writing. The authors have read and approved the published on the final version of the article.

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